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S. HRG. 110–153

SECURING AMERICA'S INTEREST IN IRAQ: THE REMAINING OPTIONS

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

JANUARY 10, 11, 17, 18, 23, 25, 30, 31, AND FEBRUARY 1, 2007

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations

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WHERE WE ARE: THE CURRENT SITUATION IN IRAQ

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2007

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:30 a.m., in room SH–216, Hart Senate Office Building, Hon. Richard G. Lugar, presiding.

Present: Senators Lugar, Biden, Dodd, Kerry, Feingold, Boxer, Bill Nelson, Obama, Menendez, Cardin, Casey, Webb, Hagel, Coleman, Corker, Sununu, Voinovich, Murkowski, Isakson, and Vitter.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD G. LUGAR, U.S. SENATOR FROM INDIANA

Chairman LUGAR. Let me call the hearing to order. If we may have order in the committee room.

To the committee and to all who are assembled, let me indicate that technically the Senate has not yet acted upon the new chairmanships, ranking members, and membership of committees. The Senate will do so fairly promptly this week, but our business goes on in the committee. And it's my privilege today, as the outgoing chairman of the committee, to introduce my friend and great Senator, Joe Biden, who will be our chairman and will preside over today's hearing. We will assume he is chairman, and he will act as chairman today and tomorrow and—through a very vigorous series of hearings on Iraq and the Middle East that we have planned.

Let me just say that one of the strengths of our committee has been the commitment of Senator Biden and Democratic and Republican committee members to bipartisanship, but likewise to very, very substantial questioning of American foreign policy, regardless of which party—which President we have served under. I'm certain that that will continue. It's an important aspect that the face of America be as united as possible, and we have attempted to further that idea, I think, with some degree of success. For example, the India Nuclear Agreement that was just concluded celebrated a significant strategic development for our country with an overwhelming vote in this committee and support of Members of the House of Representatives who shared this bipartisan ethic.

So, with that introduction, let me just indicate I'm delighted to welcome our new members to the committee. I'm certain the chairman will want to do that, too. But it's especially good to welcome him to the chairmanship, and I turn over the gavel, which I do not see at the present, Mr. Chairman. [Laughter.]

But, nevertheless, in due course that will be forthcoming, too. [Laughter.]

Chairman BIDEN. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR., U.S. SENATOR FROM DELAWARE

Chairman BIDEN. Folks, let me echo the comments made by the Senator. Technically, we vote in the U.S. Congress on the organization. I am insisting on an open vote, not a secret ballot, if you get the meaning of that. There may very well be a secret ballot. We may keep him as chairman. I may vote for him. [Laughter.]

One of the things that Senator Lugar emphasized is that all of us on this committee, under his leadership and the brief stint before that under mine and now again under mine, is that we understand that no foreign policy in America can be sustained without the informed consent of the American people. And one of the overwhelming responsibilities of this committee, which has legislative responsibility, but quite frankly, its role, historically, has been more in playing the role of providing a platform upon which to inform the American people of the options—many times, difficult options—that must be chosen by a President of the United States in order to conduct the foreign policy of this country.

And this morning we begin the work of the new Congress with many new Members, including many new members on this committee. We welcome, today, new members—Senator Cardin, Senator Casey, Senator Corker, and Senator Webb, and we're delighted they have joined the committee. We also welcome veteran members of the U.S. Senate who are new to the Foreign Relations Committee—Senator DeMint, Senator Johnny Isakson from Georgia, Senator Bob Menendez from New Jersey, and Senator Vitter, who I don't see here yet, but I'm sure will be coming.

You join a committee that's tried to remain a place for sanity and civility in what has been a very partisan and sometimes polarized Senate over the last decade. We've not always succeeded, but, quite frankly, when we have, it's largely been due to the efforts of Chairman Lugar. I don't want to make this sound like a mutual admiration society, but, to state the fact, there is no one—no one in the U.S. Senate who knows more about foreign policy, and no one who has contributed more to American security than Chairman Lugar.

Today, we're brought together by a question that dominates our national debate, and it really boils down to a simple proposition. What options remain to meet our twin goals of bringing American forces home and leaving behind a stable Iraq? Over the next 4 weeks, this committee will seek answers to that question. First, we will hear from the Bush administration, then we'll hear from experts—left, right, and center—in our government and out of government, from across the United States and beyond our borders. Then we'll hear from men and women with very different ideas, but who are united in their devotion to this country and their desire to see us through this very difficult time.

The Bush administration, as well as important private groups and experts, have developed varying plans on how to proceed in Iraq. Tonight, I will sit, as will all of you, and listen to our President, and he will have my prayers and hopes that his plan will be

one that will ease our burden and not deepen it. But it's a unique responsibility of the U.S. Congress, and especially and historically the Foreign Relations Committee in the U.S. Senate, to evaluate these plans, in public, to help our citizens understand the very difficult choices this country faces.

That's the best way to secure, in my view, as I said earlier, the informed consent of the American people. For without their informed consent, whatever policy we arrive at cannot long be sustained.

I have my own strongly held views, as the witnesses know and my colleagues know, about what to do and how we should proceed in Iraq. There will be plenty of time for me to talk about them in the days ahead. But, for now, I want to set out what Senator Lugar and I jointly hope to accomplish as we put together this agenda for the next several weeks, and how we hope to accomplish it.

First, let me make it clear what these hearings are not intended to be about. They are not about an effort to revisit the past, point fingers, or place blame on how we got to where we are. The American people spoke very loudly this past November. They know that we're in a significant mess in Iraq. But instead of arguing how we got into that mess, they want us to be proactive and be part of the solution. They expect us to help America get out of the mess we're in, not talk about how we got there.

We will start by receiving the most up-to-date unvarnished analysis of the situation and trends in Iraq and in the region. As a matter of fact, we began that inquiry yesterday. As all my colleagues know, and many people in the audience know, we have a "Secret Room" in the Senate. It's called "S–407," where we're able to have unvarnished discussions with the most sensitive information, requiring the highest clearance. And yesterday, all of my colleagues and I sat there for a considerable amount of time receiving a classified briefing from all the major intelligence agencies of the U.S. Government.

We continue that inquiry, the inquiry of determining what the facts are on the ground today, with the experts who will assist us in assessing the political, security, economic, and diplomatic realities that are on the ground today in Iraq and in the region.

We'll begin with Dr. Phebe Marr, who has given us her valuable time and scholarship and insight for many years in this committee and is one of the most welcome witnesses that we have had in both administrations, all administrations. She is a preeminent historian of Iraq, and she will provide a historical overview. It is our view that by illuminating the past, we're going to be better able to understand the present, and hopefully better prepared to deal with the present situation.

Michael O'Hanlon, of the Brookings Institution, has also graced us with his presence in the past, and he will focus on—I'd put it this way—focus on the numbers. How do we measure the current situation in Iraq? The trends, in terms of security, the economy, and public opinion.

And Mr. Said, the director of the Iraq Revenue Watch, will speak to us on the political dynamics inside Iraq. Who are the main players? What are their interests? And what possible scenarios could bring them together?

And then Paul Pillar, the former national intelligence officer for Near East and South Asia, will address the dynamics in the region. He has, again, graced us with his presence in the past, and has been very valuable. The issue that we will ask him to discuss is: What do Iraq's neighbors want? And how can they affect the outcome on the ground in Iraq, if they can affect the outcome?

The goal today, as it was yesterday, is not to discuss policy options, although there are no limits on what any of the witnesses can discuss, but it's to get at the facts, as best we know them. We want this committee and the public to have a strong foundation upon which to evaluate the principal policy options that are being discussed in this country today. Starting tomorrow and over the following 3 weeks, we will turn to those options and ask: Where do we go from here? Secretary of State Rice has graciously indicated she is not only ready, but anxious, to appear before our committee, which she will do tomorrow, after President Bush announces the administration's plans, tonight.

The authors of every other major plan for Iraq will present their recommendations, including those who advocate escalation, those who advocate withdrawal, partition, federalization, siding with one side or the other, strengthening the center, and so on. The major authors of the plans—the authors of those major plans will come and testify over the next 3 weeks.

As we hear from them, we'll also hear from leading military, diplomatic, economic, and political experts, and we will ask this country's senior statesmen and stateswomen, former National Security Advisors, former Secretaries of State, to help us put everything we've heard in context as we conclude what will probably be the first round of hearings on Iraq.

The ultimate question for this committee is the question that'll be on the minds of every American as we listen to the President of the United States tonight. Will your plan, Mr. President, or other plans, put us on a better path in Iraq, or will it dig us into a deeper hole with more pain, and not much to show for it? We pray it will be the former. But together we have a responsibility and, I believe, an opportunity to help put this country on a better path.

So, let's begin. Let me turn this over now to Senator Lugar for any comments that he wishes to make.

Senator LUGAR. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I thank you for holding this important hearing and for assembling such an excellent panel.

I would offer a special greeting, as you have, to Dr. Phebe Marr, who has been a tremendous resource for the committee, and for me personally. She testified at four different Iraq hearings during my recent chairmanship, and also appeared at a hearing held under Senator Biden in August 2002. Dr. Marr's calm and authoritative analysis on Iraq is grounded in a prodigious understanding of that country and a nonpartisan outlook that is badly needed in this debate.

Dr. Michael O'Hanlon has also provided excellent testimony before our committee in recent years. In 2005 and 2006, I wrote a series of 15 "Dear Colleague" letters to—on Iraq to all Senators. These letters introduced reports and documents that I found to be

particularly illuminating. The Brookings Institution Iraq Index, a report overseen by Dr. O'Hanlon, accompanied the first letter that I sent, and it provides a remarkably detailed view of the economic and security situation in Iraq. The Iraq Index is updated regularly, and I continue to recommend it to any Member of Congress or citizen who wants a thoughtful grounding in the facts.

I also welcome Mr. Said and Dr. Pillar, who are testifying before this committee for the first time. We are grateful to have them as a new resource at this critical moment.

Tonight, President Bush will give a speech outlining his intended course in Iraq. In recent days, I have had opportunities to talk to the President about Iraq. Among other points, I underscored the need for a thorough effort to involve Congress in the decision-making process.

United States policy in Iraq would benefit greatly from meaningful executive branch consultations with legislators, and from careful study by Members of Congress, that's directed at dispassionately evaluating the President's plan and other options. Members of this committee and the entire Congress must be prepared to make reasoned judgments about what the President is proposing.

Initially, the President and his team need to explain what objectives we are trying to achieve: If forces are expanded, where and how they will be used; why such a strategy will succeed; and how Iraqi forces will be involved; how long additional troops may be needed; what contingencies are in place if the situation does not improve; and how this strategy fits into our discussion throughout the region.

The American media is understandably focused on the possibility of a troop surge in Iraq. But whatever may be the final conclusion on this point, relative success or failure is likely to hinge on many other factors and decisions. The complexity of the Iraq situation demands more of us than partisan sound bites or preconceived judgments.

With this in mind, this hearing, setting the terms of reference for what is happening in Iraq, is especially timely. I look forward to the insights of our distinguished panel and to working with Chairman Biden and all members of this committee as we continue our inquiry in the coming weeks.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BIDEN. Thank you, Senator.

Let me explain to the new Members of the Senate that the way we proceed will be to hear from all the witnesses—and I'll announce that order in a moment—and then open it to questions, based on our seniority here.

This is a very important topic, to say the least. And we could probably, with some useful benefit to informing ourselves, spend 2 days with this panel alone. But my staff tells me, in consultation with the Republican staff, that, as a practical matter, we're going to limit each of us, including myself, to 8-minute rounds of questions. I realize that is, in some sense, is not sufficient to really explore in the kind of depth you may want to. My experience is, the witnesses are available to you, personally, after the hearing, and on the telephone and in their offices, and occasionally, if you ask

them, they will make themselves available in your offices if it works with their schedule.

So, I apologize in advance that there's not going to be the kind of exposition that—if we were doing this as a seminar at a university, we'd be able to spend a whole lot more time. But the dictates of time make it difficult. So, we're going to limit it to 8-minute rounds, if I may.

But, first, let me begin. And the order in which I will ask the witnesses to deliver their statements will be Dr. Marr, Mr. O'Hanlon, Mr. Said, and Dr. Pillar.

Welcome, again, Phebe, and we're delighted to have you here. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF DR. PHEBE MARR, HISTORIAN, AUTHOR OF "THE MODERN HISTORY OF IRAQ," WASHINGTON, DC

Dr. MARR. Senator Biden, Senator Lugar, I want to say how delighted I am to be back again. And I can't commend you and the committee enough for what I think has been a remarkable job in the continuing debate on Iraq and in informing the American public on it. It has seemed to me to be quite a wonderful effort, I hope will continue with good effect.

I have been asked to address the historical context of this issue. And let me say that 2007 marks the 50th year that I've been involved in Iraq. I've done other things besides Iraq, but it was 1957 when I first went to Iraq. And so, I have the benefit of some historical hindsight in having actually been on the ground through all of the regimes, including the monarchy.

Iraq has had a very rich and varied history, but one of the things that has struck me as I have followed it as a scholar and personally is the discontinuity of Iraqi history. And, indeed, we're in the middle of another such period.

Actually, I'd like to address three questions this morning. The first is: Where is Iraq today? What are the chief political and social elements we face in Iraq? Second: How can we account for this situation? To what extent is it historical? And, last: Is this current situation likely to be lasting? Is it transient? Is it remediable?

Iraq, since 2003, has undergone not one, but several, revolutionary and radical changes of a proportion not seen since the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the formation of the state in the 1920s. And I think the degree and nature of these changes need to be recognized.

First has been a radical change in leadership. It's not simply that Iraqi leadership and its dictatorship have been decapitated, now physically, as well as literally, but that an entirely new leadership group has come to power. The ethnic and sectarian composition of that leadership has changed. Shia and Kurds have replaced Arab Sunnis as the dominant group. And its ideological orientation has also changed, from one that was secular, nationalist, and devoted to a unitary Iraqi State to one with differing visions of where Iraq should go. Overall the leadership has a view that is far more dominated by religion than it has been at any time in Iraq's history.

Since the nature and character of this leadership is critical to our endeavor, I'd like to just take a few minutes to indicate a few characteristics of these leaders worth noting. They result from a study

that I've been engaged in at the United States Institute of Peace for the last couple of years. I've attached a couple of charts to my written testimony, and I think there's a special report coming out on the Internet very shortly. But there are three characteristics I'd like to call to your attention. One is inexperience and discontinuity in leadership over the past 4 years. Some 75 percent of the current leaders hold national positions for the first time. This makes for a very steep learning curve in governance. Second is the divide between the leaders with roots in the exile community, together with Kurds who have been living in the north, separate from the rest of Iraq, and those leaders who remained living inside Iraq under Saddam's rule. These groups have different narratives of the past and visions for the future. And third, and most important, the key leaders today have been shaped by decades of opposition to the former regime. Many spent years in underground movements or imprisoned by Saddam, and lost family members to the Baath. Few insiders, including professionals who simply worked under the Baath regime, have made it into the leadership. The suspicion, distrust, and hostility between these two groups is the core dynamic driving much of the politics in Iraq today, making reconciliation difficult.

A second fundamental change has been the destruction of governmental institutions, the bureaucracy and the army, about which much has been said. The institutions underpinned not just the Baath regime, but Iraq's Government since its founding in the 1920s. Both of these institutions were established under the British, under the mandate, but had their origins in the Ottoman period. Despite ups and downs and periods of instability in modern Iraq, these two institutions remained the backbone of the state until 2003. The collapse of much of Iraq's bureaucratic and military structure have left a void that, in my view, will take years, if not decades, to fill and has left an enormous political, social, and institutional vacuum. This vacuum is now filled, in part, by militias and a new mix of parties and factions.

A third radical change is underway as a result of these events: The collapse of the state as the Iraqis have known it since its creation under international mandate in 1920. Iraq is now a failing, if not yet a failed state, with a new central government that has difficulty cohering and whose reach does not extend much beyond the perimeters of the Green Zone. The establishment of a government that delivers services to the population—chief among them, security—is recognized as the chief task before Iraqis and its foreign supporters. However this issue of governance is resolved, the form of the Iraqi State is likely to change fundamentally. How governance will be reconstituted, power distributed in the future, is a big question. But Iraq is not likely to be a unified state dominated by a strong central government in Baghdad, at least for some time.

A fourth revolutionary change has been the seemingly radical shift in identity on the part of the population, which, in extreme form, has led to this vicious sectarian war in Baghdad and its environs, and to serious demographic shifts, and an effort, not yet successful, to make this communal identity territorial.

Many have seen these identities—Kurdish, Shia, Sunni, Turkmen, et cetera—as longstanding, even primordial, a bedrock of

Iraqi society. But I think this is a misreading of Iraq's much more complex and interesting history. The intensity of these sectarian and ethnic divisions are more the result of a collapsing order, a vicious incitement of civil war by al-Qaeda, and political manipulation by politicians desirous of getting power. They were also exacerbated by an overweening central government and increasing persecution of the opposition by Saddam's dictatorship. However, the events of the past year have solidified emerging communal identities to an extent not known before in Iraq. And only time will tell whether they can be mitigated. This is likely to take enormous effort by Iraqis and by us.

And, last, another profound change is becoming apparent: The collapse of one of the Arab world's major cities—Baghdad. Baghdad has played a major role in Iraqi history, not just since the 1920s, but since its founding in the eighth century. Iraq, with its two rivers and complex irrigation system, as well as geographic openness to invasion from foreign territory, has seldom flourished unless it has had a relatively strong central government to harness its water resources and protect its population.

When Baghdad has declined or been destroyed, as it twice was by the Mongols, Iraq has fallen into long periods of decay. But one must remember that, ultimately, that city and Mesopotamia, now Iraq, have always revived.

Greater Baghdad now contains a quarter to a third of Iraq's population and its highest concentration of skills and infrastructure. Baghdad, as a city, is not lost, but its revival and the return of its middle class are essential to overcoming ethnic and sectarian divisions and the restoration of a functioning government.

One last thought on the current situation, and this may overlap a little with my colleague. Major ethnic and sectarian blocs are already fragmenting into smaller units based on personal interests, desire for power, differing visions and constituencies. It's these smaller units, and the leadership of the larger, better organized and financed parties, also intermixed with militias, that will be making the decisions on Iraq's direction. It seems to me that one way out of the conundrum of communal-identity politics is to encourage political alliances between these various groups on issues and interests, such as oil legislation, commercial legislation, regulation of water resources, economic development, and other issues. This is a slow, laborious process, but it's probably the only way in which some of the distrust and hostility between the leaders and groups can be broken down and a new political dynamic shaped.

Let me finish up by asking: Given this situation, what prognosis may be made? I feel Iraq faces three potential futures in the near and midterm, and it's still too early to tell which will dominate. Given the grievous mistakes made on all sides, this process is going to be very costly and time consuming, and no one should expect a clear outcome in the next 2 years, probably even in the next decade. But helping to shape the long-term future of Iraq in one direction or the other will have a profound effect on the region and, I believe, on our own security.

The first outcome is that Iraq will break up, as I'm calling it, into its three main ethnic and sectarian components—Kurdish, Arab Sunni, and Arab Shia—hastened by ethnic and sectarian conflicts

spiraling out of control. Unless this division is shepherded and fostered by outside forces, however, I think this outcome is unlikely, on its own. This division is not historical, but has come to the fore in a moment of history characterized by political vacuum and chaos, as I've indicated. Such a division will pose real difficulties in Iraq and is radical in its implications for a region in which peace depends on tolerance and coexistence, not just within Islam, but among ethnic and national groups. While this breakup may happen, in my view it should not be encouraged or brokered by the United States, especially if we want to disengage our forces from the country. It will create more, not less, instability in the future.

The second outcome is that Iraq may break down, a process that is well underway. Rather than cohesive ethnic and sectarian entities, the Iraqi polity will disintegrate into smaller units. These will comprise political parties and movements, militias, local tribal leaders, already mentioned. In reality, this is the Iraq that is emerging, with different local forces competing in an effort to establish control in various areas of the country. This scenario, a full-blown failed state, would cause serious problems for the region and the United States. Indeed, I feel that the failed-state syndrome may be spreading throughout the region, as events in Lebanon and Palestine indicate. We may be seeing the breakdown of the state system established in the region by the British and French after World War I.

A third outcome would be to slow and gradually arrest the decline, and for Iraq to gradually reconstitute a government that recognizes the new identities that have emerged, but learns to accommodate them in some new framework that allows for economic and social development. It'll be easy to rebuild this framework, I believe, if Iraqis do not divide indefatigably on ethnic and sectarian lines, but, rather, work within various groups and parties that are gradually participating in the political system to achieve mutual interest. Even if such a government does not control much territory out of Baghdad or the Green Zone, it's better to keep it intact as a symbol and a framework, toward which future generations can work, than to destroy it and try once again to establish another new and entirely radical framework.

Iraq is very far from achieving a new government that works, and the collapse we are witnessing is likely to get worse before it gets better. Only when the participants in Iraq recognize, in this struggle for power, that they are losing more than they can gain by continuing it, will it come to an end. That may be a long time.

In the meantime, the best we can probably do is to help staunch the violence, contain the struggle within Iraq's borders, and keep alive the possibility that after extremism has run its course, the potential for a different Iraq is still there.

Others in the region should be encouraged to do the same, a task which should be built on the fact that no state in the region, or its leadership, wants to see the collapse of the current state system, no matter how much in need of reform their domestic governments may be.

Thank you for your time.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Marr follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. PHEBE MARR, HISTORIAN, AUTHOR OF "THE MODERN HISTORY OF IRAQ," WASHINGTON, DC

I will be focusing almost entirely on Iraq's domestic politics, my area of expertise, and hopefully bringing a little historical perspective to bear, since I have been working on Iraq for some 50 years now. I would like to address three questions today. First, where is Iraq today? What are the chief political and social characteristics we face? Second, how can we account for this situation? And lastly, is the current situation likely to be lasting? Or is it transient? Is it remediable?

First, what can be said about the situation in Iraq today? Iraq since 2003 has undergone not one but several revolutionary changes, of a proportion not seen since the collapse of Ottoman Empire and the formation of the new Iraqi state in the 1920s. The first has been a revolutionary change in leadership. It is not simply that a regime and its dictatorial head have been—not only figuratively but now literally—decapitated, but an entirely new leadership group has come to power. This leadership, brought to power essentially by elections in 2005, has now entirely reversed several of the characteristics of the old Baath regime, and even the transitional regimes that replaced it in 2003 and 2004. It has changed the ethnic and sectarian composition of the leadership. (It is now dominated by Shia and Kurds rather than Arab Sunnis.) It has changed the ideological orientation from one which was secular and nationalist, devoted to a unitary Iraqi state, to one with different visions but far more dominated by religion. At the same time, it has brought more women into power and in general is better educated. The new leaders come, more often, from urban origin, whereas Saddam's clique were more rural and small town born. But the change has also now brought new men and women into power. They have three distinct characteristics worth noting.

First is their inexperience and the discontinuity in their leadership. Some 76 percent in this Cabinet and Presidency hold such jobs for the first time. This has meant a lack of experience, a steep learning curve, and an inability to establish links with one another and with constituencies. Most have had little chance to gain experience because of the continual change of Cabinets.

Second, the change has also brought a divide between a group of leaders with roots in exile who have lived outside of Iraq and Kurds who have been living in the north separate from the rest of Iraq on the one hand, and those who remained inside living under Saddam on the other. The latter include key elements now in opposition, such as the Baath, as well as the younger generation and the dispossessed who follow Muqtada al-Sadr. Some 28 percent are outsiders, now mainly from Middle Eastern rather than Western countries; some 15 percent are Kurds; only 26 percent are insiders.

Third, and most important, is the fact that the key leaders in power today have all been shaped by years, even decades, of opposition to the former regime. The heads of the Kurdish parties and the Shia religio-political parties, such as SCIRI and Dawa, spent years in underground movements; were imprisoned by Saddam; lost family members to the Baath; and even fought the long Iran-Iraq war against the regime from the Iranian side. Some 43 percent of the current leaders were active in opposition politics. Since 2003, few "insiders"—especially those in any way affiliated with the Baath regime, such as professionals who worked in education or health, Sunni or Shia—have made it into the leadership. While many of this group are encompassed by the insurgency, or support it passively, others in this group would like to join the political process but are excluded. The suspicion, distrust, and hostility between these two groups is the core dynamic driving much of the politics in Iraq today, which makes a reconciliation process so difficult to achieve.

In conjunction with this leadership change has gone another fundamental upheaval: The erosion and destruction of the governmental institutions—the bureaucracy and the army—which underpinned not just the Baath regime but Iraq's Government since its founding in the 1920s. Both of these institutions were established by the British under the mandate, although both had their origins in the Ottoman period. Despite ups and downs and periods of instability, these two institutions remained the backbone of the state until 2003. Much has been made of the destruction (or collapse) of these institutions elsewhere, and I will not dwell on it here, but the profound impact this has had on the current situation in Iraq must be appreciated. The disbanding of all of Iraq's military and security forces, the removal of the Baath Party apparatus that ran the bureaucracy and the education establishment (de-Baathification), and, as a result, the collapse of much of Iraq's bureaucratic structure, have left a void that will takes years—if not decades to fill. While much of this structure—especially at the top—needed to be removed, and a good bit of the rest had been hollowed out and corrupted under Saddam's rule, the sudden and precipitous collapse of this governmental underpinning and the removal of much of the

educated class that ran it have created an enormous political, social, and institutional vacuum. This vacuum is now filled in part by militias and a mix of new and often inexperienced political parties and factions.

As result of these events, a second radical change is underway in Iraq: The collapse of the state as Iraqis have known it since its formal creation under international mandate in 1920. Iraq is now a failing—if not yet a failed—state with a new central government that has difficulty cohering and whose reach does not extend much beyond the perimeters of the Green Zone in Baghdad and which does not, clearly, command a monopoly over the official use of force. Indeed, outside of the three Kurdish-run provinces, there is little provincial or local government yet either. The establishment of government that delivers services to the population, chief among them security, is now recognized as the chief task before Iraqis and its foreign supporters.

However, before that is accomplished, the form of the Iraqi state is likely to change fundamentally. For 35 years under the Baath, Iraq was a unitary state which was part of the Arab world. Now it is one in which ethnic and sectarian identities predominate and new and different subnational groups, including militias, are emerging. The constitution, drafted and passed in a referendum last year, provides for a radical devolution of authority to federal regions, an issue on which many Iraqis are divided and which may or may not come to complete fruition. How governance will be reconstituted and power distributed in the new entity that emerges from the current confusion is a large question, but Iraq is not likely to be a unified state dominated by a strong central government in Baghdad, at least for some time. In fact, a high degree of decentralization—or even an absence of formal government in many areas—may characterize Iraq for some time. The increasing fractures in the body politic have, of course, raised the question of whether the Iraqi state can—or even should—continue to exist, or whether it will be divided into ethnic and sectarian or perhaps subnational components. Should that happen, the results would be revolutionary indeed, not only for Iraq but for the entire surrounding region, with implications likely to reverberate for decades.

There have been other changes in Iraq that are almost as revolutionary as these changes in leadership and the transformation of the state. One has been the seeming change in identity on the part of the population, which, in its recent extreme form has led to a vicious sectarian war in Baghdad and its environs. This changing identity has now led to more serious demographic shifts and an effort—not yet successful—to make this communal identity "territorial" by carving out more purely ethnic or sectarian areas. While the development of a semi-independent Kurdish entity in the north has been taking shape for over a decade under the aegis of the Kurdish nationalist parties, carving out distinct Shia and Sunni areas—even emphasizing Shia and Sunni identity as the fundamental basis of political loyalty—is new.

Many have seen these identities (Kurdish, Shia, Sunni, Turkman, Christian, etc.) as longstanding, even primordial, a bedrock of Iraqi society that has long been submerged, manipulated, or repressed by foreign (British) or dictatorial (the Baath and Saddam Hussein) rule, and have now come to the fore as a natural expression by the population of their political aspirations. I recognize how compelling and attractive that view is for people looking for an understandable explanation of what is happening today, but I personally think it is a misreading of Iraq's much more complex and interesting history. One should be wary of reading back into the past what is happening today and of assuming it is the necessary foundation of the future. These intense sectarian divisions in Baghdad, where mixed marriages were common, is new and is partly the result of collapsing order, a vicious incitement of civil war by al-Qaeda, political manipulation by politicians desirous of getting a Shia majority, and is now driven by just plain fear and intimidation.

This is not to say that these ethnic and sectarian differences and identities are themselves new; they go back centuries, but their strength and their exclusivity have varied greatly over time. Ethnic and sectarian identity in Iraq has always had to compete with far stronger tribal, clan, and family ties. As Iraq modernized and joined the international community in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, a middle class espoused political ideologies imported from outside (Nationalism—Iraqi, Arab and Kurdish—as well as Socialism and Communism) and for years—right through the 1970s when Saddam stamped them out they were the chief motivating factors of the emerging middle class. In recent decades, Islamic visions competed with them, often cutting across ethnic and sectarian lines.

An overweening central government and increasing persecution of the opposition and repression by Saddam's growing dictatorship in Baghdad are better explanations for these emerging identities. If Iraq and the Baghdad government had been more attractive, open, and promising, it is questionable whether these more exclu-

sive and separatist identities would have taken root. Kurdish nationalism has always been espoused by the two Kurdish parties and their leaders (the KDP and the PUK), but they did not dominate the north—tribal leaders on the payroll of Saddam's government did—until Saddam's war with Iran and his subsequent attack on Kuwait so weakened his government that he could no longer control the north. Much the same could be said for the Shia-Sunni divide, which he clearly exacerbated by relying on his tribal Sunni relatives from Tikrit and then killing and repressing Shia when they rose up in 1991.

Even so, these sectarian identities have never been exclusive nor, until recently, expressed territorially. It was the power vacuum, and the innovation of elections on a body politic still unaccustomed to a peaceful competition for power, that provided the opportunity for leaders to mobilize a constituency along these lines. Despite this, the Shia bloc is politically divided. Sunnis, who have identified more with the state they have dominated in the past, are only now coming to grips with the idea of a "Sunni" rather than an Iraqi or Arab identity, largely out of fear they will be marginalized or exterminated. The events of the last year have solidified emerging communal identities to an extent not known before in Iraq; only time will tell whether they can be mitigated and overcome in the future. And this is likely to take enormous effort by Iraqis as well as by us.

Last, a fourth profound change is becoming apparent: The collapse of one of the Arab world's major cities, Baghdad. Baghdad has played a major role in Iraqi and Islamic history not just since 1920s, but since its founding in 762. It can be said that Iraq, with its two rivers and its complex irrigation system, as well as its geographic openness to invasion from foreign territory, has never flourished unless it had a relatively strong central government to harness its water resources and protect its population. Baghdad is the city that has provided that function. Its high point came in the 10th century when it was a center of learning and trade and integrated population and ideas from all over the known world. When Baghdad has declined or been destroyed (as it was, twice, by the Mongols in 1258 and 1402), Iraqi cohesion has ceased to exist and it has fallen into long periods of decay. But one must remember that, ultimately, the city—and Mesopotamia—always revived.

Today, the capital is in a serious state of erosion—from insurgency, sectarian warfare, and population displacement and emigration. Indeed, much of this decline predates our invasion. Since floods were controlled in the mid-1950s, Baghdad has been inundated with migrants from rural areas in the north and south, who created satellite cities—urban villages—which changed the ethnic composition of the city and diluted its urban core. The growth of Baghdad, especially in the 1970s and 1980s, drained other areas of population. Greater Baghdad contains between a quarter and a third of Iraq's population and its highest concentration of skills and infrastructure. However, even under Saddam, Baghdad began to lose its skilled middle class, which is now beginning to hemorrhage.

This strand of Iraq's population, its educated middle class, must be revived if the country is to get back on its feet. It is this class which has, for the most part, submerged its ethnic, sectarian, and tribal identity in broader visions and aspirations—political, social, and cultural—and has greater contact with and affinity for the outside world. Intermarriage among sects and even ethnic groups was increasingly common in this middle class, which staffed the bureaucracy, the educational establishments, and the top echelons of the military. Unfortunately, under the long decades of Baath rule, this class was "Baathized" to a degree, in order to survive, and has now found itself disadvantaged, and under current sectarian warfare, persecuted. And it is this class in Baghdad that is now fleeing in droves, not just for other places in Iraq, but outside to Jordan, Syria, the gulf, and Europe. While educated middle classes exist in other Iraqi cities—Mosul, Basra, Kirkuk, Irbil—they are much smaller, less cosmopolitan, and, now, far less mixed. They will not be able to function as the kind of mixing bowl necessary to create interactions between and among different groups, so essential in the modern world.

Baghdad as a city is by no means lost, but its revival (in more modest dimensions) and the return of its "mixed" middle class are essential to overcoming ethnic and sectarian divisions and to the revival of a functioning, nonsectarian government, all of which is critical to any decent future outcome in Iraq. However decentralized Iraq may become in its future iteration, none of its parts will be able to achieve their aspirations without Baghdad. And the weaker the central government is, the weaker the economic and social revival will be.

One last thought on the current situation. Before we give up and hasten to assume that ethnic and sectarian identity will be the basis of new state arrangements (either inside a weak Iraqi state or in independent entities), there is one other political dynamic emerging that bears notice. The major ethnic and sectarian blocs (the Kurds, the Sunnis, and the Shia) are already fragmenting into smaller units based

on personal interests, a desire for power, and differing visions and constituencies. None of the larger ethnic and sectarian units on which a new regionalized state is proposed are homogeneous. These smaller units have been galvanized by the three elections of 2005, and have formed political parties and blocs. These blocs are themselves composed of smaller parties and groups often now supported by militias. While the militias have gotten most of the attention, the parties have not. It is the leadership of the larger, better organized and financed parties that now control the situation in Baghdad. More attention needs to be paid to them and to their leadership, since they will be making the decisions on Iraq's direction.

The most important of these parties are clear. In the north, the Kurds are divided between two principal political parties: The KDP and the PUK. Both parties are of longstanding, each with its own separate military forces and political party hierarchies. Both are led by men with monumental ambitions and egos. These leaders and parties, now cooperating in a common constitutional venture, the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG), have fought for decades in the past and are still not wholly integrated into a Kurdish government. They could split in the future. Kurdish society also has an emerging Islamic movement (the Kurdish Islamic Union is a good example); separate tribal groups with some stature; and ethnic and sectarian minorities (Turkmen, Christians) with distinct identities and outside supporters.

In the face of a disintegrating Iraqi state and the chaos and danger in Iraq, the Kurds have pulled together since 2003 in confronting the Arab part of Iraq and are increasingly separating themselves from Baghdad. However, the KRG in the north is not self-sustaining economically, politically, or militarily, nor can it be for many decades, and even as it moves in that direction, it faces the long-term affliction of isolation, provincialism, and hostility from its neighbors that could thwart its domestic development. Failure in this experiment or a complete collapse of Baghdad could again fracture the north and give rise to warlordism and tribal politics, as it did in the mid-1990s. Kurds need to be given encouragement not only to nurture their successful experiment in the north, but also to spread it to the south and to cooperate in reviving Iraq rather than moving in a direction of separatism.

In the Shia bloc, the UIA, there is even less unanimity. Several political parties or movements dominate this sector and only pull together under the increasingly weaker leadership of Aytollah Sistani, who wants to keep a "Shia majority" in Iraq. Whether he can continue to do so under the pressure of events is a large question. The major Shia parties are clearly SCIRI, under the cleric and politician Abdual Aziz al-Hakim, and the Sadrist movement under Muqtada al-Sadr, also a minor cleric. The Dawa Party of Prime Minister Maliki is a weak third.

SCIRI, formed in 1982 in Iran from Iraqis exiled there, was originally an umbrella group but has now become a party devoted to Hakim and the furtherance of Shia interests. It has been heavily financed and organized by Iran, and its militia, originally the Badr Brigade (now the Badr organization), was originally trained and officered by Iran. It has allegedly disarmed. It attracts educated middle-class Shia, who probably see it as the best avenue to power in a new Shia-dominated Iraq, but its leadership is distinctly clerical and has ties to Iran. SCIRI's leanings toward clerical rule are drawbacks in Iraq, especially for Arab Sunnis and Kurds.

Dawa has legitimacy as the founder of the Shia Islamic movement in Iraq in the late 1950s, but it was virtually emasculated by Saddam in the late 1970s and 1980s. Most of its leaders fled to Iran, Syria, Lebanon, and Europe where they remained in exile for decades. Their organization is weak and they have no militia to speak of.

The Sadrist movement is not an organized party. Its closest model would be Hezbollah in Lebanon, and its leader, Muqtada, is erratic, militant, and sometimes dangerous. He has few religious or educational credentials, but he draws on his father's name and legacy. (His father, the chief Ayatollah in Iraq, was killed by Saddam in 1999). More important, he has attracted a wide following among poor, the downtrodden and youth, who have not benefited from the changes in 2003. He has emphasized opposition to the occupation, Iraqi unity, and the fact that he and his followers are "insiders," not exiles. His militia, now seen by many in the United States as a major threat to the new government, is fractured and localized, often under the command of street toughs, and it is not clear the extent to which he can himself command all of them. A smaller Shia group, al-Fadhila, also an offshoot of the conservative Shia movement founded by Muqtada's father, Ayatollah Muhammad Sadiq al-Sadr, bears watching; it has influence in Basra.

These various Shia groups and their leaders are in competition for power and have been for decades (especially the Sadrists and Hakims), and it is not clear that unity can be kept between them. They also draw on different constituencies and have somewhat different visions for the future of Iraq. SCIRI, for example, espouses

a Shia region in the south; Sadr is more in favor of a unified Iraq. Dawa sits somewhere in the middle.

The Sunni component of the spectrum is the most fragmented. The Sunni contingent which has been taken into the Cabinet and controls 16 percent of seats in Parliament (Iraqi Accordance Front or Tawafuq) is itself composed of several parties without much cohesion. Most important is the Iraqi Islamic Party (IIP), a party going back to the 1960s and roughly modeled after the Muslim Brotherhood. While it represents Sunnis, it is more nationalist than Sunni, and does have a history and some organization. The second component, known as Ahl al-Iraq (People of Iraq), is a mixture of secularists, tribal, and religious dignitaries, such as Adnan Dulaimi. As its name suggests, it has a nationalist focus. The third component, the National Dialogue Council, is relatively insignificant. Even if these groups come hand together on issues, it is not clear how much of the Sunni constituency they represent. The Iraqi Dialogue Front, under Salah Mutlaq, a former Baathist, who probably represents some of the ex-Baath constituency, got 4 percent of the votes and sits in Parliament but not the Cabinet. Whether these two groups can be said to represent "Sunnis"—and how many—is at issue, since much of the Sunni insurgency is still out of power and presumed to consist in large part of former Baathists, religious jihadis, and now indigenous Iraqi al-Qaeda elements. Bringing some of these non-Qaida elements into the process is essential, but expecting the Sunni community to stick together as Sunnis or to think and feel as Sunnis is premature. Many Sunnis, long associated with the state and its formation, think along nationalist lines, and have ambitions beyond a mere Sunni region.

And one should not forget, entirely, the remnants of the main secular bloc to run in the December 2005 election: The Iraqiya list, headed by Ayyad Allawi. This group constitutes the bulk of the educated Iraqis who think in national, rather than communal or ethnic terms. Although they only got 9 percent of the vote and have little chance of forming a government, they have positions in the Cabinet and could help in contributing to a more balanced, nonsectarian government in the future.

One way out of the conundrum of communal identity politics is to encourage new political alliances between individuals and groups on issues and interests, rather than alliances based on identity. This will be very difficult, especially for the Shia, who see their identity as a ticket to majority rule, but it can be done, and, to a certain extent, already is being done. On issues such as oil legislation, regulation of water resources, economic development, and some other issues—even that of federalism and keeping Iraq together—voting blocs can be created across ethnic and sectarian lines, in ways that benefit all communities. This is a slow, laborious process, but it is probably the only way in which some of the distrust and hostility between these leaders can be broken down and new political dynamics shaped.

To the extent that educated professionals can be brought into government to help shape these deals and bridge the gap, that will help. Ultimately, state organizations and institutions can be rebuilt under new management. While no new grand vision is likely to emerge any time soon from this process, pragmatism may take root, and with it the bones of a government which delivers services. If this happens, larger groups of Iraqis will give their new government some loyalty. It is the state—and effective governance—which needs, gradually, to be put back into the equation, to enable ethnic and sectarian loyalties to be damped down and to curb the insurgency. In this process, no two factors are more important than reviving economic development (not just oil revenues) and bringing back an educated middle class which has some degree of contact with and understanding of the outside world beyond the exclusive domain of tribe, family, sect and ethnic group.

Given this situation, what prognosis may be made? Is the current situation likely to last? Or is it a transient stage? What is a likely long-term outcome and what would be "best" for Iraqis, the region, and the United States?

Iraq faces three potential futures in the near and midterm, and it is still too early to tell which will dominate. All that one can say, thanks to grievous mistakes made on all sides, is that the process is going to be very costly and time-consuming; no one should expect any clear outcome in the next 2 years and probably not even in the next decade. But helping to shape that long-term future in one direction or the other will have a profound effect on the region and, I believe, our own security.

The first outcome is that Iraq will "break up" into three main ethnic and sectarian components—Kurdish, Arab Sunni, and Arab Shia—hastened by the ethnic and sectarian conflicts spiraling out of control, and already indicated in the constitution. Many see this as inevitable and (in the West) as a possible way to "fix" the Iraqi situation and hence to reduce our deep military involvement. Iraq may end up with such a division, but, unless it is shepherded and fostered by outside forces, it is unlikely, for several reasons. This division is not historical, but has come to the fore in a moment of history characterized by a political vacuum, chaos, and shrewd polit-

ical leaders who have mobilized constituents on this basis—especially the two Kurdish parties and SCIRI. But such a clear-cut division has real difficulties in Iraq. One is that it does not correspond to reality. Even in the Kurdish area—where there is more substance to the claim, this identity is fostered by two leaders and two parties who have near total control over their opponents and region. But these parties have no clear borders recognized by neighbors, or by Arabs to the south, and they will be challenged by all. And they do not have the economic wherewithal for maintenance of a sustainable state, either in terms of economic investment (some 70 percent of their income still comes from the central government in Baghdad), ability to defend their borders, or recognition. Independence, as many of their leaders recognize, may come with a big economic price tag that their constituents may not ultimately be willing to pay.

Elsewhere in Iraq, there is insufficient sectarian homogeneity to form the basis of a state or even a region. Shia parties themselves disagree profoundly on whether a federal state in the south—under Shia religious control—should be established. SCIRI is forwarding this project because it wants to control this territory, eclipse Sadrists, and impose its vision on the Shia population. It is opposed by Sadrists and other more secular Shia, and they will contest the issue, if not in Parliament, on the street. Creation of such a Shia entity will pose questions of its boundaries—and we already see sectarian strife in Baghdad as a component of the struggle over who will control portions of the city. This is also a new political principle and dynamic likely to spread to neighboring states like Bahrain and Saudi Arabia, which have a mix of Shia and Sunni populations, with immensely destabilizing prospects. And it is an exclusivist principle. What kind of state will it be? The leadership of SCIRI, with its strong clerical leadership, its earlier reliance on its own militia, and its emphasis on a "Shia" majority, does not give confidence that it will be any more democratic than its parent model in Iran. Moreover, getting a stable, recognized, "Shia" government in this region will be a long and contentious proposition providing little stability in the south. If the Kurds are unable to defend their borders themselves, how will the Shia be able to do so?

But it is in Arab Sunni areas—with Anbar at its heart—that this project fails abysmally. First, Arab Sunni Iraqis, whether the more rural variety inhabiting towns and cities along the Euphrates and Tigris, or their more sophisticated cousins—urban cousins—in Baghdad and Mosul, have been nurtured for decades on Arabism and on loyalty to an Iraqi state, which they helped create since 1920. True, some are more religiously oriented than secular, but this does not detract from their sense of nationalism. Getting Iraqi Sunnis to identify as Sunnis is going to be a long and very difficult task, let alone getting them to concentrate on governing a truncated "Sunni" federal area. And they are surrounded by neighboring Arab countries with leaders and populations who agree with them. And, as in the case with the Shia, where will the borders of this entity be? How much of Baghdad will it include? Will it divide the city of Mosul with Kurds along the Tigris River? And what about Diyala province with its Sunni, Shia, and Kurdish and Turkman populations? How is that to be divided up? While sectarian cleansing in these areas is underway to an alarming degree, it is by no means complete and in no way desirable. The results are not going to be a homogenous Sunni area but a patchwork quilt. Moreover, unless the sting of the Sunni insurgency is drawn, any map of Iraq shows that the Arab Sunnis population control strategic portions of Iraqi territory—which they can use, as they have been doing—to prevent both Kurdish and Shia progress. Included in this territory are water resources—both the Tigris and Euprhates; access to neighboring Arab countries, and communications right across the center of the country, as well as Iraq's ability to export oil through pipelines.

In the end, the creation of new entities—even regions—based on Shia and Sunni identity is radical in its implications for a region in which peace depends on tolerance and coexistence between Islam's two major sects. I will not mention here the obvious implications for the geostrategic position of Iran and its role in the region or the equally obvious reactions from other Sunni-dominated states. While this breakup may happen, it should not be encouraged or brokered by the United States, especially if we want, ultimately, to disengage our forces from the country. I believe it will create more, not less, instability in the future.

A second outcome is that Iraq may "break down," a process that is also well underway. Rather than cohesive ethnic and sectarian entities, Iraqi society will disintegrate into smaller units. These will comprise the political parties and movements we already see, with their various leaders and organizations; different militias; local tribal leaders and warlords, criminal organizations that can control access to resources; and, in urban areas, a combination of local groups and educated leaders who command the necessary skills to run things. Some of these groups and organizations may overlap—especially parties and their militias—and they will function

through some fig leaf of government. But the territory over which they rule will vary and possibly shift as will their command over Iraq's resources. This breakdown is almost wholly a function of a collapse of the central government in Baghdad. The process of building an alternative regional government in the wake of this collapse is furthest advanced in the three Kurdish provinces in the north, but it is not complete there by any means.

In reality, this is the Iraq that is emerging, with differing local forces competing and engaging with one another in an effort to reestablish control and primacy in various areas of the country. In some cases these struggles are violent. But none of these local warlords, militias, parties, or provincial governments—even if they can keep a modicum of order in their territory—can achieve the kind of economic development, security, contacts with the outside world, and promise of a modern life and a future to which most Iraqis aspire. In the meantime, organized criminal elements—and a myriad of freebooters—are increasingly stealing Iraq's patrimony, while its oil wells and other resources go further into decline. And in some areas, such as Baghdad, the absence of government has led to a Hobbesian nightmare of insecurity, violence, and the most vicious personal attacks on human beings seen anywhere in the modern world. Iraq could descend further into breakdown, as local warlords, militias, criminal elements, and others assert control. This scenario—a full blown "failed state"—is already causing problems for the region and for the United States. Indeed, the failed state syndrome may be spreading, as events in Lebanon this summer and now in Palestine indicate. Needless to say, it is precisely the failed state syndrome that produces the best opportunity for al-Qaeda and other jihadists opposed to United States and Western interests to nest in the region.

A third outcome is to slow and gradually arrest the decline, and for Iraq to gradually reconstitute an Iraqi Government that recognizes the new divisions which have emerged, but learns to accommodate them and overcome them in some new framework that allows for economic and social development. No society can exist without governance, and that is the root of Iraq's problems today. It will be easier to rebuild this framework, I believe, if Iraqis do not divide, indefatigably, on ethnic and sectarian lines, but rather work with the various groups and parties that are gradually participating in the new political system to achieve mutual interests. This does not preclude the emergence of new parties, but none are on the horizon now. Such accommodations will exclude extremes, such as al-Qaeda, and possibly some—though not all—Sadrist elements, and it must include many of the Sunnis—ex-Baathists and others—who are not yet in the government. This aim can be advanced by pushing leaders in Baghdad to cut deals and make agreements on issues on which they have mutual interests—across the ethnic and sectarian divide. It is also essential to expand areas of economic development; government services (especially security) and to bring back the middle class and put them in positions of administrative and military authority. Regardless of who is running politics, an infusion of educated, experienced technocrats will help moderate the process and push it toward the middle. Over time, new links and understandings may become institutionalized and a government in Baghdad gradually take shape. Even if this government does not control much territory outside of Baghdad or the Green Zone, it is better to keep it intact as a symbol and a framework toward which a future generation can work, than to destroy it and try, once again, to establish a new and entirely radical framework.

Iraq is very far from achieving a new government that works, and the collapse we are witnessing is more likely to get worse before it gets better. Only when the participants in this struggle for power recognize that they are losing more than they can gain by continuing, will it come to an end. That may be a very long time. In the meantime, the best we can probably do is to staunch the violence; contain the struggle; and keep alive the possibility that after extremism has run its course, the potential for a different Iraq is still there. Others in the region should be encouraged to do the same, a task which should be made easier by the fact that no state in the region—or its leadership—wants to see the collapse of the current state system, no matter how much in need of reform is its domestic government may be.

SEAT DISTRIBUTION FROM THE DECEMBER 15, 2005, IRAQI LEGISLATIVE ELECTION

Party	Total seats	Percentage
Shia Parties:		
United Iraqi Alliance	128	46.55
Progressives	2	0.73
Total	130	47.27

SEAT DISTRIBUTION FROM THE DECEMBER 15, 2005, IRAQI LEGISLATIVE ELECTION—Continued

Party	Total seats	Percentage
Sunni Parties:		
Accord Front	44	16.00
Iraqi Dialogue Front	11	4.00
Liberation and Reconciliation Bloc	3	1.09
Total	58	21.09
Kurdish Parties:		
Kurdistan Alliance	53	19.27
Islamic Union of Kurdistan	5	1.82
Total	58	21.09
Secular Nationalist Parties:		
National Iraqi List	25	9.09
Iraqi Nation List (Mithal al-Alusi)	1	0.36
Total	26	9.45
Minority Parties:		
The Two Rivers List (Assyrian)	1	0.36
The Yazidi Movement	1	0.36
Iraqi Turkman Front	1	0.36
Total	3	1.09

MINISTRIES AND LEADERSHIP POSITIONS BY PARTY, PERMANENT GOVERNMENT, 2006

Party	No. of ministries +leadership positions	Percentage
UIA	21	45.65
SCIRI	5	10.87
Dawa	1	2.17
Dawa Tandhim	3	6.52
Sadrists	4	8.70
Islamic Action	1	2.17
Hezbollah	1	2.17
Independent	6	13.04
Kurdistan Alliance	8	17.39
PUK	4	8.70
KDP	4	8.70
Tawafuq	9	19.57
Iraqiya	6	13.04
Independent	2	4.35

[EDITOR'S NOTE.—The charts presented by Dr. Marr were not reproducible. They will be maintained for viewing in the committee's premanent record.]

Chairman BIDEN. Doctor, thank you. Thank you very much. Michael.

STATEMENT OF DR. MICHAEL O'HANLON, SENIOR FELLOW AND SYDNEY STEIN, JR., CHAIR, THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION, WASHINGTON, DC

Dr. O'HANLON. Thank you, Senator. It's a great honor to appear before this committee today.

Chairman BIDEN. By the way—excuse me for interrupting—I note that, in the interest of time, you've been unable to go through the entire statements each of you had——

Dr. MARR. Oh, yes.

Chairman BIDEN [continuing]. Your entire statements will be placed in the record for everyone to have available.

Dr. O'HANLON. Thank you for the honor to testify today.

I think the numbers in Iraq essentially add up to what we all, I think, are realizing in our gut more and more, which is, the state of Iraq today is poor. As a person trying to maintain an objective database on this for 3½ years now, I tried hard not to use that kind of a sweeping conclusion for the first couple of years. There was always reason to think that the glass might be half full, or at least the data themselves might suggest that you could find information that would allow you to reach that conclusion. And we thought, as providing a database, it was important for us not to prejudge where things were headed. But I think it's increasingly clear that in Iraq the situation is poor, that we are losing. One can debate whether we've lost. I would agree with Secretary Powell's characterization, that we are losing, but there is still hope for salvaging something. And the degree of setback or degree of an unfortunate outcome matters a great deal, even if we are not going to wind up where we hope to be, on the scale that we had hoped. But the data, I think, are very clear, and let me go through just a couple of points to try to summarize why I say that.

On the testimony I've prepared today, we have 18 security indicators, 6 economic indicators, and another half dozen or so political and public opinion indicators. The latter category has some hope, has some positive element, but the first two are almost uniformly bad. Of the 18 security indicators that we're presenting for you today, 17 of them are either bad or, at best, stagnant, in terms of the trend lines. Only one can be said to be positive, and that's the one that I think, unfortunately, is less important and less—itself, less promising than we once hoped—which is the progress in training Iraqi security forces, because even though we are making technical progress, getting them equipment, getting them training. We all know that their sectarian trends and tendencies are growing, and one can't even speak, necessarily, of a clearly improving Iraqi security force, at this time. We've tried to guestimate about how many of the Iraqi security forces may be not only technically proficient, but politically dependable in some way. Very hard to come up with that kind of a number. I've talked to people in the military and the administration on this. I know you all have, too. But I think that, at best, there are several thousand Iraqi forces that can be reliably said to be politically dependable, even if there may be 100,000 or more that pass at least a modest standard of technical capability. So, the security environment is quite poor.

On the economic front, of the six categories that we summarize in our testimony today, only one of them shows any real positive motion, and that's the GDP. But that, of course, is essentially a top-down effect from high oil prices and from foreign aid, and it doesn't necessarily reach all the middle-class Iraqis that we need to reach.

So, this is why I conclude that things aren't good, and, in fact, are quite poor, on balance.

Let me identify, very quickly, six categories, and give you just a little bit of information on each of the six, and try to do so quickly, because I realize it's easy to swamp people with data. And, by the way, I should say, by way of background, not all this data is of equally good quality. Again, those of you—and most of you who have been to Iraq know how hard it is to get information from the ground, and we also know that the numbers—you know, the benchmarks may be off, and the trends may be somewhat off. But I still think the overall gist of this is pretty clear.

I should also say, our information is largely U.S. Government information, but we also try to depend a great deal on journalists working in the field, on nongovernmental organizations in the field, and, to some extent, our own research. But we are not in Iraq, with a lot of interns, gathering data; we are primarily trying to compile and assess trends.

First point of the six categories—and this is obvious, but I'd better make it clear and get it on the table anyway—the violence levels in Iraq have been escalating dramatically. We've seen this again in the recent data. There is considerable disagreement about how many people in Iraq are dying per month, but it's probably in the range of 4–5,000 civilians a month, which is at least double what it was just a couple of years ago. And, frankly, in this broad semantic debate about whether Iraq is in civil war or not, by that standard Iraq is very, very clearly in civil war. The sheer level of violence makes this one of the two or three most violent places in earth. And, frankly, we're getting to the point where it even begins to rival some of the more violent periods during Saddam's rule, which is a terrible thing to have to say. It's not as bad, of course, as the worst period of the Iran-Iraq war or of Saddam's genocides against his own people, but it is essentially rivaling—essentially—what I might say is the average level of Saddam's level of violence over his 25 years in power, about 4–5,000 civilians being killed per month.

One backup piece of information on this, or corroborating statistic, the number of attacks per day that we're seeing from militias or sectarian groups or insurgents is now almost 200, which is an escalation of at least a factor of five from a couple of years ago. So, the first point, again, is fairly obvious, but, I think, worth emphasizing.

Second point—and Dr. Marr made this point, and we all are aware of it—is the growing sectarian nature of the violence. And here, I'm just going to highlight one or two statistics, which come largely from Pentagon data bases. In the early 2 years of Iraq's war—or of our experience in Iraq since 2003—there were very few sectarian attacks, maybe zero or one per day, according to the Pentagon's best effort to tabulate. More of the attacks were a Sunni-based insurgency against anyone associated with the government, whether it was our forces, Iraqi Shia, Iraqi Sunni, Iraq Kurd. The violence was very much of an insurgent and terrorist nature. And zero or one attacks per day were assessed as sectarian. Now it's 30 sectarian attacks a day. Three zero. So, this is a dramatic escalation in the amount of sectarian violence.

We have a terrorist threat, an insurgency threat, and a civil war from sectarian violence, all at the same time. And I don't want to make too much of the semantic issue here. If you want to call it "sectarian strife" or "large-scale sectarian strife" rather than "civil war," I suppose we can still have that debate, but the sheer amount of violence and the growing political impetus to the violence from the different sectarian leaders makes Iraq unambiguously qualified, in my mind, as a place where we have a civil war today. So, I wanted to underscore the sectarian nature of the violence.

Third point, related to the first two, is that, if you want to put it in a nutshell, Iraq is becoming Bosnia. Ethnic cleansing and displacement are becoming paramount. And here, I think the statistics have been underappreciated in much of the public debate, so far. So, let me try to be very clear on one big, important data point; 100,000 Iraqis per month are being driven from their homes right now. Roughly half are winding up abroad, roughly half are moving to different parts of Iraq. This is Bosnia-scale ethnic cleansing. I agree with Dr. Marr that it would be preferable—and Iraqis certainly would prefer—to retain some level of multiethnic society, and that separation of the country into autonomous zones raises a lot of tough questions. However, let's be clear about what the data show. It's happening already. And right now, it's the militias and the death squads that are driving the ethnic cleansing, and the movement toward a breakup of Iraq. And the question, pretty soon, is going to be whether we try to manage that process or let the militias alone drive it, because it's happening; 100,000 people a month are being driven from their homes. Iraq looks like Bosnia, more and more. That's my third point.

Fourth point, disturbing—again, not surprising, but disturbing—middle- and upperclass flight. We have huge problems of Iraqi professional classes, the people we need to get involved in rebuilding this country, no longer able to do so. To some extent, it's a legacy of the issue about de-Baathification and the degree to which Ambassador Bremer expanded the de-Baathification approach beyond what was initially planned, but also, now, Iraqis are being driven from their homes because of the amount of kidnaping of upperclass individuals, much of it financially driven. And just one very disturbing statistic: Physicians in Iraq. We now estimate that a third of them have left the country or have been killed or kidnaped in the time since liberation of Iraq from Saddam, 4 years ago. So, one-third of all physicians are out of Iraq and no longer practicing. And that's probably, if anything, an underestimate. So, middle-class and upperclass flight, or the death of many middle-class and upperclass individuals, has become a real challenge for putting this country back together in any meaningful way.

Fifth point. And this makes me, I should admit in advance, sympathetic to President Bush's planned—from what I understand—planned focus on job creation in his speech tonight. I think it's overdue. But unemployment is a big problem in Iraq. And I think the Commander Emergency Response Program, which we used, on a pilot scale, on a smaller scale, in the early years, was a very good idea. If you want to call it "make work," that's fine. If you want to call it "FDR-style job creation," that's fine. I think that's what

Iraq needs today, because the unemployment rate is stubbornly high. And even if job creation is not, per se, a good economic development strategy, it may be a good security strategy, because it takes angry young men off the streets. So, the unemployment rate, as best we can tell, is still stuck in the 30-plus-percent range. Now, by developing-country standards, that's not necessarily without precedent, but in Iraq it fuels the civil war and the sectarian strife and the insurgency, and that's the reason why it's of great concern, in addition to the obvious reasons.

Last point, I'll finish on Iraqi pessimism. For the first 2 years of this effort, Iraqi optimism was one of the few things we could really latch onto and say that the political process plus the gratitude of the Iraqis that Saddam was gone—maybe not gratitude toward us, per se, because they quickly became angry with us, but gratitude in a broader sense—plus their hope about the future, provided a real sense that this country could come together, because the optimism rates about the country's prognosis, among Iraqis themselves, were in the 70-percent range for the first couple of years. Those numbers have plummeted. They're still higher than I would have predicted, to be honest with you. They still look like they are 40–45 percent optimism, but they are way, way down from what they used to be. And if you look at a couple of other indicators of Iraqi public opinion, especially from a June 2006 poll done by our International Republican Institute, only 25—excuse me, I'll put it another way—75 percent of all Iraqis consider the security environment to be poor—75 percent; and 60 percent consider the economic environment to be poor. So——

Chairman BIDEN. Can I ask a point of clarification?

Dr. O'HANLON. Yes; please.

Chairman BIDEN. Is that polling data, or that data about pessimism, does that include the roughly 1 million people who have been displaced or are out of country, or does it include——

Dr. O'HANLON. It's a very good point, Senator. It does not, as far as I understand. And, therefore, if you did address these individuals who have suffered most directly, the numbers might well be lower. But, in any event, I think the overall gist, the trendlines, are bad. And when you ask Iraqis about the security environment or the economic environment, they're even more pessimistic than they are in general terms.

That's my overall message, and I look forward to the conversation later.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Dr. O'Hanlon follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHAEL O'HANLON, SENIOR FELLOW AND SYDNEY STEIN, JR., CHAIR, BROOKINGS INSTITUTION, WASHINGTON, DC

The year 2006 was, tragically and inescapably, a bad one in Iraq. Our ongoing work at Brookings makes this conclusion abundantly clear in quantitative terms. Violence got worse for Iraqi civilians and barely declined at all for American and Iraqi troops. And the economy was fairly stagnant as well.

Despite the drama of Saddam's execution in the year's final days, 2006 will probably be remembered most for two developments inside Iraq. The first is the failure of the 2005 election process to produce any sense of progress. In fact, 2006 was the year that politicians in Iraq did much more to advance the interests of their own sects and religions than to build a new cohesive country. (In a September poll, Prime Minister al-Maliki was viewed unfavorably by 85 percent of all Sunni Arabs,

for example.) The second is the related commencement of Iraq's civil war dating back to the February 22 bombing of the hallowed Shia mosque in Samarra. While some still question whether Iraq is in civil war, there is no longer much serious debate about the situation. The sheer level of violence, and the increasing politicization of the violence to include many more Shia attacks on Sunnis as well as the reverse, qualify the mayhem in Iraq as civil war by most definitions of the term. And the country has become one of the three or four most violent places on Earth.

It is still possible to find signs of hope in our Brookings statistics on Iraq: The numbers of Iraqi security forces who are trained and technically proficient, the gradually improving GDP, recent reductions in Iraqi state subsidies for consumer goods (which distort the economy and divert government resources), the number of children being immunized. But those same children cannot feel safe en route to school in much of today's Iraq; that GDP growth is a top-down phenomenon having little if any discernible effect on the unemployment rate or well-being of Iraqis in places such as Al Anbar province and Sadr City, Baghdad; reductions in subsidies are not enough to spur much private sector investment in such a violent country; and those increasingly proficient security forces remain politically unreliable in most cases, just as inclined to stoke sectarian strife as to contain it.

The performance of Iraq's utilities remains stagnant—not bad by the standards of developing countries, but hardly better than under Saddam. Oil production and electricity availability remain generally flat nationwide. Fuels for household cooking and heating and transportation fall even further short of estimated need than they did a year or two ago, as does electricity production in Baghdad.

Despite some unconvincing rhetoric from President Bush in the prelude to the November elections that "absolutely, we're winning," most Americans now agree on the diagnosis of the situation in Iraq. Former Secretary Baker and former Congressman Hamilton recently warned of a "further slide toward chaos." Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates, stated in his confirmation hearings that we aren't winning, even if he declined to go as far as Colin Powell and assert that we are actually losing. Former Secretary Rumsfeld himself, in his leaked November memo, recognized that Iraq was going badly and put out a laundry list of potential options in Iraq that we may have to consider to salvage the situation, including a Dayton-like process modeled on Bosnia's experience to negotiate an end to the civil war.

Iraqis tend to share a similar diagnosis. According to a June 2006 poll, 59 percent call the economy poor and 75 percent describe the security environment as poor. The security situation in particular has only deteriorated since then.

Against this backdrop, dramatic measures are clearly needed. At a minimum, we will likely require some combination of the options now being proposed by the Iraq Study Group, the Pentagon, and others. President Bush is likely to recommend several of these in his eagerly awaited January speech—a massive program to create jobs, a surge of 25,000 more American troops to Iraq to try to improve security in Baghdad, an ultimatum to Iraqi political leaders that if they fail to achieve consensus on key issues like sharing oil, American support for the operation could very soon decline.

Our Brookings data suggest rationales for each of these possible policy steps, even if there are also counterarguments. Coalition forces have never reached the numbers needed to provide security for the population in Iraq, and indigenous forces remain suspect—in their technical proficiency, and even more so in their political dependability. These two realities make at least a tactical case for a surge, if it is really feasible on the part of our already overworked soldiers and marines. Despite the success of military commanders in putting Iraqis to work with their commander emergency response program funds, the administration never chose to emphasize job creation in its economic reconstruction plans meaning that the unemployment rate has remained stubbornly high. And for all our happiness about Iraq's democracy, it is clear that extremely few Iraqi leaders enjoy any real support outside of their own sectarian group. Trying to force them to work across sectarian lines must be a focus of our policy efforts, if there is to be any hope of ultimate stability in Iraq.

Social scientists and military experts do not know how to assess, rigorously, the probabilities that such steps will succeed at this late hour in Iraq. Overall, however, it seems fair to say that most have become quite pessimistic. If the above types of ideas fail, therefore, "Plan B" options may well be needed within a year, ranging from a federalism plan for Iraq that Rumsfeld and Senator Biden have been discussing to plans that would go even further and help Iraqis relocate to parts of their country where they could feel safer (as Bosnia expert, Edward Joseph, and I have recently advocated in The American Interest). Such an idea is widely unpopular—with Iraqis themselves, with President Bush, with most Americans who value the

notion of interethnic tolerance. But with 100,000 Iraqis per month being displaced from their homes, making for a total of some 2 million since Saddam was overthrown, ethnic cleansing is already happening. Unless current trends are reversed, the question may soon become not whether we can stop this Bosnia-like violence—but whether we try to manage it or let the death squads continue to dictate its scale and its character.

Although it has been said before about previous new years, it seems very likely that 2007 will be make or break time in Iraq.

Category	11/03	11/04	11/05	11/06
Security				
U.S./other foreign troops in Iraq (thousands)	123/24	138/24	160/23	140/17
U.S. troops killed	82	137	96	68
Percent killed by IEDs	24	13	48	54
U.S. troops wounded	337	1,397	466	508
Iraqi Army/police fatalities	50	160	176	123
Iraqi civilian fatalities	1,250	2,900	1,800	4,000
Multiple fatality bombings (for month in question)	6	11	41	65
Estimated strength of insurgency	5,000	20,000	20,000	25,000
Estimated strength of Shia militias	5,000	10,000	20,000	50,000
Daily average of interethnic attacks	0	1	1	30
Estimated number of foreign fighters	250	750	1,250	1,350
Number of daily attacks by insurgents/militias	32	77	90	185
Attacks on oil/gas assets	9	30	0	11
Iraqis internally displaced 100,000 since 04/03 (total)	100,000	175,000	200,000	650,000
Iraqi refugees since 04/03 (total)	100,000	350,000	900,000	1,500,000
Iraqi physicians murdered or kidnapped/fled Iraq	100/1,000	250/2,000	1,000/5,000	2,250/12,000
Iraqi Security Forces technically proficient	0	10,000	35,000	115,000
Iraqi Security Forces politically dependable	0	0	5,000	10,000
Economics				
Oil production (millions of barrels/day; prewar: 2.5)	2.1	2.0	2.0	2.1
Percent of household fuel needs available	76	77	88	54
Electricity production (in megawatts, prewar: 4,000)	3,600	3,200	3,700	3,700
Ave. hours/day of power, Baghdad (prewar: 20)	12	12	9	7
Unemployment rate (percent)	50	35	33	33
Per capita GDP (real dollars; prewar: $900)	550	1,000	1,100	1,150
Politics, Public Opinion, Democracy, Law				
No. of Trained Judges	0	250	350	750
Telephone subscribers (prewar: 800,000)	600,000	2,135,000	5,500,000	8,100,000
Independent media companies (prewar: 0)	100	150	225	400
Iraqi optimism (percent who think things going in right direction)	65	54	49	45

Chairman BIDEN. Thank you.

Mr. Said.

STATEMENT OF YAHIA SAID, DIRECTOR, IRAQ REVENUE WATCH, LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS, LONDON, ENGLAND

Mr. SAID. Mr. Chairman, Senators, I'm honored to be here, and I'm pleased by your interest in the situation in Iraq, and efforts to find a solution that will be helpful to the Iraqi and American people.

Chairman BIDEN. As Strom Thurmond used to say, "Will you pull the machine closer so everyone can hear you?" Thank you very much.

Mr. SAID. Some of the statements I'm going to make are going to echo what was said before, and, in a way, will confirm, through

anecdotal evidence, what has been suggested through the numbers and statistics.

The conflict in Iraq is not only pervasive, as the numbers suggest, but it's very complex. And it's very important not to try to simplify it. The situation in Iraq has suffered, and policymaking in Iraq has suffered, because the conflict was reduced to some of its elements rather than looked at in its complexity. This is not only a conflict between democracy and its enemies, it's not only a conflict between insurgency and counterinsurgency, it's not only a conflict between Sunni and Shia. This is a multifaceted, overlapping series of conflicts which is a function of the various groups and interests and agendas. And what I will try to do in my statement is try to address some of the elements of the conflict, to just illustrate the complexity of it, and hopefully that will help inform policymaking. I will also try to address the question: Why are these conflicts taking such a violent form? And finally, I will try to address issues of national dialog and efforts at finding a peaceful resolution to these conflicts.

As the numbers suggested by Mr. O'Hanlon, the insurgency continues—and by "insurgency" I mean attacks against coalition forces—continues to be a significant part of the conflict. The majority of attacks continue to target coalition forces and coalition personnel, and the high numbers of casualties are evidence to that. But the insurgency is also a domestic political game. Many groups from the various communities, from various political directions, engage in the insurgency to acquire political legitimacy and to acquire, through that, a right to govern. Indeed, when the Iraqi Government proposed or suggested the option of an amnesty lately, insurgents bristled and said, "They shouldn't be pardoned for fighting the occupation, they should be rewarded by being given positions in power." The insurgency is also about many other factors, including money. And it's becoming harder and harder to distinguish whether a commercial interest is a goal in itself or is a means to a goal.

The sectarian violence, as, again, the numbers have suggested, is on the rise, and is tearing at the fabric of society, but it's not producing the kind of consolidation, the kind of alignment along sectarian and ethnic lines that some of the architects of the violence have hoped for. Indeed, as Ms. Marr has suggested, there is fragmentation. There is fragmentation within communities, there is fragmentation within political blocs and individual political parties. There is also increasing and growing specter of warlordism as rogue military commanders take control of fragments of militias and even state security structures. And the evidence for the fragmentation is everywhere. On my recent trip to Baghdad, a driver from a Sunni neighborhood complained to me that the Sunni insurgents, the Sunni fighters, kill more of their own kin than they do of Shia militias. The fighting between the Sadrists and militias affiliated with the Supreme Council of Islamic Revolution in Iraq, the SCIRI, and security forces controlled by them, have swept throughout the south of the country, and, over the last year, the Sadrists have gained control, at least temporarily, of various cities in the south. Even in Kurdistan the tensions are not far below the surface.

One of the largest movements—the largest political movement in Iraq today are the Sadrists, and I think it's worthwhile to focus a little bit on that component of the situation in Iraq, because it's also illustrative of the dynamics. While other political parties control state and security structures, particularly the SCIRI, the Sadrists control the streets. But this is a very controversial and contradictory movement. The Sadrists nurture a nationalist image. They don't engage in sectarian rhetoric. They have clashed frequently with coalition forces. At the same time, they have participated in the political process, they have 30 MPs, 6 ministers currently in boycott.

Many ex-Baathists—Shia ex-Baathists—joined the Sadrist movement, yet the Sadrist movement has been the most vocal in calling for revenge and for punishing regime officials. The Sadrists style themselves after Hezbollah in Lebanon, and seek to protect their communities and constituents and provide services. At the same time, their militias are undisciplined and engage in criminal violence and looting, themselves, and, of course, man some of the feared death squads.

This is a movement of the poor. This is an antiestablishment movement. Their grassroots support comes from the very poor Arab Shia in the countryside and the slums of Baghdad. And, as such, their natural enemies are not necessarily the Sunnis, but are the establishment, regardless of their sectarian or ethnic affiliation. As—and we see that through their clashes with the Shia establishment, with the merchant and religious Shia establishment represented by SCIRI.

So, you have one movement that is fighting three conflicts. It's fighting an insurgency, it's fighting an antiestablishment revolt, and it's fighting a sectarian civil war.

So, why does the conflict in Iraq take such violent forms? It does, because there is a political vacuum, as Ms. Marr—Professor Marr—has suggested. And this political vacuum is signaling to the various groups and communities the necessity to protect their interests and achieve their goals through violent means, because there is no framework for a peaceful resolution of conflicts, for a peaceful reconciliation of the diverging interests.

This violence, of course, is also feeding into the collapse of the state, and you have a vicious circle of political vacuum, violence, and state collapse.

Now, the political process that took place over the last 3 years was supposed to address that. It was supposed to create that vehicle for a peaceful resolution of conflict, for ways for Iraqis to come together and reconcile their differences. But, unfortunately, and despite a tremendous effort by Iraqis, Americans, and others, this has not been the case. Indeed, the political process is defunct, and, as Ms. Marr suggested, the state also has not emerged. We don't have, in Iraq, a legitimate public authority that could protect people and provide them with services.

Why did this process fail? And this is not about pointing fingers at the past, but it's very important to understand some of the reasons for the failings. It's tempting to point the finger at external factors. Indeed, the Iraqis love to point the finger at external factors. And if you ask them, "It's the Americans' fault, it's the

Israelis, it's the Iranians, it's Saddam," and everybody possible. But there are, of course, internal reasons. And one of them is the fact that many Iraqis, a majority of Iraqis, are sitting on the fence, or, as my colleague has just suggested, are pessimistic. Iraqis have little faith in the process—in the political process and its results, and in the elites that emerge from it. They don't have confidence in this regime—in the current regime and its sustainability.

What you have is a pervasive atmosphere—it's two sentiments that—dominating the situation in Iraq—which is fear and apathy. And you see that everywhere. And it's these sentiments that provide the perfect cover for corruption, for terrorism, for violence, and for sectarian hate. Even government officials are inflicted by this sentiment, and this explains how they use their positions to undermine, to dismantle the machinery of government that has been entrusted to them. And, indeed, you can hear echoes of that pessimism or apathy in the Prime Minister's recent interview with the Wall Street Journal.

Within this atmosphere, we're seeing, now, a hardening of positions on all sides. There is this mood, if you like, of going for a last push. And it's not only evident through the terrorist and the sectarian violence, but also in the government's own position. Clearly, the model of a full-spectrum national unity government, which we still have in Iraq now, has not worked. It has even furthered the dismantling of the machinery of the state, because it was reduced to farming out ministries to individual parties and groups. Now the strongest parties in the government, particularly the SCIRI and the Kurds, are trying to build a narrower government, and hope that it would be more efficient and work more as a team. But there are risks to this approach. These parties don't have strong grassroots support, and will rely more both on coercion, but also on continued U.S. support and bolstering. The execution of Saddam Hussein, and the manner in which it was carried out, and the rhetoric and the timing and everything, is indication of this hardening. That event was clearly designed to intimidate political opponents of the government, and particularly the Sunni community.

The new security plan and the push for an all-out assault, in combination with the surge option, is also an indication of that. There is very little evidence to show, today, that the Iraqi Government will be able to mobilize the resources necessary to make this security plan more successful than those who preceded it. And a temporary surge will also probably not lead to sustainable outcomes. At the same time, if the plan—if the security plan is carried out in a one-sided way, and the Prime Minister has indicated that he views Sunni violence, terrorist violence, as the primary problem, and that the Shia militias are a secondary reaction to that—so, if this plan is carried out in a one-sided way with disregard to human rights, it can exacerbate the situation and make finding a political peaceful solution even harder. And, at the end of the day, the only solution to the situation in Iraq has to come through dialog, has to come through engagement and ownership of a broad cross-section of Iraqis, to overcome that feeling of apathy and disconnection. The dialog has to be genuine—as in, the parties have to produce real concessions—all the parties. It has to be broad. It has to involve not only the sectarian protagonists, but also those who still

believe in the viability of the Iraqi states and in the necessity, as Professor Marr has indicated, of having a central state in that particular region.

Unfortunately, the government's action, the hardening of the government's position over the last 6 months—the Iraqi Government has closed down to opposition newspapers, TV stations, has issued arrest warrants for leading opposition figures—do not create a conducive environment for an open and genuine dialog. So, there is need for international intervention on that front, and I'll address that later.

Dialog, of course, doesn't mean that one needs to throw out the results of the political process of the last 3 years. I think the Constitution—the Iraqi Constitution, with all its shortcomings, serves as a good starting point for dialog, but the Constitution needs to be transformed, through genuine dialog, from a dysfunctional to a rational federal structure.

Oil, and—negotiations on an oil deal, which have apparently concluded recently, also provide a model for the—for that rational federalism. The main principles that the negotiators have agreed on is to maximize the benefit of Iraq's oil wealth to all Iraqis, to use oil as a way to unite the nation, and to build a framework based on transparency, which is very important in a situation of lack—of poor trust, and on efficiency and equity.

Major issues have been resolved, like having a central account to accumulate all oil revenues, and manage the oil revenues on—at the federal level. Apparently, even the issue—the current issue of contracting, and who has the right to contract, has been resolved, as well as the structure for a national oil company.

But there remains issues open, and it's very important not to let the details derail the negotiations. And it's also very important to have a professional and open dialog on those issues, as in involving the proper professionals in the negotiations, and not reduce them to a political kitchen cabinet. One needs financial people, one needs economists and petroleum experts, involved in the debate.

And one of the critical issues is how the revenue-sharing framework is going to work. Will it be through the writing of checks, which is unsustainable in the long term? There is no reason for Basrah to transfer money to the central government so that it can write checks to the other regions. Unless the revenue-sharing is carried out through the budget, through an integral budgetary process, the arrangement will be unsustainable. So, it's very important to make sure that the integrity of budgetary process is preserved.

In conclusion, I think policies for Iraq should be informed by the complexity of the conflict. A surge, or the security plan envisioned now for Iraq, reduces the conflict to one between a democracy and its enemies; between democracy and terror. But if it is carried out with disregard to human rights, if it is carried out with disregard to the rule of law and in a one-sided way, it may exacerbate the situation and may also increase sectarian tensions and undermine the very democracy it purports to defend.

The withdrawal of U.S. forces also reduces the conflict to an issue of a fight between an occupying army and a nationalist resistance. But, at the same time, a withdrawal may spell the end to the

Green-Zone-based Iraqi State, and that could unleash further spirals of violence.

Segregation, or the various proposals on the table that are aimed at addressing Iraq through an ethnic prism, reduces the conflict to one between Sunnis and Shia. But, in that atmosphere of fragmentations, as Professor Marr has suggested, that means that we will just replace one civil war with three civil wars, one failed state with three failed states. And, as I hope the next speaker will address Iraqi partition or segregation will lead to unimaginable consequences at the regional level.

So, the only solution for Iraq will have to be long term and comprehensive, as Professor Marr has suggested, and will have to be based on an open and inclusive dialog, but it's something the Iraqis, on their own, cannot do, and they will need an international intervention to identify the protagonists, to bring them to the negotiations table, and to help prod them to reach compromise. What Iraq needs today is an internationally sponsored and mediated peace process.

And I will finish at that. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Said follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF YAHIA KHAIRI SAID, DIRECTOR, REVENUE WATCH INSTITUTE, LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS, LONDON, ENGLAND

The conflict in Iraq today is as complex as it is pervasive. This is a reflection of the various groups and interests at play as well as the legacies of the past. The conflict can not be reduced to simple dichotomies of democracy against its enemies, resistance against the occupation or Shia vs. Sunni. Likewise there is no single universal solution to the conflict. Neither the current proposal for a "surge" nor the proposal to withdraw coalition forces are likely to bring peace. What is needed is a comprehensive and long-term approach based on an open and inclusive dialog at national and international levels, in which the fair distribution of Iraqi oil revenues is used as an incentive for uniting Iraqis.

THE NATURE OF THE CONFLICT

The Insurgency: The targeting of Multinational Forces continues to account for a significant portion of the violence as evidenced by the consistently high numbers of coalition casualties. The insurgency is also an arena of domestic political conflict. Groups from different ethnic and political backgrounds use the "resistance" to legitimate their claim to power. Sunni insurgents bristled at the government's offer of an amnesty last year, insisting that they should be rewarded, not pardoned for fighting the occupation. Al-Qaeda uses videos of attacks on U.S. troops to recruit and fundraise for its own global war. Some insurgent attacks are simply a cover for economic crimes. As with many such conflicts, it is often hard to discern whether the violence is purely a means to commercial gain or an end in itself.

Spiralling sectarian violence is polarising communities and tearing society apart. However, it is not producing the consolidation and political mobilization along ethnic and sectarian lines as intended by its architects. Quite the opposite, the pervasive violence and uncertainty is leading to fragmentation within communities, political blocks, and individual parties. Warlordism is emerging as rogue commanders assume control of fragments of militias and individual units of the state security forces.

A resident of a Sunni neighborhood in Baghdad recently complained to me that Sunni fighters kill more of their own kin than they do Shia militias. Tribal rivalries broke into open conflict in the Anbar province this summer pitching Sunni tribes against each other and against the foreign al-Qaeda fighters. The head of the prominent Tamim tribe recently expressed a widely held sentiment among fellow Sunnis when he lambasted the "Iraqi un-Islamic Party" which purports to represent them in government. Likewise among the Shiites, there are frequent and violent confrontations between the SCIRI-controlled militias and police forces on one side, and militias associated with the Sadrist movement, on the other. These confrontations allowed the Sadrists at various times to briefly seize control of most major cities in central and southern Iraq. The competition to control Basra's oil smuggling busi-

ness among various militias and political parties often takes the form of street warfare. Less overtly, tensions bubble just under the surface between the two main Kurdish parties and between them on one side and Kurdish Islamists on the other. Outburst of separatism by Kurdish leaders—like the recent spat over the national flag—should be viewed in the context of competition for power in Kurdistan itself.

The Sadrist Movement is emblematic of the complexities and contradictions of Iraq's political and security landscape. While SCIRI and other political groups control government positions and resources, the Sadrists control the street. They nurture a nationalist image clashing occasionally with Multinational Forces and deriding the new elite who came with the invasion. This did not stop them from actively participating in the political process. The Sadrists have 30 members of Parliament and 6 ministers. Many Shia ex-Baathists joined the Sadrists after the collapse of the regime yet the movement is most vocal in seeking revenge against regime officials. Among Shia groups the Sadrists are the least likely to employ sectarian rhetoric yet their warlords are implicated in the worst instances of sectarian violence. The Sadrists try to emulate Hezbollah in Lebanon by seeking to protect and provide social services to their constituents and by meting out vigilante justice against criminals and those engaged in what they deem to be "un-Islamic" conduct. But its militias are undisciplined and often engage in looting and criminal activities themselves. The Sadr leadership freely admits to having only indirect control over their fighters. The Sadrists style themselves as the representatives of the poor and downtrodden. Indeed their main strength is the support of millions of poor Arab Shia in the rural south and the slums of Baghdad who are in a rebellious mood aimed at the establishment regardless of its sectarian color. As such SCIRI and other Shia groups representing the merchant and religious elite with strong ties to Iran are the Sadrists' natural enemy. In short, the Sadrists are simultaneously fighting a nationalist insurgency, a revolt against the establishment and a sectarian conflict.

STATE WEAKNESS AND THE POLITICAL PROCESS

The pervasiveness of the violence in Iraq today, the persistent power vacuum and progressive hollowing out of the state are components of a vicious circle. State weakness sends signals to the various groups that they can, and, in fact, need to defend their interests and achieve their goals through violent means. The political process over the past 3 years was supposed to fill the vacuum by establishing a framework where Iraqis can reconcile competing interests through peaceful means. The goal was to establish a legitimate public authority which would protect Iraqis and provide them with essential services. Despite enormous efforts, expenditures and sacrifice by Iraqis, Americans, and others, this goal has yet to be achieved.

It is tempting under such circumstances to blame everything on enemies and external influences such as al-Qaeda and Iraq's neighbors. Iraqis habitually blame their woes on the Americans, Iran, Arab States, Israel, Saddam, and so on. There is no question that external factors, sometimes by intent and sometimes by mistake, have played a role in shaping the current predicament. But the roots for such consistent failure need to be explored and addressed inside society itself.

Despite overcoming great risks to vote in two elections and a referendum, Iraqis have little faith in the political process and the leadership it has produced. Indeed political participation for most Iraqis has been limited to these three votes. There are few in Iraq today who believe in the viability and sustainability of the new regime. A substantial majority sits on the proverbial fence. This is not only a result of the authoritarian legacy or the fact that change came from the outside. It is also the result of disappointed hopes and broken promises over the past 4 years.

Fear and apathy are the most pervasive sentiments in Iraq today. They provide the perfect cover for corruption, crime, and terror and sap the energy from the enormous task of reconstruction. These sentiments extend to many officials and politicians who do not shy from dismantling the machinery of government and the state they have been entrusted with in pursuit of short-term narrow gains. One could even hear echoes of this apathy in the recent interview by Prime Minister Maliki with the Wall Street Journal.

Faced with this predicament, there is a hardening of positions on all sides and a determination to go for "one last push." This is not only expressed through the debilitating terrorist and militia violence but also in the posture of the Iraqi Government.

The model of a full spectrum "National Unity" government is clearly not working and has indeed exacerbated the decline of the state. The farming out of ministries to individual parties and groups produced a weak and divided government unable to function as a team.

The strongest parties in government, particularly the SCIRI and the Kurds, seem resolved to build a narrower coalition government which may exclude the Sadrists and some Sunni parties. This has already taken place on the ground with Sunni parties only nominally participating in government and the Sadrists boycotting it.

Without the Sadrists, however, this coalition has little grassroots support. It will have to rely more on cordon and will be more susceptible to external influences. It will be even more dependent on continuous U.S. support.

The handling of the Saddam execution is illustrative of the hardening of the government's stance. The rush to execute the former dictator, the rhetoric preceding it and the manner in which it was carried out were clearly designed to intimidate the Sunnis.

The government has also hardened its rhetoric and actions against political opponents, closing down two opposition TV stations and issuing an arrest warrant for the most prominent opposition figure—the head of the Association of Muslim Scholars.

SECURITY PLANS

The security plan announced a couple of days ago is the culmination of this approach. While officially targeted at all militias and armed groups, the Prime Minister has clearly indicated that he views Sunni violence as the main source of tensions and Shia militias as a reaction to Sunni violence.

It is not clear yet whether the government will limit the targets of the security plan to Sunni groups or whether it will also take on the Sadrists. Either way it is unlikely that it will be able to muster the resources necessary to achieve better results than previous efforts, including the two recent Baghdad security plans. Even a temporary U.S. surge in support of the plan is no guarantee for achieving sustainable outcomes. A military offensive—especially if it fails to protect civilians on all sides—is liable to inflame the sectarian conflict and make a peaceful settlement even less likely. The U.S. forces can find themselves embroiled, as a party, in the sectarian conflict.

There is no doubt that there is an urgent need to confront the terrorists, criminals, and those spreading sectarian hatred and to protect civilians from them. This can only be achieved on the basis of legitimacy and respect for human rights and the rule of law. It is, therefore, particularly disconcerting when the Iraqi Government insists on taking over control of the security portfolio in order to fight the enemies "our way," dispensing with what they view as exaggerated and misplaced U.S. concern for human rights.

The new security plan and the associated surge option emphasises the aspect of struggle between a nascent democracy and its opponents. Yet if it is carried out without regard to human rights and in a way that exacerbates sectarian tensions, it is only likely to make matters worse and destroy the very democracy it seeks to protect.

If the conflict in Iraq was primarily about occupation and resistance then a speedy withdrawal of coalition forces would offer the best solution. In today's context a withdrawal will cause a spike in other forms of violence and precipitate the collapse of the last remnants of the Iraqi state unleashing an open-ended conflict with unpredictable consequences.

A solution based on ethnic segregation emphasises another aspect of the conflict. But in the context of fragmentation and warlordism, it is unlikely to bring any relief. On the contrary it will exacerbate ethnic cleansing and undermine regional stability.

NATIONAL DIALOG

Ultimately the violence in Iraq can only end through a political process which unites Iraqis rather than dividing them. For this to happen it is necessary to engage all constituencies in the shaping of the new Iraq and provide them with a sense of ownership in the outcome. This requires open and inclusive dialog and readiness for compromise on all sides. It will require broadening the political process to include those Iraqis who still believe in nation-building and coexistence rather than limiting it to the combatants and extremists on all sides. Current national dialog and reconciliation efforts have fallen short of these ideals.

Dialog will clearly require regional and international mediation. International assistance is needed to help identify the protagonists, bring them to the negotiations, and encourage them to compromise. In short Iraq is in need of an internationally mediated peace process.

The International Compact with Iraq offers a platform for such dialog as well as a framework for mobilizing international assistance once a settlement is reached.

Other initiatives by the United Nations and the League of Arab States are essential for success in this context.

The final settlement can not dispense with the achievements of the last 3 years. Those, including the constitution, will have to serve as the starting point of any discussion over Iraq's future. The constitution will need to be reviewed and implemented in a way that provides a basis for rational federalism. The winners of the political process will have to be prepared to make real concessions and genuinely share power and resources if compromise is to be achieved.

Over the past months, Iraqi officials have been negotiating a framework for the management and sharing of Iraq's oil wealth which can provide a model for the shape of federalism in the new Iraq. Negotiators were in agreement that such framework should maximise the benefit from the wealth to all Iraqis and promote national cohesion. It should be based on the principles of efficiency, transparency, and equity. Transparency is particularly important as it helps build trust among the various parties and prevent abuse.

The negotiators succeeded in overcoming a number of obstacles agreeing in particular on the federal management and sharing of all oil revenues, a structure for a National Oil Company and a framework for coordinating negotiations and contracting with International Operating Companies. Some details will still need to be worked out, chief among them is the exact mechanism for revenue-sharing. If the new framework is to contribute to national cohesion, transparency and accountability the budgetary process must be the main vehicle for revenue-sharing.

A draft framework along these lines has been developed over the past months and will shortly be presented to Parliament. It is critical for the success of this effort that deliberations on the subject are carried out in an open, inclusive, and professional manner.

Chairman BIDEN. Thank you very much.

Doctor.

STATEMENT OF DR. PAUL PILLAR, VISITING PROFESSOR, SECURITY STUDIES PROGRAM, GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY, WASHINGTON, DC

Dr. PILLAR. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you very much for the privilege of participating in this most important set of hearings. And I commend the committee, as Phebe Marr did in her opening comment, for its approach to educating the American public on this topic.

You've asked me to address the relationship between the conflict in Iraq and other trends and developments in the Middle East. And, in that connection, I would focus on five major dimensions on which the war has had impact elsewhere in the region or on the perceptions and concerns of other Middle Eastern actors. Those five are: Sectarian divisions, extremism and terrorism, political change and democratization, ethnic separatism, and the alignments and the relative influence of other states in the region.

With the violence in Iraq having increasingly assumed the character of a civil war between Sunnis and Shiites, as described by my fellow panelist, it has intensified sectarian sentiment, suspicions, and resentments all along the Sunni-Shia divide, only a portion of which runs through Iraq. Just as important, this divide coincides with longstanding and deeply resented patterns of economic privilege and political power.

The evident conviction of many Iraqi Shiites, who, as we know, constitute a majority in their country, that their time for political dominance has come, cannot help but put revisionist thoughts in the minds of their coreligionists elsewhere in the region. The conflict in Iraq has made this sectarian divide more salient, not only for ordinary Shia and Sunni populations, but also for regimes. It's a concern for Saudi leaders, for example, because of Saudi sym-

pathy for their Sunni brethren in Iraq, and because of any possibility of restiveness among the Saudi Shia minority. Looking out from Riyadh, Saudis today see themselves as encircled by a Shia arc that now includes control of both of the other major Persian Gulf countries—Iran and Iraq. King Abdullah of Jordan has spoken in similar terms about such a Shia arc.

For the United States, one consequence—not the only one—but one consequence of this regionwide intensification of sectarian sentiment is that it is difficult for the United States to do just about anything in Iraq without it being perceived, fairly or unfairly, as favoring one community over the other and thereby antagonizing either Sunnis or Shiites, or perhaps both, elsewhere in the region.

A second dimension on which the war in Iraq is having repercussions throughout the Middle East, and, in this case, even beyond, concerns extremist sentiment and the threat of jihadist terrorism. Iraq is now the biggest and most prominent jihad, and may ultimately have effects at least as significant as those of earlier ones, partly because it is seen as a struggle against the United States, in the eyes of the jihadists, the sole remaining superpower and the leader of the West. I concur, and I think just about any other serious student of international terrorism would concur, in the judgments recently declassified from the national intelligence estimate on terrorism which stated that—in the words of the estimators—that, "The war in Iraq has become a cause celebre for jihadists. It is shaping a new generation of terrorist leaders and operatives. It is one of the major factors fueling the spread of the global jihadist movement, and is being exploited by al-Qaeda to attract new recruits and donors."

Some of the possible effects within the surrounding region may already be seen in, for example, the suicide bombings in Amman, in November 2005, which were carried out by Iraqis from the al-Qaeda-in-Iraq group.

A third important regional dimension is the possibility of favorable political change, especially democratization, within Middle Eastern countries. One hopeful development in the Middle East over the last few years has been an increase in open discussion of such political change. And I believe the current administration, with its rhetorical emphasis on democratization, deserves at least a share of the credit for that.

In looking not just for talk, but for meaningful reform, however, it is harder to be encouraged. What passes for political reform in the Middle East has generally been, in countries such as Egypt, slow, fragmentary, very cautious, subject to backsliding, and more a matter of form than of substance.

It is difficult to point convincingly to effects, one way or the other, that the war in Iraq has had on political reform in other Middle Eastern states, but, in my judgment, the all-too-glaring troubles in Iraq have tended, on balance, to discourage political reform in other Middle Eastern countries, for two reasons. First, the demonstration of what can go terribly wrong in a violent and destructive way has been a disincentive to experiment with political change. Middle Eastern leaders, like political leaders anywhere, tend to stick with what has worked with them so far when confronted with such frightening and uncertain consequences of

change. And, second, the identification of the United States with both the cause of democratization and the war in Iraq has, unfortunately, led the former subject to be tarnished with some of the ill will and controversy associated with the latter, however illogical that connection may be.

The fourth major issue, and an important one for three of the states that border Iraq, is ethic separatism. And here, of course, we're talking about the status of the Kurds, the prototypical stateless ethnic group. Kurdish separatism is a concern for both Syria and Iran, for example, which have significant Kurdish minorities. The strongest worries, however, are in Turkey, where Kurds constitute about 20 percent of the population and where the organization that has usually been known as the Kurdistan Workers Party, or PKK, waged an insurgent and terrorist campaign that left an estimated 35,000 people dead. Ankara has been very sensitive about any suggestion of independence for Iraqi Kurdistan because of worries about rekindling separatist sentiment among Turkish Kurds. Turkey also is unhappy about what it regards as insufficient action by Iraq or the United States against PKK fighters who have taken refuge in northern Iraq.

The final set of issues I would highlight concerns effects on the geopolitics of the Middle East; that is, on the relative power and the foreign policies of neighboring states. Among the neighbors the largest winner has been Iran. The war has crippled what had been the largest regional counterweight to Iranian influence, not to mention doing away with a dictator who started a war in the 1980s that resulted in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Iranians. Iranians today view the war in Iraq with mixed motives. The current leadership in Tehran probably is pleased to see the United States continue to be bogged down and bleeding in Iraq for the time being, but it also has no reason to want escalating and unending disorder on its western border. Tehran has been reaching out and providing assistance to a wide variety of Iraqi groups. Although some of this assistance may help to make trouble for United States forces, it is best understood as an effort by Tehran to cast out as many lines of influence as it possibly can do, that whenever the dust in Iraq finally settles, it will have a good chance of having the friendship of, or at least access to, whoever is in power in Iraq.

Syria is another neighbor that faces a significantly changed geopolitical environment as a result of events in Iraq. The bitter and longstanding rivalry between the Syrian and Iraqi wings of the Baathist movement had been a major determinant of Syrian foreign policy for many years. It was the principal factor that led Damascus to break ranks with its Arab brethren and ally with Iran during the Iran-Iraq war. The demise of the Iraqi Baathist regime has changed all this, as punctuated by the restoration of diplomatic relations just 2 months ago, in November, between Syria and Iraq. Sectarian considerations also must enter into thinking in Damascus, where the regime is dominated by the minority Alawite sect, but rules a Sunni majority. Meanwhile, Syria's main foreign-policy aim continues to be return of the Golan Heights, which Syrian leaders realize could come about only through cooperation with the United States.

I've highlighted what I regard as the main issues that involve the regional impact of this war. They are not the only issues, of course. A major concern of Jordan, for example, is the influx onto its territory of an estimated 700,000 Iraq refugees. Syria also faces a major Iraqi refugee problem, as do Lebanon and Egypt, and, to lesser degrees, other neighboring states.

Oil is another interest for several Middle Eastern states, given the obvious effects that different possible levels of Iraqi production and export could have on the oil market, and, thus, on the finances of these countries.

A concluding point, Mr. Chairman, concerns the United States directly. Given how much the war in Iraq has become a preoccupation for the United States, it necessarily colors virtually all of our other dealings with countries in the region. It has been one of the chief reasons for the decline in the standing of the United States among publics in the region, as recorded by opinion polls by such organizations as the Pew group taken over the last several years. It has been a reason for concern and doubt among Middle Eastern governments regarding the attention and commitment that Washington can give to other endeavors. And Middle Eastern governments know that it has, in effect, relegated to a lower priority almost every other U.S. interest in the Middle East.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Pillar follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. PAUL PILLAR, VISITING PROFESSOR, SECURITY STUDIES PROGRAM, GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the privilege of participating in this very important series of hearings related to the conflict in Iraq. I have been asked to address the relationship between that conflict and other trends and developments in the Middle East.

Events in other countries in the region will depend primarily on issues and conditions in those countries; in my judgment, the hoped-for beneficial demonstration effects that success in Iraq would have had on the politics of the broader Middle East have always been overly optimistic. Nonetheless, the development of a multifaceted and worsening armed conflict in Iraq does have significant implications for the rest of the region and by implication for U.S. interests in the region. Unfortunately, conflict and instability tend to have greater repercussions in a neighborhood than do success and stability.

In the case of Iraq and the Middle East, regional consequences involve concerns by neighbors about what may yet lie ahead as well as adjustments that regional actors already have made. The consequences involve regimes in the region as well as nonstate actors such as terrorist groups. And they involve direct consequences of the violence in Iraq as well as more indirect reverberations from the conflict there.

I want to emphasize how much uncertainty is involved in trying to analyze the regional impact of the current war in Iraq, much less of various future scenarios or policy options. It is simply impossible to predict the full range of important regional effects, partly because of the uncertainty that clouds Iraq's own future but also because of the complexity of factors affecting events elsewhere in the Middle East. Any prognostications that speak with certainty about particular future effects ought to be met with skepticism.

With that understanding, I would identify five major dimensions on which—although specific future consequences may be uncertain—the war in Iraq already has had discernible impact elsewhere in the Middle East and is likely to have more, and which, therefore, are worthy of attention as debates over policy proceed. Those five are: Sectarian divisions, extremism and terrorism, political change and democratization, ethnic separatism, and the alignments and relative influence of states in the region.

SECTARIAN CONFLICT

Sectarian divides within the Muslim world deserve to be discussed first, because the violence in Iraq has increasingly assumed the character of a civil war between Sunni and Shia. As such, it has intensified sectarian sentiment, suspicions, and resentments all along the Sunni-Shia faultline, only a portion of which runs through Iraq. It would be almost impossible to overstate how strongly this divide, which the Iraq war has made more salient, stokes feelings and fears among many people of the Middle East. Rooted in centuries-old disputes over succession to the Prophet, the conflict manifests itself today in, for example, the perspective of some Sunnis (particularly the more doctrinaire Wahhabis of Saudi Arabia) that Shia are not even true Muslims. Just as important, the sectarian divide coincides with resented patterns of economic privilege and political power.

The special significance of Iraq is that, although Shiites are a minority of Muslims worldwide, they are a majority in Iraq (as well as, of course, next door in Iran). The evident conviction of many Iraqi Shiites that their time for political dominance has come cannot help but put revisionist thoughts in the minds of their coreligionists elsewhere in the region. These include the Shia minority in Saudi Arabia, who are concentrated in the oil-rich eastern province and see themselves treated as second-class citizens. They include the Shiites who constitute a majority in Bahrain but are still under the rule of a Sunni government. And they include Shiites in Lebanon, who probably are the fastest-growing community in that religiously divided country and who believe that current power-sharing arrangements give them an unfairly small portion of power—a sentiment exploited by Lebanese Hezbollah.

The conflict in Iraq has made this sectarian divide more salient not only for Shia populations but also for regimes. The sectarian coloration of that conflict is an acute concern for Saudi leaders, for example, because of their own sympathy for Sunni Arabs in Iraq, the emotions of other Saudis over the plight of their Sunni brethren in Iraq, and any possibility of restiveness among Saudi Shiites. Looking out from Riyadh, Saudis now see themselves as encircled by a Shia arc that includes control of both of the other large Persian Gulf States—Iran and Iraq—Shia activism in Lebanon, and significant Shia populations in the Arab Gulf States as well as to their south in Yemen. King Abdullah of Jordan also has spoken publicly about such a Shia arc.

For the United States, this intensification of sectarian conflict carries several hazards, only one of which is the specter of direct intervention by other regional actors in the Iraqi civil war. There also are issues of stability in the other countries that must manage their own part of the Sunni-Shia divide. And not least, there is the difficulty of the United States doing almost anything in Iraq without it being perceived, fairly or unfairly, as favoring one community over the other and thereby antagonizing either Sunnis or Shiites, or perhaps both, elsewhere in the region.

EXTREMISM AND TERRORISM

A second dimension on which the war in Iraq is having repercussions throughout the Middle East—and in this case even beyond—concerns extremist sentiment and the threat of international terrorism, particularly from Islamist terrorists often styled as "jihadists." Other wars in other Muslim lands have served as jihads in recent years, including in Bosnia, Chechnya, Kosovo, and especially Afghanistan. The Afghan jihad against the Soviets served as an inspiration to radical Islamists, a training ground for terrorists, and a networking opportunity for jihadists of diverse nationalities. We have seen the effects in much of the international terrorism of the past decade and a half. Iraq is now the biggest and most prominent jihad. It may ultimately have effects at least as significant as those of earlier jihads, because it is taking place in a large and important country that is part of the core of the Arab and Muslim worlds, and because it is partly a struggle against the United States, the sole remaining superpower and the leader of the West.

The effects of the war in Iraq on international terrorism were aptly summarized in the National Intelligence Estimate on international terrorism that was partially declassified last fall. In the words of the estimators, the war in Iraq has become a "cause celebre" for jihadists, is "shaping a new generation of terrorist leaders and operatives," is one of the major factors fueling the spread of the global jihadist movement, and is being exploited by al-Qaeda "to attract new recruits and donors." I concur with those judgments, as I believe would almost any other serious student of international terrorism.

The full effects on terrorism of the war in Iraq, as of the earlier anti-Soviet campaign in Afghanistan, will not be seen and felt for a good number of years. But some of the possible effects within the surrounding region may already be seen in, for example, the suicide bombings in Amman, Jordan, in November 2005, which were

perpetrated by Iraqis who belonged to the "al-Qaeda in Iraq" organization. Another possible effect is the recent use in Afghanistan of suicide bombings, a tactic not previously part of the repertoire of insurgents there but perhaps partly exported from, or inspired by, Iraq where the tactic has been used extensively.

I believe that the most important variable in Iraq in the months or years ahead as far as the effects on international terrorism are concerned is the sheer continuation of the war, as well as the continued U.S. participation in it. "Jihad" means, literally, "struggle." What is important to the jihadist, more so than any particular outcome, is participation in a struggle. As long as the jihadists' struggle in Iraq is not completely extinguished, it will continue to inspire the Islamist rank-and-file and to be exploited by the likes of al-Qaeda.

POLITICAL CHANGE AND DEMOCRATIZATION

A third important regional dimension is the possibility of political change within Middle Eastern countries, especially change in the favorable direction of more democracy and more civil and political liberties in what is still, by most measures, the most undemocratic and illiberal region of the world. One hopeful development in the Middle East over the last few years has been an increase in open discussion of issues of political change. There has been, at least, more talk about the subject; it has been more of a live topic in more Middle Eastern countries than a few years earlier. I believe the current U.S. administration, with its rhetorical emphasis on democratization, deserves a share of the credit for this.

In looking not just for talk but for meaningful action, however, it is harder to be encouraged. What passes for political reform in the Middle East has generally been slow, fragmentary, very cautious, subject to backsliding, and more a matter of form than of substance.

It is difficult to point convincingly to effects, in one direction or another, that the war in Iraq has had on political reform in other Middle Eastern states. Inspired statesmanship should have good reason to move ahead with reform regardless of what is happening in Iraq. But most Middle Eastern statesmanship is not inspired. And in my judgment, the all-too-glaring troubles in Iraq have tended, on balance, to discourage political reform in other Middle Eastern countries, for two reasons.

First, the demonstration of what can go wrong—in a very violent and destructive way—has been a disincentive to experiment with political change. Middle Eastern leaders, like leaders anywhere, tend to stick with what they've got and with what has worked for them so far, when confronted with such frightening and uncertain consequences of political change. If today's Iraq is the face of a new Middle East, then most Middle Eastern leaders, not to mention most publics, do not want to be part of it.

Second, the identification of the United States with both the cause of democratization and the war in Iraq has led the former to be tarnished with some of the ill will and controversy associated with the latter. This connection is, of course, illogical. But it should not be surprising, given that some in the Middle East had already tended to view liberal democracy with suspicion as an alien import from the West.

The issue of political change and democratization is important for many Middle Eastern countries, but I would mention two as being of particular significance. One is Egypt, the most populous Arab country and a keystone of U.S. policy in the region. The Mubarak government has evidently seen the need at least to appear to be open to reform, as manifested in the holding in 2005 of an ostensibly competitive Presidential election, in place of the prior procedure of a one-candidate referendum. But such procedural change has not reflected any significant loosening of Mubarak's hold on power. A continuing emergency law helps to maintain that hold, opposition Presidential candidates have not been treated fairly, and the most popular and effective opposition party remains outlawed.

The other key country is Saudi Arabia, in which neither the form nor the reality is remotely democratic, and in which power is still in the hands of a privileged royal family in alliance with a religious establishment. King Abdullah appears to recognize the need for reform if Saudi Arabia is not to fall victim to more sudden and destructive kinds of change. He faces stubborn opposition, however, not least from within the royal family. Anything in the regional environment that makes political reform appear riskier will make his task harder.

ETHNIC SEPARATISM

The fourth major issue, and an important one for three of the states that border Iraq, is ethnic separatism. This really means the issue of the Kurds, who ever since the peace of Versailles have been the prototypical stateless ethnic group. Kurdish separatism is a concern for Syria, in which Kurds, who are concentrated in the

northeast part of the country, constitute a bit less than 10 percent of the Syrian population. It also is a concern in multiethnic Iran, where Kurds in the northwest represent about 7 percent of Iran's population. Kurdish dissatisfaction led to deadly riots in Syria in 2004 and in Iran in 2005. The strongest worries, however, are in Turkey, where Kurds constitute about 20 percent of the population and where the organization usually known as the Kurdistan Workers Party, or PKK, waged an insurgent and terrorist campaign that has left an estimated 35,000 people dead. Ankara has been very sensitive about any suggestion of independence for Iraqi Kurdistan, because of worries about rekindling separatist sentiment among the Kurds of southeastern Turkey. The Government of Turkey also has a strong interest in the status of PKK fighters who have taken refuge in northern Iraq, and it has been unhappy about what it considers to be insufficient U.S. or Iraqi efforts against those fighters.

The views of regional governments toward the Kurds, as events in Iraq play out over the coming months, will depend at least as much on the legal and political forms applied to Iraqi Kurdistan as on the practical facts on the ground. After all, since 1991 the Iraqi Kurds have enjoyed—and neighboring governments have lived with—what has largely been de facto independence, despite Kurdish participation in politics in Baghdad. The situation may be similar to that of Taiwan in the Far East, in which de facto independence is tolerated but any move to make it de jure would be destabilizing.

ALIGNMENTS AND POWER OF NEIGHBORING STATES

The final set of issues I would highlight concerns the effects the situation in Iraq is having on the geopolitics of the Middle East—that is, the effects on the relative power, and the foreign policies, of neighboring states. The geopolitical impact stems from at least three aspects of that situation: The change in the ideological map of the region resulting from removal of the Iraqi Baathist regime; the competition of neighboring states for influence within Iraq; and the debilitating effects of the war itself, which has greatly weakened what had been one of the stronger states in the area.

Among the neighbors, the largest winner has been Iran. The war has not only toppled the dictator who initiated an earlier war that killed hundreds of thousands of Iranians; it also has crippled what had been the largest regional counterweight to Iranian influence. Meanwhile, the all-consuming preoccupation that the Iraq war has become for the United States, along with the growing unpopularity of the war among Americans, probably has made Iranian leaders less fearful than they otherwise might have been about forceful U.S. action, including military action, against Iran. This confidence is tempered, however, by the fact that the occupation of Iraq has completed a U.S. military encirclement of Iran, a posture that nonetheless suits the internal political purposes of Iranian hard-liners as they play off an image of confrontation with Washington.

Iranians today view the war in Iraq with a mixture of motives. The current leadership in Tehran probably is pleased to see the United States continue to be bogged down and bleeding in Iraq for the time being. But it also has no reason to want escalating and unending disorder on its western border. Tehran seems determined to exercise as much influence as it can inside Iraq as whatever process of political reconstruction there unfolds. It has been reaching out, and providing assistance to, a wide variety of Iraqi groups, not just its traditional allies such as the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq. Although some of this assistance may help to make trouble for U.S. forces, it is best understood as an effort by Tehran to throw out as many lines of influence as it can so that whenever the dust in Iraq finally settles, it will have a good chance of having the friendship of, or at least access to, whoever is in power. Iranian leaders probably realize that creation in Iraq of a duplicate of their own system of clerical rule is not feasible, but they at least want to avoid a regime in Baghdad that is hostile to Iran.

Iranian leaders almost certainly hoped, prior to March 2003, that they would be able—as was the case in Afghanistan—to work cooperatively with the United States on the political reconstruction of Iraq. That, of course, did not happen. But the shared U.S. and Iranian interest in avoiding escalating and unending disorder in Iraq probably would make Tehran, despite all the ill will that has transpired over other issues, receptive to engagement with Washington. The Iranians would want such engagement, however, not to be limited to any one issue—be it Iraq, or the nuclear program, or anything else—but instead to address all matters in dispute.

Syria is another neighbor that faces a significantly changed geopolitical environment as a result of events in Iraq. The bitter and longstanding rivalry between the Syrian and Iraqi wings of the Baathist movement had been a major determinant

of Syrian foreign policy. It was the principal factor that led Damascus to break ranks with its Arab brethren and to ally with Iran, and later to participate in Operation Desert Storm, which reversed Saddam Hussein's aggression in Kuwait. With the demise of the Iraqi Baathist regime, the foreign policy equation for Syria has changed. Syria restored relations with Iraq in November 2006. Although the economic ties between Syria and Iran are substantial, Syria's main reason for its otherwise counterintuitive alliance with Tehran is over. The sectarian dimension also must influence thinking in Damascus, because the regime is dominated by the minority Alawite sect but rules a Sunni majority. The implication of all these factors is that there is significant potential for coaxing Syria away from the alignment with Iran and its client Hezbollah, and toward more cooperation with the United States, with the hope for Syria of realizing what is still its main foreign policy goal: The return of the Golan Heights.

Other regional states, including the gulf Arabs, are conscious of the strength that Iraq once had and that, if it were again to become stable and united, could be the basis for Iraq once again throwing its weight around. They also are conscious of the fact that the issues involved in previous conflicts involving Iraq were not all the creation of Saddam Hussein. The longstanding enmity between Persian and Arab that underlay the Iran-Iraq war certainly was not. And Kuwaitis viewing the turmoil to their north know that the notion of Kuwait as rightfully the 19th province of Iraq also predated Saddam, and has been part of the undercurrent of relations with Iraq ever since Kuwait became independent.

I have highlighted several of the main issues that involve the regional impact of the Iraq war. They are not the only issues. A major concern, for example, of another of Iraq's immediate neighbors—Jordan—is the influx of approximately 700,000 Iraqi refugees. Syria and other neighbors also are facing a significant Iraqi refugee problem. Oil is another issue of high interest to several Middle Eastern states, given the effects that different levels of Iraqi production and export could have on oil prices and consequently on the finances and economies of those states.

A concluding point concerns the United States directly. Given how much the war in Iraq has become a preoccupation for the United States, it necessarily colors virtually all of our other dealings with the Middle East and with countries in the region. It has been one of the chief reasons for the slide in the standing of the United States among publics in the region, as recorded by opinion polls taken over the last several years. It has been a reason for concern and doubt among governments regarding the attention and commitment that Washington can give to other endeavors. And Middle Eastern governments know that it has, in effect, relegated to a lower priority almost every other U.S. interest in the region.

Chairman BIDEN. Thank you very much. Your collective testimony has generated a number of questions, and let me begin.

Dr. Marr and Mr. Said, I've actually—as many have—read the Iraqi Constitution, and I have it in front of me, and it is a—if I were to make a comparison, I'd compare it to our Articles of Confederation rather than the American Constitution. And it lays out in detail how regions can become regions; and, if they become regions, what authority they have, the 18 governates can. Tell me, if you will, Dr. Marr, in light of your point, on page two or three, in which you say, "Iraq is not likely to be a unified state dominated by a strong central government in Baghdad for at least some time" and "the high degree of decentralization called for in the Constitution." How do we square that?

Dr. MARR. I've read the Constitution, too, but, I must say, not in the last month, so you may have to spark——

Chairman BIDEN. Well, then——

Dr. MARR. No; I know the whole issue of regionalism—the question of whether Iraq, or rather federalism, is going to be defined by large regions is a very controversial one. Now, we have a clearly formulated region in the KRG, the Kurdish Regional Government, which, as you know, would like, in my view, to expand and take in other Kurdish-majority areas, including Kirkuk, which I don't believe will be done entirely tranquilly. I think that's a flashpoint

that could cause a lot of difficulty. And I also believe that, within that region, while the Kurds are cooperating—and I give them high marks on a lot of things—looking beneath the surface, some of these differences, some of this fragmentation exists there, as well. However, the Kurds have a solid region. Now, what is at stake here is whether there's enough homogeneity among these two other sectarian groups—"The Shia" and "The Sunnis"—to form a region similar to that in Kurdistan. And one particular party, SCIRI, Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq—I won't say that again—would like to form a nine-province Shia region in the south, which, of course, they expect to control.

If we look at that map up there, it looks as though there's a Shia majority down there, but, in fact, there's much more fragmentation. I don't believe that that could be accomplished without quite a bit of controversy with others, for example, the Sadrists, just to mention one. And, indeed, that piece of legislation, as you know, the legislation to enable the Parliament to form that region, was postponed for 18 months, precisely because people see it as controversial.

When we come to the so-called Sunni region, that's even more difficult, because the Sunnis, in my view—you can't speak of them as "The Sunnis" because they're very diverse. As a whole, Sunnis have played the major role in the formation of the state, and have dominated the state—not exclusively, but it's been something they feel they've done. Getting Sunnis to identify as Sunnis rather than Iraqis, nationalists, or even Arab nationalists, is extremely difficult.

Last, but not least, there are large mixed areas, which are undergoing a lot of sectarian differentiation. They are a patchwork quilt. If we look at greater Baghdad, if we had a map here of where these areas are, Kirkuk, many other areas such as Diala, they are a nightmare. They include Kurds, Turkmen, Shia, Sunnis—actually creating borders, dividing them up, would be very difficult. And, in the end, I think we would have a system, if we follow through with this, which is, in some ways, repugnant to many people, that the dominant identity has to be what you were born with, in——

Chairman BIDEN. If I can——

Dr. MARR [continuing]. One way or another.

Chairman BIDEN [continuing]. Interrupt. The dominant identity, as I read the Constitution, doesn't require it to be based upon a region, based upon ethnicity. In my seven visits to Iraq, I meet with people, and they say they want to have their local policeman running their local areas. They've gotten along very well. And they don't want a national police force dominated by a bunch of thugs patrolling their streets.

Question. Do any of you picture, in your lifetime, the likelihood that a national police force will be patrolling the streets of Fallujah? It's a serious question. Does anybody see that in their lifetime?

[No response.]

Chairman BIDEN. I don't think so. I don't see it, either. So, it's about time, I think, we, maybe, stop pushing a rope here.

One of the questions I have, as well, is: What is the role of Sistani? What influence does he possess now? Anyone. Yes.

Mr. SAID. Well, I'll address the issue of Sistani, but I also would like to come back on the issue of the Constitution.

Sistani has great moral authority in Iraq, and it extends beyond the Shia community. However, that authority has been eroding over the past 3 years.

Chairman BIDEN. Why?

Mr. SAID. In part, because Sistani himself has been manipulated, if you like, by some of the Shia political parties.

Senator BOXER. I'm sorry, say that louder.

Mr. SAID. He has been—the image—the institution of Mr. Sistani has been manipulated by some of—by the—some of the Shia parties who have been trying to glean legitimacy from him. The institution of the Shia Marjiya has been used for political means to advance narrow party political objectives. And this has reflected negatively on—has tarnished, has limited—has reduced the omnipotence of Sistani. At the end of the day, it's very important to remember that Sistani is an apolitical—is a nonpolitical religious leader who does not like to meddle in politics. And he has largely withdrawn from interference since the last elections.

Chairman BIDEN. Let me follow up with a question, since my time is up.

Mr. O'Hanlon, you indicated that—which comports what we've been told—that there are roughly about 5,000 politically reliable, as well as well-trained, Iraqi forces. I listened this morning to Mr. Bartlett, speaking for the President—and I'm assuming he's going to say what Mr. Bartlett said today—that, in a surge that will be in conjunction with Iraqi forces, who will be moved into neighborhoods, who will be the ones, "going door to door," do you believe there are a sufficient number of reliable Iraqi forces to work with whatever surge plan the President moves forward, if the President's plan envisions a significant Iraqi military initiative along with this surge?

Dr. O'HANLON. Right now, Senator, I'd say no. I think the only hope for changing that is if there can be some kind of a broad political dynamic that's created in the next couple of months, that's been different from what we've seen in the past—some resolution on sharing oil, on rehabilitating former Baathists who don't have blood on their hands, letting them regain their jobs, all the things that probably should have been done 2 or 3 years ago. There's some hope of creating—and it's, of course, a political question. It's less about training and less about the mathematics of the schedule, and more about this national need for consensus.

Chairman BIDEN. Do you all agree that oil has the potential to be the glue that holds the country together, rather than splits it apart?

Mr. SAID. Definitely. And as the resolution on the oil negotiation shows, one could come up with solutions that go beyond the Constitution——

Chairman BIDEN. Well——

Mr. SAID [continuing]. Beyond the——

Chairman BIDEN [continuing]. There's been no resolution on the distribution of the revenue. There has been a resolution—tentative, as I understand it—on who has authority to determine whether or not investments will be made, in what wells and where. But if

you're sitting out there in the Sunni province, where you've got a lot of nice sand and shale, and not much else, you're going to want to know, "How much is coming my way?" in terms of revenue-sharing, and, "What guarantees are there to be?" In my understanding, that's the point that has not been resolved. Is that correct?

Dr. MARR. I'm not entirely sure of that. But I think negotiations are going on now, and, to my surprise, I've been impressed by the fact that there have been some compromises on this—by the Kurds, for example, who are the most eager to get going on this. Maybe not enough compromises yet, but there have actually been some. So, I think it could move ahead in that direction, but it could also be a point of contention, depending on how it's done.

Chairman BIDEN. That's encouraging. My time is up. I thank you.

Senator Lugar.

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

I appreciate the four statements. And I suspect that—I appreciate them even more having read, in the Wall Street Journal yesterday, a story called "Nightmare Scenario," which relates to the U.S. withdrawal from the region. Now, although a lot of our debate, politically, has been over whether troops should come in or whether they should come out, and the timeframe for the coming out, and so forth, the Wall Street Journal had this paragraph that said, "The United States is pushing a wide-ranging strategy to persuade Sunni allies that are serious about countering the rise of Iran in exchange for Arab help in Iraq and Palestinian territories. Key to the effort is to continue to promise to keep United States forces in Iraq for as long as necessary. But the United States is also beefing up the U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf, plans to deepen security cooperation with the gulf allies. The Pentagon has proposed sending a second carrier battle group to the gulf region. There are also advanced plans in the way to knit together the air defense systems of the six smaller states, including Qatar, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates, and to build a United States-administered missile defense system. Similarly, the Air Force is laying plans to lay up exercises with Arab allies in the region. One proposal calls for the United States to hold combined air exercise with Oman and the UAE."

Now, that's a very sizable agenda going on, quite apart from the debate that we're having as to whether as many as 20,000 troops, in some form or other, get to Baghdad. I want to raise a question of the panel, of any of you. You've illustrated the interests of each of the regional governments, and discussed in your testimony, how critical U.S. presence is for them. Absent that, they have testified, either publicly or covertly, that they will take action—the Jordanians, even—to carve out, maybe, a space to take care of these 700,000 refugees that you have mentioned; or the Saudis, quite overtly, that they may come to the assistance of Sunnis in Iraq under certain conditions. Likewise, the Syrians, conflicted, in a way, because of the nature of their government, but their Sunni majority has a deep interest in Iraq outcomes. Furthermore, the Turks, as you have mentioned, quite apart from Iran—characterized as the big winner—each with important interests in Iraq.

What if Secretary Rice, as she heads out to the area Friday to begin a very important and timely tour, were to suggest all of us need to come together—by "all of us," I mean the United States and Iraq, the Turks, the Iranians and the Syrians and the Jordanians, and even the Egyptians and the Saudis—around the same table to meet rather continuously? This is not the old debate, "Should we have negotiations with Syria? Should we ever talk to Iran?" Rather, the subject of conversation question is, each of these countries has an interest in Iraq, presently, and an interest in us—that is, the United States presence in the region. What about this carrier group? What about the six countries with conducting air exercises over here? What do they think about the United States having more troops in the general area? Where? What should they be doing? Now, we may not want to share all of our plans, although this is pretty explicit in the Wall Street Journal, in terms of a permanent presence. But absence means chaos for a good number of people. And you have to consider those who will take advantage of the situation in ways that, strategically, may be injurious to the United States and certainly a good number of other people, including the specter raised in the article of all-out warfare, which would likely constrict the supply of oil to everybody in the world, the price goes sky high, recessions occur—the subject, really not discussed today, but an implication of this predicament.

Now, is it practical, if the Secretary were to say, "I'd like to have a meeting. We can have it wherever you want to have it, but we'd like to see everybody around the table"—what would be the response, at this point, of the neighbors? Would they come together? Would they want to see each other? Would they want to participate with us? Do you have any feel about some type of strategy, of grand diplomacy in which we, sort of, lay all the cards on the table and try to think through what is happening in this troubled period, which you all have said is going to take time to evolve—not 6 months or a year or so forth, but an evolutionary struggle for a state to evolve in Iraq, in which that kind of time can only be guaranteed if all the rest of the players are not restive and aggressive? Anyone have thoughts about this idea? Yes.

Mr. SAID. I think you raise a very important point. And there's a situation of putting the cart before the horse in the debate about Iraq—surge, withdrawal, troop movement. I think the decision on troops should come on the back of such settlement that you have outlined—a comprehensive regional agreement. Iraq's neighbors will have various attitudes toward that, because some of them, as has been suggested, are flourishing—and generally like the current state of affairs, although they fear deterioration. Others have been crying for attention. Saudi Arabia, in particular, had been demanding attention to the situation of Iraq, from the United States, as well as Turkey. So, there will be various responses.

One problem with having a comprehensive regional conference to address all the issues in the region, that this is a—quite a big load for one conference, but there is no doubt that, as suggested, also, by the Baker-Hamilton Report, that there is need for a regional approach. Iraq cannot be solved on its own, Palestine cannot be solved on its own. But the decision on troops and troop movements

should come on the back of such—the blueprint of such agreement, rather than come ahead of it.

Senator LUGAR. Yes.

Dr. O'HANLON. Senator, I'd like to add one word on this, and it's sort of a hawkish case for regional engagement, if you will, which is that, I—Paul Pillar mentioned, earlier, that Iran's interest here may be trying to maximize its influence. I think there's also a chance that Iran is trying to deal the United States a major strategic defeat and try to drive us, not only out of Iraq, but out of the region, and that Iraq—that Iran has gotten more ambitious as this war has gone worse.

I would see one purpose of a regional conference as disabusing Iran of the notion that it can drive us out of the region, and sitting down and making it clear to Iran that they should have an interest in some level of stability in Iraq, because, even if Iraq totally fails, which it might, we are going to stay committed, to the extent our regional partners wish, to the Persian Gulf, and that Iran has no chance of driving us out of the region. I think that message is worth sending. I'd be very curious—I know people in this room have been articulate about the need for different options in Iraq, but I haven't heard anybody say we should get out of the Persian Gulf. And I think Iran needs to be disabused of the notion that they could drive us out.

Senator LUGAR. And particularly because we have negotiations with Iran about nuclear weapons. That goes on somewhere very close to this. And perhaps a feeling, by Iran, that, in fact, if we are in a withdrawal status would have, I think, a deep effect upon that set of negotiations.

Dr. PILLAR. Senator Lugar, if I could just add to what Mike said. If you look at the perspectives of, say, the Saudis—and the issue has been raised about Saudi concern, about the ties with the United States, and so on—it really isn't American troops fighting in Iraq that are most important to the Saudis, as far as their own security is concerned; it has to do with those other aspects of the U.S. presence, the overall U.S. security guarantee, and so on.

And my other final comment would be, how the regional actors would respond to that kind of initiative depends on other things, as well, such as what the United States is doing vis-a-vis the Arab-Israeli conflict. And that's the reason the Iraq Study Group highlighted that issue, as well.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you.

Chairman BIDEN. Thank you.

Senator Kerry.

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

There's so much to try to tackle, and it's hard to do, obviously, in a short period of time. We appreciate your testimony this morning.

Let me try to cut to the, sort of—there's a short-term and a long-term set of interests here. The long-term interests are enormous. And you've just touched on them. I mean, obviously, none of us on either side of the aisle—I don't think anybody in Congress—wants to give short shrift to the large strategic interests we have in the region. And anybody who's been talking, like myself, about the need to push the process—and I recommended an international

peace conference in—3 years ago. Nothing's happened. We've been sitting around not engaging in this kind of political resolution, while we've continued down the military side. But none of us have suggested that there isn't a huge interest in the stability of the region, in the—in our neighbors, in a whole set of strategic issues. But when you measure those interests against what Iraq is doing to our interests, you come out on a real low side of that ledger. Iran is more powerful. Hezbollah is more powerful. Hamas is more powerful. "The Shia Revival," as Vali Nasr refers to it, is more real. I mean, things that weren't staring us in the face are now staring us in every quarter. We're worse off.

So, our current policy is, in fact, not protecting our interests, not doing for the forces that we want to support in those countries, what's in their interest. And, in the end, we're setting ourselves backward.

Against that, you have to, sort of, ask yourself, OK, so where do you go here, to put those interests back on the table and resolve this? No. 1 issue in front of us is this question of more troops. Now, that speaks, I think, to both short and long term. Let me just come to it very quickly.

General Abizaid said—and now he's leaving, we understand there's a transition, but I don't think you could quickly dismiss his experience, his being in the field, General Casey being in the field, and what they've observed and learned in that period of time—and he said, point blank on November 15 of last year, "I've met with every divisional commander, General Casey, the corps commander, General Dempsey. We all talked together. And I said, 'In your professional opinion, if we were to bring in more American troops now, does it add considerably to our ability to achieve success in Iraq?' And they all said no."

Now, Mr. Said, you just said, yourself, that adding more troops may, in fact, make it more difficult to get a resolution. So, my question to each of you, in sum, is: If there isn't sufficient evidence of this kind of summitry and diplomacy, if there isn't a sufficient political process in place—and I want your judgment as to whether or not there is—will more troops have any chance of, in fact, getting what we want, or is it going to make matters worse? And, if it does, where are we, after putting them in, in 6 months, if it hasn't worked?

Mr. O'Hanlon.

Dr. O'HANLON. Senator Kerry, very tough question. I like your idea of a ledger. On the positive side of the troop-surge proposal, I would say, we all know, tactically, there have never been enough troops in Iraq to clear and hold. So, that's the tactical argument for this case. It would have been a much more compelling argument 3 and 4 years ago than it is today, but I think it remains, at some level, in the plus column. On the negative column, of course, we know that there is no political resolution of these very sectarian divides——

Senator KERRY. Well, hold on a minute. I mean, 30,000 troops or 20,000 troops, is there anybody who imagines, measured against the task, that that's enough to do the job?

Dr. O'HANLON. You have to hope that you can get momentum in Baghdad, or in parts of Baghdad, and then that will begin to have

a spillover effect. So, narrowly speaking, I would say no; there's no hope you can do it nationwide with 20,000 troops.

Senator KERRY. Go ahead and finish up.

Dr. O'HANLON. Well, I think—I think, you know, that's the main tactical argument in favor. Most of the other arguments say, either there's a danger to this, to our Army and Marines, to the Iraqi sense of dependency on us, or it's not going to be enough.

Getting to Senator Biden's question earlier, "Are there enough Iraqi security forces to team with us to be dependable?" Absolutely not, unless there's a much stronger political consensus in Iraq.

So, I would not oppose the surge, but I would only support it if it's in the context of a much broader——

Senator KERRY. Political settlement. And you don't see the political settlement effort or capacity there now.

Dr. O'HANLON. Not now.

Dr. MARR. I would ask——

Senator KERRY. Dr. Marr.

Dr. MARR [continuing]. Very carefully, what these troops are going to do. I have some questions as they get involved in this complex sectarian situation and other issues. Are they going to attack simply Muqtada, or are they also going to attack insurgents? What are the Iraqis going to do? What are others going to do? What are these troops going to do, and what is the strategy that is going to be employed?

One other issue, about sending them or not sending them in, is the question of how we get Iraqis—I don't want to say to just step up to the plate; that's a very simplistic idea—but, indeed, Iraqis themselves are the only ones who can ultimately sort out and move ahead on this sectarian strife issue. And whether sending the troops in and doing the job for them is going to provide an atmosphere which enables them to do it, or whether it's going to delay the hard choice they face. This is another issue——

Senator KERRY. Do you see the political process in place to resolve the fundamental differences between an Abdul Aziz al-Hakim and a Muqtada al-Sadr, between the very—the interests of the militias, the warlordism that Mr. Said just referred to, the Sunni reluctance to participate, the Sunni desire to reemerge as the people who run the country, the interests of certain individuals with respect to Iran, the Persian-Arab divide? I mean, all of these things are, it seems to me, so huge, so historically and culturally deep in this issue, that, as it further disintegrates into this morass of individual interests, you can't—our troops can't pull that back together, can they, Mr. Said?

Mr. SAID. No. Troops, alone, can never resolve this. I mean—well, there's one caveat to that, of course. If you send 500,000 troops to Iraq, you may be able to steamroll the situation without there being a political consensus, but there is no—neither the resources nor the will to do that. So, given the lack of the possibility to mobilize the necessary troops, the troops need to come on the back of political consensus, on the back of a political settlement that is internationally mediated, that is supported by Iraq's neighbors, as well as the various communities in Iraq.

Senator KERRY. I mean, I want to get your answer, too, Mr. Pillar, but, as you do, because time runs so fast, could you just touch

on the question of to what degree the presence of the American troops delays the willingness of people to resolve those issues, and acts as a cover for people's other interests to be able to play out to see who's on top and who's on the bottom?

Dr. PILLAR. I think there's a strong sense, both among Iraqis and with the regional players, the subject of Senator Lugar's question, that, as long as the United States is doing the heavy lifting, however much of an interest they have in eventually resolving the situation, they are not the ones in the front having to do it. There is an issue of having to concentrate the minds.

Senator KERRY. Do you want to comment, Mr. Pillar? You said something about the Green Zone state that struck me. The Green Zone state might fall. Isn't the fact that it is only a Green Zone state, kind of fundamental to this question of legitimacy and of resolving these larger political differences?

Dr. PILLAR. I think some—I think that was your——

Senator KERRY. And would you, as you touch on that, tell me: If the troops start going after the militia—and I'm reading that they're talking about an evenhandedness in the application of this—what is the Muqtada al-Sadr response to that? And where do the Badr Brigade and the Jaish al-Mahdi come out in that conflict?

Mr. SAID. It's speculative, at this point, to judge what the troops are going to do. The Iraqi Government security plan, although, declares that all the militias will be attacked, but also, in the same breath, states that they view Sunni violence as the primary objective. So, on the back of this security plan, the surge of U.S. troops can be seen as taking sides in the ongoing sectarian conflict. The United States may declare that it will go differently, but, at this point, the agreement, since the meeting in Amman between the Prime Minister and the President, seems to have been to go for one last push in support of the elites that have emerged out of the current political process and against their enemies. And this could contribute—if mishandled, and especially if no protection is offered to all communities, to all Iraqi communities, this could embroil the United States in a new role in Iraq, as being a party in the conflict.

Senator KERRY. My time is up, but——

Mr. SAID. Thank you.

Senator KERRY [continuing]. But none of you answered the question—maybe you will as you go along here—of: What happens if this fails?

Mr. SAID. It will make—it will make the negotiations even harder. I mean, we have a window of opportunity today, and maybe passing, for a negotiated settlement, including the region. Further blood, more blood—and, if it's seen as one-sided—will make negotiations even harder, down the road.

Chairman BIDEN. Thank you very much, Senator.

Senator Hagel.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you each for your presentations and your continued efforts to educate and inform not just the Congress, but the American people. And that, as we all appreciate, is of great essence, on probably the most significant issue this Nation has faced since Vietnam. Not just as you all have said, and each in your own way, noted, that it is not just an Iraqi issue, it is far broader, and the consequences

are far more significant. It's a regional issue, and some of us have been saying that for some time.

As I have listened to your presentations and my colleagues' questions, no matter the question, no matter the answer, no matter the issue, the dynamic, it all comes back to one fundamental thing, and that's the absolute requirement for political settlement, not just in Iraq, but in the Middle East. And each of you has been very articulate in framing those issues in some specificity.

I noted, Mr. Said, in your testimony and comments, if I can quote—I think you said something to the effect that no framework for a peaceful resolution exists now in Iraq. You then further, toward the end of your statement, said, "What Iraq needs now is an international sponsored peace process, a framework." You engaged Senator Lugar on this issue, to some extent. With that in mind, and each of you have noted Professor Marr's point about: Only the Iraqis, essentially, can settle their differences. Dr. Brookings—I mean, Dr. O'Hanlon——

[Laughter.]

Chairman BIDEN. You don't mind Dr. Brookings, do you?

Dr. O'HANLON. Thank you. [Laughter.]

Senator HAGEL. I think your mother was from that side of the family. [Laughter.]

Dr. O'Hanlon noted that this was going to require a broad political dynamic. So, if I have listened as attentively as I think I have to each of you, you all come to the same conclusion. So, here's the question. We will, tonight, learn, from the President of the United States, what he is going to propose to the Congress and the American people, and to our allies—most specifically, to the Iraqi Government—on where we go from here. I think it's pretty clear what that proposal is going to consist of. And you mentioned Baker-Hamilton. I don't think that there is any great—I'll listen to the President tonight, carefully, obviously, to find out, but I don't think there is any great attention in what the President is going to say tonight that comes from, or a result of, the 79 recommendations that came out of the Baker-Hamilton Commission—one, specifically, which has been noted here, engagement with Iran and Syria, and the wider diplomatic regional focus.

If you all had the opportunity—and I know you all talk to the White House and decisionmakers—but to focus on two or three most specific issues, in the President's presentation tonight, as to what he will be proposing, what would you say are the most important two or three? Or what would you like to see are the most important two or three? Or, if you were the President, what do you think is the essence of where we go from here, and why? And I know we are limited in our time, but I have 4 minutes; that gives each of you 1 minute. And we would start with Dr. Marr.

Thank you.

Chairman BIDEN. You can go over, on your answers.

Dr. MARR. I would focus on regional cooperation. That is to say, getting the regional community in, either by a big conference, which I tend to think isn't going to work very well, or by a contact group, something that allows us to deal with them individually—would be very important, and getting them on board on stablizing Iraq. And, second, on the kinds of pressures, incentives, other

things we're going to have to undertake, as the group that's providing most of the force in Iraq, to nudge Iraqis—that means the political parties in power now—to cooperate, to get on with reconciliation, to deal with the de-Baathification issue, and other things. Ultimately that's going to determine what kind of response we get in Iraq.

Senator HAGEL. Mr. O'Hanlon.

Dr. O'HANLON. Senator, I would focus, as Phebe has just said, on the need for political reconciliation. I think it's the overwhelming prerequisite to any kind of success, or even averting complete failure in Iraq, at this point. It's hard for the President to really create the right mentality in Iraqi minds, because, of course, he is so committed to this operation. But it strikes me that the Iraqis need to feel like 2007 is a make-or-break year. Hopefully, they can read our politics well enough to know that this country may support the President tonight if he asks for more effort in various ways, but I think it's probably his last chance to really get that kind of support from the country, and he may not even get it this time. And so, I hope that there's a sense of acute focus among Iraqis on the need to resolve issues like sharing oil equally, reining in militias, rehabilitating former Baathists who don't have blood on their hands directly, and dealing with issues like Kirkuk. If that doesn't work, the President can't talk about it very easily tonight, but I think the backup plan is to think about this more like Bosnia and move toward a facilitated resolution of the civil war, where we move toward autonomous regions and help people relocate so they're in neighborhoods where they feel safer. I think that's the obvious backup plan, and pretty much the only choice we're going to have within 9 to 12 months, unless things turn around quickly.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Mr. Said.

Mr. SAID. For a political settlement in Iraq, Iraqis need to come together to decide on the shape of the state they want to live in. That's the essence of a political process that is—that doesn't exist now. We have the formal mechanisms—we have elections, we have a constitution, we have a government—but they are not working. And the evidence to that is the violence and the apathy that I have spoken about. So, there needs to be an external intervention, because Iraqi forces, Iraqi political entities and groups, are clearly unable to reach that consensus on their own. There is a need for international intervention in that regard. And it's better that it's multilateral rather than the United States doing it alone, as it has been trying over the last 3 years. There is a need to bring in more players, who can cajole the various actors, who can bring them to the table, and who can provide the essential support needed to implement whatever the Iraqis agree on—needed to support whatever the Iraqis can agree on.

And only on the back of that, one can then decide which forces stay, which forces leave. Maybe other actors will be able to bring their own forces to the table after having been engaged properly.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Dr. PILLAR. It is unfortunate that—but true, as you said, Senator—that what we hear tonight probably is not going to be drawn much from the Baker-Hamilton Report, so I would just use the last

few seconds to say I endorse strongly both the approach in the report that the regional engagement, including engagement with the likes of Syria and Iran, has to be part of a package, and, second, to support the whole concept of an approach toward the troop presence in Iraq that let's Iraqis, as well as the American people, look forward to a future in which, as the report put it, by the first quarter of 2008, essentially the combat role by United States troops will be over.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you, to each of you. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Chairman BIDEN. Thank you very much. We usually move—at least I have been moving based on seniority, but Senator—my good friend, Senator Dodd, is here, but he suggested that I move to Senator Feingold.

Senator DODD. Before you jump too quickly at that, Mr. Chairman, as a strong supporter of the seniority system—I've, over the years, acquired the ability to appreciate it—let me briefly, briefly say—let me congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on taking the gavel here—to thank Dick Lugar for tremendous leadership on this committee. And it's a continuation—a continuum here. I'm not surprised at all that Joe Biden is convening a hearing like this, with a distinguished group of panelists, to talk about the critical foreign policy issue of the day. It's exactly what Dick Lugar has been doing before. It's great to see this kind of leadership move back and forth here, with people who are highly competent, know what they're talking about, and providing great leadership in the country on this issue. So, I thank you, Mr. Chairman, very, very much.

Chairman BIDEN. Thank you.

Senator Feingold.

Senator FEINGOLD. Well, as an increasingly strong supporter of the seniority system——

[Laughter.]

Senator FEINGOLD [continuing]. Let me thank Senator Dodd for his tremendous courtesy in this regard.

Senator KERRY. Ask Senator Webb how he feels about this. [Laughter.]

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you all for coming to testify in front of this committee. And thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for arranging this and the rest of the hearings we'll be having over the next few weeks. I know you and your staff have worked hard to lay out a range of good hearings and witnesses so this committee can grapple with one of the most significant challenges, really, in our Nation's history.

Unfortunately, these hearings are taking place in the context of increasing violence in Iraq, a lack of political agreement among Iraqi political factions, an overstrained United States military, and an overwhelming and accurate sense among the American people that the President's policies in Iraq are wrong. This really is, of course, a tragic situation. And I appreciate your candor and insights today on what I hope will be the first of many open, honest, and candid hearings we'll have.

My colleagues have already addressed a number of important issues. I don't want to take a lot of time here today, but I do want to talk about a critical aspect of the administration's Iraq policy:

What the role of the United States military in Iraq is, given what you've been talking about, political deadlock and increasing sectarian violence; what impact the current United States military presence in Iraq is having on the political, economic, and security conditions in Iraq; and, most importantly, what impact our continuing presence in Iraq is having on our efforts to defeat terrorist networks not just in Iraq, not just in the region, but around the world. I think sometimes we forget this isn't a regional issue, it is an international issue. And I think one of the greatest failings of our view of this is that we look at this either in—through the prism of Iraq or even through the prism of the Middle East. That is insufficient, in light of what happened to us on 9/11, in light of the challenges to the security of the American people.

So, let me start with Dr. Pillar. Let me focus on a statement you made in your testimony. To paraphrase, you said you concurred with the statements in the declassified national intelligence estimate published by DNI on September 26, 2006, that suggested that Iraq could become a "cause celebre" for jihadists, and that it is "shaping a new generation of terrorist leaders and operatives," and is being exploited by al-Qaeda to "attract new recruits and donors."

First, in speaking generally about your analysis, would the withdrawal of American troops from Iraq at some point help counter the ability of al-Qaeda and other jihadists around the world to recruit new members?

Dr. PILLAR. Yes, sir; I believe it would, which is not to say that it would undo much of the damage that's already been done. What's taking place in Iraq right now is that the current prominent jihad mirrors what took place in Afghanistan in the earlier jihad against the Soviets in the 1980s, where a number of effects occurred. One, it became a huge inspiration and propaganda point, a kind of rallying point. Two, it was a training ground, in a very specific way. Lots of people learned how to handle firearms and explosives to put to other use. And third, it was the ultimate extremist networking opportunity, in which you had people of different nationalities—Pakistanis, Arabs, what have you—who came together. And we're still seeing the effects of that today. I think most of the long-term effects of the jihad in Iraq paralleling that most of those we have yet to see. What's already occurred cannot be undone. But the short answer to your question is yes; we can avoid compounding the damage by reducing, or bringing to a close, our presence there.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you for that direct answer. So, more specifically, then, is it safe to say that al-Qaeda will continue to exploit the presence of a significant level of United States military personnel in Iraq?

Dr. PILLAR. There's no question in my mind that it will. It's been one of the biggest propaganda points that al-Qaeda has been offered.

Senator FEINGOLD. In your prepared statement, you said that, "The most important variable in Iraq in the months or years ahead is the sheer continuation of the war, as well as the continued United States participation in it." So, for example, if the United States began redeploying from Iraq, what would be the long-term impact on al-Qaeda, globally, in your view?

Dr. PILLAR. Senator Feingold, I think you have to bear in mind that "jihad" means, literally, "struggle." What's most important for the people we're talking about is not a particular outcome, or what we, back in this country, might consider, in our lexicon, victory or defeat and what have you. It's participation in a struggle, and especially participation in a struggle against a superpower. And with the Soviets no longer around, that's us. So, just about any outcome that is within the realm of imagination of anyone in this room, which would involve at least some violence still in Iraq, is going to serve that purpose of a struggle. So, that's the most important thing, not a particular outcome or this side winning or that side losing.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Doctor.

Dr. O'Hanlon, thanks for your testimony. First, let me applaud the work that you and your colleagues at Brookings are doing on Iraq. Your data and analysis are helpful and insightful. Let me ask you some questions about some of the—what lies beneath the data.

Your data obviously highlights troubling trends. It shows that, regardless of the size of United States troop presence in Iraq—and your data shows that it has gone from 123,000 in 2003 to 140,000 in 2006—Iraqi civilian fatalities, estimated strength of the insurgency, strength of the Shia militias, and daily average interethnic attacks and the estimated number of foreign fighters have all risen over the past 3 years, without fail. Given that we can't, from this data, draw a connection between U.S. troop levels and the improvement of any of these important indicators, can we draw a conclusion with your data that sending in more U.S. troops will actually have an impact on any of these key indicators?

Dr. O'HANLON. No; not from the data, Senator. I think there's a possibility of constructing a theory that the added troops could help, especially in the context of a broader political and economic initiative. But there's no data that would prove that it would work. And, in fact, I think that, to the contrary, I would be, while not against the surge proposal, if done in a broader context, I'd be skeptical, at this point, that it can make a big difference.

Senator FEINGOLD. As you mentioned, the other big troubling statistic is shown in the number of Iraqis who are displaced. This is turning into an incredible humanitarian tragedy. According to your data, in your view: Would an increase in United States military personnel in Iraq address any of the driving factors of their displacement—presumably things like bombings, growing militias, interethnic attacks? As we discussed, it appears as if the numbers don't support the hypothesis that more troops will help settle things down.

Dr. O'HANLON. Well, again, you can tell a story, you can construct a theory of how more neighborhood-by-neighborhood security might help reduce the ethnic displacement. But, again, we have no evidence from the information, that we've accumulated over 4 years' time, to prove that. Even in an earlier period, when there was less violence and less for the United States and its partners to deal with day to day in Iraq, we were not able to get things on a positive trajectory. So, I think, if anything, the data would make one skeptical. Can't prove it, one way or another, but should make one skeptical about the prospects.

Senator FEINGOLD. Well, studying your data, what dynamics or variables, in your view, have had the most significant impact on reducing violence in Iraq? The top-line numbers you've given us show, again, pretty consistent increase in the violence across the board, but do you see any connections or positive stories in that data that should contribute to formulating policy proposals?

Dr. O'HANLON. I see virtually no positive news on the hard numbers of security or economics. The only good news really is in the politics and the public opinion, although there's less than there used to be. Two or three years ago, it was possible to tell a better story, because 2 or 3 years ago, the Shia really seemed to believe in the future of Iraq, and that's when you had the Grand Ayatollah al-Sistani more vocal, trying to rein in some of the militias. The overall Shia response to the insurgency seemed to be one of patience, of believing time was on their side anyway. They stayed optimistic in the polls. They still seemed to believe in the idea of an integrated Iraq. The Sunni Arabs were very skeptical all along, and very quickly soured on our presence, as you know, but the Shia stayed positive for a long time. Unfortunately, that's gone, to a large extent, and I don't know how to recreate it.

So, I'm certainly much more pessimistic about the idea of building an integrated Iraq, at this point, than I have been in the previous 4 years.

Senator FEINGOLD. Well, thanks, all of you.

And, again, thank you very much, Senator Dodd.

Chairman BIDEN. Thank you, Senator.

I would note the presence of Chairman Lantos's wife, Annette Lantos, in the audience. Welcome. I'm glad you've come over to the other side. Thank you.

Senator Coleman is next, but he is absent.

So, Senator Corker.

Senator CORKER. Mr. Chairman, it's an honor to be on this committee.

Chairman BIDEN. We welcome you. We're delighted to have you with us.

Senator CORKER. Thank you. And I'm glad to see that, after Ranking Member Lugar had 35 hearings, you're doing the same. This is a tremendous service to us in the Senate, to our country, and I appreciate what you're doing very much, and echo what Senator Dodd said, a minute ago.

I'm a new member. I'll ask one question and then move on to other members. But I know that we all want to see a stable Iraq, and we all want to see our men and women in uniform home as soon as possible. And I keep hearing that possibly the addition of troops would be better served after political settlements could occur. And I guess the question is: Is there any real thought that political settlements can occur with so much chaos, with so much lack of security for citizens there in Iraq today?

Dr. MARR. I'll start by taking a crack at that. I'm not optimistic either, but I'm a realist. And so, my expectations, from the start, were perhaps not of the highest.

I think the idea that we're operating in a timeframe where, in the next year or two, according to our exigencies here, the situation is going to play out in Iraq is wrong. Their timeframe—as you can

see if you talk to any of these leaders coming over here—is a much longer one. And I, frankly, think this chaos, perhaps not with the same level of killing—but this kind of instability is going to go on for a very long time, until the population and the political leadership that either benefits or loses from it comes to the conclusion that they're losing more than they're gaining. And the settlement is not going to result from some grand conference, some grand reconciliation. I'd like to suggest, again, it's going to be much more mundane and prosaic. And we see it going on at a local level. It will come from different groups making different deals with different people across these divides until something more cohesive emerges. That's going to take quite some time. And whether our patience with this process is going to last or not is an open question.

Dr. O'HANLON. A somewhat different take, Senator, although I greatly respect Dr. Marr's point and I think there's a lot to it. I would also say, when 100,000 people a month are being driven from their homes, the idea that the conflict can stay at this level indefinitely, and essentially retain a character like we're seeing today, is not what I would agree with or prognosticate. I would say that we have a couple of years to save anything like a multiethnic integrated Iraq. Frankly, I don't think it's that important to save it. I think stability is much more important than salvaging the kind of Iraq that's been there in the past, from America's strategic-interest perspective. And I think we're going to have to see progress on that in the course of 2007, in part because of American politics, but in part because another year's worth of this level of ethnic cleansing and Iraq starts to look more and more like three separated regions, where you essentially had a civil war divide the country. I see Dr. Marr is disagreeing with me, but that's what the numbers say to me.

And so, I think that we are going to have to view 2007 as our last best chance to have anything like current strategy succeed, and, if it doesn't, with or without a surge, I think within a year we're going to have to start having a conversation about whether Iraq has to be divided up into a—what you could call a federal structure or a soft partition—you know, different phrases can be used—but basically where oil revenue is shared, but, otherwise, most of the governance, most of the security is done in three separate provinces, there is some kind of a loose federal structure, a small federal army. And, otherwise, you help people relocate, if they need to, to places where they will feel safer, and help them with relocation assistance, in terms of housing and jobs.

Dr. PILLAR. Well, it is valid to say that—to point out that the security affects the politics, just as the politics affects the security. I strongly agree with Phebe Marr's observations about the timeframe involved and about how Iraqis are going to keep doing what they're doing until they believe they don't have a chance to get the upper hand. If you're looking for an analogy in the Middle East, that I think is frightening in a way, but perhaps most apt, it was the Lebanese civil war, which raged on for something like 14 years, from the mid-1970s to the late 1980s, until all the Lebanese parties—and that, too, was one characterized by a very complex sectarian mosaic—until they basically exhausted themselves, literally

and figuratively, and finally, with the help of the Saudis and the Syrians, reached a peace agreement, even though that left a number of people dissatisfied. We're seeing the effects of it today. But that's the kind of timeframe I think we're dealing with, with regard to resolving, if it's ever going to be even halfway resolved, the political conflict in Iraq.

Senator CORKER. Well, are you recommending, then, that things stay as is until they get so bad that people start making those kinds of deals? Is that what you're recommending?

Dr. PILLAR. It wasn't a recommendation, Senator Corker, it was an analytic observation about the situation we face.

Chairman BIDEN. Thank you.

I would note that we did not have 135,000 forces in Lebanon during that period. And I know you're making an accurate—I think, accurate observation, but—at any rate.

Senator Boxer.

Senator BOXER. I want to thank Senator Dodd for understanding my conflict here with the Environment Committee. I really do appreciate it. And I want to thank——

Chairman BIDEN. You're a chairwoman of that committee——

Senator BOXER. Yes.

Chairman BIDEN [continuing]. And he has interests before that committee, and, don't worry, he's not going to fool around with you. [Laughter.]

Senator BOXER. I shall never forget the problems of Connecticut. [Laughter.]

Acid rain and everything else.

Senators Biden and Lugar, thank you for continuing to work so closely together. And this panel, I think, has been fascinating. And I find that, you know, as I've listened, a couple of things are leaping out at me that I think make sense in a very difficult chaotic situation. And the things I think make sense happen to be the things that my chairman has been talking about, and I'm going to pursue what Mr. O'Hanlon has talked about—which is to try and wake up, smell the roses, and figure out what is actually happening on the ground. People are moving toward their ethnic identities. That's not America. This is what we don't want to see happen. But either we're going to accept that or our kids are getting killed—and more and more and more. And if you listen to Dr. Marr—and she's so learned—she says, "Only when the participants in the struggle for power recognize they're losing more than they can gain will this violence come to an end. This may be a very long time. And, in the meantime, the best we can do is staunch the violence, contain the struggle." Listen. How many more dead will that be? And I'm not asking you that, because you're not a military expert. But I will ask the Secretary of State that.

And I have to say, Dr. Marr, with all due respect, when you talk about—you see, kind of, an ending, and you say—and you could be right—"This will end when"—and I'm quoting you—"different people make different deals across a period of time." How is that better than the idea of accepting the fact that that dealmaking ought to happen from all the parties accepting the reality of this, and then doing what Mr. Said says, which is come to a political agreement, and then figure out how to enforce that agreement with

international forces, not just on the backs of the American people. I just—and I say "the American people," because their kids are bearing the brunt of this.

I think it's very interesting—I read, Mr. Said, your amazing article, December 9, 2002. Is it—am I right that your family fled Iraq because of Saddam Hussein? OK. And this is what you wrote in 2002, "There are many reasons why Iraqis who have long sought to topple Saddam Hussein are opposed to the impending war." This is before the war started. "This, after all, is not the first time the United States has pursued regime change in Iraq. All previous attempts ended with disastrous consequences for the Iraqi people."

But I would add a sentence: And this time, although it isn't ended, a lot of families here are coping with disastrous consequences, not only the dead, but the wounded and the post-traumatic stress and the brain injuries and so on.

Now, Mr. Said, every poll shows us that 60 percent of the Iraqis today think it's OK to shoot an American. Could you explain to us why that is the case? Could you—why do you think that's so?

Mr. SAID. I mean, it's understandable. The effect of United States troops in Iraq today—not the whole consequences of the invasion, which obviously are—have been catastrophic for thousands of Iraqis and Americans—is ambiguous, it's a mixed bag. On one hand, the foreign troops are an irritant, they are creating a reaction in the form of an insurgency, which continues to be the bulk of the violence taking place in Iraq today. And the number—60 percent—confirms that, that for most Iraqis they view the American presence as an occupation, and they continue to consider fighting the occupation a legitimate pursuit.

Senator BOXER. OK. Well, let me——

Mr. SAID. However, if I may——

Senator BOXER. Yes. Go ahead.

Mr. SAID [continuing]. The presence of United States troops today is critical for the survival of the Iraqi State and actually for the physical survival of many Iraqis. The United States troops in Iraq today have a humanitarian mission, as well as a——

Senator BOXER. I get it. Why do 70 percent of the Iraqi people say we should get out, 60 percent say it's OK to shoot? So, this may be the case, but clearly that message hasn't gotten through.

Now, Dr. Marr, have you ever read the book, "The Reckoning," by Sandra Mackey?

Dr. MARR. Yes. I know her. Yes.

Senator BOXER. Both of you make me very proud, by the way, just as an aside. But I read that book before I voted on whether or not I wanted to give this President authority to go to war. She predicted everything that has happened. And one of the things she said—and I want—and you may not agree with her—is that after World War I, Iraq was put together, was it not, as a country?

Dr. MARR. No; I think there were some elements of being together before that. There was Mesopotamia——

Senator BOXER. I understand.

Dr. MARR. You know, there's a sense of living within that territory that is more than just throwing a country——

Senator BOXER. But is it not——

Dr. MARR [continuing]. Together.

Senator BOXER [continuing]. So that there was no "Iraq," per se, until after World War I?

Dr. MARR. Yes. That's——

Senator BOXER. And is it not true——

Dr. MARR [continuing]. True of many countries——

Senator BOXER. Well, I'm——

Dr. MARR [continuing]. In the area.

Senator BOXER [continuing]. I'm not talking about other countries.

Dr. MARR. Yes.

Senator BOXER. I'm talking about Iraq. And isn't it true—isn't it true that when the British drew these lines, they put many different ethnic groups inside Iraq who they knew had many years, perhaps thousands of years, of enmity?

Dr. MARR. I don't even know what you're talking about. They put——

Senator BOXER. I'm talking about——

Dr. MARR [continuing]. Ethnic groups inside of——

Senator BOXER. I'm saying——

Dr. MARR [continuing]. Iraq?

Senator BOXER. I'm saying: When they drew the lines, according to Sandra Mackey, they were very clear that they drew them knowing that it would be a contentious country because of all the ethnic rivalries. Would you agree with her on that point?

Dr. MARR. No.

Senator BOXER. You don't agree——

Dr. MARR. It's a——

Senator BOXER [continuing]. With her.

Dr. MARR. It's a long issue. I don't deny ethnic and sectarian rivalries, but I do want to succinctly address your issue. There are many other ties—tribal, family—which frequently override ethnic and sectarian identity, and a nonsectarian educated middle class, which was very strong in periods in Iraq—forties, fifties, sixties, seventies. Education doesn't obliterate, sectarianism, but really reduces it. It's much more complex. And I didn't want to leave the impression that I feel that United States troops have to stick around for years and years while Iraqis solve their problem. I would favor, if the Iraqis can't get their act together in a reasonable time, a policy of containment, that is containing the problems from spilling across the borders of Iraq.

So, don't, please, identify my position with one of sticking around there——

Senator BOXER. Good, I'm glad you——

Dr. MARR [continuing]. Forever——

Senator BOXER [continuing]. Clarified. I'm really glad.

Dr. MARR [continuing]. While that happens.

But I want to come back to one point. I don't agree with the reality—I don't think Sandra goes as far as this—that Iraq is inevitably based on ethnic identity and sectarian identity which has come to the fore very virulently only recently. You may think you're going to get stability by recognizing these divisions, and drawing lines, but who is going to protect the seams?

Senator BOXER. Well, let me——

Dr. MARR. Which forces——

Senator BOXER [continuing]. Let me—let me address——

Dr. MARR [continuing]. You know——

Senator BOXER [continuing]. That——

Dr. MARR. So——

Senator BOXER [continuing]. Because I think my chairman has spelled that out beautifully, because we're talking about still one Iraq with semiautonomous regions, where you can bring in, you know, the world community to help enforce a political settlement. But that's OK. I don't need to—you know we disagree on the point.

And I'll close, because I know my time is up. But it seems to me that Sandra Mackey was right on every single point that she made, that what would happen when a war came is that these ethnic differences would come to the surface, where they were tampened down before.

Because I think we're missing the point. We haven't really laid out how we're going to get keeping this country as a whole and not going with the idea expressed by Dr. O'Hanlon. We haven't really resolved that question. If you think they're going to go in and go after al-Sadr, al-Maliki's government will fall, because he's dependent on Sadr. So then, is it all going to be against the Sunnis? And then, as Mr. Hakim says, "Are we in the middle, taking sides in a civil war?" It's complex.

I thank you all for your time. And I thank you——

Chairman BIDEN. Well, I thank you, Senator. I'm sure the panel would be prepared to answer some questions. We will not take up the rest of their academic and——

Senator BOXER. No, no, that's not what I meant.

Chairman BIDEN. But I'm—no, but, I mean, I hope the panel would consider—and if you could submit through the chair any additional questions you have. But I'd try to narrow them, rather than have each of us committing 10 or 12 questions to them. I know we could do that.

Senator BOXER. That's my only one. Thank you.

Chairman BIDEN. Yes. No; I would—the panel has no problem responding to that, I'm sure.

Senator Coleman.

Senator COLEMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I was in Iraq about a month ago. And just a quick observation. OK? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

To me, it seemed like there are two battles going on in Iraq. One is a war in the Anbar province that our Marines are fighting, and they know who the enemy is. The enemy is the foreign fighters and the al-Qaeda insurgents. And the Marines are doing their job, and they're making progress every day, in the sense of eliminating terrorists. You can measure this progress. The other battle is in Baghdad, and consists of sectarian violence. I see our troops caught in the crosshairs of this sectarian violence in Baghdad. If you see it, it's almost unbelievable, the extent of it, the depravity of it. And it seems to me that as our Marines make progress in clearing areas of terrorists, they need Sunnis to participate in the police departments in Anbar to hold the territory they've cleared. The local Sunnis know who the foreign fighters are. And Sunnis are needed in the army. So it seems to me that the Iraqis have got to achieve reconciliation in order to end the violence in the long term. We

can't resolve anything in Iraq in the long term, militarily, without reconciliation among Iraqi factions. And during my trip to Iraq it didn't appear to me that the Iraqi leadership were doing all they could to achieve real reconciliation. I met with Dr. Rubaie, the National Security Advisor for the Prime Minister, and said that he didn't think that sectarian violence was a major issue in Iraq. I was incredulous when I heard that. Yet we continue to face the problem with Sunnis and the insurgency and I think we saw some of that in the paper today. When I was in Iraq I didn't get a sense that Iraqis are done killing each other through sectarian violence.

And so, my first question is: Does anybody here have a sense of whether reconciliation can occur in Iraq today? And, if not, is there a timeline for reconciliation?

Mr. SAID. Mr. Coleman, I tried, in my testimony, to illustrate a complex conflict—and you alluded to that—that there is an insurgency, for example, taking place in Anbar, and the sort of the civil strife taking place in Baghdad. Of course, it's less neat than that, actually. There are insurgencies and civil wars happening throughout Iraq. There are only a few pockets of stability in Iraq, including Kurdistan. But, almost in every province there is a conflict, whether it's a criminal—criminal gangs or whether it's a sort of a social revolt against the establishment or whether it's civil war. In Anbar this summer, there were clashes between Sunni tribes. Ostensibly, in the media, it was about Sunni tribes fighting al-Qaeda, but, in reality, these were old tribal rivalries spilling into open conflict and being dressed as Anbar tribes fighting al-Qaeda. Inside the Sunni political representations, there are deep fissures between the Islamists, on one side, and the Baathists—and unreformed Baathists, on the other. So, there are no neat groups that one can resort to or revert to in a partition formula whereby one can say: What do the Sunnis say? There is a vast difference between the positions of various Sunni groups. And the differences between the Shia groups are expressed in real fighting and dead bodies in the south, throughout Basrah. Every city in the south has fallen out of government control at one point or the other over the last 6 months.

So, the Iraqis are not done killing each other, but on the various bases, under various motivations—there is—we don't have the luxury to wait out for compromises to emerge from this chaos. The situation—the pervasive fear and violence is creating a humanitarian disaster in Iraq, as Mr. O'Hanlon has described, that needs to be addressed. So, there is an urgency for a political process, if you like, regardless of the willingness of the parties to engage. The problem is, the parties need to be brought to the table. And what needs to be—to happen is, one needs to bring more parties that are willing to engage. If the combatants, if the radicals or the extremists are not willing to talk, then the table needs to be widened, because there are many Iraqis, as well, who want to see peace in their country, and want to rebuild their nation. And this is a role for the international community. There is a need for an international-sponsored peace process that will bring Iraqis to the table, including those who are willing to find compromises and willing to stay together.

Senator COLEMAN. But, Dr. Marr, I mean, if I could turn to you on this, if the parties aren't at that point where they have that fundamental commitment to say, "We recognize what the problem is, and we are committed to do those things to resolve it"—that's my concern as—and I'll listen to the President, but I'm not—I didn't see, in my time there, in my conversations, that you've got a commitment on the part of the Iraqis to do what has to be done that would then justify a greater commitment of American lives and resources. That's my problem. If——

Dr. MARR. I agree that that is a problem. And it's not perhaps either/or. I'm just expressing what I think is a realistic analysis of what's likely to happen. That doesn't mean that I like it or there aren't some other things we can do.

The key issue is: How do you get Iraqis, particularly those that are going to be in the political process, to reconcile? And you have pointed out a very good way to do that. You've got to put pressure, you have to have incentives, you certainly have to widen the political spectrum. Because one of the things that's operative here is that political parties and groups who have power now want to keep it, and their power is fragile. And widening the spectrum and including others may not be exactly what they want. We don't want to get caught in that. We, alone, are not the only ones who need to do this. The regional neighbors have their own clients, and they need to be able to exercise pressure but there are numerous ways in which we could push, nudge, and otherwise try to get this reconciliation.

Now, whether that's going to be successful is a big issue. And certainly whether we keep troops there and keep on with this effort, if Iraqis don't rise to the occasion, I have to say, it is, in fact, one of your jobs——

Senator COLEMAN. And——

Dr. MARR [continuing]. To decide that.

Senator COLEMAN. But you have also highlighted the consequences if we do that, that there are devastating consequences, in terms of ethnic cleansing, in terms of—Dr. Pillar, in terms of what's going to happen in the rest of the region.

And I'm not sure what my time is, Mr. Chairman. If I can just——

Chairman BIDEN. No; you have another little bit.

Senator COLEMAN. Dr. Pillar, the—we're not in this alone. I mean, Iran has—Iran is pressuring us in—with Hezbollah in Lebanon; they're pressuring us with Hamas in Gaza; they're pressuring us with supporting al-Sadr in Iraq. Is there any appetite on the part of folks in the region to play a constructive role in trying to resolve this situation?

Dr. PILLAR. Yes, Senator; I think there is. And you can look at past experience. In the case of the Syrians, for example, just to mention them in passing, they were part of Operation Desert Storm, back in 1991. In the wake of 9/11 I believe administration officials would tell you that Syrian counterterrorist cooperation against the jihadists, about whom they share with us a concern, has taken place. The State Department has spoken about that publicly. And in the case of Iran, we had the experience of very profitable cooperation in Afghanistan in the wake of Operation Enduring

Freedom. And people like Ambassador Khalilzad and Ambassador Dobbins could talk to you about that.

There's little doubt in my mind that, in Tehran, there was at least a hope, if not an expectation, that something similar would happen with the political reconstruction of Iraq. Obviously, it did not work out that way. But the short answer to your question is yes; as demonstrated in the past, even the likes of the Iranians and the Syrians have shown their willingness to cooperate.

Senator COLEMAN. Does any other—is that a unanimous opinion?

Mr. SAID. I think there is opening for engagement, almost with all parties, without exception. And the question is: What's the framework? It has to be a multilateral framework. It has to be seen as a fair framework that will offer everyone something. Everyone needs something out of the process. It cannot be just at the expense—you know, it cannot happen at the expense of some parties and to the benefit of others.

Dr. PILLAR. And it has to be, as Senator Lugar put it earlier in the proceedings, all the cards on the table. You know, from the Iranians' point of view, they wouldn't want a negotiation just about Iraq, just as they're not comfortable with a negotiation just about the nuclear issue. They want to talk about all issues in dispute with the United States.

Senator COLEMAN. But you do recognize that they are fueling—they are fueling the instability, they're doing those things that are worsening the problem rather than doing anything to——

Dr. PILLAR. As I suggest in my testimony, they are dealing with a wide variety of groups in Iraq. It may be hard—and you'd have to rely on your classified intelligence for the latest story on this—to connect this bit of Iranian assistance with that attack. Nonetheless, some of that assistance, no doubt, has facilitated attacks against coalition forces. But, as I suggested before, the main way to look at that is as a full-court press by Iran to get as much influence in Iraq as they possibly can, with all parties.

Senator COLEMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BIDEN. Thank you.

Did you want to say something, Mike?

Dr. O'HANLON. I just wanted to make one other point. And I hesitate to add a nuance to anything Paul Pillar has said on this region; he knows it so well. But I am getting worried, from what we can see from the available evidence, that Iran has one other aim, which is to deal the United States a major strategic defeat in the region, which it now thinks is attainable in a way it did not 3 and 4 years ago, which may somewhat change the calculus. And it doesn't make me oppose the idea of negotiation, but it makes me very wary of expecting any progress or even assuming that Iran wants a stable Iraq as an outcome in this.

Senator COLEMAN. And I share those concerns, Dr. O'Hanlon.

Mr. SAID. If I may just add, Iran is not a coherent actor, by the way. Iran—there are various influences and interests in Iran, and that also gives an opening for dialog.

Dr. PILLAR. Yes; we have to see beyond the outrageous rhetoric of Ahmadinejad. I agree completely.

Chairman BIDEN. Let me—by the way, the chairman and I have discussed holding, hopefully, some thoughtful hearings on Iran and

actually what the state of play in Iran is, unrelated to us, just what's going on in Iran at the moment.

But let me, before I yield to my friend from Connecticut, indicate that there is going to be—you've been sitting a long time, and there is going to be a vote at noon, in which time we will break. Assuming the vote goes off at noon—after Senator Dodd, we will break for that vote, which will be 15 minutes, give you a little breather. And then I will confer with the Senator, and I'll ask the staff to confer with you. My intention was to continue to go through, to finish, but it's a much bigger committee. We have a total of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11—almost 12 more members to go. I'd like you all to consider, based on your schedules, whether or not you would want to break briefly for a lunch break from 12 noon to 1 o'clock, to give you an opportunity to have some lunch.

Senator SUNUNU. Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BIDEN. Yes.

Senator SUNUNU. If we break when the vote occurs, it does appear we might have time for one more round on each side. Being the next in line, I have a particular interest in that type of arrangement——

[Laughter.]

Senator SUNUNU [continuing]. If it were possible.

Chairman BIDEN. Well, based on your comments yesterday, I'm not going to let that happen. [Laughter.]

Chairman BIDEN. That's a joke. That's a joke. We will accommodate you, Senator, notwithstanding your comments. [Laughter.]

Senator Dodd.

Senator DODD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I'm going to ask one question, and then I see colleagues here, and try and provide some time for others before we break for the vote. Let me also join the chairman in welcoming our new members to the committee.

Jim, I've sat in that chair you're in, a long time ago, but it does move, and then it stalls, it seems, for a while. [Laughter.]

But I was looking at Barack Obama and remembering last year when he was sitting—and wondering if we'd even notice him at the end of the table, and moving up very quickly. So, welcome, all of you, to a very exciting committee with some tremendous leadership we've had, as I mentioned, with Dick Lugar and with Joe Biden now, and others. So, it's a good committee to be on, and your participation is really welcome.

I'd like to just pick up on—picking up off Senator Coleman's question. We're going to have the Secretary of State here tomorrow, as you know, coming before us. And I have been impressed with your comments and your ideas in this thing, and particularly, Dr. Marr, this issue of reconciliation, how it's going to come about. I suspect you're probably more—far more right about that. Despite our desires for something else to happen in a sort of a conversion on the road to Damascus here to occur with major political leaders.

But two points here; I'd like you to just quickly comment, if you can. One is: What can we be doing to help facilitate this? A question we get all the time, that if you're—if you believe this is a surge, it's not the right idea, that increasing military forces doesn't make a lot of sense, that clearly political resolution here is what

everyone seems to suggest is ultimately going to produce the kind of results we'd like to see, the question then follows on: What should we be doing? What should the United States, our allies, moderate Arab leaders in the region, be doing, specifically?

I just came back from 6 days in the region, as well. I was there with my colleague from Massachusetts. We were in Lebanon and spent about 3½ hours with President Assad in Damascus, which I've shared, with the Secretary and others, the conversations and what was offered there. One of the things that I share with you here is, when I asked, specifically, "What sort—what do you want to see, in Iraq, occur?"—the answer, I don't mind sharing with you here in this room, was, "I'd like to see a pluralistic, stable Arab government. I'm not interested in seeing a fundamentalist Shia-Iranian state on my border." Now, he said that in English in a private meeting. It wasn't announced in—in Arabic in a public document. So, I'm conscious of the fact that these are statements being made, as Tom Friedman likes to point out, in private, where you may get less than what the actual policies are. But, nonetheless, I found it interesting that he pursued, or at least willing to say those things.

What should we be doing? How should the United States—how should the Secretary of State be conducting our foreign policy in the region? And what, specifically, do you think we ought to be doing to encourage this kind of political resolution that we're all talking about?

Dr. MARR. That is absolutely critical and difficult, and I have only a few thoughts; I hope my colleagues have some others.

First of all, the absence of security and the dreadful humanitarian situation that Mike O'Hanlon is talking about needs to be addressed. Insecure people are not willing to make compromises. But with the political parties, you've got to have a collection of incentives and disincentives to get them to come to some terms on these very issues we've identified. There's a considerable amount of agreement on this.

You've got to say no to some people who may not like it, and you've got to have a little, perhaps, stick there, in terms of how long and how much support and troops the United States is going to be willing to provide.

And, second of all, I like the idea that I just heard—and I agree with it—of widening the pool. I'm not so sure some of the parties who now have power, and who feel very fragile, who feel worried that the Baath might come back or Sunnis might come back or whatever, are going to be willing to make the compromises. There used to be a large middle class with a lot of technocrats. There are not a lot now. Many of them have fled. They need to come back.

Two things, I think, are very important. One is to get this Cabinet to act as a Cabinet, not just a collection of fiefdoms of individual people, and getting the educated middle-class professionals back who have some of the spirit of, you know, nonsectarian identity.

So, widening the political pool, getting other people in, would be helpful. But I think, of course, the neighbors need to be brought in. We've talked about that. There's no easy answer. That's the only thing I want to say here. This is going to be long, laborious, the

kind of thing diplomats, politicians do all the time. But I think our expectation, that somehow this is going to happen rapidly, needs to be a little more realistic.

Senator DODD. Anyone else want to comment?

Dr. PILLAR. If I understand your very broad question, Senator Dodd, about approaching the region, I would just incorporate, by reference, the recommendations of the Iraq Study Group, and two themes, in particular. One is what we were discussing a moment ago, which is to talk with everyone. And that doesn't necessarily mean one big multilateral conference. I think Phebe made the very appropriate point earlier that other kinds of engagement are called for. And, No. 2, be prepared to talk about everything that is on the agenda of the regional governments, and not just ours. And, again, the Arab-Israeli conflict comes right to the fore.

Dr. O'HANLON. Senator, I wanted to make a plug for what I know many of you do, especially in the bipartisan coalitions or groups that go to Iraq and talk to Iraqis, because I think Iraqis need to know American political support is very fragile, and it's not going to last much longer.

Senator DODD. We've made that point.

Dr. O'HANLON. And I'm sure you continue to, but I think they need to keep hearing it, because I think it's very hard for President Bush to send that message in a convincing way, given how much his Presidency depends on this. From what I understand of the way he's going to talk—tonight, from what little I've heard from people in the administration, he is, of course, not going to be able to create this sense. He's going to try to put pressure on the Iraqis, but he's not going to be able to say, and not going to want to say, that if they don't get their act together, we're leaving. You know, that's just not something that he is in a position to want to say.

But I think you all, collectively, and we, in the think-tank world, to a lesser degree—we're less visible and less important in their eyes—we have to send that message, that, you know, for the reasons across the spectrum, from military capability of our Army and Marine Corps, to the patience of our people, to the upcoming Presidential race, and everything else, our patience for sticking with anything like this strategy is very limited, and it's probably measured in terms of 9 to 18 months, not years.

Mr. SAID. I just wanted to second what Professor Marr has said, in terms of broadening the political process—if you like, facilitating national dialog, internationalizing the Iraq—the Iraq issue, and bringing in more actors to the table.

About the broadening of the political process, this is not about reversing the outcomes of the political process——

Senator DODD. Yes.

Mr. SAID [continuing]. Of the last 3 years, it's about enhancing it. It's a process that has some elements that are good, but it's clearly not working, and it needs to be enhanced. There needs to be concessions. The winners of the political process need to make concessions and bring in more people to the table. And I'm not talking, here, about more combatants and more extremists, but about bringing people with a vested interest in a democratic Iraq.

There are also things that the United States will need to do on the humanitarian level. There is a humanitarian situation evolving

in Iraq today, and the United States needs to keep engaging on that issue, and maybe also bring in more international support.

And, finally, again, it's—again, efforts that are already underway in Iraq, on state-building, on maintaining the machinery of government, that will be necessary, no matter what the outcome of the current violence is.

Senator DODD. Thanks. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BIDEN. I thank you very much.

Let me suggest that it's possible that maybe all the Senators who were here will not be coming back, so it may be more in your interest for us to keep going. But I will do—you need a break. We'll go to Senator Sununu, and, after his questioning, I'd ask permission, since Senator Webb has to preside at 1 o'clock, if the vote hasn't been called by then, whether or not my friend from Pennsylvania would be willing to let Senator Webb go next. And then we can make a—then we'll give you a break, regardless, and then decide whether to come back in 5 minutes or give everybody a chance to eat lunch. My guess is, we'll continue to go through, in light of the rollcall I just got from the committee staff as to who is likely to come back. So, it may be easier to do it that way.

Senator DODD. Mr. Chairman, I presume, by the way, opening statements are going to—you've made an accommodation for that to be included.

Chairman BIDEN. Yes; anyone who has an opening statement, it will be placed in the record.

Senator DODD. Thank you.

Chairman BIDEN. Senator Sununu.

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

We often say how much we appreciate your time and testimony, to all of our witnesses, but I think it's fair to say, today in particular, this has been a great panel. They're very constructive, very specific, very direct, and I think that's extremely helpful to us, given the importance of these issues.

There does seem to be a lot of consensus about the importance of the climate: Economic issues, political issues, social issues that need to be dealt with in order for stability—long-term stability to be realized. There's been specific discussion, as there was in the Iraq Study Group report, of things like the oil law, provincial elections, the training process, and the broader reconciliation process. Those were all recommendations here. But I think, Mr. O'Hanlon, you, in particular, emphasize that those would need to be addressed, or at least referenced, with regard to any change in the military footprint, military operations, and military objectives. And I think this, as well, is something that was contemplated in the Study Group Report, specifically with regard to an increase in troops. On page 73, it says, "We could support a short-term redeployment or surge of American combat forces to stabilize Baghdad or speed up the training-and-equipping mission if the United States commander in Iraq determines that such steps would be effective. We reject the immediate withdrawal of troops because we believe so much is at stake." So, clearly, this is something that's contemplated by Baker-Hamilton, but in the context of achieving some of these other specific objectives.

So, I'd like all the panelists to comment, but we'll begin with Mr. O'Hanlon, whether or not you feel that some increase in forces, if used to—hypothetically, for example, stabilize Baghdad—would make, or could make, a difference in improving the window for training forces or for the formal reconciliation process, which began in December, but seems to have slowed a little bit. I mean, we can talk about those two specific examples or any others you want to discuss.

Dr. O'HANLON. I'll give you a somewhat tortured answer, Senator. I would support a surge, in the context of a much broader approach, but I'm not sure I could be very confident it's going to work. So, since I have the opportunity—and you've given it to me—to speak today, I think that we all have to be thinking about backup plans very hard, because, with or without a surge, I think we're likely to see something like the current strategy not succeed. But I would still think our chances would improve in the short term, at the tactical level, at least, with a surge. So, it's a tough situation.

Senator SUNUNU. If those troops are given a specific objective, or an objective to support one of these other political or economic issues, which would it be? Which do you think their temporary role or security role could be most effective in enhancing?

Dr. O'HANLON. I think that they have to create some level of stability in Iraq, in the neighborhoods, reduce the violence. If you don't do that, nothing else can work.

Senator SUNUNU. But, in terms of reconciliation, training, oil law, provincial elections, we—for example, in the electoral process, last time a surge was implemented, or two of the three times that we saw a surge in troops, it was focused on the elections, with relative success, and most people agree that those were relatively peaceful.

Dr. O'HANLON. I think a limited focused approach like that probably won't work. We're going to—we sort of need a miracle, politically. We need for Prime Minister al-Maliki, who now has an 85-percent unfavorability rating among Sunni Arabs, to be seen as a different kind of leader than he's been seen as so far. Or maybe we need a new Iraqi Prime Minister, like Allawi, who at least had a little stronger—you know, linkages across other ethnic groups. But I think we are beyond the point where you could say one specific political improvement will be enough. I think we're going to have to see a whole new ball game in very short order.

Dr. MARR. Well, it seems to me that if there's any mission for this additional surge, it's going to be to stop the ethnic cleansing, sectarian cleansing, or whatever we want to call it, in Baghdad. It certainly can't address all the problems of the country. But it's the demographic shift, that Michael has mentioned, that is so devastating and we want to stop and slow this. That's what we mean when we say "providing some security in Baghdad." But I think we've all pointed out how that's fraught with dangers, because it's so inextricably mixed with different ethnic and sectarian groups and political parties and others. I agree, here, that perhaps it's worth giving it a shot, but our chances of actually turning the whole situation around on the ground is very slim. We might be able, with our forces, to hold some neighborhoods or do something

militarily, but, as everybody has pointed out here, the real issue is: What are you going to do with the time you buy and the increase in tranquility, presumably, that you get? How are you going to get Iraqis to begin to address their political problems? That's the real issue.

Senator SUNUNU. And that's the point I make. And where I'd like a little bit of additional comment is: If that time is created, where might it be best used? And do you even think it might be used effectively?

Mr. Said.

Mr. SAID. I think this is an issue of putting the horse before the cart. I think the troops are a tool to achieving a certain objective. We need to agree on the objectives before we can discuss the tools. And the discussion seems to be having—that there is this option of a surge on the table, and let's find a role for it. And I think that's the wrong way of asking the question, or for putting the question, I think.

Senator SUNUNU. Well, I—although it would—I think I've actually asked the question in just the way you want. The objectives are a reconciliation process—equity in distribution of oil revenues, so that the Sunnis feel enfranchised economically, provincial elections, so that the feel enfranchised politically, so that they have some better voice in governance. Those are the objectives that will lead to long-term success. And my question is: Do you see an opportunity for additional military troops to help achieve a window where those objectives might be accomplished?

Mr. SAID. I think if there is agreement—if there is a political process that leads to agreement on these issues, if we—if we have a blueprint for addressing these issues, on the back of that they may be needed—more troops may be needed or less troops may be needed. It all depends on the shape of the agreement. That agreement may bring other troops from other countries to help with the situation, and it doesn't have to become a burden of the United States alone. So, there are all kinds of outcomes from the political process that could lead to increased or reduced troops.

There's one issue that the others suggested, and I have emphasized, as well, which is the humanitarian role. There is one role that the United States can play today, which is protecting civilians. But that's—this has to be done in an evenhanded way that is not seen as participating in the conflict on one side or the other. But protecting civilians is definitely an important role.

Senator SUNUNU. Thank you.

Mr. Pillar.

Dr. PILLAR. It presumably is the capability of troops, whether it's part of the surge or any others, to provide security, not to run elections, not to pump oil, not to do those other things. But I think the answer to your question, Senator, if I understand it, is that you cannot focus on any one thing. You noted the elections before. Well, we've been through this multistage political reconstruction process in which there was always something else to look forward to. You know, the constituent assembly elections or the transfer of sovereignty or the election of the regular legislature. We're through all that. And so, there isn't any one thing. It is the oil. It is the political reconciliation. It's the neighborhood-by-neighborhood security.

It's everything. So, I'm afraid I would resist giving you a specific answer, because the valid answer is: All of the above.

Senator SUNUNU. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BIDEN. Thank you.

Folks, what we're going to do is give you a little bit of a break here. I instructed—I suggested that my colleagues go and vote. We'll adjourn. If Senator Lugar makes it back before I do, he will reconvene the committee for Senator Webb to be able to ask his questions. This is an opportunity to get up and stretch your legs. And I think what we'll try to do is go straight through rather than have you have to come back this afternoon.

So, we'll adjourn until the vote is over.

Thank you.

Recess, I should say.

[Recess.]

Chairman BIDEN. The hearing will come to order, please.

There's an awful lot of things that are going on today, including a meeting with Mr. Hadley. I see that in order, next, ordinarily, what would be the case—and I'd just raise this as a question—my friend from Florida would be next, but Senator Casey, a new member, is to be down at the White House at a quarter of 12. I wonder whether or not the Senator would yield to Senator Casey?

Senator BILL NELSON. Of course I do.

Chairman BIDEN. And then go back to—I believe the Senator from Alaska, who's next on this side, but I'm not sure.

Senator Casey, why don't you proceed?

Senator CASEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman—and I appreciate your indulgence—Senator Lugar. And thank you, Senator Nelson, for this opportunity to jump the line a little bit. I will try not to get used to it.

I have two questions, one that pertains to our troops, and the other with regard to diplomacy.

I come from Pennsylvania, where Senator Specter and I represent a State that has lost, right now, the third-highest amount of troops—just last week went above 140. I'm thinking of those troops today, and their families, as all of us are, who gave, as Abraham Lincoln told us a long time ago, the last full measure of devotion to their country.

One of the questions I have for Dr. O'Hanlon and others—when it comes to data points with regard to where we are in Iraq, one that I'm not sure you've been able to track, or whether you or the other panelists have information about, is the condition of our troops, in terms of the things we used to read a lot more about than we do now—body armor, the protective gear, weapons, all of the indicators that we can point to that tell us whether or not we're doing everything we can to support the troops who are in battle right now. Do you have any information about that or any kind of status? Because, as you know better than I, many months ago we read about all the horrors, where families were buying equipment and body armor and things like that. So, that's the first question I had, with regard to that data point, so to speak.

Dr. O'HANLON. Senator Casey, my impression is that most of these numbers are much better now, but I'm going to focus on one

thing, which I wonder if we should have had a broader national debate about, which is the type of vehicle we put our troops in. As you know, there are some vehicles that are built around the world that are designed to withstand the blast of mines, or, as we call them in Iraq, improvised explosive devices, which are now responsible for about half of all of our fatalities, as our data show. And, of course, other types of threats exist, and snipers are a worse concern than before in Iraq, but it's really the IED problem that's No. 1. And I, frankly, am wondering—it's getting pretty late in the game to have this conversation, but I am wondering if we should have had, and maybe still should have, a big debate about whether to refit a lot of our vehicles with things that look more like some of the specialized mine-clearance vehicles, that are more expensive, have—often have V-shaped hulls, different kinds of suspension, are higher up off the ground. Now, a bigger IED can always penetrate that, so there's always a countermeasure the enemy can envision.

But, frankly, that's the one thing I'm still wondering, if, in broad terms, we really never focused on enough in this country. It would be very hard to build 10,000 of them fast, but if you took a World War II-type approach, and you said, "This is a national emergency, we're going to have to ask every car manufacturer in the United States to do this for 6 months," you could do it. And we simply haven't considered that. I'm not sure history will judge us very well. And I say this as being critical of myself, too. I'm a defense specialist at Brookings, and I wonder if I shouldn't have been thinking about this more 3 and 4 years ago. It may be kind of late in the game now, but I—maybe not.

Senator CASEY. But, in particular, you're talking about up-armoring vehicles, or retrofitting or redesigning?

Dr. O'HANLON. New vehicles. Vehicles that are designed to have V-shaped hulls, higher suspensions to be able to operate more effectively on three wheels, even if one's blown out. Basically, building much of our patrolling fleet around the same vehicle concept that some specialized mine-clearance vehicles currently employ in the U.S. military, but that most of our fleet of Hummers and Bradleys and so forth does not.

Senator CASEY. And in the interest of time—and I know Senator Webb has presiding duties, and I want to be cognizant of that—the last question is very broad, and it's been asked, probably, in different ways throughout the morning, but it's one that I think a lot of Americans are wondering about. We hear a lot of things that talk about a political solution and steps to get us in that direction, apart from the military strategy and tactics on the ground, much of which we'll be talking about tonight when the President presents his plan. But just in terms of diplomacy, if you could focus on that with your collective experience, I think it's good to work with lists, if we can, if that's at all possible. I know it's very difficult in this context. But if you had the opportunity to construct a diplomatic strategy for the next 6 months, say, what would be the three or four or five things you would do, in terms of very specific steps that this Government should take diplomatically—within the region especially, or beyond the region? Any one of you can weigh in on that, in terms of a specific list of steps.

Mr. SAID. Well, I think there is a need to engage with Iraq's neighbors, but also with the broader international community, the permanent five from the Security Council. Professor Marr suggested a contact group concept. That may be a good first step. I still believe that we need to work toward a process—a peace process that will involve some form of a conference. But, preparations for that, engaging with each of Iraq's neighbors, trying to address their concerns and their interests in Iraq, and trying to see how they can contribute to influencing the situation inside Iraq by working with their constituencies in Iraq, by working with the groups, by providing assurances for certain groups in Iraq about their interests, and encouraging them to achieve compromises.

So, there is scope for active diplomacy in Iraq. And some of that has taken place in the international compact with Iraq, which the administration and the United Nations have been engaged in over the last 6 months. And I had an opportunity to work on that. That involved intensive diplomacy with the Gulf States and with the international community, 22 countries or more, to bring them in Iraq. And there is great interest to get engaged. There is great interest in the international community to get engaged in Iraq in a meaningful way so that there is no hierarchy at levels and sort of a—category A countries and category B. But really get engaged—China, Russia, the gulf. And there—and this should be pursued.

Dr. MARR. I had a couple of thoughts at a practical level, on our Embassy. We need skillful, behind-the-scenes, but muscular, diplomacy. I like much of what Ambassador Khalilzad did. And we're getting another very good Ambassador. But two things are needed for our Embassy there: More Arabic speakers, of every kind—it's difficult enough, in the security situation, to get out, but the more we can interact with Iraqis at every level, the better off we'll be; and more sustained deployments, not of troops, but of AID people, whoever. The turnover in personnel, because it's a hardship post, is abysmal, in terms of intelligence, building linkages, networks, and so on. That's what everyone complains about. You just get into the job, you learn who's who, you establish the contacts, and you're out, and somebody else comes in. So, those are two practical things that I think would help our Embassy in Baghdad.

Chairman BIDEN. Thank you very much, Senator.

Senator CASEY. I'm out of time.

Chairman BIDEN. Senator Murkowski.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We hear a lot about suggestions that we, here in the United States, might do or propose, and the President is going to present his new proposal this evening. We'll listen very attentively to that. But I think we all recognize that we can only do so much from the outside, from the United States perspective, or even from the international-community perspective. And I appreciate the focus that you all have made in saying we need to broaden the dialog, bring in more. But we recognize that the Iraqis have to step up and do their part. They've got to be the participant.

And, Mr. O'Hanlon, I listened very attentively this morning as you kind of went down through your various measures, and I have to admit that they were really very discouraging as you listen to some of the terminology that you used, and that others of you used,

as well. You know, you used the term "pessimism" over and over. We heard of the "hardening of the people," the word "fear" and the "apathy," just the general environment being "poor," all very negative and really very discouraging words. We all know that you can't really engage, you can't get your—the men behind you to engage in the fight that you must take on if you don't believe. And the question that I would pose to you, Mr. O'Hanlon, and to any of the others is: Is there any good-news indicators that we're seeing from the Iraqis that give us hope to believe that if we should move forward with, as the President may propose, this surge, that the Iraqi people feel a degree of optimism, at this point, that they can be that full participant that we need and expect them to be? Are there any good signs that you can report?

Dr. O'HANLON. Senator, I think you could find some, and we used to try very hard to try to give them equal billing, because I used to think that, whether they were 50 percent of the reality of Iraq or not, they needed to be highlighted. But they seem to be dwindling in number. But I can still tick off a few for you.

Some of them are on our last category, of politics and public opinion. Certainly, Iraqis have a lot more in the way of communications, whether it's newspapers, TV, telephones, Internet access. And they use these things, and they relish them. There's also, from what I understand—I haven't spent as much time in Iraq as some people on this committee, but there is more bustle in some of the streets, or at least there has been. And we can read about a traffic jam, and that's the negative way to look at it; the upside is that a lot of people have cars, and there is a sense of people still wanting to be out and about, despite the risks. So, there is a certain energy in Iraq that I think may be dwindling, but it's still there.

There are some indicators about public utility performance. It's confusing to try to track GAO and USAID and figure out exactly where Iraqi utilities stand today. Electricity is not very good. Oil production is not very good. Water and sewage performance, hard to read. I can't quite get confidence in the data I'm seeing. Things are probably about at Saddam Hussein levels, though. In other words, we've basically treaded water for 4 years on that front. But there are some new facilities coming online. Child vaccinations seem to be up, from what I can tell. The number of trained judges in the Iraqi political system, of course, much higher than it used to be.

So, yes, if you want to find things, you can find a number of indicators that——

Senator MURKOWSKI. We can find——

Dr. O'HANLON [continuing]. Are possible.

Senator MURKOWSKI [continuing]. Those, but do the Iraqi people believe that more good is being delivered?

Dr. O'HANLON. Not now.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Now, Mr. Said, you're kind of shaking your head no. Can you comment on that?

Mr. SAID. Unfortunately, in terms of life of Iraqis on the street, it's getting progressively worse. And even if you can find numbers—for example, the numbers on the electricity don't look so bad, but the reality of it is worse than the numbers. Water—the Ministry of Water Resources have done a wonderful job. It's one of the

most efficient ministries in Iraq. But, without electricity, you can't deliver water. So, even where things are getting better, the overall situation is making it worse.

However, if you are looking for a silver lining in the situation, one of the elements is the recent agreement on an oil management framework. Because that agreement shows that there has been movement since the time when the Iraqis negotiated a constitution as a zero-sum game, whereby weakening the federal government—the strength of the region is only achieved through weakening the central government. I think the deal on oil shows that the Iraqis have moved on, have realized, if you like, that, actually, it doesn't have to be a zero-sum game, that strong federalism is based on a strong center and strong regions.

So, there are elements of awakening, if you like, at least among some Iraqi—Iraq's leaders and politicians, but, in terms of reality on the ground, it's devastating.

Senator MURKOWSKI. On the oil issue, have you looked at the Alaska Permanent Fund model as a model to be utilized there, where you would have a sharing of the revenues among the people? And, in your opinion, do you think that that would help with some of the sectarian strife that we're facing now?

Mr. SAID. I think there have been proposals for a direct distribution of oil revenues to the Iraqi citizens. Some people in the Iraqi Government strongly support that. However, there has been great opposition to it from the international financial institutions.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Great opposition, you say?

Mr. SAID. Opposition to the direct distribution of revenues. They fear that it may be inefficient use of resources, that Iraq needs to invest all its oil revenues, and so on. I, personally, disagree with that. I think direct distribution is a good tool to unify Iraqis. I think there is a lot speaking in favor of direct distribution of revenues to the citizens, at least a portion—a small portion. Unfortunately, it is now—it's not happening, simply because of strong opposition by the IMF, in particular.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Mr. O'Hanlon.

Dr. O'HANLON. Senator, I think it's a good idea, also. And I would envision, potentially, divvying up Iraq's oil into three or four buckets, one of which would be the Alaska model, direct distribution, one of which would be direct payments to the provinces, based on population, a third bucket would be for federal projects or for national-level institutions. But I think, in responding to the international financial institutions, the natural thing to do is to keep reducing Iraqi subsidies, which we all know are still too high. The Bush administration has had some success in convincing them to reduce those for various consumer goods. Try to keep reducing those, and then use the Alaska model, direct distribution system, as compensation. So, that's a way to avoid, you know, siphoning off money from investment, and I think it would also improve the consumer market for many of these goods, which is being distorted by subsidies right now.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BIDEN. Thank you very much.

At the risk of generating a revolt here, the most junior member of the committee is to preside at 1 o'clock. I'll leave it up to his more senior colleagues to wonder whether you let him go for 8 minutes, which means it's going to put you all behind. I will have pushed you back a good 20 minutes.

Senator BILL NELSON. Well, I don't mind. Be happy to defer. At 1 o'clock, I turn into a pumpkin, as well, in handling a meeting. So, if we can go—let the Senator from Virginia go ahead, and just let me get in a couple of questions before 1 o'clock.

Chairman BIDEN. We will try to do that. We've got 15 minutes. If you do less than 8, you'll make more friends, Jim. [Laughter.]

Senator WEBB. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I realize that I've now incurred a sequence of obligations all the way down this bench here. And the unfortunate part of that is, as the junior member, there's not many ways I can repay that——

[Laughter.]

Senator WEBB [continuing]. Other than agreeing to preside on the Senate floor for some of these people, which I won't do. [Laughter.]

Senator WEBB. But I want to thank the witnesses for their testimony. I thought there were some really fascinating information for me to be able to put into the thought process here. I think, as most of you know, I was an early-warning voice against going into Iraq in this way. I thought that strategically it was going to harm the country. And I was very interested to see that there seems to be pretty strong agreement here that the—for the long-term benefit of Iraq and the region, the solution here really should be moving from the outside in, rather than from the inside out. And what I mean by that is, we do need a regional diplomatic umbrella before we can, in my view, guarantee the long-term security and stability of Iraq.

And I know that, Dr. Marr, in your testimony, you mentioned the notion that there's going to be a high degree of decentralization for quite a period of time. And Dr. Pillar mentioned, several places, the specter of direct intervention. And, you know, Dr. Said, you mentioned the Lebanon model, which—I was a journalist in Lebanon in 1983, when the Marines were there. You—there were a number of parallels, other than simply the idea that people are going to fight it out over a period of years. Just the notion they had a very weak central government that was unable to get on its feet. You had all these different militia elements in constant turmoil. There was a great deal of middle-class flight, and, you know, people with high degrees of skills leaving the country. And we're seeing, in many ways, some of those parallels.

And it occurs to me that, with respect to the players in this region, that it would be much better to have a United States-led sponsorship, in a way, that would bring these players to the table in a constructive way, rather than having them come in more as a consequence of disarray as things move forward. I would like your thoughts on that.

Dr. MARR. Let me just say that among people I talk to that know the region, this opinion is almost unanimous—there is widespread believe that we need to engage the neighbors, and, to an extent, the international community, in a variety of ways. And I would just

like to go back to the Iraq Study Group, because it was interesting that we had a very wide variety of opinions—on the right, left, middle—and there really was very widespread agreement that this must be a component, particularly if Iraq is not going to be successfully stabilized soon. I keep coming back to at least minimizing the damage to the neighbors and getting the neighbors to help to put either pressure or provide incentives to their clients inside. We need to do that.

Dr. O'HANLON. Senator, I think it's probably a good idea, although I'm skeptical of Iran's willingness to participate in a constructive way. But I think, even under those circumstances, it's still worth doing. As I've tried to argue, it's because, in part, you can tell the Iranians, "Listen, there's not going to be any great outcome for you here, in terms of driving us out of the region." If you're in a conference where Saudis and Turks are sitting down with the United States, we'll have our allies there, too, and it'll be easier, I think, to convince the Iranians, something which they need to recognize, which I'm not sure they have, so far, which—they cannot drive us out of the region the way Britain left in the early 1970s, for example. Regardless of the outcome, and regardless of who's elected President in the United States in 2 years, we are almost certainly going to stay committed to our traditional allies. And I hope that awareness could sober Iran a bit about what it's trying to do inside Iraq. So, even if you take a very, sort of, dire interpretation of Iran's motives, I think it's still worth talking.

Dr. PILLAR. Senator, I agree with your observation entirely. And just to comment on Mike's comment, Iran's motives are shaped, in large part, by the United States posture toward Iran. And insofar as regime change is the main element of—or is perceived to be the main element of—that posture then the other side doesn't have much incentive to cooperate. So, that's a set of incentives that is very much in our power to manipulate.

Mr. SAID. I think, without taking the Lebanon analogy too far, because, of course, there are also differences there, I think what is also instructive from Lebanon is the Taif accords, the peace deal that brought peace to Lebanon. It was sponsored by Saudi Arabia, and it involved an element of implementation by Saudi Arabia, as well. And I think there are—there are instructive elements there that could be extended to Iraq, whereby a regional process where——

Senator WEBB. Yes.

Mr. SAID [continuing]. Can not only bring the solution and the settlement, but also the resources to implement it.

Senator WEBB. I have 2½ minutes left. I have one other question, and it—it's, sort of, inspired by the chairman's question earlier about: Do you ever—do you think you would ever see national police operating on the streets of Fallujah? Do any of you believe there will ever be true stability in Iraq if there are American combat troops on the streets of Iraq's cities? Or while there are?

Mr. SAID. No.

Senator WEBB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BIDEN. Thank you.

Senator Isakson.

Senator ISAKSON. In deference to my—the Senator from Florida who has to leave at 1 o'clock also, I'm certainly willing to let him ask a couple of questions before 1 o'clock.

Chairman BIDEN. I told you this is the most collegial committee in the Senate here. Thank you very much. It's kind of you.

Senator Nelson.

Senator BILL NELSON. Thank you.

Senator ISAKSON. As long as he doesn't run over. [Laughter.]

Senator BILL NELSON. Well, rather than make a speech, I'm just going to ask questions. How's that?

Senator ISAKSON. Good.

Senator BILL NELSON. When does the pain of sectarian strife become sufficient that it finally causes the Sunnis and the Shiites to start getting serious about reconciliation?

Mr. SAID. The pain is already quite serious. The question is—and if it was just Sunnis and Shiites fighting, there may—we may have reached that threshold. But what's happening in Iraq, as has been suggested by others as well, is fragmentation. This is becoming, gradually, a war of everyone against everyone. There are criminals on the streets. There are myriad Shia militias fighting among each other as much as they are fighting against the Sunnis. There are death squads of undescribable origin and of undescribable violence. This has become such a pervasive exercise in violence that there is no pain threshold that can stop it. This—there are no coherent sides directing the violence anymore. They are fragmented. There are warlords acting at the behest of the highest bidders. There are commercial interests and foreign interventions. Iraq has passed the point, if you like, where it can pull itself by its bootstraps. There is a need for an external intervention to bring peace to Iraq.

Senator BILL NELSON. All right, now, that answer is particularly appropriate to Baghdad, would you not say? Let's go outside, to the west of Baghdad, to Al Anbar. I thought that the Marine commanders made a compelling case to me there, that additional troops would help them, as they are beginning to get the Sunni leaders to help them with al-Qaeda, which is the problem in western Iraq, in Al Anbar. Give me—differentiate between Al Anbar and Baghdad.

Mr. SAID. There are clearly differences, but they could go, also, the other way around. One of the major sources of the—the major source of violence in Anbar is the fight between the Iraqis and Americans. So——

Senator BILL NELSON. Pull that mike——

Mr. SAID [continuing]. One can easily——

Senator BILL NELSON [continuing]. To you closer.

Mr. SAID. Huh?

Senator BILL NELSON. Pull the mike closer.

Mr. SAID. I'm sorry. I'm saying, the main component of violence in Anbar is the fight—is the violence between the Iraqis and Americans. So, one can just as well say that a solution in Anbar can come through withdrawing U.S. forces rather than increasing them. But, regardless of that, even in Anbar there is intra-Iraqi violence. It's not Shia versus Sunni, it's Sunni versus Sunni. And, indeed, the tribal feuds in Anbar province—old tribal feuds on—over commercial interests and smuggling routes, have spilled out into

this new coalition of Anbar tribes purporting to fight al-Qaeda. In reality, there is an—inside that determination, there are old tribal rivalries that are being used. And, in a way, the United States is being used by one tribe to bolster its bid against the other. So, it's never a simple—a black-and-white situation. But——

Senator BILL NELSON. Right. All right, you——

Mr. SAID [continuing]. You are right that, in mixed areas, that's—the situation is different.

Senator BILL NELSON. With the example you just gave in Al Anbar, could the Saudis, with their tribal influence, help in settling down the tribal strife, and, therefore, help with the stabilization of that western part of Iraq?

Mr. SAID. Tremendously. I think the one party if—everyone speaks about bringing Iran to the table, and Syria—I think one party that could contribute a lot more significantly than those two to a political settlement in Iraq is Saudi Arabia. And it's not being engaged properly.

Senator BILL NELSON. All right. Let's——

Dr. MARR. If I could——

Senator BILL NELSON. Yes, Dr. Marr.

Dr. MARR [continuing]. Just remind people how complex it is, there are tribes and tribes. And I've talked to people in Saudi Arabia who don't have any love for the Dulaymis, who are in Anbar. But I do agree the Saudis have a very vested interest in the stability of the Sunni region, so that this instability doesn't spill across the border. And something beside building a fence should be done.

Senator BILL NELSON. Well, Mr. Chairman, I haven't given you my report, but that's one of the reasons I went and spent 12 days in the region. And I spoke, specifically at the request of General Hayden, to the Saudis—the King, all of the security apparatus in Saudi Arabia, and so forth. So, I would ask: How do you encourage Saudi Arabia properly to get involved?

Mr. SAID. I'm sorry. One reason why the Saudis are not being engaged sufficiently in Iraq is that—is the resistance on behalf of Iraqi—some of the Iraqi leaders, winners of the political process, to engage them. Because clearly a Saudi engagement will bolster the position of some of the opposition groups, vis-a-vis some of those who are in power; and, therefore, Saudi engagements needs to be a part of a regional approach, and it needs to be part of an internationally mediated settlement for Iraq that goes beyond, if you like, the pain threshold of the Iraqi Government. I mean, we cannot—this will not happen if everything happens exactly as to the wishes of the Iraqi Government. The Iraqi Government needs to be pressured into accepting Saudi engagement, as well as some of the other groups need to be pressured into accepting Iranian engagement.

Senator BILL NELSON. All right. Final question, Senator Isakson. As I said, I'm not making a speech, I'm asking questions.

A final question. Bashar Assad says that he has an alliance with Iran, vis-a-vis Iraq. You all have already testified on his reasons not to do that. How do we—how do we crack that door? How do we start to bring him to us instead of to Iran?

Dr. PILLAR. I think two main things. One, bear in mind that his principal objective is still to get what his father couldn't get, which was return of the Golan, as, obviously, part of a larger peace process with Israel. And the last time the Syrian track was active, they came this close to an agreement. And the second thing is, there are economic ties that have developed over the years between Iran and Syria, and there's going to have to be some kind of consideration for how economic ties with the United States could take part of the place of that, if they lost any of it.

So, economic issues and Arab-Israeli peace-process issues.

Mr. SAID. If I might add, again, I mean, the—there has been a very strong and constructive, in the region, Syrian-Saudi alliance that has broken down over the last 10 years. And that's something that could also be—especially in terms of economic aid—if Saudi Arabia could replace Syria's dependence on Iran, one could see a different behavior.

Senator BILL NELSON. Thank you.

Senator MENENDEZ. Mr. Chairman, a procedural question, if I may?

Chairman BIDEN. Sure.

Senator MENENDEZ. I won't be, unfortunately, able to stay after Senator Isakson. I have an interview I've got to do. What is the procedure here on questions for the committee?

Chairman BIDEN. Yes; we'll submit——

Senator MENENDEZ [continuing]. Some course of events——

Chairman BIDEN [continuing]. Them through the Chair to the witnesses.

And I apologize to my colleague from New Jersey for the way this has been disjointed a bit here.

Senator Isakson.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

All of you have said, in one way or another, that reconciliation is absolutely essential to long-range stability of Iraq. I have read that part of the administration's case may be—for a surge of troops in Baghdad—may be that you can't have reconciliation until you first have stability within Baghdad, relative peace. The question is: If the multifaceted violence—more than just the sectarian violence, but what you, Mr. Said, have referred to—if, in fact, a surge does produce a more peaceful Iraq, without having played a favorite within the many facets, and was evenhandedly done, can that contribute to bringing about the reconciliation we're talking about? Or is the fact that we're going to have soldiers there, present—as the answer to Mr. Webb's question—make it impossible?

Mr. SAID. I think any additional U.S. soldier brings with him the—or with her—the complexity of the issue. Again, it's one more occupation soldier, in the eyes of many Iraqis, as well as a protector for some communities, in the case of the sectarian violence. So, the—you're asking if the presence of the troops will produce stability, and I think what we've heard from me and from the others is that there is skepticism that the proposed surge will produce the stability and the protection that the people will get. But to answer your question directly, yes; if they succeed, if the additional troops do succeed in protecting more Iraqis and reducing the

threshold of fear, the level of fear that they experience today, then, of course, that will be—that will contribute to political settlement.

Dr. MARR. I would just——

Senator ISAKSON. Yes.

Dr. MARR. I would just like to add, here, that I see the situation in the Iraqi Government, within the Green Zone, as one centered on political parties and factions and groups, with their militias, particularly an alliance between the two Kurdish parties and SCIRI. Of course, Muqtada al-Sadr is playing a role. These are political parties with leaders who have been shaped by certain perceptions. They're new, they're not entirely stable. And this is the dynamic you have to look at. They're being asked to make compromises with ex-Baathists, people—insurgents and people who have perhaps wreaked a great deal of terror in Baghdad, and who have a history of wanting to get back in. So, I—put it in a political context here, because, in fact, it's not just a question of stabilizing Baghdad. They might use us for that purpose, because, indeed, that's what they'd like. Better we do it than that they do it. Even if we stabilize Baghdad, if that should occur, we're going to have to find ways to get these particular parties, groups, leaders, operating within this dynamic, to make the compromises necessary, and to expand the political group. That's the task that's at hand, and we can think of a variety of ways in which you can do that. Hopefully, it will work, but it really requires a strategy, nudging, and instruments, positive and negative, to get that to occur.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Dr. Marr.

Dr. O'Hanlon, I want to ask you a question, and you can add on what you were going to say. Sixteen years ago, my son wrote a master's graduate thesis at the University of Georgia—which as a father I read—which just occurred to me in your testimony, it was about the effects of the Dutch disease on the Middle East. And the Dutch disease, as I remember it from that master's thesis, is when you have a nation with a singular source of wealth, which is a raw material—in this case, oil—that never develops its infrastructure or its economy or its people, then it—they are rife for problems. Then it went into investigating each one of these.

The President's recommendation, we are told, is going to have a $1 billion economic—for lack of a better word, a WPA program for, I presume, mostly in Baghdad. Does that help, given this Dutch disease, which Iraq obviously suffers from—does that—assuming, again, the stability, which is step one—does that help to bring—to contribute to reconciliation, if, in fact, they begin being employed in the—there begins some semblance of a diversified economy?

Dr. O'HANLON. Senator, I'm a supporter of a job-creation program, not necessarily because I expect it to contribute to a stronger Iraqi economy, in the long term, but because I think it's a good security strategy, in the short to middle term—takes some of the unemployed angry young men off the street, or at least gives us some hope that some fraction of them will be less likely to oppose what we're doing and oppose the Iraqi Government. So, on those more specific security grounds, I would support it.

On your earlier question, if I might add on——

Senator ISAKSON. Please.

Dr. O'HANLON [continuing]. I think it's fine to imagine, you know, a surge beginning before a reconciliation, as long as there's a sense of urgency about the latter. Because I think—my own sense, this is just guesstimating, of course—but the best you could hope for out of a surge is to get violence back to where it was, maybe, in 2004, or, if you're really lucky, the more difficult parts of 2003. A surge is not going to end Iraq's problems, it's not going to stabilize Baghdad. That would be too ambitious of a goal, and it's just not realistic. So, the most we can hope is that it arrests the deterioration, maybe stops some of the worst ethnic cleansing, and gets things back to where they were a couple of years ago. That's obviously not good enough. That's not a stable endpoint. So, the only way that could be useful is if there very quickly follows on—hopefully at the same time, but certainly very quickly thereafter—a broader political and economic strategy, as well.

Senator ISAKSON. Yes.

Mr. SAID. I think it's a very important question you raise about Dutch disease. And, indeed, none of the economic policies promoted by the United States in Iraq under the direct administration, nor now under the Iraqi Government, are mindful of that. Indeed, Iraq's dependence, singular dependence, on oil has increased over the past 4 years. Last year's budget, 94 percent of government revenues came from oil. That's unprecedented. There is no country in the world that has such degree of dependence on oil. But, unfortunately, at this point, it seems that Dutch disease—worrying about Dutch disease is a luxury that the Iraqi Government cannot afford. And, as Mr. O'Hanlon suggested, an immediate job-creation program, although it is clear that it will not offer any long-term economic benefits, will at least reduce the violence, which is the main concern.

Senator ISAKSON. Dr. Pillar, I—first of all, thank you for your service to the country. You're a retired veteran, served in Vietnam—I was reading your resume—and, I think, wrote a book that's title was, in part, "Negotiating Peace and Terrorism in U.S. Foreign Policy." And when you made your statement, it was enlightening to me, when you said—talked about "jihad depended on struggle," and talked about "the terrorist networking, given the struggle in Iraq," assuming, for a second—knowing what happened on 9/11, and knowing what al-Qaeda's stated purposes are, and assuming stability came to Iraq and we were gone, what would al-Qaeda do to—would it create more struggles to keep feeding itself?

Dr. PILLAR. It would create more struggles. It would lose a big propaganda point and recruitment tool and networking opportunity and training ground, which, again, are the things that parallel what we saw in Afghanistan. It would not be critical, one way or another, in the survival of al-Qaeda. And most of what al-Qaeda will continue to try to do would not depend even on a safe haven, as was once the case in Afghanistan. One can talk about Iraq, but more important will be things terrorists do in places like Hamburg and Kuala Lumpur and flight-training schools in the United States, which is one of the lessons of 9/11: You don't need a territory. They can do their dirty business other ways.

Senator ISAKSON. And I guess my answer to that would be, they thrive off the continued conflict in Iraq, they have no interest in reconciliation, or peace, for that matter.

Dr. PILLAR. Absolutely. They thrive off of continued conflict in Iraq, yes.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SAID. If I may add, here, also, al-Qaeda is not necessarily interested in gaining power in Iraq.

Senator ISAKSON. I know.

Mr. SAID. Al-Qaeda is more interested in keeping it as it is, and keeping the United States in Iraq, where there could be major confrontation.

Dr. PILLAR. Exactly. I agree, completely.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BIDEN. Senator Cardin, you take what time you need. [Laughter.]

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate it very much. And I can't tell you how much—how important I think these hearings are, and the witnesses that we have here, building upon the opinion that the United States needs to lead with diplomacy and bringing in the international community if we're going to be able to complete a mission in our interest in Iraq.

I want to follow up specifically on one part that is likely to be in the President's policy, and that is the public works initiative, significant United States-initiated economic-development public works in Iraq. And I want to know what your views are as to the capacity of Iraq to be able to deal with that type of initiative. All of you are saying that the United States is viewed as an occupation force, the President's message tonight is certainly going to get mixed reviews among the parties in Iraq. It's—it makes more visible, United States presence in Iraq. There are concerns about security issues among any public works projects. And I just would like to know—we've had problems in Congress making sure the money is used appropriately that we appropriate. And we know that it has not been the case. So, I guess I have a concern that, yes, we want to be responsible in building Iraq, the economics and providing opportunity for the people of Iraq, but—well, what are your views as to how well that will be used in Iraq, or what suggestions you might have as to what we should be doing to make sure that money is properly used in Iraq, understanding that the package that the President's likely to be submitting to us is coupled with an escalation of United States presence in Iraq that certainly will cause some additional problems for us in that region?

Dr. O'HANLON. Senator, that's a great question. I certainly think you're right to raise all these concerns, but I still strongly support the job-creation program, because, again, unemployment has been such a nagging issue in Iraq, and it creates more angry unemployed young men who join the Mahdi Militia, for example, or who join the Sunni-based insurgency. So, I think it makes sense. But to focus in on one of your operational questions: How do we provide oversight? What are the most important things for us to watch? In the spirit of what I was saying before, and that my colleague, Mr. Said, was saying also, I think it's, in a way, almost less important

what the Iraqis do on their jobs, and more important that we make sure the right people get the money. In other words, you don't want to have this become a slush fund that some jihadist gets in charge of or some militia member gets in charge of, and then turns it into a patronage system to reward militia members. You have to make sure that you are being very careful about the disbursement of the funds. I don't, frankly, care if they whitewash the same fence 10 times in a row, as long as it's 10 people who are relatively good-natured and well-intentioned and are not using that money to funnel to a lot of al-Qaeda or insurgent or militia operatives.

So, figuring out the mechanism to pay people, I think, is the single most important thing, and my guess is the right answer is to build on the military commander's emergency response program, because our troops in the field are the ones who are out there in the large numbers who are going to have the ability to do more vetting and more careful distribution. They have to be involved, at some level. You can't just rely on these Provincial Support Teams, Provincial Reconstruction Teams, that have a couple of dozen people in each province, because they're going to have to give the money in bucketloads to Iraqis who, in some cases, may or may not be fully dependable. That would be my only advice.

Dr. MARR. I'd just like to make three points on this. I would hope that this money is going to be rapidly funneled to Iraqis. The whole idea that Americans are going to be there doing the public works is just, it seems to me, a nonstarter.

Iraqis traditionally are schizophrenic on foreign powers and occupation, and we perhaps put a tad too much concern on antiforeign, antioccupation sentiment. Of course that's going to be there, but Iraqis do need the outside help. And yet, even when they get it, they're going to rebel against it.

I think there is an issue here, not so much on the public works and the emergency funds, because the money needs to be spread for employment, I agree. But in terms of really developing the economy, getting the electricity going, and so forth, Iraq used to have a very good technocratic class, engineers and others, but, as everybody has pointed out, they're really losing it, not just at the top level, the engineer, but the technocrats who actually do the work. I recall a conversation in Basrah, last time I was there, about some technician who was dealing with something as simple as filters of some kind on oil installations; and just getting people to understand that they had to change that filter—it had to be absolutely clean every day—he said, was very really a problem. So, this is something we do need to be concerned about, whether the money is going to be used properly.

And we haven't talked too much about it, but corruption is a huge problem. Mike probably knows the figures on how much of the Iraqi oil revenue, the economy, and so on, is siphoned off to individuals, and doesn't feed into the formal economy or the government. So, some kind of balance has to be found, in terms of oversight of the funds, that they're going not just to insurgents, that goes without saying, but corrupt politicians and others—there will always be a certain amount of corruption—versus getting that money and the jobs into the bloodstream. I think there's always a

balance to be achieved here. But that corruption issue is a real problem.

Senator CARDIN. I agree with you. And there's certainly a desire to get Iraqis employed. And I can appreciate your pointing that out. But I think, at the end of the day, we want the water supply to be available to the Iraqis. We wanted this to be constructive and helping the economy of the country to lead toward stability of the country. And without the experts that they need, because they have left, without having the trained workforce, there's going to be a lot of foreign interest in helping in Iraq, and, unfortunately, some of that's not going to be well received, it seems to me.

Mr. SAID. I think there are two problems with the job-creation program that is being proposed. First of all, the Iraqi Government, last year—this past year—have failed to spend a lot of the money that it has allocated through the budget for investment. There is a serious shortage of capacity to spend, in the Iraqi Government, to—especially for investment projects. So, to add additional resources, if the Iraqi Government hasn't been able to spend, is a bit problematic.

So far, such initiatives have been guided by short-term interests, particularly addressing the security situation, and has not fed into a long-term or medium-term strategy. Now, there is—the Iraqi Government has developed several strategies—a national development strategy on, currently, the compact—but there has been—there seems to be continued—continuing disconnect between the interventions, the aid money that is being given, and the Iraqi medium-term strategy. So, it's very important for this particular package to flow through an Iraqi-owned and -designed planning strategy that looks in the—to the medium term and is not ad hoc and short term.

Senator CARDIN. Well, let me thank, again, the witnesses, and thank your patience, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BIDEN. Well, thank you for your patience.

Senator Lugar, do you have anything you want to——

Senator LUGAR. Just one followup on Senator Cardin's question. We've been discussing—and he illuminated this, as you have—that it would be desirable for this to flow through somebody in Iraq. But you've all testified the bureaucracy is decimated, the professionals that were left have gone somewhere, and there is a protection problem even for those Iraqis who might be doing these works, quite apart from Americans or somebody. Physically, how can the billion dollars be spent? You've said that the Iraqis couldn't allocate maybe a quarter of their own budget this year, quite apart from $1 billion that comes in from us. I'm just trying to trace, physically, what happens, in terms of expectations and results.

Mr. SAID. This is quite a challenge. I mean, you are pointing out a serious challenge that the administration will face in spending these resources. I think the trick is—here is to help spend at least some of these resources to build Iraqi capacity to spend, Iraqi capacity to manage and execute projects, which has been decimated over the last 3 or 4 years.

Senator LUGAR. Build the capacity to get those resources to people.

Mr. SAID. Another element of it is to use the emergency response fund framework that the commanders use, the military commanders on the ground, with small sums of money, to produce the kind of relief. But this is not a framework within which you spend billions of dollars; these are much more small-scale—however, quite effective in generating short-term employment.

Dr. MARR. Just one point. I'd like to bring up my favorite subject, and that's exchanges—education, students, training people, getting Iraqis out; it doesn't even have to be to the United States—and working on the visa problem here, to get them in. I'm hearing all kinds of complaints, still, about Iraqis not being able to come over, study, and so on. But one way to help build the capacity is to get Iraqis out, get them in training, and that helps some of the security problems, as well.

Senator LUGAR. You mean develop a major scholarship program for 10,000 Iraqis, something of this sort, with a significant public-relations aspect, and maybe some leadership.

Dr. MARR. Not enough is being—not enough is being done there, I think.

Chairman BIDEN. Senator Menendez——

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BIDEN [continuing]. Welcome back.

Senator MENENDEZ. I'm glad to have been recognized. I didn't think it was going to be that short, but I appreciate it. And I appreciate the panelists for their testimony and their staying power for all this time. And I wanted to get back, and having sat here all morning I hope that the questions that I want to pose to you are not repetitive. I stayed here through the morning, so, maybe on some of the questions and answers, you may have answered some of this. So, I hope it's not repetitive, in case I didn't catch it.

As I both read your testimonies and listened to your testimony here today, and your answers to questions I have a real concern. I didn't vote for the war in the first place, so I come from a certain point of view. But, of course, I want us to succeed. And it seems to me that everything I heard you collectively say is that this is about, at the end of the day, a political solution, and that we cannot necessarily accomplish a military solution.

I hear and read, for example, Dr. Marr, in your testimony, toward the end, you say, "Only when the participants in the struggle for power recognize that they are losing more than they can gain by continuing will it come to an end. And that may be"—your sentence goes on, "that may be a very long time." When I listen to Mr. Said say that, in fact, "a good part of the violence is one about power and money" and when I hear Dr. Pillar say, which I agree with totally, that "Iran is the big winner, at the end of the day"—all of those comments, and others, in my mind, speak volumes as to why an escalation is not the solution to our problem. As a matter of fact, from what I've seen of those who are military experts, including several of our generals, say is that to have a real ability to have some military effort—as I think Mr. Said mentioned—is about half a million troops, over three times the number of troops that exist in the United States now. And there is no way, both military, I think, from the U.S. perspective, in terms of the ability to do that, as well as the support, for that possibly to happen.

So, having said all of that, the question is: How is it—and you've all talked, at different points, about the political process, the regional players but what would you be saying tomorrow if the Secretary of State comes before the committee? What would you be saying to her if you were advising her, and to the President, about what the steps are that we need to take to get that political process, both internally by Iraqis and as General Pace said, "to love their children more than they hate their neighbors"? That can't be accomplished through military might, to love their children more than they hate their neighbors. The question is: How do we have a surge, an escalation, in a political process that gives us the ultimate success that we want? What would be the steps that you would be suggesting in order to accomplish that?

Dr. MARR. Well, I'd kind of like to go back to the Iraq Study report again, because I think they really did address this, aside from the surge. And, incidently, I'm not so pessimistic that I think there are going to be no agreements between Iraqis for a very long time. We've pointed out to one area where this long process seems to be beginning, and that's the oil legislation. There have been some compromises, mainly from the Kurds, who recognize that they want to get on with this. I think you have to take a strong stand behind the scenes and indicate that there's both a carrot and a stick, as the Iraqi Study Group report said. We're willing to continue aid and help—not necessarily money, but training, assistance, support, and so on—if certain milestone steps are taken—something on the de-Baathification, compromise on the oil law, and——

Senator MENENDEZ. But this is now—you're saying the United States saying to——

Dr. MARR. United States talking turkey——

Senator MENENDEZ [continuing]. Proactively.

Dr. MARR. Yes; to these——

Senator MENENDEZ. And as part of that——

Dr. MARR. But also negative. If——

Senator MENENDEZ. Uh-huh.

Dr. MARR [continuing]. These things are——

Senator MENENDEZ. That's what I want to——

Dr. MARR [continuing]. Not accomplished—and our patience isn't exhaustive, as Michael has said—then we're going to withdraw this support, including military support.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, I'm glad you said that, because my followup to the question, and I'd like to hear from others, is: Isn't it true that benchmarks without timetables or at least consequences, are only aspirations, as part of that process? What would your suggestions be?

Mr. SAID. I think benchmarks are useful, even without consequences, because they set goals, they set parameters according——

Senator MENENDEZ. But we've had those benchmarks, and many of them have not been met, and——

Mr. SAID. Definitely.

Senator MENENDEZ [continuing]. And now we have them as another excuse for an escalation of troops.

Mr. SAID. Definitely. I mean, there is definitely a need to—for the U.S. Government to take a more assertive role, vis-a-vis its

own allies in Iraq. There is a need to take a more serious look at——

Senator MENENDEZ. How do we get other regional players to be involved in a proactive way?

Mr. SAID. Beyond that, I thought—I think it's very important to say that this is not something the United States alone can make. I think internationalizing Iraq is a very critical element. To give you just one example, the League of Arab States and the United Nations have been trying, over the last 3 years, to build, if you like, the Iraqi delegation to a peace conference, trying to canvas Iraqi political class and political elites to identify people who could sit together and negotiate a peace settlement. This is a role that the United States cannot play. This is a role that could—that only trusted international multilateral actors can do. And I think the United States should encourage such efforts, be it through the United Nations, through the international compact, or through the Arab League, to broaden the negotiating table and bring additional Iraqis to the table, and regional players, to start working on a settlement and on a political framework.

Senator MENENDEZ. Dr. Pillar, you may have responded to this previously, but in the twin exercise that the Iranians and the Syrians have right now, where, in one part they are enjoying us being bogged down, shedding our blood and national treasure, and on the other part, they have an interest in the stability of Iraq, where is the tipping point? Where do we get them to move in the direction that is more positive than the negativity they are playing right now?

Dr. PILLAR. Well, Senator, we did address, somewhat earlier in the proceedings, some of the ways of manipulating the incentives. On the Syrian side, it has to do with their objectives regarding the peace process, getting the Golan back. With regard to the Iranian side, Tehran is interested in a whole host of things—not just the nuclear issue that gets all the attention, but a whole host of things that involve the United States, having to do with everything from frozen assets to developing a normal relationship, and a vague thing that the Iranians would refer to as "respect," which is kind of hard to operationalize, but it is important to them.

I think Phebe, I'd go back to the Iraq Study Group as a reference point to this, because I think their treatment of the external dimension is excellent. And I would summarize our earlier discussions in this room and what the ISG says by saying the diplomatic approach needs to be inclusive with regard to with whom we are speaking, it needs to be flexible with regard to the forums and formats—it's not just one big conference, it's bilateral contacts, it's track-two-type stuff, it's the indirect incentives that could affect the thinking in places like Tehran, and it has to be sensitive to what's on the agenda of those countries. I just mentioned some things of interest to Iran, for example. We can't just limit it to, "We want to talk about stopping your troublemaking in Iraq." You know, if that's our agenda, it's going to go nowhere. It has to be broader.

Mr. SAID. If I may add another element here, which is violence inside Iran and Syria, Iraq has been—there has been an element of contagion taking place through Iraq, and there has been a spike in sectarian violence and ethnic violence in Iran, both with the

Arab minority and the Kurdish minority. And there have been issues with the Kurdish minority in Syria. And this could become more serious as Iraq implodes. So, there is a threshold of pain, if you like, there, as well, that will encourage them to engage more.

Dr. PILLAR. With the Kurds, there were fatal riots in Syria, I believe in 2004, and similar ones in Iran in 2005, so they've actually had bloodshed inside their territories over these issues.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BIDEN. Folks, the end is in sight. You've been a wonderful panel.

Let me address, from a slightly different perspective, several points you've raised.

I believe—it doesn't make me correct, it just made me a pariah for a while—I believe I was the first one to suggest, in an op-ed piece over a year ago—that there be an international conference, and a contact group to follow up on that conference. It was pointed out, as one of the criticisms, which is legitimate, in one sense, that if you expand the participation, not only externally, but internally, within Iraq, which you're suggesting, you are, by definition, undercutting the government. There is a "freely elected government in Iraq." There is a Constitution that the Iraqi people have overwhelming voted for. "I was there when the vote took place," the argument goes. Therefore, for the United States to do anything that goes beyond the governmental entities that exist now within Iraq, and to do anything without their permission relative to external forces, is to, in effect, negate the commitment we made to their Constitution and to the unity government. How do you respond to that?

Dr. Pillar.

Dr. PILLAR. Well, I guess it all has to be portrayed as help. And when you talk about the regional actors—for example, Mr. Said made the point about the Arab League's efforts to try to help the Iraqis do all the functions that a sovereign state would do—and so, if help can be phrased in those terms, it doesn't necessarily have to be represented as inconsistent with Iraqi sovereignty.

Chairman BIDEN. But if, in fact, the existing Maliki government says, "We don't want X, Y, or Z participating in this conference, internally—they are not elected, they're not part of the government, they do not hold a ministry," et cetera—then what do we say?

Mr. SAID. I mean, a peace process—I'm sorry, a peace process, by definition, detracts from sovereignty. There is——

Chairman BIDEN. Detracts from sovereignty?

Mr. SAID. Detracts from sovereignty. There is no peace process anywhere in the world that recognizes 100 percent of the sovereignty of one of the parties involved. If there is a need for a peace process, this means there is a problem; and, therefore, we have to—it's a last—it's a last—it's a last resort.

Governance, sovereignty, the right, is not a carte blanche, it's not an open check. If the government is not delivering, in terms of providing for peace, in terms of providing a peaceful conflict resolution mechanism, then it loses the right to some of its sovereignty.

Chairman BIDEN. Well, that is a new international concept. I happen to agree with it, but that is a new concept, in terms of what we'd constitute as the sacredness of sovereignty. I happen to agree

with you, but I just want to make sure we understand. We mix terms a lot. We—not you—we interchange terms a great deal. As you all pointed out, it's very complex in Iraq. There's an insurgency and there's sectarian violence and there's insurgency and violence within the insurgency and so on. I would describe the situation in Iraq as almost a disintegration rather than a civil war, quite frankly.

But, having said that, I think, in order to help us in this process, think through this process—and one of the things the chairman and I have, I think, been pretty much in lockstep on is trying to figure out these practical big-ticket items.

For example, employment. I have made many trips to Iraq, in relative terms. Two trips ago, I met with General Chiarelli, the No. 2 guy, who is now leaving.

He said, "Senator, if I—you ever hear me criticize the—raise the word 'bureaucrat' again, smack me." He said, "There is no bureaucracy to deal with here in Iraq. We desperately need one."

And he gave me the following example. He said, "You know, the date palm, the national fruit, national tree, it's a symbol of Iraq"—he went back through the history of it.

He said—and I'm embarrassed that I don't remember the varmint that can decimate it, but it's something the equivalent of the boll weevil to cotton—"you have to spray these every 5 years."

And, he said, "If you don't, within that timeframe, you run the risk of this disease consuming this national treasure, and also a previous source of income."

And he said, "So, I went to the Embassy and said, 'You ought to get them—we ought to spray these things.'"

And he said—and I'm paraphrasing—he said, "They said, 'No, that's up to the Iraqis.'" And he said, "But I told them there's no Department of Agriculture that works."

And he said, "Well, they said, 'It's got to be them.'" And he said, "So, I did what Saddam did. I used my helicopters and went and sprayed them."

Which leads me to the second point he raised to me. He said, "You know, we have what I call the most expensive water fountain in all the Middle East, that we built in Baghdad." He said, "It's great to put some high water—potable water to everybody in Baghdad." He said, "We built it," except we didn't run the pipes from "the fountain" to the homes. That was up to the Iraqis. Yet there was no mechanism by which the Iraqis knew how to, or were able to, organize, at least at that point, actually putting the PVC pipe in the ground from his term of art, his facetious term, "the water fountain" to the homes.

So, I guess what I'm getting at is this. And this is a question to you, Dr. Marr. From a historical perspective, how big a contributor to the economy of Iraq was agriculture in the 1950s, let's say, or the 1940s or the 1960s? I mean, was it a major component? You hear the phrase "Iraq used to be the breadbasket of the Middle East." Can you tell me, from a historical perspective what—whether or not Iraq was a major exporter of agricultural products in the past?

Dr. MARR. I have covered that in my previous book, and there's a very interesting history on that. And let me just recoup it.

When the British were there, under the mandate, up until the 1950s, they put a lot of emphasis on agriculture. But you have to remember, as you know, there are two kinds. There's irrigation system in the south, which is hugely expensive. You have to desalinate, you have to put a lot of effort, on dams and so forth, and you have to have a population that likes agriculture and wants to work in it. And, in fact, that has gradually fallen into decay. Growing grains, rice, and other things grown in the south, Iraqis were able to feed themselves, were even able to do some exporting, into the 1950s. The rain-fed agriculture in the north is much easier. The Kurdish area and some of the areas around Mosul, you don't need that irrigation. But, frankly, because of political mismanagement and all sorts of other things, agriculture has fallen into incredible disarray in Iraq. This migration of the population from the south to Baghdad and so on has depopulated the area, and it really has fallen into decline. And not only does Iraq not export, not just under our occupation or even under Saddam, but everything went into industry, and you can just chart the figures where oil and urban service industries, working for the government, for education, took over and left agriculture behind.

One word of caution. I'm not sure Iraq can be a breadbasket. I think there's been too much emphasis on how much agriculture could do. It could certainly be revived. It would help to feed the population. But modern agriculture is not grains and so on; it's vegetables and other things you grow for commercial agriculture. They could do a great deal more with that. But a breadbasket for the Middle East, I think, is too ambitious.

But agriculture, as a percentage of population employed or any other figure, has declined radically.

Chairman BIDEN. Well, one of the reasons I raised the question is, my last trip, over the Fourth of July, it was suggested to me there was a direct correlation—and, Michael—or Dr. O'Hanlon, maybe you could speak to this—there was a direct correlation between the formation of the unity government and the exponential rise in those participating in militias, the exact opposite that was predicted. What was predicted was, there would be a unity government; what that would do is focus on a unified Iraq; they would have a united Iraqi Army that was multiethnic; that the police force would be able to begin to be purged of the death squads and so on. And the irony was, at least in just pure data, that the number of people being prepared to get a paycheck and get a weapon to "fight with a militia" went up almost exponentially. And so, two of the generals with whom I sat said, "You want me to deal with the militia. Don't give me jurisdiction to disarm them. Get the Department of Agriculture working, and give them employment. You want me to deal with reduction of the militia. Give me the opportunity to provide for employment." Because these are people between the ages of 18 and 30, they've got nothing to do. The unemployment rates you gave us were very high. Are they correct? Is there a correlation—are people joining the militias, in part, because there's nothing else to do, a la riots in the 1960s in the United States of America, in center cities where large numbers of teams sat on corners and had nothing to do, and, therefore, engaged? You were mayor of Indianapolis, going through that very difficult period

of time. Talk to me about that a minute. I mean, what's the correlation between the intensity of support for being part of a militia and the sectarian violence and being unemployed?

Dr. O'HANLON. I don't think I can create a direct link that I can prove with the data. But I can agree with your point, in a broader sense. But it's impression. And the impression is that when you give a country lack of hope for multiple years—you know, you have angry young men joining the working-age population, with nothing else to do—we just have to ask: What's going to be their psychology? So, it's the commonsensical answer you gave that I would fall back on, myself. I can't prove it from the data. And in the small samples that we have of pilot projects being attempted, I don't think we have a way to prove that job-creation programs reduce the support for the insurgency or the militias. But, as you say, Senator, it's the combination of high unemployment, the experiment in democracy not really producing reconciliation, 3 years of accumulated violence. All this has added up to a climate of hopelessness, and we have to attack it in multiple ways, even if we're not sure of what's going to work.

Chairman BIDEN. OK. Last point I'll make, and then—unless the chairman has additional questions, close this out.

I was impressed with, not the dissimilarity, but the similarity of your testimony today on a number of very important points. One is that there's no straight line here to look at, in terms of the disintegration of the situation in Iraq. It's not totally a consequence, or even primarily a consequence, of religion, although religion is playing a larger role. There's an interlocking and complicated connection between tribal loyalties, religious loyalties, political parties, the disintegration of the middle class, or at least the exodus. One thing that I don't want to misrepresent, so I'm going to ask you specifically—my impression is that there was total agreement on the need for a political settlement being the ultimate criteria for stability in Iraq. The real question that's evolved is one that we've been discussing for a while, and the Baker Commission discussed, and I have discussed in the proposal I've made, and others—I'm not unique in this regard—and that is whether continuing and/or increasing our presence physically with military in Iraq promotes movement toward reconciliation, whatever "reconciliation" means, or the looming middle term—not threat, but reality that, over the next 12 to 18 months, if there's not a correlation between political reconciliation—if that does not occur, you will see a correlation with the reduction of American forces, to the point that we essentially have removed all our combat forces from that country. And that seems to be the tension. I may not be explaining this succinctly. But, given the broad choice that it seems to me the President of the United States has—and it's a pretty basic choice, it seems to me—does he increase, surge, escalate, or even just maintain without any threat, if you will, of significant reduction within a particular timeframe? Is that more likely to get action along the lines we need it, which is reconciliation of some sort? Or is it better as the Baker Commission suggested, by implication anyway, to tell the Maliki government, and others now, "Hey, Jack, it's not gonna last very much longer"?

I was asked, when the President made his secret trip to Iraq—I was on one of those programs, and they showed a picture of the President whispering in Maliki's ear. And they said, "What do you think of that?" I said, "It depends on what he's whispering." I wasn't being facetious. If he's whispering, "I'm with you to the end, don't worry, we're staying," then we're in real trouble, was my response. If he's whispering, "Hey, Jack, listen up here. You've got a limited amount of time. You've got to make some courageous and difficult choices. You've got to put yourself on the line. If you do, we'll help. If you don't, you can't count on it." In very colloquial terms, that's about what the choices are, in terms of our policy. You can demur, you cannot answer, but if you're willing, which side of that ledger do you—are more inclined to come down on? I know nothing is straight-line here, nothing is black and white. What should be the thrust of our policy over the next year as it relates to the issue of encouraging consensus, or a move toward consensus or reconciliation? By suggesting we're going to be leaving or by suggesting that we're going to provide the physical stability, the security, first, before we ask you to make these very difficult decisions?

Dr. O'HANLON. Senator, it's a great way of framing the dilemma. I think the way I would put it is, I would not be comfortable with President Bush being the only person speaking for the United States on this issue, because we know anything he says is going to be interpreted not as a surge, but as a new level of effort. His whole legacy is linked, as we all know, to Iraq coming out at least OK. So, I personally, not just become—not just because I'm a Democrat—I'm happy to see the Congress in Democratic hands—and, even where Republicans are having the opportunity, they are asking tough questions and sending the message—the current policy is not going to be sustainable. It's not sustainable militarily. The Army and Marine Corps are already doing too much, even at 140,000. To go to 160 is really going to something that has to be viewed as a temporary measure, even if President Bush asked for 50,000 more troops in the budget this year.

In terms of our politics, we all know, a number of you running for President, and just running for campaigns in 2008, are sending a message, "This can't continue." And the Iraqis have to know that, with 100,000 people being displaced from their homes every month, it can't continue in their country either.

So, only if both messages are sent simultaneously can it work. A surge, by itself, with the implication that it could continue indefinitely, I think, would be a terrible message to send. But if it's juxtaposed with this sense of urgency, and "2007 is the last real chance," then I think there may be a case for it.

Dr. MARR. That is a wonderful question, and I think it is the nub of the matter. I've asked myself the same thing, thinking of it from the Iraqi side, What motivates——

Chairman BIDEN. Right.

Dr. MARR [continuing]. Iraqis? And I wish I had a really definitive opinion on it, but I think I lean somewhat more to the Iraq Study Group sense of it, although I'm not hard over.

A couple of points. I think threat is necessary, but not sufficient, to get the Iraqis to move. And I think we have to ask ourselves,

also, what motivates people. It's not only threat. If you're always threatening, without some incentive, you're not going to get anywhere. But there is a sense of not only so much hopelessness, but passivity, or, "What can we do about it?" in the Iraqi tradition that I'm not sure, even if we used a threat, it's going to be successful.

Chairman BIDEN. Yes.

Mr. SAID. I think that a threat to withdraw will have two impacts of opposite direction. On one hand, it may incentivize people to talk and to seek a settlement. On the other hand, it may emphasize—encourage them to go for a last push. Indeed, what seems to be the dynamic, so far, has been that the threat and the—because people in Iraq realize that the Americans are not staying—has been to go for a last push.

Likewise, the surge option, particularly if taken out of context, out of political context, is more likely to produce negative results than positive.

A third—and it's just a general comment—I don't think there is an option of a gradual U.S. withdrawal. I think what you will realize—and this has happened on—in regional bases, in provincial bases—that attempts to withdraw, especially British attempts to withdraw, gradually have not materialized. And, indeed, once you start to withdraw, you'll have to be ready to withdraw almost immediately. And so, that is also important to keep in mind.

Dr. PILLAR. I will not demur at all in answering your very clear question, Senator. I would definitely lean in the direction of letting the Iraqis know we're not going to be there forever, consistent with the Iraq Study Group report.

I disagree a little bit with the comment Mr. Said just made. You know, people talk about an immediate withdrawal versus gradual. I think, just as a matter of military logistics and force protection and all that, even if you wanted to get out fast, fast could translate into a matter of months and wouldn't really be that much different from the timeframe that the ISG was talking about.

But my basis for answering you that way is, basically, we have tried other things, even ones that look like surges in the Baghdad area. They haven't worked. This other thing might not work, either, but at least it hasn't been tried. And it's also the option that we know will reduce U.S. costs and casualties.

Chairman BIDEN. Well, I appreciate it very much. We're going to hear from the Secretary tomorrow. She's graciously agreed to be here. And I hope, when she does, we will have explained that in a sense, "surge" is a bit of a misnomer. Most Americans, I think, when you talk about a "surge," are thinking of 20 or 25 or 30 or 15,000 folks getting on a boat, being shipped to the gulf, coming up through Basrah, and occupying Baghdad. The truth of the matter is, this is going to be a process, if it occurs. And we're talking about telling the Marines they've got to go from 6 months to a year in place. We're going to tell the Army guys and women there, they're going to go from 12 months to 14 months, we're going to take a brigade out of Kuwait or out of Qatar and move them in, and so on. So, this is a process—which I think complicates the matter even more, in a sense. But that's for another day.

So, I—again, the purpose of this is to educate us—and you've helped do that today. And hopefully, the American people and the

press have gained as much from listening to all of you as we have. I truly appreciate your patience. You've been sitting here since 9:30. It's now a quarter of 2. It's the drawback from expanding the committee to 21 people. I guess that's the number we have. But there are so many people in the Senate so critically interested in this that I overcame my instinct of making it smaller. I was chairman or ranking member of Judiciary for 17 years, and my entire effort was to reduce the size of the committee to make it more manageable. But I'm delighted with the new members. You can tell the degree of the concern and participation. And I think you've all noted—you've testified before—I doubt whether you've ever testified before where you were any more convinced that as many people were listening to everything word you had to say. And so, I hope that's some psychic remuneration for you, for all the work you've done on our behalf. We promise we'll try to cut the questions down. We'll kind of see if we have multiple questions. I don't want you in a position where you're spending the next whatever having to answer the written questions.

Again, the chairman and I both thank you for your tremendous input here and your patience.

And the committee is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1:52 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JIM WEBB, U.S. SENATOR FROM VIRGINIA

The series of hearings that we begin today provide a critical opportunity to forge a new strategic direction for Iraq and the entire region—one that is long overdue and one I hope all Americans will eventually be able to rally behind. I would like to express my appreciation to our panel's witnesses for their appearance today. I look forward to hearing their assessments, especially as they relate to the regional implications of the situation in Iraq today.

We went to war in Iraq recklessly; we must move forward responsibly. The war's costs to our Nation have been staggering. These costs encompass what we hold to be most precious—the blood of our citizens. They also extend to the many thousands more Iraqi people killed and wounded as their country slides into the chaos of sectarian violence and civil war. We have incurred extraordinary financial costs—expenses totaling more than $380 billion and now estimated at $8 billion a month.

The war also has diverted our Nation's focus fighting international terrorism and deflected our attention to the many additional threats to our national security abroad and national greatness at home—costs difficult to measure, perhaps, but very real all the same.

The Iraqi Government and the Iraqi people must understand that the United States does not intend to maintain its current presence in their country for the long term. They must make the difficult but essential decisions to end today's sectarian violence and to provide for their own security. The American people are not alone in seeking that day; indeed, the overwhelming majority of Iraqi citizens also does not want our forces present in their country for any longer than is absolutely necessary.

The key question of the moment is how long the United States should be expected to keep our forces in Iraq as its government seeks to assume these burdens? How and when do we begin to drawdown our combat presence and conclude our mission in a way that does not leave even greater chaos behind? What is the administration's strategic vision and, as it relates to our presence in Iraq, its eventual end point?

The answers to these questions are not to be found in Iraq alone. Achieving our goals in this war requires a coherent strategy encompassing the entire region. The National Strategy for Victory in Iraq, published by the National Security Council in November 2005, principally emphasized how the United States would help the Iraqi people defeat terrorists and build an inclusive democratic state. This strategy identified an initiative to increase international support for Iraq. It did not, how-

ever, affirm the need for an overarching diplomatic solution that is now, more than ever, an imperative if we are to end the war.

I have said for many months that the United States does not require a military solution to end the war in Iraq. We must seek a diplomatic solution immediately—one that engages all nations in the region with historic and cultural ties to Iraq. Because they are part of today's problem, Syria and Iran also must be party to tomorrow's solution. This overarching diplomatic solution, one supportive of a coherent strategy, will lead to four outcomes. First, it will enable us to withdraw our combat troops from Iraq over time. Second, it will lead to progressively greater regional stability. Third, it will allow us to fight international terrorism more effectively. Lastly, it will enable us to address our broad strategic interests around the world with renewed vigor.

During an earlier era in our Nation's history, we were faced with an unpopular war that had gone on too long. The then-recently retired General Dwight David Eisenhower spoke out against the conduct of the Korean war in the summer of 1952. "Where do we go from here," he asked; "when comes the end?"

Today, the members of this committee—indeed all Americans—await answers to these same questions: Where do we go from here? When comes the end?

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, U.S. SENATOR FROM MARYLAND

As a new member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I wish to thank Chairman Biden and Ranking Member Senator Lugar for taking the initiative to hold today's hearing regarding the war in Iraq. This hearing is timely and responds to the interest of the public to learn more up-to-date information about the President's plans and options.

I know the citizens of Maryland are very keen to understand where we are in Iraq and the implications for our sons and daughters fighting in Baghdad and other parts of that country. Maryland is home to the U.S. Naval Academy and other key military installations. For many reasons, the Iraq war and the return of our troops are of critical concern to the citizens of my State. Sixty-two Marylanders have lost their lives in Iraq and many more have suffered life-changing injuries.

In fact, this is one of the reasons I sought a seat on the Foreign Relations Committee. Marylanders want to be informed about what is happening in Iraq and other U.S. engagements around the world and I wanted to be in a position to respond to this interest. To be sure, the Iraq Study Group Report was an excellent means to begin this process. The findings and recommendations from the report constitute the most in-depth study to date of the management of the Iraq war. Specifically, I agree with the report's recommendation to begin a phased troop withdrawal of combat brigades.

Today we begin a series of hearings on Iraq designed to give Members of Congress and the American public a situational overview of the war and viable options to change our current course to promote greater security and to bring our military forces home. At the outset, I am very concerned about media reports regarding the Bush administration's intent to increase the number of U.S. troops.

In 2002, as a Member of the House of Representatives, I voted against the war in Iraq and have been critical of the President's conduct of the war and reconstruction efforts. I have encouraged the President to change course in Iraq and begin a phased troop withdrawal. Now, every indication suggests the President plans to do the opposite and increase American forces.

The escalation in combat forces causes me great concern for several reasons. First, it is unclear whether we can count on the Iraqi military/security forces to contribute and participate in the new security arrangement at a level that will allow U.S. forces to pull back from Baghdad and to begin troop withdrawal. This was the major problem in 2006 with "Operation Together Forward" Iraq failed to provide the agreed-upon troop numbers.

Second, there is strong opinion that the increase in U.S. forces by itself will do little to quelling the violence in Iraq and protect its civilians. The Iraqis should not be allowed to hide behind robust American troop levels. Rather, the Iraqis should assume responsibility to hold areas with American tactical, logistical, and technical support. It is imperative now for the Iraqi Government to assert control over its armed forces and security apparatus and finally institute appropriate command and control structures to credibly fix many of their identified shortcomings.

Third, with increased security must come greater protection for civilians and enhanced economic/infrastructure reconstruction efforts. While I recognize reconstruction is a long-term process, the quicker the United States and our coalition partners

begin this effort, the sooner we can stifle the insurgents' ability to recruit more Iraqi citizens into the deadly cycle of violence. Security and reconstruction go hand in hand and we owe it to the people of Iraq and our troops to implement a multifaceted approach to rebuild Iraq.

Fourth, it appears the President's new Iraq plan may well raise as many problems as it attempts to resolve. Troop escalation is a risky gambit that could increase sectarian violence and contribute further to Iraq's slide to a larger civil war. I hope this is not the case and I encourage the President to work with this Congress to create a lasting solution to the situation in Iraq.

Finally, in that regard, it is critical that an aggressive initiative be undertaken on the political and diplomatic front among the countries in the region. The goal of such an initiative must be to bring about a cease-fire in the civil war and an Iraqi Government that has the support of all the ethnic communities in Iraq. Military efforts alone cannot bring peace and stability to Iraq. The United States must undertake a broader international effort for a political solution to the civil war in Iraq.

During the coming weeks, the role of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to inform will be just as important as the role of the committee itself. This committee must exercise the appropriate oversight and investigation that the American people are demanding, and that our troops deserve.

THE ADMINISTRATION'S PLAN FOR IRAQ

THURSDAY, JANUARY 11, 2007 [A.M.]

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:02 a.m., in room SD–106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Joseph R. Biden, Jr. (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Biden, Dodd, Kerry, Feingold, Boxer, Bill Nelson, Obama, Menendez, Cardin, Casey, Webb, Lugar, Hagel, Coleman, Corker, Sununu, Voinovich, Murkowski, DeMint, Isakson, and Vitter.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR., U.S. SENATOR FROM DELAWARE

Senator BIDEN. The hearing will come to order.

Welcome to the Foreign Relations Committee, Madam Secretary. It's an honor to have you here.

Nearly 4 years ago, Congress and the American people gave the President of the United States the authority to destroy Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, and, if necessary, to depose a dictator. We know now that the weapons of mass destruction were not there, and that the dictator is no longer there, as well. The Iraqis have held elections, and they've formed a government. But the country and our troops, in my view, are now embroiled in the midst of a vicious civil war.

As of last night, according to the Pentagon, 3,009 Americans have lost their lives, over 22,000 have been wounded, and we have spent and committed hundreds of billions of dollars. And there seems to be no end in sight.

For many months now, the American people have understood that our present policy is a failure, and they wanted to know, and continue to want to know, where we go from here.

Last night, like millions of my fellow Americans, I listened intently to the President of the United States lay out his new strategy for Iraq. We all hoped and prayed the President would present us with a plan that would make things better. Instead, I fear that what the President has proposed is more likely to make things worse.

We hoped and prayed we would hear of a plan that would have two features: Begin to bring American forces home and a reasonable prospect of leaving behind a stable Iraq. Instead, we heard a plan to escalate the war, not only in Iraq, but possibly into Iran

and Syria, as well. I believe the President's strategy is not a solution, Secretary Rice. I believe it's a tragic mistake.

In Iraq, the core of the President's plan is to send another 20,000 Americans to Baghdad, a city of more than 6 million people, where they will go, with their fellow Iraqi soldiers, door to door in the middle of a civil war.

If memory serves me, we've tried that kind of escalation twice before in Baghdad. And it's failed twice in Baghdad. And I fear it will fail a third time. And the result will be the loss of more American lives and our military stretched to the breaking point, with little prospect of success, and a further loss of influence in the region.

Secretary Rice, this November the American people voted for a dramatic change in Iraq. The President said, forthrightly, he heard them. But it seems clear to me from listening to him last night, he did not listen. And, for the life of me, I don't understand how he could reject the overwhelming opposition to his plan from a broad bipartisan cross-section of the country's leaders—military, civilian, and civic. As I understand it, the Joint Chiefs of Staff opposed this plan. Our commander in the region, General Abizaid, opposed the plan. Our commanders in Iraq, starting with General Casey, opposed this plan. The Baker-Hamilton Commission opposed this plan. And so did our greatest soldier statesman, Colin Powell.

They all gave advice to the President that could be boiled down to two things. First, our military cannot stop the Shia, the Kurds, and the Sunnis from killing each other. The Iraqi people have to make very, very, very difficult political compromises in order for the killing to stop. And all of the people who gave advice to the President that I've mentioned suggested that the best way to force the leaders and the people to make these hard compromises was to start, this year, to drawdown our forces, not escalate them. The second consensus point from the advice the President got was that the way to secure this political solution to secure Iraq—was to secure support for whatever political solution the Iraqis arrived at from Turkey, Syria, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and all the neighbors. And there's a second reason for seeking that kind of support and consultation. It was that, if, in fact, the civil war cannot be stopped, at least with a regional consensus, the hope would be, it would be contained within Iraq.

So, Secretary Rice, to be very blunt, I can't, in good conscience, support the President's approach. But because there's so much at stake, I'm also not prepared to give up on finding a bipartisan way forward that meets the twin goals most Americans share and, I believe—I don't speak for anyone in this committee, but I believe most of my colleagues in the Senate share, and that is: How do we bring American forces home in an orderly way over the next year and leave behind a stable Iraq? In all my years in the Senate, Secretary Rice, I don't think we've faced a more pivotal moment than the one we face today. Failure in Iraq will not be confined to Iraq. It will do terrible damage to our ability to protect our interests all over the world, and, I fear, for a long time to come. That's why we have to work together for a solution.

I'm aware that the surge is not 22,000 people—or 20,000 people getting into the boat, landing at one moment. The reason why I think there's still time for us to work out a bipartisan solution is

that this is a process. We need a solution that will gain the support of our fellow citizens.

I say to my colleagues, maybe because I got here in the midst of the Vietnam war, toward the end, I think we all learned a lesson, whether we went or didn't go, whether we were for it or against it, is no foreign policy can be sustained in this country without the informed consent of the American people. They've got to sign on. They've got to sign on. I just hope it's not too late.

Mr. Chairman.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD G. LUGAR, U.S. SENATOR FROM INDIANA

Senator LUGAR. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I join you in welcoming Secretary Rice to the Foreign Relations Committee once again. I appreciate her willingness to discuss policy on Iraq with the committee in advance of a very important trip to the Middle East which I understand commences tomorrow. All of us listened intently to President Bush's speech last night. Yesterday I said that, initially, the President and his team should explain what objectives we're trying to achieve if forces are expanded, where and how will they be used, why is it the strategy will succeed, how Iraqi forces will be involved, how long additional troops may be needed, what contingencies are in place if the situation does not improve, and how this strategy fits into our discussion throughout the region. The President made an important start on this process with his speech. The elements of his plan require careful study by Members of Congress. I appreciate the efforts the President has made, thus far, to reach out to Congress and to the American people.

I was encouraged by the President's emphasis on a regional element in his Iraq strategy. Whenever we begin to see Iraq as a set piece—an isolated problem that can be solved outside the context of our broader interests—we should reexamine our frame of reference. Our efforts to stabilize Iraq and sustain a pluralist government there have an important humanitarian purpose. But remaking Iraq, in and of itself, does not constitute a strategic objective. Stability in Iraq is important because it has a direct bearing on vital U.S. strategic objectives. To determine our future course in Iraq, we must be very clear about what those objectives are. In my judgment there are four primary ones.

First, we have an interest in preventing Iraq, or any piece of its territory, from being used as a safe haven or training ground for terrorists. As part of this, we have an interest in preventing any potential terrorist in Iraq from acquiring weapons of mass destruction.

Second, we have an interest in preventing a civil war or conditions of permanent disorder in Iraq that upset wider regional stability. The consequences of turmoil that draws in outside powers or spills over into neighboring states could be grave. Such turmoil could generate a regional war, topple friendly governments, expand destabilizing refugee flows, close the Persian Gulf to shipping traffic, or destroy key oil production and transportation facilities. Any of these outcomes could restrict or diminish the flow of oil from the region, with disastrous results for the world economy.

Third, we have an interest in preventing the loss of U.S. credibility and standing in the region and throughout the world. Some loss of confidence in the United States has already occurred, but our subsequent actions in Iraq may determine how we are viewed for generations.

Fourth, we have an interest in preventing Iranian domination of the region. The fall of Saddam Hussein's Sunni government opened up opportunities for Iran to seek much more influence in Iraq. An Iran that is bolstered by an alliance with a Shiite government in Iraq or a separate Shiite state in southern Iraq would pose serious challenges for Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, and other Arab governments. Iran is pressing a broad agenda in the Middle East with uncertain consequences for weapons proliferation, terrorism, the security of Israel, and other U.S. interests. Any course we adopt in Iraq would consider how it would impact the regional influence of Iran.

Now, these are not our only interests in Iraq, but they're fundamental reasons for our military presence during the last several years.

I would observe that all four of these objectives are deeply affected not just by whether the insurgency and sectarian violence can be abated in Iraq cities and neighborhoods, but by the action of Iraq's neighbors.

For this reason, I have advocated broader diplomacy in the region that is directed at both improving stability in Iraq and expanding our options in the region. Inevitably, when one suggests such a diplomatic course, this is interpreted as advocating negotiations with Syria and Iran—nations that have overtly and covertly worked against our interests and violated international norms. But the purpose of the talks is not to change our posture toward these countries. A necessary regional dialog should not be sacrificed because of fear of what might happen if we include unfriendly regimes. Moreover, we already have numerous contacts with the Iranians and Syrians through intermediaries and other means. The regional dialog I am suggesting does not have to occur in a formal conference setting, but it needs to occur, and it needs to be sustained.

Both our friends and our enemies in the region must know that we will defend out interests and our allies. They must know that we are willing to exercise the substantial leverage we possess in the region in the form of military presence, financial assistance, diplomatic context, and other resources. Although it is unlikely that a political settlement in Iraq can be imposed from the outside, it is equally unlikely that one will succeed in the absence of external pressures and incentives. We should be active in bringing those forces to bear on Iraqi factions. We should work to prevent miscalculations related to the turmoil in Iraq.

Now, finally, much attention has been focused on the President's call for increasing troop levels in Iraq. This is an important consideration, but it is not the only element of his plan that requires examination. The larger issue is how we will manage our strategic interests in the Middle East, in light of our situation in Iraq. Can we use the stability that we offer the region, and our role as a counterweight to Iran, to gain more help in Iraq and in the region?

I look forward to continuing our examination of Iraq in the committee's hearings, and especially your testimony this morning.

Thank you.

Senator BIDEN. Thank you.

Madam Secretary, the floor is yours.

STATEMENT OF HON. CONDOLEEZZA RICE, SECRETARY OF STATE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON, DC

Secretary RICE. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Senator Lugar. Thank you, members of the committee.

I look forward to our discussion. And in order to facilitate that, Mr. Chairman, I have a longer statement that I would like to have entered into the record, and I will——

Senator BIDEN. Without objection, your entire statement will be placed in the record.

Secretary RICE. Thank you.

As I come before you today, America is facing a crucial moment—indeed, as the chairman has put it, a pivotal moment—concerning our policies in Iraq and concerning our broader policies in the Middle East. I think that we all know that the stakes in Iraq are enormous and that the consequences of failure would also be enormous, not just for America and for Iraq, but for the entire region of the Middle East, and, indeed, for the world. And so, we agree that the stakes in Iraq are enormous. And as the President said last night, Americans broadly agree, and we in the administration count ourselves among them, that the situation in Iraq is unacceptable. On these two points, we are unified: The enormousness of the stakes, and the unacceptability of the current situation.

The President has, therefore, forged a new strategy that speaks both to our stakes in Iraq and the need to change the way that we are doing things. The Iraqis have devised a strategy that they believe will work for their most urgent problem; that is, to return security to Baghdad. We are going to support that strategy through the augmentation of American military forces. I think Secretary Gates will say more about that in his committee. But I want also to emphasize that we see this not just as a military effort, but also as one that must have very strong political and economic elements.

In order to better deliver on the governance and economic side, the United States is further decentralizing and diversifying our civilian presence. And I will talk a little bit more about that, and in greater detail. We are further integrating our civil and military operations. And, as Senator Lugar has noted, it's extremely important to see Iraq in a regional context, and I would like to talk a little bit about the regional strategy that we want to pursue that supports reformers and responsible leaders in Iraq and across the broader Middle East.

Let me be very clear. We all understand that the responsibility for what kind of Iraq this will be rests with the Iraqis. They are the only ones who can decide whether or not Iraq is, in fact, going to be an Iraq for all Iraqis, one that is unified, or whether they are going to allow sectarian passions to unravel that chance for a unified Iraq. We know, historically, that Iraq rests on the region's religious and ethnic fault lines. And, in many ways, due to events in

Baghdad over the last year, Baghdad has become the center of that struggle.

The Samarra mosque bombing provoked sectarianism, and it set it aflame at a pace that threatens to overwhelm the fragile and yet promising process of reconciliation, a process that has produced successful elections and a new constitution, and substantial agreement, as we sit here today, on a law to share Iraq's oil wealth fairly, as well as a commitment to a more reasonable approach to de-Baathification and to hold provincial elections. Iraqis must take on the essential challenge, therefore, that threatens this process of national reconciliation, and that is the protection of their population from criminals and violent extremists who kill in the name of sectarian grievance.

The President, last night, made clear that the augmentation of our forces is to support the Iraqis in that goal of returning control and civility to their capital. He also noted that there are also very important strategic, economic, and political elements that must be followed up if "clear, hold, and build" is to actually work this way. And so, I want to assure you that we, in the State Department, recognize the importance of surging our civilian elements and our civilian efforts, as well as the surge that would be there on the military side. This is a comprehensive policy.

Iraq has a federal government. We need to get our civilian employees out of our Embassy, out of the Green Zone, into the field, across Iraq. We have had, over the last year and a half, the establishment of Provincial Reconstruction Teams that are operating outside of Baghdad. The importance of those teams should be understood in the following way: It is extremely important to have an effective and functioning government in Baghdad, and we have worked with them on ministries, on budget processes, on the technical assistance that they need, to have a functioning government. But it is equally important to have local and provincial governments that can deliver for their people. And, indeed, this gives us multiple points for success, not just the Government in Baghdad, but the people with whom we are working in the provinces.

I might just note that we believe that this is having an effect in places like Mosul and Tal Afar, but it's also having a very good effect even in some of the most difficult places. And one of the other elements of the President's policy last night was to announce that 4,000 American forces would be augmented in Anbar, the epicenter of al-Qaeda activity. That is, in part, because we believe that the efforts that we've been making with local leaders, particularly the sheikhs in Anbar, are beginning to pay fruit. For instance, they have recruited, from their own ranks, 1,100 young men to send to Jordan for training, and these "Sons of Anbar," as they call them, will come back to enter the fight against al-Qaeda.

And so, I want to emphasize, we're focused on the need to return control to Baghdad, but we're also very focused on the need to build capacity in the local and provincial governments, and to be able to deliver economic and reconstruction assistance there.

Finally, let me just say one word about our regional diplomatic strategy. Obviously, Iraq is central now to America's role in the Middle East—central to our credibility, central to the prospects for stability, and central to the role that our allies and friends and

Iraq's neighbors will play in the Middle East. But we have to base our regional strategy on the substantially changed realities of the Middle East.

This is a different Middle East. This Middle East is a Middle East in which there really is a new alignment of forces. On one side are reformers and responsible leaders who seek to advance their interests peacefully, politically, and diplomatically. On the other side are extremists, of every sect and ethnicity, who use violence to spread chaos, to undermine democratic governments, and to impose agendas of hatred and intolerance. On one side of that divide, the gulf countries, including Saudi Arabia and the other countries of the gulf—Egypt, Jordan, the young democracies of Lebanon, of the Palestinian territory, led by Mahmoud Abbas, and in Iraq. But on the other side of that divide are Iran, Syria, Hezbollah, and Hamas. And I think we have to understand that that is a fundamental divide. Iran and Syria have made their choice, and their choice is to destabilize, not to stabilize.

And so, with all respect to those who talk about engagement with Syria and Iran, I think we need to recognize that if Iran and Syria wish to play a stabilizing role for their own interests, then they will do so. If, on the other hand, they intend to offer a stabilizing role because they believe that, in our current situation in Iraq, we are willing to pay a price, that's not diplomacy, that's extortion. And I would just ask you what that price might be.

I have a hard time believing that Iran will, on one side, talk to us about stabilizing Iraq and say, "Oh, by the way, we won't talk about what you're doing in the Security Council to stop our nuclear program." That's not part of the price. Or that Syria will talk about stabilizing Iraq while they continue to destabilize it, and say, "Oh, we aren't actually interested in talking about the fact that we have not reconciled to the loss of our position in Lebanon or to the existence of a tribunal to try those who are responsible for the assassination of Rafik Hariri." These two will most certainly come into contact with each other, the destabilizing activities in Iraq and the desires of these states to have us pay a price that we cannot pay.

We do have a regional approach. It is to work with those governments that share our view of where the Middle East should be going. It is also to work with those governments in a way that can bring support to the new Iraqi democracy. It is to support the very normal democracy that Iraq itself may engage in with all of its neighbors. And it is to have an international compact, which is a bargain between the international community and Iraq, for support in response to Iraqi reforms, economic and, indeed, some that are political. In that Iraqi compact, both Syria and Iran have been present, and will continue to be.

Let me just conclude by saying that we all understand, in the administration, that there are no magic formulas for Iraq, as the Baker-Hamilton Commission said. And I'd like you to understand that we really did consider the options before us. The President called on advisors from outside. He called on the advice of the Baker-Hamilton Study Group. And, of course, he discussed the policies with his advisors, like me, who have been there from the beginning, and, therefore, bear responsibility for both the successes and failures of this policy; and new advisors, like Secretary of De-

fense Gates, who came with a fresh eye. After all of that, he came to the conclusion—and I fully agree—that the most urgent task before us now is to help the Iraqi Government. And I want to emphasize "help" the Iraqi Government—to establish confidence among the Iraqi population that it will, and can, protect all of its citizens, whether they are Sunni, Shia, Kurds, or others, and that they will, in an evenhanded fashion, punish those violent people who are killing innocent Iraqis, whatever their sect, ethnicity, or political affiliation.

We believe that the Iraqi Government, which has not always performed, has every reason to understand the consequences, now, of nonperformance. They, after all, came to us and said that this problem had to be solved. They came to us and said that, yes, they would make the necessary decisions to prevent political interference in the military operations that need to be taken to deal with the Baghdad problem. They came to us and said that, "This government will not be able to survive if it cannot reestablish civil order." And they gave to the President, and not just Prime Minister Maliki, but many leaders, an assurance that this time they're going to make the difficult choices in order to get it done.

The situation in Iraq is unacceptable, but Iraq is also, at this point in time, of very high stakes to this Nation. This is a time for a national desire and a national imperative not to fail in Iraq. We've faced crucible tests as a country before, and we've come through them when we have come through them together. I want to pledge to you, as the President last—did last night, that we want to work with all Americans, here, particularly, in the Congress, the representatives of the American people, as we move forward on a strategy that will allow us to succeed in Iraq. This is the strategy that the President believes is the best strategy that we can pursue. And I ask your careful consideration of it, your ideas for how to improve it. And, of course, understanding that not everyone will agree, I do believe that we're united in our desire to see America succeed.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Secretary Rice follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CONDOLEEZZA RICE, SECRETARY OF STATE, DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, as I come before you today, America faces a crucial moment. We all know that the stakes in Iraq are enormous. And we all share the belief that the situation in Iraq is unacceptable. On this we are united.

The new way forward that President Bush outlined last night requires us to do things differently. Most importantly, the Iraqis have devised their own strategy, and our efforts will support theirs. To do so, we will further decentralize and diversify our civilian presence in Iraq to better assist the Iraqi people. We will further integrate our civilian and military operations. And we will fashion a regional strategy that supports reformers and responsible leaders in Iraq and across the Broader Middle East.

Among Americans and Iraqis, there is no confusion over one basic fact: It is Iraqis who are responsible for what kind of country Iraq will be. It is they who must decide whether Iraq will be characterized by national unity or sectarian conflict. The President has conveyed to the Iraqi leadership that we will support their good decisions, but that America's patience is limited.

Iraqis are now engaged in a task without precedent in their history. Iraq rests on the main religious and ethnic faultlines in the Middle East, and for centuries, Iraqis have settled their differences through oppression and violence. Now they are attempting to do so peacefully and politically. This is not easy, and as one could

expect, many Iraqis have deep grievances, which some violent men interpret as a license to kill innocent people.

Baghdad has become the center of this conflict. We know that al-Qaeda deliberately sought to provoke sectarian violence in Iraq by targeting Shia civilians. With last February's bombing of the Golden Mosque in Samarra, the success of their plan accelerated. Sectarian passions, incited to violence, now threaten to overwhelm Iraq's fragile, yet promising, process of reconciliation—a process that has produced successful elections and a new constitution, substantial agreement on a law to share Iraq's oil fairly, and commitment to a more reasonable approach to "debaathification."

To succeed with national reconciliation, the Iraqi Government must improve security for its people, particularly in Baghdad. Iraqis themselves must take up this essential challenge. They must protect their population from criminals and violent extremists who kill innocent Iraqis in the name of sectarian grievance. The Iraqi Government must reestablish civil order in Baghdad to regain the trust of its people and control of its capital. President Bush has decided to augment our forces to help the Iraqis achieve this mission. Secretary Gates will have more to say on this.

Success in Iraq, however, relies on more than military efforts alone; it also requires robust political and economic progress. Our military operations must be fully integrated with our civilian and diplomatic efforts, across the entire U.S. Government, to advance the strategy that I laid out before you last year: "Clear, hold, and build." All of us in the State Department fully understand our role in this mission, and we are prepared to play it. We are ready to strengthen, indeed to "surge," our civilian efforts.

Our political and economic strategy mirrors our military plan: Iraqis are in the lead; we are supporting them. Improvement in the security situation, especially in Baghdad, will open a window of opportunity for the Iraqi Government to accelerate the process of national reconciliation. We can and will measure whether this work is being done. We recognize that the trend of political progress in Iraq is just as important as the end result. On the hydrocarbon law, for example, Iraqis are transcending sectarian differences and achieving a national purpose. This is a positive trend, and the process is moving in the right direction.

Iraqis must also take steps that accelerate economic development and growth. The Government of Iraq has taken many important steps already on key economic issues, including policies to open Iraq's economy more fully and responsibly to foreign investment. The Iraqi Government must now move urgently, especially in the most troubled areas, to deliver essential services to its people—programs that improve lives in meaningful ways, that restore confidence in national and local governance, and provide a stake in the country's future for all Iraqis who wish to see an expansion of hope rather than a continuation of violence. The Iraqi Government is committing $10 billion of its own resources to help create jobs, to break the logjams to growth in their economy, and to further national reconciliation.

To better disperse these new resources throughout the country, Iraqis are building new governmental structures. One innovation they have proposed is the creation of a new National Reconstruction Development Council, which would enable the Prime Minister to deliver resources faster and more effectively for major infrastructure projects. This Council will also help take the place of our own Relief and Reconstruction Fund. Another Iraqi innovation is the development of Project Management Units, to help Iraqis use their own resources more effectively to implement programs.

For these efforts to succeed, our support will be crucial. Since 2004, we have used money from the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund and other programs to build infrastructure and help the central government move toward self-reliance. As we enter 2007, despite many problems, we have substantially and successfully completed this phase. As Iraqis take charge, we will narrow our focus in how we help their central government. Using FY 2006 Supplemental funding, we have worked with the Iraqis to improve their capacity to govern. Now, our advisory efforts will concentrate on the most vital ministries. We will advise and invest our resources where we judge that our efforts will be most effective.

To oversee our economic support for the Iraqi people, and to ensure that it is closely integrated with our security strategy, I have appointed Tim Carney to the new position of coordinator for Iraq Transitional Assistance. He will be based in Baghdad and will work with Iraqi counterparts to facilitate a maximum degree of coordination in our economic and development efforts.

As Iraqis intensify efforts to improve lives, the main focus of our support will continue to shift toward helping the Iraqi Government expand its reach, its relevance, and its resources beyond the Green Zone. We will help local leaders improve their capacity to govern and deliver public services. Our economic efforts will be more tar-

geted on specific local needs with proven records of success, like microcredit programs. And we will engage with leading private sector enterprises and other local businesses, including the more promising state-owned firms, to break the obstacles to growth.

Our decentralization of effort in Iraq will require a more decentralized presence. We must continue to get civilians and diplomats out of our Embassy, out of the capital and into the field, all across the country. The mechanism to do this is the Provincial Reconstruction Team, or PRT. We currently have 10 PRTs deployed across Iraq: 7 American and 3 coalition. Building on this existing presence, we plan to expand from 10 to at least 18 teams. For example, we will have six PRTs in Baghdad, not just one. We will go from one team in Anbar province to three—in Fallujah, Ramadi, and Al Qaim. These PRTs will closely share responsibilities and reflect an unprecedented unity of civilian and military effort.

Expanding our PRT presence will also enable us to diversify our assistance across all of Iraq. Iraq has a federal government. Much of the street-level authority, and much of the opportunity for positive change in Iraq, lies outside the Green Zone—in local and provincial governments with party leaders and tribal chiefs. By actively supporting these provincial groups and structures, we diversify our chances of success in Iraq. Our PRTs have had success working at the local level in towns like Mosul, Tikrit, and Tal Afar. Now we will invest in other parts of Iraq, like Anbar province, where local leaders are showing their desire and building their capacity to confront violent extremists and build new sources of hope for their people.

All total, we seek to deploy hundreds of additional civilians across Iraq to help Iraqis build their nation. And we will ask Congress to provide funding to support and secure our expanded civilian presence. We want to give our civilians, deployed in PRTs, the flexibility to devote extra resources where they can do the most good at the local level. Our expanded PRT presence will be a powerful tool to empower Iraq's reformers and responsible leaders in their struggle against violent extremism. We, therefore, plan to request, as part of our FY 2007 Supplemental, significant new operating funds for our PRTs as well as hundreds of million of dollars to fund their programs. When we add in relevant USAID projects, we hope to approximately double our resource commitment to help local Iraqi communities through PRTs.

These commitments will not be indefinite. As I said earlier, one of our main objectives in this phase is to help the Iraqis use their own money to rebuild their country. The Iraqis have budgeted billions of dollars for this mission in 2007, and as their efforts become more effective, we have kept our FY 2008 requests limited. We want Iraqis to rely more and more on their own resources, their own people, and their own efforts. Therefore, by 2008 and 2009, the burden of local assistance should be assumed more effectively by the Iraqi Government. In the meantime, though, our efforts will be vital.

The final piece of our effort is the development of a regional diplomatic strategy, which was a key recommendation of the Iraq Study Group. Iraq is central to the future of the Middle East. The security of this region is an enduring vital interest for the United States. America's presence in this part of the world contributes significantly to its stability and success. So, as we recommit ourselves in Iraq, we are also enhancing our efforts to support reformers and responsible leaders in the region—and to deter and counter aggression to our friends and allies.

Our regional diplomacy is based on the substantially changed realities of the Middle East. Historic change is now unfolding in the region, and it is unleashing a great deal of tension, anxiety, and violence. But it is also revealing a new strategic alignment in the Middle East. This is the same alignment we see in Iraq. On one side are the many reformers and responsible leaders, who seek to advance their interests peacefully, politically, and diplomatically. On the other side are extremists, of every sect and ethnicity, who use violence to spread chaos, to undermine democratic governments, and to impose agendas of hate and intolerance.

This is why the proper partners in our regional diplomacy are those who share our goals. In this group, I would count, of course, our democratic allies: Turkey and Israel. I would also count the governments of the Gulf States plus Egypt and Jordan, or the "GCC+2." We have established unprecedented consultation with this group of countries. In fact, I will be returning to the region, and to this process, later this week. I would also count among our key partners the democratic reformers and leaders in places like Lebanon, the Palestinian territories, and, of course, Iraq. Our most important goal now is to use our diplomacy to empower democratic and other responsible leaders across the region. We must help them show their fellow citizens that it is they, not violent extremists, who can best protect their lives, promote their interests, and advance a future of hope.

On Iraq, in particular, our regional diplomacy has several components. One concerns Iraq's neighbor to the north: Turkey. President Bush and I have engaged re-

tired GEN Joe Ralston to work with Iraq and Turkey on concerns about terrorism from the Kurdish Worker's Party. Those efforts have helped to ease tensions, but we will do more to protect our ally, Turkey, from terrorist attacks.

Over the last 6 months, we have also supported significant progress in crafting an international compact between the Iraqi Government and the international community. Working with more than 40 countries, Iraq has developed a set of written commitments to action on political, security, and economic targets. The creation of the compact has been guided by a diplomatic process that has already met at the level of Foreign Ministers. This group involves all of Iraq's neighbors—including Iran—and other states that have invested significantly in Iraq's future. Iraq has led the compact process. The United Nations has served as cochair. And the World Bank has assisted. This diplomatic process also provides a structure that can easily accommodate flexible, informal meetings of smaller groups of countries about other topics of common concern.

While many of us are working to strengthen peace in the region, two governments have unfortunately chosen to align themselves with the forces of violent extremism—both in Iraq and across the Middle East. One is Syria. Despite many appeals, including from Syria's fellow Arab States, the leaders in Damascus continue to destabilize Iraq and their neighbors and support terrorism. The problem here is not a lack of talk with Syria but a lack of action by Syria.

Iran is the other. If the government in Tehran wants to help stabilize the region, as it now claims, it should end its support for violent extremists who destroy the aspirations of innocent Lebanese, Palestinians, and Iraqis. And it should end its pursuit of a nuclear weapons capability. I repeat my offer today: If Iran suspends its enrichment of uranium—which is, after all, an international demand, not just an American one—then the United States is prepared to reverse 27 years of policy, and I will meet with my Iranian counterpart—anytime, anywhere—to discuss every facet of our countries' relationship. Until then, we will continue to work with the Iraqis and use all of our power to limit and counter the activities of Iranian agents who are attacking our people and innocent civilians in Iraq.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I know there are no guarantees or magic formulas on the question of Iraq. I know that most Americans are skeptical and concerned about the prospects of success. I know and share the concern for those who remain in harm's way that all Americans feel, as well as the heartbreak they feel for the families who have lost loved ones.

I also know that, over the past several weeks, President Bush and our entire national security team have carefully considered a full range of new ideas. The President has heard from those of his advisors, like me, who have been around from the very beginning, and who bear responsibility for our policy thus far—its successes and its setbacks. He has also heard from new advisors who bring a fresh perspective. In addition, the President has weighed the thoughtful advice given to him by Members of Congress, by our friends and allies abroad, and by outside experts like the gracious public servants who made up the Iraq Study Group.

The conclusion the President reached, with which I fully agree, is that the most urgent task now is to help the Iraqi Government establish confidence that it can, and will, protect all of its citizens, regardless of their sectarian identity, from violent extremists who threaten Iraq's young democracy—and that it will reinforce security with political reconciliation and economic support. Implementing this strategy will take time to succeed, and I fully expect that mistakes will be made along the way. I also know that violent extremists will retain their capacity and their appetite to murder innocent people. But reestablishing civil order—the willingness and the capacity of the Iraqi Government to meet its responsibilities to its people—is essential.

The situation in Iraq is unacceptable, and the stakes are extraordinary—for the United States, for the region, and for the entire international community. It was, after all, the trouble and turmoil of the Middle East that produced the violent extremist ideology of al-Qaeda, which led 19 young men to crash airplanes into our cities 5 years ago on September 11. It is clear that, now and for many years to come, the crucible of the Middle East will remain the center of gravity for American and international interests.

There have been other critical times for America, when we have united as one nation to meet great challenges. Now must be such a time, for it is a national desire and a national imperative not to fail in Iraq. This, we believe, is the best strategy to ensure success. And I ask that you give it a chance to work.

Senator BIDEN. Madam Secretary, thank you very much. And I assure you, no one on this committee has any doubt about your intense concern and the intensity with which you have deliberated on

this and your frank acknowledgment of the mistakes that have been made. And I don't have any doubt about us wondering whether or not you care a great deal about this.

I have been told by the staff that the Secretary—she has a big day today. She has to be here, as well as in the House, and she understandably will have to leave here by 1 o'clock, at the latest. According to the staff calculation—and I'm going to hold everybody to this, including myself—that if we give everyone 7 minutes, everyone will have an opportunity to ask her, not all the questions you have, but the most important questions you think need be asked. We will be holding these hearings for another 2½ weeks. There'll be plenty of opportunities. And, again, the Secretary will be back over the ensuing months. And so, I hope that that meets with everyone's approval. Matter of fact, seven may be stretching it, but that's where we're going to start, if we can.

Let me begin, Secretary Rice. Last night, the President said, and I quote, "Succeeding in Iraq requires defending its territorial integrity and stabilizing the region in the face of extremists' challenges, and that begins with addressing Iran and Syria." He went on to say, "We will interrupt the flow of support for Iran and Syria, and we will seek out and destroy networks providing advanced weaponry and training to our enemies in Iraq." Does that mean the President has plans to cross the Syrian and/or Iranian borders to pursue those persons or individuals or governments providing that help?

Secretary RICE. Mr. Chairman, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs was just asked this question, and I think he perhaps said it best. He talked about what we're really trying to do here, which is to protect our forces, and that we are doing that by seeking out these networks that we know are operating in Iraq. We are doing it through intelligence. We are then able, as we did on the 21st of December, to go after these groups, where we find them. In that case, we then ask the Iraqi Government to declare them persona non grata and expel them from the country, because they were holding diplomatic passports. But what is really being contemplated here, in terms of these networks, is that we believe we can do what we need to do inside Iraq. Obviously, the President isn't going to rule anything out to protect our troops, but the plan is to take down these networks in Iraq.

The broader point is that we do have, and we have always had, as a country, very strong interests and allies in the gulf region, and we do need to work with our allies to make certain that they have the defense capacity that they need against growing Iranian military buildup, that they feel that we are going to be a presence in the Persian Gulf region, as we have been, and that we establish confidence with the states with which we have long alliances, that we will help to defend their interests. And that's what the President had in mind.

Senator BIDEN. Secretary Rice, do you believe the President has the constitutional authority to pursue, across the border into Iraq or Syria, the networks in those countries?

Secretary RICE. Well, Mr. Chairman, I think I would not like to speculate on the President's constitutional authority or to say anything that certainly would abridge his constitutional authority,

which is broad, as Commander in Chief. I do think that everyone will understand that the American people and, I assume, the Congress, expects the President to do what is necessary to protect our forces.

Senator BIDEN. Madam Secretary, I just want to make it clear, speaking for myself, that if the President concluded he had to invade Iran or Syria in pursuit of these networks, I believe the present authorization—which granted the President the right to use force in Iraq—does not cover that, and he does need congressional authority to do that. I just want to set that marker.

Let me move on. How long do you estimate American forces will be going door to door with their Iraqi counterparts in Baghdad before they can—I believe the phrase is "secure"—or "clear, hold, and build"? What is the estimate of how long will it take to clear? And how long are we prepared to hold with American forces in Baghdad that are being surged?

Secretary RICE. Well, I can't give you an exact timetable on how long operations might take. Let me just note that the Iraqis are in the lead on these Baghdad operations. And I think that one reason that it's extremely important that they are bringing some of their best forces from around Iraq to participate in this—or to lead this effort is that a good deal of the establishing of confidence in these neighborhoods has to be done by Iraqis. We will be in support of them, but I think that it's extremely important to have an image in mind that it is Iraqis who are expected to take census. After all, they're the ones with the linguistics skills to do so. It is Iraqis that are expected to be in these neighborhoods. The problem with previous Baghdad security plans is that there weren't enough forces to hold. I think that it is important that it will be a combination of Iraqi forces: Army and police—national police and local police. But we want to be certain, this time, that the holding phase lasts long enough for the Iraqis to be able to deal with the perpetrators of the violence. And so, I don't want to try to put a timeframe on it, but Secretary Gates said, earlier today, that he expects this to, of course, be a temporary measure while Iraqi forces are brought up to——

Senator BIDEN. Well, Secretary Rice, I think you're right. It's important to have a visual image of what this means: 6.2 million people, a civil war or a sectarian war taking place. And here's what the President said last night, referring to our surge troops, "The vast majority of them, five brigades, will be deployed to Baghdad. These troops will work alongside Iraqi units, and will be embedded in their formations." No American should misunderstand what that means. It means young marines are going to be standing next to an Iraqi soldier as they break down a door. So, I'd want to know and you've answered it—my question related to how long we think these marines and these five brigades are going to be kicking in doors, standing on street corners, patrolling neighborhoods, going to second-story walkups, et cetera. And that was the reason for my question. But, you're right, it's important we have the correct image of what this is. And that's what it is.

Secretary RICE. It is important that we have the correct image that Iraqis want to have this be their responsibility.

Senator BIDEN. Are you confident—you, personally, Madam Secretary—this will be my concluding comment—question—are you confident that Maliki has the capacity to send you a sufficient number of troops that will stay in the lead, that will allow American Marines to feel that their physical security is not being jeopardized merely by being "with this brigade of Iraqis"? Are you confident they will send a sufficient number, and their best?

Secretary RICE. Most importantly, General Casey and our Ambassador believe strongly that the Maliki government intends to live up to its obligations.

Senator BIDEN. But I'm asking you, Secretary Rice.

Secretary RICE. I have met Prime Minister Maliki. I was with him in Amman. I saw his resolve. I think he knows that his government is, in a sense, on borrowed time, not just in terms of the American people, but in terms of the Iraqi people.

Senator BIDEN. Are you confident?

Secretary RICE. I'm confident.

Senator BIDEN. Thank you very much, Secretary—or, excuse me—Major Secretary——

[Laughter.]

Senator BIDEN. Senator Lugar—Chairman Lugar.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Rice, in the New York Times today, columnist David Brooks wrote a column called "The Fog Over Iraq." I simply wanted your comment, because you have indicated you have visited with Prime Minister Maliki. David Brooks references the meeting of our President with Prime Minister Maliki on November 30 in which, reportedly, Maliki presented a plan in which our troops, the American troops, would go to the periphery of Baghdad, and would fight off insurgents, Sunni insurgents or whoever, trying to penetrate Baghdad. Meanwhile, the Iraqi Army and police, including Shiites and Kurds, principally, would take over the responsibility of attempting to clear the city.

Essentially, Brooks says President Bush rejected that plan, or our Government did, and the President has decided that we would do the opposite. American troops would be embedded in the nine police districts in Baghdad, and would, in fact, be more heavily involved, with a new mandate to secure those areas, whether door to door or in some other fashion. One thought is, no, not door to door, that the Shiites go door to door, and that we are back in the background, advising and supporting, and so forth. But the article goes on to give the impression that Maliki and the Kurds and the Shiites had at least an idea of creating their own kind of stability.

Now, from our standpoint, we may have decided that such a move rejected the Sunnis as a partner in the process; and, thus, led to greater destabilization of the country as a whole on—but let me just ask for your comment as to whether this is a sequence of events that transpired into the plan that the President gave last night. And what are the strengths and dangers of that?

Secretary RICE. Yes, Senator Lugar, the core of the Maliki plan has really been preserved here. This really is based on his plan. It is absolutely the case that the Iraqis have wanted to have responsibility for their own problem, to have their troops under their command, and to move out. When Prime Minister Maliki presented the

plan, he wanted our people to look at it with his military people to see how quickly this could be accelerated so that he could go and take care of the sectarian problem in Baghdad.

The fact is that it could not be accelerated quickly enough with only Iraqi forces in order to meet the timeline that he really felt he had, in terms of dealing with the Baghdad problem. And so, out of this planning process came, from our generals, the view that we needed to augment their forces, as embeds, as, by the way, the Baker-Hamilton Commission recommends, as people who can help them with, in a sense, on-the-job training, who can help them to, kind of, solidify their ability to go after this. But the Iraqis continue to press that they really need to be the ones interfacing with their population in a major way, they need to be the ones to deliver the stability that is needed.

I think you will see that in a relatively brief period of time as their forces develop, they will take on more and more. And as the President said last night, the thought is, they would have all of their forces by November. But there was a gap in time between the time that they need to get Baghdad under control and having the capability to do it, even bringing, as they are, their best and most reliable army forces from around the country.

So, that's the difference. But I don't believe it was ever really the Prime Minister's intention that it would be Shia and Kurds only. I think he understands that one of the problems that they have is that the Sunni population feels that the Iraqi Government is not evenhanded in dealing with death squads.

Senator LUGAR. What can you tell us about favorable reception of some of the sheikhs in Anbar province of our new policies? Would you describe that situation?

Secretary RICE. Yes. Well, the last time that there was a kind of formal report about Anbar, I remember some of the reporting as being the tremendous difficulties in Anbar. And it is a difficult place, because it is the epicenter of al-Qaeda. Now what you will hear from our commanders in the area—and also I have heard directly from my Provincial Reconstruction Team leader, a very seasoned diplomat—is that the sheikhs have essentially gotten tired of al-Qaeda, and want them out. They do not believe that we can do that alone. They have begun to recruit their own young men to be trained to be a force against the foreign invaders. They have, for instance, sent 1,100 young men to Jordan to train for something that they call the "Sons of Anbar" to come back. They will recruit more and send them. This is also a part of a success, we believe, of a policy with regional neighbors who have been involved in the Sunni outreach piece. It is into that—Anbar—that we believe it's important to surge both civilian and military assets. And so, when the President talks about 4,000 additional forces sent to Anbar, this is not because of a sectarian problem, this is because we think we may be able to support this local effort against al-Qaeda, and, second, to surge resources into Anbar.

To be very frank, the chairman asked me if I was confident about the Iraqi Government. I'm confident that they want to do this. I'm also one who knows that there have been times when they haven't performed, in the past. And one of the things that they've got to perform better on is getting economic resources into some of the

Sunni areas, particularly into Anbar. And so, we are also going to increase the number of Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Anbar to help with that process.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you.

Senator BIDEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Dodd.

STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER J. DODD, U.S. SENATOR FROM CONNECTICUT

Senator DODD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, Madam Secretary. And let me thank you, as well. We've had some conversations over the last couple of weeks, prior to the trip Senator Kerry and I took to the region, and then on the return, as well, and I thank you for that. And I thank you for being here this morning.

And again, I thank the chairman for holding these set—these series of hearings that we're going to have on the subject matter. They'd offer, I hope, an opportunity for us not only to listen to you, as we did the President last evening, but also an opportunity for you to hear from us, as well. I think it's important that there be a conversation here as we try to sort out this policy and begin to make sense of it. It's not about Democrats and Republicans, it's about getting this right. And I couldn't agree more with Senator Biden, I don't know of another foreign policy crisis that's been as compelling as this one. Over the past 32 years, as a Member of the House and as a Member of this body and a member of this committee for a quarter of a century, I've never been to the region where I've felt it was more in crisis than it is today, and at greater risk.

So, I'd like to share just some opening thoughts and comments, if I can with you, and then—and get to a quick question.

On the eve of the Second World War, the 20th century's most daunting and difficult struggle, Winston Churchill explained, in the following words, a compelling thought, I think. He said, "There's no worse mistake in public leadership than to hold out false hopes to be swept away. People face peril or misfortune with fortitude and buoyancy, but they bitterly resent being deceived or finding that those responsible for their affairs are, themselves, dwelling in a fool's paradise."

Madam Secretary, I'm sorry to say, today—and I think many hold this view—that a fool's paradise describes nothing as aptly as our Iraq policy today. I think most Americans know it, painfully. The Iraqi people, of course, know this, in compelling numbers.

If the President did grasp, I think, the sad extent of that failure, I sincerely doubt he would have ordered yet more troops into Iraq. The President's plan simply strikes me as a continuation of Operation Together Forward, which has been described already, which—far from improving Iraq's security climate, produced the unintended consequences of heightened sectarian violence.

I fail to see—and I think many others share this view—how the outcome will be different this time. And that is a true disservice, I think, to the American troops, who have shown nothing but professionalism and courage and should not be asked to risk their

lives for an unsound strategy and an unsound and an unsure purpose.

The Baker-Hamilton Report should have disabused us, in my view, of the notion that, caught in the midst of sectarian, ethnic, and religious political hatreds, we can simply bludgeon our way to victory. As many of us have been saying for some time now, only political and diplomatic possibilities hold out any real hope of reversing the spiral into chaos.

The time for blunt force, I think, is long past, and many hold that view. Instead, we ought to withdraw, I think, our combat troops from these large urban areas of sectarian conflict, where they simply are cannon fodder. There are 23 militias operating in Baghdad, alone. It's hard to identify exactly who is the enemy here. We have Shias and Sunnis, you have Baathists, you have insurgents, some al-Qaeda elements here. Asking our military people to sort out who the enemy is in all of this is extremely difficult, to put it mildly. Instead, we ought to be focusing our attention on training reliable Iraqi security forces, providing some security in the border areas. And, as several of our junior officers that I talked with in Baghdad suggested, providing the kind of security around some of these critical infrastructure areas, and provide the kind of water, sewage, and electrical grids that are so critical to people having some sense of opportunity or hope for the future.

If the only solution in Iraq is a political one, then diplomacy happens to be the weapon that we have left, and must use. The President's solution to—for all of this—or to all was, of course, to ignore the most important recommendations the Iraq Study Group—namely, robust diplomacy—and, instead, settle on an escalation of our current combat strategy. This is a tactic in search of a strategy, in my view, and will not bring us a more stable Iraq.

The American people have spent $14 billion training and equipping 300,000 Iraqi police and security forces. Yet, as I said a moment ago, 23 separate sectarian militias operate with impunity throughout Baghdad, alone. Sectarian killings continue largely unabated, averaging scores of deaths every day, and thousands a month. This is not random violence, it is a targeted civil war complete with ethnic cleansing. Those of us who have been to Iraq recently have seen it with our own eyes, heard it with our own ears. Beyond that, the President's own intelligence experts have told us that the Islamic world is growing more radical and that the terrorist threat is greater today than it was on 9/11, not despite, but because of, the continuing war in Iraq. They conclude it's become both a physical and ideological training ground for the next generation of extremists. The wider region has been further plunged into violence, as we know. Hezbollah has crippled the Lebanese Government; civil war in the Palestinian territories now seems more likely than ever; Syria and Iran are more powerful and emboldened than they have been in recent memory; we're further away from stabilizing Afghanistan as drug-traffickers and tribal warfare now threaten to destroy its nascent democracy, and the Taliban is growing stronger by the hour.

And perhaps most troubling of all is our standing in the world. According to the Pew Center for Global Opinion, most people in Great Britain, France, Spain, Russia, Indonesia, Egypt, Jordan,

Turkey, Pakistan, Nigeria, India, and China think that the war in Iraq is a greater danger to world peace than either Iran or North Korea, stunning as those numbers are. The President says that we're in a war of ideas. But how can we possibly win that kind of a war between democracy and extremism when so much of the world considers us to be the threat? It's deeply troubling to me, as I hope it is to you, as well. How weakened is our standing in the world and our support from foreign peoples? How many tools have we thrown away? And how safe are we now?

Senator Lugar raised an important question in his opening comments that I'd like you to address, if you can, and that is—none of us are suggesting, at this table, that we engage Iran or Syria as if they were an ally or a friend or talking about conferences where we give them a status they don't deserve. But it's awfully difficult to understand, Madam Secretary, why we would not try to engage very directly with people who can play a critical role in providing some stability. We heard, in Syria, the President say that he's interested in a secular Arab State operating on his border, does not want a Shia-dominated fundamentalist state on his border. That was just a comment to us in the room with Embassy personnel present. It seems to me it's worthy of examining and exploring those areas where we can have a common ground here, rather than just neglecting or ignoring that kind of an offer, if we're going to bring stability to the region.

I wish you would, once again, address the issue raised by Senator Lugar in the context in which he raised it, not diplomacy as a favor or a gift or some acknowledgment that we agree with these people, but, rather, the necessity for the United States to lead in a region where we have not been able to do so.

Secretary RICE. Thank you, Senator.

Let me address the question, first, of Iran and Syria. And they are different. And I think we need to separate the two.

First of all, on Syria, we did engage, for quite a long time. Colin Powell engaged. Rich Armitage engaged. Bill Burns engaged. And, in fact, we got nowhere. And, indeed, I would argue that the situation, from our point of view, is worse today, in terms of the terms on which we would be engaging, than it was at that time.

The terms on which we would be engaging now, and on which we're being asked to engage, is that we go to the Syrians and we say, "Help us to stabilize Iraq," or, "Let's join in our common interest to stabilize Iraq." That's what we would say to them. The problem, of course, is that if they have an interest in stabilizing Iraq, I assume that they will do it on the basis of their national interest, and that they will do it because it is in their national interest. To do anything more with them is to suggest that there's a tradeoff that's possible, "You help us stabilize in Iraq, and perhaps we will overlook some of your activities in Lebanon. You help us stabilize in Iraq, perhaps we can do something to shave some of the teeth from the tribunal."

I think it's extremely important to note that we have talked to the Syrians. We've generally gotten nowhere. And now we would be going in a way that I fear looks like a supplicant.

Senator DODD. Could I just ask you, Madam Secretary——

Secretary RICE. Yes.

Senator DODD [continuing]. Is that speculation on your part, or has——

Secretary RICE. No.

Senator DODD [continuing]. That been the reaction you've heard? It seems to me——

Secretary RICE. I would also just note that an awful lot of people have engaged the Syrians recently, to no good effect. The Italians, the Germans, the British all engaged them to no good effect.

Senator DODD. Well, but——

Secretary RICE. Senator Dodd, if I really thought that the Syrians didn't know how to help stabilize Iraq, and we needed to tell them, then perhaps that would be worth doing. They know how to stabilize Iraq. They just need to stop allowing terrorists to cross their borders.

Senator DODD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary RICE. Shall I go to Iran? Because I do think they're different.

Senator BIDEN. Yes.

Secretary RICE. When it comes to Iran, first of all, there's a 27-year history of not engaging Iran, so this would be a major shift in policy. Of course, we did talk to them about Afghanistan, when that made sense. But what we're looking at, again, is an Iran that is engaging activities to try to kill our troops. They know how to stop that. They know how to stop it tomorrow. They know how to stop destabilizing the young Iranian—Iraqi Government. And I assume that if they believe it's in their interest, they would do so.

But I just don't believe, for a moment, that the conversation with the Iranians is going to go in the following way, "Help us stabilize Iraq," and they don't want to talk about a price on their nuclear program.

We are, I think, dealing with Iran in the proper fashion, which is to insist, with the rest of the international community, that any negotiations with Iran are going to be on the basis of suspension of their nuclear program. We are reaching out to the Iranian people. We just had a group of Iranian medical doctors here, in an exchange. We will have some American sports teams go there. There are banks. We are making it difficult for Iran to continue its policies of terrorism and WMD pursuit, because we are sanctioning and designating their banks that are engaged in those activities, and it is having an effect on whether people are willing to invest in Iran, whether they are willing to take the reputational risk of handling Iranian assets. That's why banks are leaving Iran. That's why they're having trouble finding a way to support their investment in their oil and gas industry.

We do have a pretty comprehensive way of dealing with Iran. I have made the offer. If they are prepared to suspend their enrichment capability, I'm there with their people at any time that they'd like and any place that they'd like. But I think that's the proper context.

And, finally, we do have the opportunity, within the international compact, to have Iran and Syria play a positive role in Iraq, if they wish to do it. They are—they've been at those meetings of the international compact, and they should play a positive role. And so, I don't think there's an absence of diplomacy, an ab-

sence of a policy toward Iran and Syria; it's just that direct negotiations on this matter put us in the role of supplicant, and I think that's a problem.

Senator DODD. Thank you, Madam Secretary.

Senator BIDEN. Thank you.

Senator DODD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator BIDEN. Senator Hagel.

STATEMENT OF HON. CHUCK HAGEL, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEBRASKA

Senator HAGEL. Mr. Chairman, thank you. Welcome, Dr. Rice. We always appreciate you coming before this committee. And before I get to my questions, I want to——

[Pause.]

Senator HAGEL. I was concerned. I—that doesn't count on my time. He's not from Nebraska, Mr. Chairman. I——

[Laughter.]

Senator BIDEN. Would you reset—would you reset the clock?

Senator HAGEL. He took the train over from Delaware, that fellow did. [Laughter.]

Like I was saying, Dr. Rice—it was a little heavy, anyway; we needed a break——

[Laughter.]

Senator HAGEL. We are very appreciative of your trip to the Middle East tomorrow, because not only does it fit into what we are discussing today—and I have believed for some time that it is the centerpiece of the difficulties in the Middle East, as was noted here by our cochairman—this issue is going to be with us for some time, as it has been. And you have noted that. The President has noted that. I would hope that—and I have reviewed your travel schedule—that we will find, as a result of those meetings, that we will have locked in place some very significant followup. And I have been one, as you know—and I've discussed this with you—that I think the President and you should think very seriously about some kind of a day-to-day high-level envoy. You do not have the time and the energy and the resources and the manpower—I don't need to tell you—to continue to work this, nor does the President. But if, in fact, we're going to make progress and move this to some higher plane, where we are developing some confidence and trust that we have lost, in my opinion—and I think others share that, especially recent conversations and poll numbers—this issue must be addressed, and that means followup. So, thank you for your leadership.

I want to comment briefly on the President's speech last night, as he presented to America and the world his new strategy for Iraq, and then I want to ask you a couple of questions.

I'm going to note one of the points that the President made last night at the conclusion of his speech, when he said, "We mourn the loss of every fallen American, and we owe it to them to build a future worthy of their sacrifice." And I don't think there is a question that we all in this country agree with that. But I would even begin with this evaluation, that we owe the military and their families a policy—a policy worthy of their sacrifices. And I don't believe, Dr. Rice, we have that policy today. I think what the President said

last night—and I listened carefully, and read through it again this morning—is all about a broadened American involvement—escalation—in Iraq and the Middle East. I do not agree with that escalation. And I would further note, that when you say, as you have here this morning, that we need to address and help the Iraqis, and pay attention to the fact that Iraqis are being killed. Madam Secretary, Iraqis are killing Iraqis. We are in a civil war. This is sectarian violence out of control, Iraqi on Iraqi. Worse, it is intersectarian violence, Shia killing Shia. To ask our young men and women to sacrifice their lives to be put in the middle of a civil war is wrong. It's, first of all, in my opinion, morally wrong; it's tactically, strategically, militarily wrong.

We will not win a war of attrition in the Middle East. And I further note that you talk about skepticism and pessimism of the American people, and some in Congress. That is not some kind of a subjective analysis, that is because, Madam Secretary, we've been there almost 4 years. And there's a reason for that skepticism and pessimism. And that is based on the facts on the ground, the reality of the dynamics.

And so, I have been one, as you know, who believed that the appropriate focus is not to escalate, but to try to find a broader incorporation of a framework. And it will have to be certainly regional, as many of us have been saying for a long time. That should not be new to anyone. But it has to be more than regional, it is going to have to be internationally sponsored. And that's going to include Iran and Syria.

When you were engaging Chairman Biden on this issue, on the specific question, "Will our troops go into Iran or Syria in pursuit, based on what the President said last night?" you cannot sit here today—not because you're dishonest or you don't understand—but no one in our Government can sit here today and tell Americans that we won't engage the Iranians and the Syrians across the border. Some of us remember 1970, Madam Secretary, and that was Cambodia. And when our Government lied to the American people and said, "We didn't cross the border going into Cambodia"—in fact, we did. I happen to know something about that, as do some on this committee.

So, Madam Secretary, when you set in motion the kind of policy that the President is talking about here, it's very, very dangerous. Matter of fact, I have to say, Madam Secretary, that I think this speech, given last night by this President, represents the most dangerous foreign-policy blunder in this country since Vietnam, if it's carried out. I will resist it.

Now, let me ask a question about the Maliki government. Is all of the Maliki government in support of America's significant escalation of troops and all the other things the President talked about? And where are our allies? Are they escalating, as well? It's my understanding that most of our allies have been withdrawing their troops. My understanding is that Great Britain intends to have most of their troops, if not all, out by the end of this year. Are the British escalating their troops? Are the Poles, the Italians, the South Koreans, the Australians? Are we finding ourselves isolated—going to find ourselves isolated? If you would answer those two questions, thank you.

Secretary RICE. Yes; certainly, Senator.

The first thing, I don't think we anticipate an augmentation of other coalition forces. But the number of Iraqi forces that should be growing over the next several months, so that, in fact, by November, these are the places that Iraq itself can take care of—we do expect Iraqi forces to fill the void.

Now, second, let me just go to the question of escalation.

Senator HAGEL. Let me ask you to——

Secretary RICE. Yes.

Senator HAGEL [continuing]. Answer the second question—actually, my first question——

Secretary RICE. Yes.

Senator HAGEL [continuing]. A little more specifically. The coalition government of Prime Minister Maliki——

Secretary RICE. Yes.

Senator HAGEL [continuing]. The Sunnis——

Secretary RICE. Right.

Senator HAGEL [continuing]. Sadr——

Secretary RICE. Yes.

Senator HAGEL [continuing]. His 30 members, which leads us right into, as we put our Marines and Army in Baghdad, another 22,000, or whether that's going to be 15,000, we're going to then put them in a position to be killing, I assume, militia—because the militia's the problem there. And, so, that's the position we're going to put our troops in, and they'll be killing our troops. Now, are the Sunni-Shia coalition members, and the Kurds, of Maliki's government, are they all supporting our new position?

Secretary RICE. Of course Muqtada al-Sadr does not support coalition forces at all.

Senator HAGEL. He has 30 representatives on that——

Secretary RICE. Yes.

Senator HAGEL [continuing]. Government. So my—again, is this a—is this a unified support of—go ahead.

Secretary RICE. Sorry. His 30 people are not even enough. If you count the two Kurdish parties, the IIP and the other Shia parties, they are, in fact, a majority. And, indeed, the President has talked to the leaders of those blocs, prior to this, to say that they need to support Prime Minister Maliki's plan. And the augmentation of our forces, of course, is in support of that plan.

So, I think you will find support among the people who are supporting Prime Minister Maliki in his desire to end the sectarian violence, and that is more than Prime Minister Maliki himself.

Senator HAGEL. Well, that's not my question.

Secretary RICE. Well, you asked me to also——

Senator HAGEL. My question was the escalation of American troops in Iraq.

Secretary RICE. But I think you asked who was supporting it, and I said the Kurdish parties, Prime Minister Maliki and his Shia allies, and the IIP support a plan to do this, and they know that the augmentation of American forces is part of that plan.

Now, as to the question of escalation, I don't see it, and the President doesn't see it, as an escalation.

Senator HAGEL. Putting 22,000 new troops—more troops in is not an escalation?

Secretary RICE. Well, I think, Senator, escalation is not just a matter of how many numbers you put in. Escalation is also a question of, "Are you changing the strategic goal of what you're trying to do?"

Senator HAGEL. Would you call it a decrease and billions of——

Secretary RICE. I would——

Senator HAGEL [continuing]. Dollars more than you——

Secretary RICE. I would——

Senator HAGEL [continuing]. Need for it?

Secretary RICE. I would call it, Senator, an augmentation that allows the Iraqis to deal with this very serious problem that they have in Baghdad. This is not a change in what we are trying to achieve. The Iraqi Government needs to establish population security. What this augmentation does is to help them carry out their plan to get population security.

I just want to note, though, of course, that many of the American casualties actually are taken in places like Anbar, they're also taken, really, because convoys are moving back and forth in the city. They are deliberately done by people who are trying to get us out of the country. They're not because we are caught in the middle of crossfire between Sunnis and Shia. I think it is important, again, to use the chairman's word, to have an image of what's really going on in Baghdad. It is absolutely the case that Iraqi——

Senator HAGEL. Madam Secretary, your intelligence and mine is a lot different. And I know my time is up here. But to sit there and say that, Madam Secretary; that's just not true.

Secretary RICE. Well, Senator, if you will——

Senator HAGEL. That is not true.

Secretary RICE. Senator, if you'll allow me to finish, there is a point I'd like to make about the Iraqis killing Iraqis and what that really is.

Senator HAGEL. Well, what that really is, it's pretty obvious what it really is.

Secretary RICE. There are death squads, Senator, that are going into neighborhoods, and they are killing Iraqis. And, indeed, the death squads are Iraqis. So, in that sense, it's Iraqis killing Iraqis.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Secretary RICE. But I think it is wrong to give an image that somehow all Sunnis and Shia have broken into violence against one another. What the Maliki government is trying to do is to reestablish civil order so that the violent groups, including militias, including death squads, are dealt with by Iraqi forces, with the aid of American forces. That's different than saying that all of Iraq has fallen into civil war. And I just think it's the wrong image. Not all of Baghdad has fallen into civil war. There are deliberate efforts by organized groups to go after Sunnis, if they are Shia, and Shia, if they are Sunnis. What the President said to Prime Minister Maliki is, "You have got to be evenhanded in how you go after these killers, whether they are Sunni or whether they are Shia." And that is the obligation that he undertook, and it is the assurance that he gave.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Senator BIDEN. Gentlemen, these are really important exchanges, but if we're going to get to the junior members being able to ask their questions, I'm going to have to start to cut them off. And I'm reluctant to do it, because this is something the American people should hear and understand. And so, I'm sorry, but I'm going to try to—try to get us back into the—into this 7 minutes. OK?

Senator Kerry.

STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN F. KERRY, U.S. SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS

Senator KERRY. You had to put the hammer down now, huh? [Laughter.]

Senator BIDEN. Yes; I'm going to put the hammer down now. Yes; right.

Senator KERRY. Madam Secretary, welcome. And we appreciate your being here. I'm going to try and summarize a couple of comments—of thoughts, quickly, and then, obviously, try to get some questions. The time is so tight.

With all due respect, I think you were splitting hairs a little bit in your answer to Senator Hagel. It is true that Iraq, as a whole, is not engaged in—broadly, as you're saying, but the trendline is increasingly moving in that direction. And in places like Basrah, the British are struggling. There's increasing violence in communities where there wasn't. And the level of violence, according to most people's standards, the testimony we had yesterday in this committee, is larger than classified civil wars in many other places, historically. And the violence of Sunni on Shia is clearly sectarian, and it is civil war between them. Low grade, still; but, nevertheless, civil war.

The Middle East that Senator Dodd and I saw when we were there a few weeks ago, certainly the Middle East I saw, is very different from the one that I think you've described here today. Last night's speech by the President was very important. It was important for what it said and set out as a policy, but it was also important, I think, for what it didn't say and didn't do.

Many of us—as you know, in our own personal conversation, we've been looking for a bipartisan way to approach this. I think the President lost an enormous opportunity last night for that bipartisanship. None of us want failure. There is a road to success, in the judgment of some people, conceivably. Much more out of reach than it ever was at any point in time, because of the failure to make the right choices and to find that consensus to date.

But last night the President chose, fundamentally, to ignore the foundation built by the Iraq Study Group, the foundation built, bipartisan basis here, and knowingly and willfully has divided the country yet again, and the Congress, over this issue. We didn't find that bipartisanship. And what was particularly lacking, in my judgment—and I don't understand it—was the political-diplomatic approach and solution here. Every general, you yourself, the President, has said, there's no military solution. But last night the President didn't offer the diplomatic and political solution. And why there isn't a resolution on the oil revenue, why there isn't a resolution on the federalism, why there isn't a path to that through

the summitry and the diplomacy necessary, is really beyond a lot of people's understanding, at this point.

The Middle East that we saw is a Middle East—and if you measure a policy by what it's accomplishing—I mean, I hate to say it, but this policy is unbelievably off the mark. A failure. Hamas is stronger than at any time previously. Hezbollah is stronger than at any time previously. Iran is stronger than at any time previously. Iraq is more of a mess than at any time previously. That is the measure of a failure.

And so, the question is—and here, we have, in the New York Times today, a story, saying that—promising troops where they aren't really needed, a story about how the government itself is saying, "We don't want them," and how they would like to run the war the way they want to, which I thought was the purpose of this exercise, but we're not going to let them.

Now, I want to get to some questions, and it's hard to do it in this timeframe. But the President said, last night, that America's commitment is not open-ended, and, if they don't follow through, they will lose the support of the American people and the Iraqi people. I don't want to debate with you whether or not you—they've already lost the support of the American people. I think it's pretty evident to most people that that's where we are. But what does it mean to say it's not open-ended? What is the accountability measure here? Are you saying, if it's not open-ended, that you're prepared to terminate it? Do you agree that it's not open-ended, first of all?

Secretary RICE. Of course it is not open-ended.

Senator KERRY. All right. If it's not open-ended, does that mean you're prepared, if they fail, to pull out, to terminate? What is the—what is the accountability mechanism?

Secretary RICE. Senator, I think it's best to leave the President's words as the President's words.

I do think that the accountability rests in two places. First of all, I think the Iraqis now know that if they don't succeed in returning security to their population, then their population is not going to support them.

Senator KERRY. And what are we going to do? That's the big issue to the United States Congress.

Secretary RICE. It's a democratic process. And, second, we will have an opportunity, as this policy unfolds—it's not going to happen overnight, to see whether or not, in fact, the Iraqis are living up to the assurances that they gave us.

Senator KERRY. And what if they don't?

Secretary RICE. Senator, I don't think you go to plan B. You work with plan A.

Senator KERRY. But that's not a plan B. That's a very critical issue here.

Secretary RICE. You work with plan A, and you give it the possibility of success, the best possibility of success. And I want to emphasize, it's not just about Baghdad. There are other elements to this policy. And I really think it's important not to underestimate the importance of relying, of course, on the Maliki government, in terms of Baghdad, but also relying on the local councils and the local leaders of Baghdad, through the expansion of PRTs there, re-

lying on the local leaders in places like Anbar to do the kinds of things that they've started to do.

Senator KERRY. But, Madam Secretary, with all due respect—I mean, all of that is good. I think those PRT teams are terrific, and I think the effort of those folks out there is courageous, unbelievable. But they can't do this if Abdul Aziz al-Hakim and SCIRI have a grand design for a nine-province state that is Shia in the south, to the exclusion of adequate support to the Sunni in Baghdad and a central government. You know that. They can't do it if Muqtada al-Sadr has ambitions with respect to the country, and the Sunni aren't brought to the table with a sufficient stake that they feel they're sharing. That's the fundamental struggle here.

Secretary RICE. I agree, Senator.

Senator KERRY. The President didn't address it.

Secretary RICE. No; the President did address it. He talked about the need for the national oil law.

Senator KERRY. The need for it, but not how it's going to happen and why do we have to wait 3 years to have that?

Secretary RICE. It's actually a very difficult thing, Senator, in a place where they've never solved their problems by politics, to ask them to take one of the most fundamental issues facing the country, which is, how are they going to divide the one strong resource they have—which is oil—and what's remarkable is that the oil law that they are now close to finalizing is not a sectarian oil law. In fact, even though the Kurds might have been expected as some have said they would—to insist that they will simply control all the resources themselves, that's not what the oil law does.

Senator KERRY. I understand what the framework for it is. But the question is: Why is there not the political resolution on the table that assures Americans that the fundamental struggle between Sunni and Shia—and the struggle within Shia—I mean, the President talked last night about this war as if it's sort of a single war—the Green Zone government struggling for democracy versus everybody else. Really, there are four or five—there are several wars.

Senator BIDEN. Senator, your——

Senator KERRY. There's a war of——

Senator BIDEN [continuing]. Time is——

Senator KERRY [continuing]. Sunni on Shia. There's a war of Sunni and Shia on American occupiers. There's a war of Syria, Iran, engaging with——

Secretary RICE. Senator, I think everybody understands that, but you asked me about the political reconciliation.

Senator KERRY. Well——

Senator BIDEN. Senator, I'm sorry, your time is up. We're just not going to be able——

Secretary RICE. All right.

Senator BIDEN. If——

Senator KERRY. Well, could you just speak to the——

Secretary RICE. Shall I answer?

Senator KERRY [continuing]. Political piece, please?

Secretary RICE. Yes. The political piece, it is composed of the following elements: The national oil law, which is a remarkable law, in that it does not take a sectarian cast; a new de-Baathification

policy, which already has allowed a number of officers to return to the armed forces, and pensions to be paid, and there will be further effort on that; a commitment to provincial elections, which the Sunnis feel will be important for righting the disproportionally low share of their representation in provincial councils, because they boycotted the elections, early on. These are the elements of a national reconciliation plan. And I don't think, Senator, it can be imposed from the outside. I do think the Iraqis themselves, with our help and with the help of others—and, by the way, with an international compact, where the international community has, indeed, said, "Those are the obligations that you must undertake for support"—that that is how they will get to that national reconciliation plan. But they're not going to get there if they're unable to provide population security in Baghdad, because that is stoking the atmosphere of sectarianism.

Senator BIDEN. I realize that generates a lot of questions, but I'm going to yield now to Senator Coleman.

STATEMENT OF HON. NORM COLEMAN, U.S. SENATOR FROM MINNESOTA

Senator COLEMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Rice, first I would say that I do appreciate the President's candor last night in admitting mistakes. I think it was important. I share his perspective on the two fronts we face in Iraq. We're fighting a war against al-Qaeda and foreign fighters in Al Anbar province. We're winning that war. I was there just 3 weeks ago. But the problem is that we can't be successful there in the long term, unless we have Sunnis in the police force and Sunnis in the army. And that gets back to the sectarian violence that we're seeing in Baghdad.

The chairman asked the question about capacity. To me, the issue is not the capacity of the Iraqis to do what has to be done to deal with this sectarian violence, but their resolve. I met with Dr. Rubaie, who is the Prime Minister's national security advisor, and I can tell you, 3 weeks ago he didn't think the answer to the violence in Baghdad was more American troops there. The sense I got from Dr. Rubaie was, "We [Iraqis] can take care of this—it is our problem." You've indicated that, "This time, they're going to make the difficult choices." And I'm not seeing that type of resolve in the Iraqis. It is difficult to ask them to enact an oil law. It's a lot more difficult to ask our sons and daughters and fathers and brothers and sisters to be on the front line in Baghdad, in the crosshairs of sectarian violence when we have this question about the resolve of the Iraqis to do what they need to do to end sectarian hatred.

And so, my question to you is: Wouldn't it be wiser to hold the Iraqis to certain benchmarks, to tell them, "You have X number of months to pass an oil law that distributes oil throughout the region, to put money into places like Anbar province, that are Sunni-dominated and have been cut off in the past, and to show a real commitment to a reconciliation"? I just don't know if the Iraqis are done killing each other. I don't know if the bloodletting is past the mark where all the groups are tired of it and willing to pursue reconciliation. Why wouldn't it be wiser for us today, "We'll give you

6 months to do this, and if you achieve it, there are a range of things that the U.S. can do in response"? Why put more American lives on the line now, in the hope that this time the Iraqis will make the difficult choices?

Secretary RICE. Senator, you've come to the real crux of the matter. Is it a matter of capacity or is it a matter of resolve? If you think it's just a matter of resolve, then I think that's precisely the strategy that you would pursue. You would say to them, "Show us, first, that you're resolved, and then we'll help you." But if you think it's both a matter of resolve and capability, which our people do, despite the somewhat bravado of Mr. Rubaie and some others—I think the Iraqi Defense Minister didn't think that he has the forces to do what he needs to do. And so, if you think it's a matter of both resolve and capability, then you want to provide the capability up front so they don't fail. And that's really what the President is saying. Then you have to have the resolve. I am absolutely of the mind, and absolutely committed, that they have to have the resolve. And, frankly, they haven't always shown it. But they are moving on a number of fronts that show that resolve—the oil law, some of the moves on de-Baathification.

But I think, again, it's important to have a view of what Baghdad really looks like. First of all, they are going to be on the front lines, because they understand that sectarian violence has to be ended by them, not by us. We can support them; we can't take it on. But all of us remember times in our history when it was not good to be in a neighborhood when the police came in. I came from a part of our country where that was the case. Seeing the police come into Birmingham, AL, when I was a kid, was not a comforting sight. That's essentially the case in some of the neighborhoods of Baghdad. And so, what that government has to do is to reestablish in that population the confidence that they are going to establish civil order, that they're not going to let death squads take out neighborhoods, kill the men, send the women into exile. That's what we're trying to help them to do. But they've got to be on the front lines of this, because ultimately only they can solve the sectarian problem.

Senator COLEMAN. I think we agree on the outcome. We agree on what the Iraqi Government has to do. We face the saying, "Fooled once, shame on you; fooled twice, shame on me." What I have yet to see—even as recently as 3 weeks ago—is that level of commitment and resolve, so that the Shias are willing to say, "We're going to take care of the Muqtada al-Sadrs. We're going to do those things that have to be done to quell the sectarian violence." And to put the lives of more Americans in the center of that sectarian violence in Baghdad, without first having the Iraqis deliver on substantial benchmarks on reconciliation, something we can point to, other than just trusting—I'm not prepared, at this time, to support that. The cost is too great. But it would appear to me that if we could get some measure of assurance that the commitment is there on the part of the Iraqis to deliver, that would be acceptable. What we have now from the Iraqis are promises that they have failed to fulfill previously, and I think the cost is too high to make further troop commitments based on the calculation we are faced with.

Secretary RICE. Thank you.

Senator, may I just say, I understand. We're clear-eyed, too, about the fact that the Iraqi Government has to perform, and we're clear-eyed about the fact that they've not, in the past. But I think it's awfully important to recognize that the violence—the sectarian violence, which was really accelerated by Samarra—is threatening to outrun their chance to do exactly the things that you want them to do, because the atmosphere of sectarianism is breaking down the very fabric of a society that, frankly, has a lot of ties between their peoples. Their tribes are mixed Sunni and Shia. There are intermarried Sunni and Shia. There are a lot of fibers of the society that are actually not sectarian. But if what is going on in Baghdad continues apace, without the government capable of getting control of it and reestablishing civil order, then you are going to have the kind of breakdown in the fabric of society to support the very processes of national reconciliation that you're talking about. That's why this is urgent, and that's why we don't have time to sequence it, to let them prove themselves first and then we will add forces to help them do what they need to do. As I said, if it's a matter of just resolve, then the sequencing works. But it's also capability. And that's the assessment of our military people and of our political people.

We have the ability, of course, to see how they're doing, in terms of living up to their obligations, because not all American forces are going to go in up front. Not all will be ready to go in on day one. And you can be sure that we're going to be watching very carefully, and we're going to be pressing them very hard, that their obligations are obligations that, if they don't meet, this plan cannot succeed. We're also going to be diversifying our efforts, making sure that we're not just dependent on the Maliki government for some successes in the country, but rather on local leaders, of the kind that we're working with in Anbar. But I just think it's extremely important to recognize that the threat right now is that that fabric of a society that is nonsectarian is being stretched to the limit by what's going on in Baghdad. And they don't have a lot of time to get on top of it, and we don't have time to sequence our help to help them get on top of it.

Senator COLEMAN. Thank you, Madam Secretary.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator BIDEN. Thank you very much.

Senator Feingold.

STATEMENT OF HON. RUSSELL D. FEINGOLD, U.S. SENATOR FROM WISCONSIN

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Madam Secretary, for appearing before the committee today. Unfortunately, Madam Secretary, this hearing is taking place in the context of what has become a true nightmare for the United States, and quite possibly the greatest foreign policy mistake in the history of our Nation. We just heard Senator Hagel, I think, use similar language, and I thank him sincerely for his candor before this committee.

We currently have 140,000 of our bravest men and women in uniform in Iraq, stuck in what has become a civil war. Over 3,000 Americans have died. And yet, we continue to see increases in

interethnic attacks and bombings, in the strength of Shia militias and the strength of the insurgency and displaced persons and so on. Almost 4 years after this war began, Iraqis are no closer to a political agreement or to resolving the underlying political, ethnic, religious, and economic problems that are ripping the country apart. But the President wants to send more United States troops to Iraq. His strategy runs counter to the needs of our strained military, counter to the testimony of our military's most senior officers, counter to the need to address the troubling developments in places like Afghanistan and Somalia, and counter to the fact that, after 4 years of failed strategies for victory, the American people have sent a resounding message, and that message is, it is time to redeploy our brave troops out of Iraq now.

The American people soundly rejected the President's Iraq policy in November. They sent a clear message that maintaining our troops in Iraq is not in the interest of our national security. They understand that our Iraq-centric policies are hurting our ability to defeat the enemy that attacked us on 9/11.

We can't afford to continue this course. I have consistently called for the redeployment of our military from Iraq. I was the first Senator, in August 2005, to call for a timetable to withdraw the troops over a period of time of 15 months, at that time. But that advice has not been heeded. And now Congress must use its main power, the power of the purse, to put an end to our involvement in this disastrous war. And I'm not talking here only about the surge or escalation. It is time to use the power of the purse to bring our troops out of Iraq. Over the next several weeks, I—and I hope, many of my colleagues—will work together to take a hard look at exactly how we should do that. But it is time to use that power.

Our troops in Iraq have performed heroically, but we cannot continue to send our Nation's best into a war that was started—and is still maintained—on false pretenses. An indefinite presence of United States military personnel in Iraq will not fix that country's political problems. And sending more troops to Iraq will not provide the stability that can only come from a political agreement.

From the beginning, this war has been a mistake, and the policies that have carried it out have been a failure. We need a new national security strategy that starts with a redeployment from Iraq so we can repair and strengthen our military and focus on the global threats to our national security.

With that, Madam Secretary, my first question is this. Is the United States more secure now as a result of our military incursion into Iraq than we were before we entered Iraq?

Secretary RICE. Senator, I think that we are more secure. We are more secure, but we're not secure.

Senator FEINGOLD. Are we more secure, vis-a-vis al-Qaeda?

Secretary RICE. We have done a lot to break up al-Qaeda, the forces that came against us on September 11.

Senator FEINGOLD. But are we more secure, vis-a-vis al-Qaeda, than we were before we went into Iraq?

Secretary RICE. Senator, I do think that we are more secure, vis-a-vis al-Qaeda, for a lot of reasons, not just our policies in the Middle East; the policies we've undertaken through homeland security improvements.

Senator FEINGOLD. I asked you whether, as a result of our Iraqi intervention, are we more secure, vis-a-vis al-Qaeda?

Secretary RICE. Senator, the notion about Iraq has always been that to deal with the short-term problem of al-Qaeda, as it exists now, is not going to create long-term security. You can only do that by changing the nature of the Middle East that produced al-Qaeda. I don't want us to confuse what we are doing in Iraq with the short-term problem.

Senator FEINGOLD. All right. Well, let me ask about——

Secretary RICE. The longer term security.

Senator FEINGOLD [continuing]. Other things.

Secretary RICE. The longer term issue is how the Middle East itself evolves.

Senator FEINGOLD. Right.

Secretary RICE. And that's why Iraq is so important, and that's why it's important that we succeed in Iraq.

Senator FEINGOLD. I understand the argument. I completely reject it, but I understand it.

What about Afghanistan? Are we better off in Afghanistan than we were before the invasion of Iraq?

Secretary RICE. I think there's no doubt that we are better off in Afghanistan. Afghanistan has made a lot of progress since 2001—when we invaded.

Senator FEINGOLD. That's not what I asked. I asked if we're better off since the intervention in Iraq.

Secretary RICE. Senator, not everything is related to what we have done in Iraq.

Senator FEINGOLD. It's a simple——

Secretary RICE [continuing]. We've done——

Senator FEINGOLD [continuing]. Question. Did it——

Secretary RICE. What we've done——

Senator FEINGOLD [continuing]. Help or did it hurt our situation in Afghanistan?

Secretary RICE. I think that we have been managing what is going on in Afghanistan as we've been managing what's been going on in Iraq. I don't actually see the connection that you are trying to draw.

Senator FEINGOLD. They're not——

Secretary RICE. I don't understand.

Senator FEINGOLD. Well, are we better off, vis-a-vis Iran and North Korea, than we were prior to the intervention in Iraq? Is our security situation, vis-a-vis Iran and North Korea, better than it was before the intervention in Iraq?

Secretary RICE. Well, I don't really think, Senator, that the North Korean nuclear test has anything to do with Iraq.

Senator FEINGOLD. Well, I think the diversion of attention from the most important problems in the world has everything to do with this terrible mistake.

What—let's try something that I think is more direct—what about our military, the strain on our military? Is our military better off than it was before Iraq intervention?

Secretary RICE. Senator, we're at war. And when we're at war, there's going to be strain on the military. I think that's what General Pace would tell you. But, again, I just can't agree with you

that there's been a diversion of our attention from all other policy problems. If you look at the progress that we've actually made on North Korea, with North Korea under a chapter 7 resolution and with six-party talks about to begin again, if you look at the progress that we're making on stopping an Iranian nuclear weapon, that, by the way, has been entrain for quite some time, if you look at the progress that we've made—and I have to say, you know, this Middle East that somehow was so stable before we invaded Iraq is a Middle East that I didn't recognize in 2000 or 2001 either. That was a Middle East where Saddam Hussein was still in power, still with the potential to invade his neighbors, as he had done before, where Syria was deep into Lebanon, where the Palestinian territories were governed by a man who was stealing the Palestinians blind, but couldn't take a peace deal—I don't see——

Senator FEINGOLD. My time——

Secretary RICE [continuing]. That Middle East as having been——

Senator FEINGOLD [continuing]. My——

Secretary RICE [continuing]. Very stable. So——

Senator FEINGOLD. My time is up, but I see this problem of our security as an international problem. And I believe the diversion of attention in Iraq has been absolutely catastrophic with regard to our national security.

Secretary RICE. Well, Senator, I appreciate your views on that, but I'm the one who, every day, goes to the office and works not just on Iraq, but on North Korea, on Iran, on the problems in Somalia, in Sudan. And I think if you look around, you'll see that the United States has a very active policy everywhere in the world.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Madam Secretary.

Senator BIDEN. Thank you very much.

Senator Corker. And, again, welcome to the committee.

STATEMENT OF HON. BOB CORKER, U.S. SENATOR FROM TENNESSEE

Senator CORKER. Mr. Chairman, thank you. I appreciate the tremendous testimony that you've allowed us to have over the last 3 days.

And, Madam Secretary, thank you for being here.

I've heard a lot—it seems that people agree—that in Iraq we need a political solution, that that is what needs to occur. And it seems to me that what the administration has tried to put forth is a way for a political process to occur and a political solution to happen, and that is by causing Iraqis to actually feel secure, to feel like they can, in fact, go about a political process in a way that allows people to debate and come to a solution.

One of the things I've realized with the testimony over the last 3 days is, there is another school of thought, and that is, that by some—and I don't mean by anybody on this panel, specifically—but that, by some who wish to withdraw, they believe that the only way there's going to be a political process, a healthy political process, is for there to be an all-out civil war first, that what we've had is a measured civil war, and that, by withdrawing, there actually would be an all-out civil war, and that things have got to get much worse before they get any better.

I'd like for you to address those two schools of thought, if you would.

Secretary RICE. Well, thank you, Senator.

First of all, I think you've put it very well, because the risk of American withdrawal, or, as it's sometimes called, redeployment—and I think we have to recognize, redeployment's really withdrawal—then we are dealing with a circumstance in which the Iraqis are so-called "left to their own devices" to deal with a problem that threatens to overwhelm their political process. And that is the sectarian violence in Baghdad.

Again, as I was saying to Senator Coleman, it really does depend on whether you think this is a matter of Iraqi resolve or a matter of capability, or a matter of both. And the President and his team thinks it's a matter of both. And so, no amount of resolve, if they don't have the capability, is going to help them to deal with the sectarian violence in Baghdad. That's why we want to augment their capability, so that they can show that resolve.

When analysts look at what you would be talking about if you just said to them, "All right, you just go at one another, and we'll go to the borders and defend the borders, and we'll fight al-Qaeda, and we'll do a few other things, but it's really up to you to resolve this," I think it has the wrong idea of what's really going on in Baghdad. It's not as if, street-to-street, every Sunni and every Shia is determined to kill each other. That's really not the case. You do have, stoked by al-Qaeda, after the Samarra bombing, people—extremist Sunni and Shia death squads, Sunni and Shia—who are, in the name of sectarianism, going in to neighborhoods, killing the men—that's where those bodies are coming from—expelling the women—that's why there are internally displaced people—but it is an organized effort to perpetrate violence by Shia death squads and Sunni death squads. That means that if the Iraqi Government is actually able to deal with the organized effort, then they will be able to stem the tide of sectarian violence. But if they're not able to do that, and to reestablish civil order, then the fabric of the society, which has not always been just sectarian—there is a lot of intermarriage, a lot of—a lot of community between the groups—that fabric's going to break apart.

And so, that's why the President has outlined what he has. He did look, Senator, at other options. He did look at the question of whether or not the Iraqis could be told, "Go do this on your own." And the assessment of the people on the ground, both our political people and our military people, is that they didn't yet have the forces to do it. I think General Casey said, at one point, it would be the summer before they were really able to take control of operations in Iraq. Well, by the summer, if something hasn't improved in Baghdad, then they're going to be in very difficult straits.

So, as you think about this policy, and whether you decide to accept it or reject it, I think you have to think about the consequences of not going down this route. And the consequences of that is that you leave the Iraqi Government without the capability to deal with their sectarian problem.

Senator CORKER. Mr. Chairman, out of respect for my more senior junior members on this committee, I'm going to pass any——

Senator BIDEN. I'm sure it's appreciated. Thank you very much, Senator.

Chairman Boxer.

STATEMENT OF HON. BARBARA BOXER, U.S. SENATOR FROM CALIFORNIA

Senator BOXER. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, for me today marks the bipartisan end of a rubberstamp Senate, and I am proud to be here in behalf of the people of California.

Madam Secretary, on November 7, the American people voted for a change in Congress, citing Iraq as the No. 1 issue affecting their vote. And a week later, General Abizaid told the Senate Armed Services Committee that he checked with every single divisional commander on the ground in Iraq, and, to a person, no one believed that more American troops would improve the situation, because the Iraqis already rely on us too much. And then, on December 7, the Iraq Study Group, noting that 61 percent of the Iraqis, who you say support us so much, approve of attacks on United States troops—they approve of shooting and killing United States troops—the Iraqi Study Group, in light of that, recommended that United States combat troops should be redeployed out of Iraq by early 2008. They also called for an immediate meeting—international meeting in the region to find a political solution to Iraq. And one line that stands out in that Iraq Study Report is, "Absent a political solution, all the troops in the world will not provide security."

And on January 8, the Military Times—and I'd ask unanimous consent to place this into the record, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, may I place this in the record? The Military Times?

Senator BIDEN. Without objection, it'll be placed in the record.

Senator BOXER. The Military Times published a poll, which found that only 35 percent of military members approved of the way President Bush is handling this war, and only 38 percent thought there should be more troops.

So, from where I sit, Madam Secretary, you are not listening to the American people, you are not listening to the military, you are not listening to the bipartisan voices from the Senate, you are not listening to the Iraq Study Group. Only you know who you are listening to. And you wonder why there is a dark cloud of skepticism and pessimism over this Nation.

I think people are right to be skeptical, after listening to some of the things that have been said by your administration. For example, October 19, 2005, you came before this committee to discuss, in your words, "how we assure victory in Iraq." And you said the following in answer to Senator Feingold, "I have no doubt that, as the Iraqi security forces get better—and they are getting better and are holding territory, and they are doing the things with minimal help—we are going to be able to bring down the level of our forces. I have no doubt"—I want to reiterate—"I have no doubt that that's going to happen in a reasonable timeframe." You had no doubt. Not a doubt. And last night the President's announcement of an escalation is a total rebuke of your confident pronouncement.

Now, the issue is: Who pays the price? Who pays the price? I'm not going to pay a personal price. My kids are too old, and my

grandchild is too young. You're not going to pay a particular price, as I understand it, with immediate family. So, who pays the price? The American military and their families. And I just want to bring us back to that fact.

NPR has done a series of interviews with families who have lost kids. And the announcer said to one family in the Midwest, "What's changed in your lives since your son's death?" The answer comes back, "Everything. You can't begin to imagine how even the little things change—how you go through the day, how you celebrate Christmas"—Mr. Chairman, could I please—"You can't begin to imagine how you celebrate any holiday or birthday. There's an absence. It's not like the person has never been there. They've—always were there, and now they're not, and you're looking at an empty hole. He has a purple heart. The flag that was on his coffin. And one of the two urns that we got back—he came back in three parts, two urns and one coffin. He's buried in three places, if you count our house. He's buried in New Jersey. He's buried in Cleveland." That's who's going to pay the price.

And then you have the most moving thing I've ever heard on a radio station, which is a visit to a burn unit and a talk with the nurse. Devon suffered burns over 93 percent of his body, three amputations—both legs, one arm—his back was broken, internal organs exposed. As the hospital staff entered the room, they would see photographs on the wall, pictures of a healthy private standing proud in his dark green Army dress uniform. "It's very important," says the major, "that nurses see the patient as a person, because the majority of our patients have facial burns and they're unrecognizable, and they're extremely disfigured."

So, who pays the price? Not me. Not you. These are the people who pay the price.

So, I want to ask you, since this administration has been so clear about how this has been a coalition, and a coalition—you've already said that we don't have anybody else escalating their presence at this time. Is that correct?

Secretary RICE. That is correct.

Senator BOXER. That is correct. Have you seen the recent news that the British are going to be bringing home thousands of troops in the near future?

Secretary RICE. I have seen the stories about what the British are going to do. I'll wait for a confirmation from the British Government about what they're going to do.

Senator BOXER. OK. I would ask unanimous consent to place into the record the article from today that announces that that's what they're going to do, is bring home thousands of troops.

And I want to point out to the American people, we are all alone. We are all alone. There's no other country standing with us in this escalation. And if you look at this coalition, the closest to us—we've got about 130–140,000 troops. I don't know the exact number. The Brits had 7,200. They're going to be announcing they're bringing home, as I understand it, more than 3,000 of those. The next-biggest coalition member is South Korea with 2,300; Poland, with 900; and, after that, Australia, with 800. No one is joining us in this surge.

Do you have an estimate of the number of casualties we expect from this surge?

Secretary RICE. No, Senator. I don't think there's any way to give you such an estimate.

Senator BOXER. Has the President—because he said, "expect more sacrifice"—he must know.

Secretary RICE. Senator, I don't think that any of us have a number that—of expected casualties. I think that people understand that there is going to be violence for some time in Iraq, and that there will be more casualties.

And let me just say, you know, I fully understand the sacrifice that the American people are making, and especially the sacrifice that our soldiers are making, men and women in uniform. I visit them. I know what they're going through. I talk to their families. I see it.

I could never—and I can never—do anything to replace any of those lost men and women in uniform, or the diplomats, some of whom have been lost——

Senator BOXER. Madam Secretary, please, I know you feel terrible about it. That's not the point. I was making the case as to who pays the price for your decisions. And the fact that this administration would move forward with this escalation with no clue as to the further price that we're going to pay militarily—we certainly know the numbers, billions of dollars, that we can't spend here in this country—I find really appalling that there's not even enough time taken to figure out what the casualties would be.

Secretary RICE. Well, Senator——

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

Secretary RICE. Senator, I think it would be highly unlikely for the military to tell the President, "We expect X number of casualties because of this augmentation of the forces." And, again, let me just say, the President sees this as an effort to help the Iraqis with an urgent task so that the sectarian violence in Baghdad does not outrun the political process and make it impossible to have the kind of national reconciliation that we all want to see there.

But I just want to say one thing, Senator, about the placard that you held up. I have to admit, my eyesight's not what it used to be, so I couldn't actually see the date underneath, but I think it may have been 2005.

Senator BOXER. October—it was the end of 2005, October—mid-October——

Secretary RICE. I think——

Senator BOXER [continuing]. 2005. And you had——

Secretary RICE [continuing]. The President——

Senator BOXER [continuing]. Absolutely no doubt——

Secretary RICE. Yes. And I think the President spoke——

Senator BOXER [continuing]. About how great it was going.

Secretary RICE. I don't think I ever said it was going great, Senator.

Senator BOXER. You thought that our troops would be coming home.

Secretary RICE. Senator, let's not overstate the case.

Senator BOXER. Well, let's just put——

Secretary RICE. I don't think I said it was going great.

Senator BOXER [continuing]. Let's just put it up again.

Secretary RICE. The point that I wanted to make, Senator, is that that is October 2005. The President has talked repeatedly now about the changed circumstances that we faced after the Samarra bombing of February 2006, because that bombing did, in fact, change the character of the conflict in Iraq. Before that, we were fighting al-Qaeda. Before that, we were fighting some insurgents, some Saddamists. But it was the purpose of Zarqawi to try and stoke sectarian violence. He wrote this letter to Zawahiri, told him he was going to do that. Zawahiri himself was even concerned that this might be a bad policy. But it turns out to have been a very smart one, because, in fact, through the bombing of the Golden Mosque, he accelerated this sectarian violence to the point that it now has presented us with a new set of circumstances.

Senator BIDEN. Senator Sununu.

STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN E. SUNUNU, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW HAMPSHIRE

Senator SUNUNU. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, in the President's remarks last night, there were some things that I was pleased to hear, such as his emphasis that the burden has shifted now to the Iraqi Government, both for these political issues that we've heard talked about today, but also for security, even setting a timetable for Iraqis taking full responsibility for security in the outlying provinces by November. There were some areas where I have a little bit more concern, such as whether or not the use of the troops he discussed will really be appropriate in dealing with sectarian violence in Baghdad, and some areas where I was a little bit more disappointed, such as the failure to talk about or establish a more formal process for engaging all of Iraq's neighbors, including those that are already very supportive and have been helpful, such as Turkey or Saudi Arabia or Jordan, in a more formal process to provide whatever support is necessary for Iraq.

But I want to begin with the area of political reform and change for the Iraqi Government, because—even here, I think you've sensed a level of frustration, because, while we understand that a change in the oil law, local elections, a reconciliation process, are essential to long-term success, and no matter how we succeed militarily, those gains won't be sustained unless these political reforms are undertaken, we still haven't been provided with a lot of clarity there, and timeframe. And while I think an arbitrary date for removing all troops from Iraq doesn't make sense militarily or diplomatically, setting a very clear timetable for these reforms does make some sense, because it sends the right message to everyone involved.

And I would further suggest, to you and the entire administration, if we don't see more specifics, and even, where appropriate, a timeframe that's established in concert with the Iraqi Government, then Congress is probably going to step into the void and start setting a timeframe for the Iraqi commitments that have been made. I certainly wouldn't prefer that. I would prefer the former to the latter.

So, I offer that as a very strong suggestion, that we work to provide much more clarity and specifics, in terms of timing. And I have two questions about those issues.

First, a very specific question with regard to the oil law. You referred to the oil law as a "remarkable law." Well, it's the most remarkable law that no one has ever really seen. Over the last week, I've had conversations with White House—senior White House staff about this issue. We had a top-secret briefing where this was raised in a very specific way. We heard from scholars yesterday. And what we can gain is that there has been some agreement on investment issues, and even ownership, but not on distribution. And, from where I sit, it's distribution that really matters. Money is power. Money is power in Washington. Money is power anywhere around the world. And unless we have a methodology for distribution, we're not going to be successful.

So, can you give more specifics about these different government objectives, not just oil law, political elections, reconciliation process, de-Baathification law? And what about the oil law, specifically? When are we going to see the area of distribution resolved?

Secretary RICE. Well, on the first, Senator, I take your point about needing to understand the timeframe in which the Iraqis are trying to do the benchmarks that are put before you. It's a political process for them, just like we have political processes in the United States. And I think there have been times when we've missed deadlines on trying to get this legislative piece done or that legislative piece done. But they do have a timeframe for moving things forward into their Parliament and getting the laws passed and so forth. They've tried to make sure that the laws that they're putting forward have enough political support so they don't have a problem in the Parliament. So, they're going about it, I think, in the right way. But certainly I think we can be more explicit about how they see the timeframes ahead, and in the days to come, I'll try to do that.

As to the oil law, actually the sticking point has been less about distribution. They understand that there needs to be some distribution on the basis of a formula that has to do with where the resource came from, the need to distribute it in a way that is equitable, and, indeed, to deal with the fact that some parts of the country are particularly underdeveloped. And so, distribution has actually been less of a problem than the question of who gets to sign contracts. That's, frankly, been the one that they've been hung up on.

And so, I think you'll find that it's a law that, in terms of distribution, in terms of some basic notion of a trust for the Iraqi people, is actually quite forward-leaning.

Senator SUNUNU. Well, I understand the point you make, that investment may have been the sticking point, but I think it's also important that we fully recognize that, while that may have been the sticking point in negotiation, that is not the issue that has the potential to fuel the sectarian violence. And it's when the Sunnis do not feel that there's an equitable distribution scheme, when they're not enfranchised economically, that they're more likely to turn to sectarian organizations or sectarian groups, because they think that violence is the only way to ensure that kind of resolution.

So, I understand investment may have been the negotiating sticking point, but I think equitable distribution is more important to long-term enfranchisement economically, and, therefore, to dealing with some of the sectarian problems.

The second question I want to ask is about the PRTs. There were some comments made, very positive, about the work of PRTs, or their reconstruction teams, or their potential. But it's my understanding that many of them are confined to relatively small compounds, that there are security issues. So, two issues. One, where will the funding and support come from? Two, how are we going to address the security issues that confine them, when we're deploying troops elsewhere? And, third, what about recruitment? It is my understanding that recruitment has been a problem, that Baker-Hamilton Commission outlined, unfortunately, the tragic fact that we have so few Arab speakers in our—both our State and intelligence personnel in Iraq. How are we going to address these two issues? Better recruitment, Arab speakers and security on the reconstruction teams.

Secretary RICE. Yes. Senator, just so I'm not misunderstood on the oil law, it does address the question of distribution. And I think it addresses it in a way that we find hopeful.

Senator SUNUNU. We had senior intelligence officials, 1 day ago—2 days ago—that were able to tell us nothing about the proposed distribution methodology. On Friday Senior National Security Council staff was able to tell me and others in the room nothing about distribution methodology.

Secretary RICE. Senator——

Senator SUNUNU. So, either the right information isn't being put into the hands of the President's National Security Advisor and his senior intelligence official for the Middle East or there's a refusal to share information.

Secretary RICE. Well, Senator, let me just say that I will tell you what we know of the draft law. I will send you a note about that.

[The information submitted by the State Department follows:]

THE SECRETARY OF STATE,
DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, DC, February 14, 2007.

Hon. JOHN E. SUNUNU,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR SUNUNU: I am writing to follow up on the question you raised during my testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on January 11 regarding the need for Iraq to establish a mechanism to share its oil wealth among all its provinces.

l agree with you on the importance of this issue. We have clearly communicated to the Iraqi government our view that it is critical for Iraq to pass a hydrocarbon law that reinforces national institutions and creates a fair and transparent mechanism to distribute revenues between the central government and the provinces in a way that is broadly acceptable to all Iraqis.

In August 2006, discussions between the central government and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) began. Despite marked differences of approach in the beginning of this process, the parties have made significant progress and have agreed that Iraq will draft a hydrocarbon law that sets out the guiding principles and framework for the oil and gas sector.

In the course of their discussions, the KRG and the central government have also agreed that the central government should collect and distribute revenue to the provinces according to each province's population once a census is completed. The

Iraqis have now started drafting a specific revenue sharing law that will more specifically codify the collection methods and distribution levels.

We will continue to keep your staff updated as the Iraqis finalize these important pieces of legislation. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

CONDOLEEZZA RICE.

Secretary RICE. In terms of the PRTs, now, 98 percent of our positions are filled. And, as a matter of fact, we've already filled 68 percent of the positions that would come into rotation in the summer of 2007. There was a time when we had some difficulty in recruiting. We had to make some changes in the way we recruited. I wanted to be sure that we had senior people leading these PRT teams, not people who were too junior. And, in fact, I think you will find that we are doing very well, in terms of getting the right people to the PRTs. And so, it was—there was a time. We changed some of the incentives. We changed the way we recruit for them. And we're doing very well in filling the PRTs.

The absence of Arabic speakers, I'm afraid, is the result of the national underinvestment in Arabic language skills over a very long period of time, and we're doing what we can to improve that. You know, at one time—I think we didn't have problems, frankly, finding Russian speakers, because the United States invested in people like me to teach them Russian. We really haven't done that, as a nation, which is why we have a critical-languages initiative, which is why we're recruiting people with mid-level experience who might have those language skills. And we're going to have to do better at getting Arabic speakers not just into the PRTs and into Baghdad, but into the rest of the Middle East, as well.

Finally, one of the things that we're doing is, we're increasing the training of the people who go into Arabic, so that they have longer in the training, so that they are more capable in the language before they go out. So, we're trying to address that problem.

Finally, as to security for the PRTs, yes, security is something that I'm very concerned about and take very seriously. We are now being provided security through the brigade teams with which we are, in effect, embedded, and we think that works best. Our people do move around. We just recently had, for the President, a briefing by four of our PRT teams. And, yes, they have, sometimes, some difficulty. But they get out, and they go meet local leaders. One was telling me—I'll not name the province, for security reasons—but that he's out at least three, four times a week with the local leaders. And so, people are getting out. They are experiencing some of the same dangers that affect our military forces, and I think it's important to recognize that our civilians are on the front lines, too. But since we went to this structure of the PRTs, they are getting out.

Senator BIDEN. Madam Secretary, let me suggest that—we want to get you out by 1 o'clock, so—I appreciate your exposition, but, to the extent that we all can't be shorter, we're going to be trespassing on your time.

Senator from Florida.

STATEMENT OF HON. BILL NELSON, U.S. SENATOR FROM FLORIDA

Senator BILL NELSON. Madam Secretary, I have supported you and the administration on the war, but I cannot continue to support the administration's position. I have not been told the truth. I have not been told the truth, over and over again, by administration witnesses. And the American people have not been told the truth. And I don't come to this conclusion very lightly.

Does General Abizaid support an increase in troops?

Secretary RICE. He does.

Senator BILL NELSON. Well, that's at variance, of course, as you've heard.

Secretary RICE. I think, Senator, first of all, if you look at his testimony, and you look at the next lines in his testimony, he talks about the conditions under which troops might be useful. And, in fact, everybody had hoped that this would be done with Iraqi forces. It wasn't that we didn't need more forces; it was hoped that we would do it with Iraqi forces. And what the Baghdad security plan of the summer showed was that that wasn't possible.

Senator BILL NELSON. Well——

Secretary RICE. General Abizaid and General Casey have been involved in the development of this plan. And it—in fact, General Casey presented this option to the President.

Senator BILL NELSON. Well, I'm looking forward to talking to General Abizaid. He is one of the few that have come before a number of the committees, that I have the privilege of sitting on, who I feel like has been a straight-shooter. And it's my hope that Chairman Carl Levin will call him here, and I will ask him directly. But, of course, I was one of the ones that asked him that question, very specifically, when he was last here in front of the Congress, and he is someone that I think has credibility. But, sad to say, he's one of the few who I've felt like that I was getting a straight story from.

Let me pick up on something Mr. Coleman said. Three weeks ago, we were in Iraq and our mouths about dropped open when the National Security Advisory, Dr. Rubaie, said—and I think this is almost his direct quote—"This is not a sectarian war." And he went on to talk about how the conflict is extremist al-Qaeda and how the Baathists who want to come back into power. And, of course, that's part of the situation. But the two of us, certainly this Senator, got the impression that they are not coming to grips with what they must face. And that is that you've got Sunnis on Shiites, and Shiites on Shiites, and Sunnis on Sunnis. And until you get that problem being solved, our efforts are just simply not going to work.

Now, I'll tell you one place where I agree with the President, when he said last night that he was going to send additional troops into Anbar province. I was convinced by the Marine commanders there, as I think Mr. Coleman was, as well, that there, where you have just a Sunni population and that the enemy is al-Qaeda, that working with those Sunni tribal leaders with additional American troops could bring some progress. But that is not so, in Baghdad. And I'm sad that we've come to this point.

Let me just conclude by asking you something I would like for you to amplify upon, although I think it's been said by a number

of people here. Obviously we need an intense diplomatic effort in the region. One of the points of my trip was, at the request of General Hayden, to go and talk with the Saudi king, urging the Saudis to use their tribal contacts in Iraq to try to get people to come together. Could you outline for the committee what intense diplomatic effort will be taken, and will it be taken simultaneously with the President's plan for additional troops?

Secretary RICE. Senator, it is being taken. I will go out, tomorrow night. The group that we are engaging, in addition to all the many bilateral engagements that we have with the Saudis, with the Kuwaitis, with others who can help, the Jordanians, who can help, is through a group called the "GCC-plus-two." That is really the appropriate group. We work also with Turkey very closely on Iraq. We have a problem on the northern border with the PKK that General Ralston is trying to resolve. But I think you would find that, first of all, there already has been diplomatic effort. We will, of course, try to intensify that effort to support what the Maliki government is now trying to do to get its sectarian problem under control.

Frankly, the countries of the region are also watching to see whether this will be an evenhanded government in dealing with both Sunnis and Shia. And so, the Maliki government faces, I think, some skepticism, not just from Americans and from Iraqis, but also from the region. And we've made that point to them, that they really must deal with the sectarian problem in an evenhanded fashion, or they're not going to get support from the region.

That said, to the degree that we hear from the Saudis and others that their biggest strategic concern is Iran, then they have a very strong incentive to help stabilize Iraq, so that Iraq is, indeed, a barrier to Iranian influence in the region, not a bridge.

Senator BILL NELSON. What do you——

Senator BIDEN. I hate to do this, but if the next question is going to result in a long answer, we're—you're going to be running out of time, Senator. So——

Secretary RICE. Thirty seconds.

Senator BIDEN [continuing]. If you want——

Senator BILL NELSON. Well——

Senator BIDEN. If it's a quick question, please——

Senator BILL NELSON. It's very quick.

We need more than engagement. We need to get these countries to act. So, how do you get them to act?

Secretary RICE. There's an international compact that they've all negotiated. We need to finalize it.

Senator BIDEN. Thank you very much.

Senator Voinovich.

STATEMENT OF HON. GEORGE V. VOINOVICH, U.S. SENATOR FROM OHIO

Senator VOINOVICH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, I'm sorry that I wasn't here for your testimony or for the other questions that have been asked of you, so please forgive me if I am redundant. But I met this morning with representatives from 10 nations who are concerned about our Visa Waiver Program. I believe that the current program—and I'm glad

the President understands this—needs to be changed, because these nations whose representatives I met with are our allies and helping us in Afghanistan and in Iraq. I think you know that the most important weapon, in terms of winning the war on terror, is our public diplomacy, which needs to be improved substantially.

I hope, Mr. Chairman, that we can proceed with the Visa Waiver legislation early in this session of Congress, so we can help some of our allies, who are really upset with us that their citizens cannot enter into the United States because of this unrealistic and restrictive program we currently have.

You should know that I am skeptical that a surge of troops will bring an end to the escalation of violence and the insurgency in Iraq. Many of the generals that have served there have said they do not believe additional troops will be helpful—in Baghdad, particularly. And, Madam Secretary, my faith in Prime Minister Maliki's ability to make the hard choices necessary to bring about political solutions has to be restored. There needs to be a political solution between the Sunnis and the Shiites. I have asked this question now for 2 years: How can there be a unity government—one that is not dominated by the Shiites that will ultimately get rid of the Sunnis that are in Iraq—when Muqtada al-Sadr is there? From everything I understand, he very well tells Prime Minister Maliki what to do. We have seen evidence that Sadr simply makes a telephone call and Maliki pulls the plug on whatever he was previously doing in order to meet Sadr's wishes.

I think that we underestimate the hatred between Sunnis and Shiites. We're saying that somehow they are all going to get together and everything is going to be happy. The Sunnis and the Baathists oppressed the Shiites for many, many years. Now the Shiites are in the majority. Is there going to be a unity government, or another theocracy, like there is in Iran? I think that is what Sadr wants.

So, how can you explain to us that the political divisions in Iraq are going to be resolved? Probably this article was discussed already this morning, "The Fog" by David Brooks in the New York Times. Brooks says that the plan we are proposing does not reflect what Maliki says he wants done. But I would insist that Maliki stand up and make it clear to the whole world that he does want this done, that he supports the plan, and that the United States is not superimposing its wishes onto him. If he does not make that clear, then everyone is going to think, "Here we go again, the United States is in there on its own."

Another important question that has been raised here is: How much help are we getting from our Sunni friends in the Middle East? What have they done to help us? In addition, countries that had been our friends are withdrawing support. Why are our friends leaving? Have they lost confidence that this dream we had of a democracy in Iraq, which many of us bought into, will no longer happen, and that Iraq is going to break down into a civil war? Another major concern I believe we all have is that we don't want any more of our young men and women killed in a civil war between two groups that ultimately are never going to come together.

I send letters out to the families of soldiers, and I tell them how brave their sons were, and that the work that they are doing there

in Iraq and the casualties we have sustained are as important as that of the Second World War. But I have to rewrite the letter today. We're talking now about stability as our goal. And we're talking about young men and women's lives at risk for that. This is a very, very important decision, and I think you are going to have to do a much better job, and so is the President, explaining this to us. You have seen the testimony here among my colleagues. I would like to add that I have supported the President's effort in Iraq, and I bought into the dream of democracy taking root there, and now I don't think it is going to happen.

Secretary RICE. Well, thank you, Senator.

I think that we don't have an option to fail in Iraq. Consequences are too great. And I do think that it is not—I just don't think that it is true that Iraqi Sunnis and Shia hate each other to the point that they can't live together. I don't believe that. I do think that there are long pent-up tensions and emotions and grievances in that society that come from years of tyranny, and that it's going to take some time for them to get over it. And I do think they've had a very bad set of circumstances by——

Senator VOINOVICH. Yes, but, Madam Secretary, what evidentiary fact do we have that Maliki is going to make the tough political decisions that he has to make, and lose his support from Sadr and the others?

Secretary RICE. Senator, we have from him these assurances. He's going to have to act on them. We're going to know very soon whether or not there's political interference when his forces—and they're his forces—want to go into a neighborhood. We're going to know very soon whether or not he is carrying through with his view—with what he told us, which is that, "If you are Sunni or Shia, and you're outside the law, and you're killing innocent Iraqis, then you have to pay a price for that. You have to be punished." We're going to know. And American forces, as they flow in over time, will only go to support a policy in which Iraqis are carrying out those obligations.

But I just want to emphasize again—I've heard everybody say, "We cannot fail. We cannot fail. We cannot fail." If they are unable to get a hold of the sectarian violence, to show that they can control Baghdad, to establish confidence that they're going to be even-handed, then it's going to be very difficult for them to——

Senator VOINOVICH. How can it happen with Sadr?

Secretary RICE. The Iraqis are going to have to deal with Sadr. And, to the degree that Sadr is outside of the political process and his death squads are engaged in violence, then they're going to have to deal with those death squads. And the Prime Minister has said, "Nobody and nothing is off limits." We will know, Senator, whether or not they're following through. But we'd really better give them a chance to get a hold of this sectarian violence in their capital, where it's not Iraqis running down the streets killing other Iraqis, Sunni and Shia; it is organized death squads going into neighborhoods and killing Sunnis and Shia. That is what is going on there, and they need to reestablish civil order, and we need to be able to help them do that. That's the purpose of the augmentation of our forces.

Senator BIDEN. Madam Secretary, I'm sure you understand—you've been around—how profound this—these inquiries are.

Secretary RICE. Yes.

Senator BIDEN. Senator Obama.

STATEMENT OF HON. BARACK OBAMA, U.S. SENATOR FROM ILLINOIS

Senator OBAMA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, I'll pursue a line of questioning that we talked about yesterday in a one-on-one meeting. I expressed these same views to the President. You know, I think when you hear the voices of Senator Hagel, Senator Voinovich, others on this panel, I think you get a sense of how weighty and painful this process has become.

This administration took a gamble. It staked American prestige and our national security on the premise that it could go in, overthrow Saddam Hussein, and rebuild a functioning democracy. And, so far, each time that we've made an assessment of how that gamble has paid off, it appears that it has failed. And, essentially, the administration repeatedly has said, "We're doubling down. We're going to keep on going. You know, maybe we lost that bet, but we're going to put a little more money in, and—because now we've got a lot in the pot, and we can't afford to lose what we've put in the pot." And the fundamental question that the American people and, I think, every Senator on this panel, Republican and Democrat, are having to face now is: At what point do we say, "Enough"? And so, this, then, raises the line of questioning that I presented to you yesterday.

It seems as if a solution to the problem is always 6 months away. I'll give you an example. Ambassador Khalilzad. He was up here before this committee in July of last year. He said, "I believe, Senator, that this government has about 6 months or so to bring this sectarian violence under control. And, if it doesn't, then I think we would have a serious situation." I pressed him on the issue. I said, "If this government has not significantly reduced sectarian violence in about 6 months, then we've got real problems. I mean, if I'm hearing this correctly, the Iraqi people—at that point, the confidence in the central government will have eroded to the point where it's not clear what we do. And I guess the question becomes: What do we do then? Because you may be back here in 6 months, and I'm going to feel bad when I read back this transcript and say, "Six months is up, and the sectarian violence continues." He said, "Well, what I'd like to say, Senator, is that we have to work with the Iraqi Government in the course of the next 6 months to bring the sectarian violence under control." So on, so forth.

Six months have passed. The sectarian violence has worsened. It is now the President's position and the administration position that, despite these failures, we now have to put more young American troops at risk.

And so, I—to me, this is the key question. You continually say that we've got assurances from the Maliki government that it is going to be different this time. What I want to know is: No. 1, what are the specific benchmarks and assurances have been received? Where are these written? How can we examine them? No. 2, why

would we not want to explicitly condition, in whatever supplemental appropriations legislation that these benchmarks be met, so that the American people and legislators who are voting on them have some understanding of what it is that we expect and it's not a backroom, secret conversation between the President and Maliki? No. 3, what are the consequences if these benchmarks are not met? What leverage do we have that would provide us some assurance that 6 months from now you will not be sitting before us again, saying, "Well, it didn't work. Sadr's militia has not been disarmed. We have not seen sufficient cooperation with respect to distribution of oil resources. We are still seeing political interference. We have lost an additional 100 or 200 or 300 or 400 American lives. We have spent an additional $100 billion. But we still can't afford to lose; and so, we're going to have to proceed in the same fashion, and maybe we'll have to send more troops in." What leverage do we have 6 months from now?

Secretary RICE. Well, Senator, the leverage is that we're not going to stay married to a plan that's not working in Baghdad if the Iraqis are not living up to their part of the obligation, because it won't work. Unless they're prepared to make the tough political decisions—and, frankly, we know why the sectarian violence didn't come down that all had hoped would. It didn't come down, because there weren't enough forces, when these areas were cleared, to actually hold them, because there were not enough reliable Iraqi forces. And we know that there was too much political interference in what was going on. That's been changed in this plan, both by the augmentation of the forces with our own forces and by bringing forces in from other parts of Iraq. So, we're not going to stay married to a plan that isn't working because the Iraqis aren't living up to their end of the bargain.

Senator OBAMA. Madam Secretary, because I think the chairman, appropriately, is trying to keep our time restricted, I want to just follow up on this and be very clear. Are you telling me that if, in 6 months or whatever timeframe you are suggesting, the Maliki government has not met these benchmarks—which, by the way, are not sufficiently explicit to the public and Members of Congress, for a lot of us to make decisions, but let's assume that these benchmarks are clarified over the next several weeks as this is being debated—that, at that point, you are going to suggest to the Maliki government that we are going to start phasing down our troop levels in Iraq?

Secretary RICE. Senator, I want to be not explicit about what we might do, because I don't want to speculate. But I will tell you this. The benchmark that I'm looking at—the oil law is important, the political process is extraordinarily important, but the most important thing that the Iraqi Government has to do right now is to reestablish the confidence of its population that it's going to be evenhanded in defending it. That's what we need to see over the next 2 or 3 months. And I think that over the next several months, they're going to have to show that——

Senator OBAMA. Or else what?

Secretary RICE [continuing]. Or this plan——

Senator OBAMA. Mr. Chairman.

Secretary RICE [continuing]. Or this plan is not——

Senator OBAMA. Mr. Chairman.

Secretary RICE [continuing]. Or this plan is not going to work.

Senator OBAMA. The question is not whether the plan is going to work or not. The question is: What are the consequences to the Iraqi Government? Are there any circumstances, that the President or you are willing to share with the public and/or the Congress, in which we would say to the Iraqis, "We are no longer maintaining combat troops—American combat troops in Iraq"? Are there any circumstances that you can articulate in which we would say to the Maliki government that, "Enough is enough, and we are no longer committing our troops"?

Secretary RICE. I'm not going to speculate, but I do tell you that the President made very clear that of course there are circumstances. That's what it means when he says, "Our patience is not limited."

Senator BIDEN. Thank you very much——

Secretary RICE. But I do think we need to recognize that the consequences for the Iraqis are also quite dire, and they are in a process in which their people are going to hold them accountable, as well.

Senator BIDEN. Thank you very much, Madam Secretary. The Maliki government will probably be gone by then, but—Senator Murkowski.

STATEMENT OF HON. LISA MURKOWSKI, U.S. SENATOR FROM ALASKA

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, Secretary Rice, for your time this morning and for all that you do. I wish you well in your trip, at the end of this week.

You've clearly heard the skepticism that has been expressed this morning, from so many of my colleagues, and for good reason. Skepticism about a lot of things. The assurances that we may or may not get from Mr. Maliki, an individual that we all concede has not been able to deliver, or to follow through with assurances that have been given in the past. There's a great leap of faith that I think is being made here that he is going to be able to do that which he promises, in terms of delivering the number of Iraqi troops, mobilizing, and really taking on those issues that, to this point in time, he has been hesitant to do so. Skepticism with the fact that we are going in alone.

And I will echo the concerns that Senator Boxer raised. On the broadcast that I was watching last night of the President, there was a little ticker underneath him as he spoke. And one of those tickers was the announcement that Britain was withdrawing 3,000 of their troops from Iraq. And it was—the visual on that was pretty compelling, because it took me back to last year, the year before, the year before that, when we were sitting in this Foreign Relations room asking what the number of coalition forces were, where they were coming from, and the administration was citing, and proudly so, to the number of countries that were engaged with us on this. But your comment to us this morning is that you don't anticipate an augmentation of the coalition forces.

You also said—and I think this is where—one area of the frustration of the American people, that Iraq came to us with this plan. Maliki came to us, to the United States, with this plan. And I think there are many in this country who are saying, "Well, why did they just come to us? Why is it just the United States that is shouldering this? Why is Great Britain pulling back? Why are we the only ones that are moving forward with this new plan?"

So, I have great concern as to where we are now, in terms of the world scene, and the fact that it really is the United States in the Iraq situation, very much alone, a situation that I had hoped we would not be in.

I want to focus my question this morning on the mission itself. When the idea of a surge in forces was first presented, I was one of those that said, "I have skepticism about it, but if there is a clear definition for the mission, I think it's something that we should look at, look at very carefully." I would agree with Senator Hagel that, given the American lives that have been lost in Iraq, we want to make sure that we have a policy that is worthy of their sacrifices. And those are his words, and I think they're very well spoken. But I'm not convinced, as I look to the plan that the President presented yesterday, that what we are seeing is that much different than what we have been doing in the past. You look to the Victory in Iraq plan that came out in November 2005, and I flipped through that to compare that with the highlights of the Iraq Strategy Review from January 2007. And basically, the components that we're talking about for the security perspective remain the same: To clear, to hold, and to build. And we, in Alaska, have paid very close attention to what happens when we try to increase our forces in Baghdad. We saw that with the extension of the 172d Stryker Brigade in August for an additional 4 months. The strategy at that point in time was to plus-up the forces in Baghdad so that we could deal with the security issue. What we saw then didn't give me much assurance that plussing-up, or a temporary surge, is going to deliver us anything more than we have now.

So, my question to you, Madam Secretary, is: How is it any different if we recognize that part of the problem, as the President has described, was the restrictions that we had in place before? Is this ramping up of this 17,500 in Baghdad—what assurances can you give us that this is going to yield us a better result, a different result than what we have seen in the past?

Secretary RICE. Well, of course, Senator, there aren't any guarantees, but I can tell you why the President, his advisors, his military advisors, believe that this is going to work. The plan requires a very different structure for Baghdad, a military commander for Baghdad, an Iraqi military commander for Baghdad, two deputy commanders for Baghdad, the division of the city into nine military governances that have forces deployed to those sections, Iraqi Army, Iraqi national police, Iraqi local police, and an American battalion to help them. And so, the structure is completely different.

But I wouldn't just run over the point that you made. The rules of engagement really were the problem. Inadequate force and rules of engagement were the problem. Those have been fixed in this new plan.

Now, the Maliki government—I understand the skepticism that people have that they will follow through. But, you know, they are only 9 months in office. That's not really very long. And they are dealing with an extremely difficult set of circumstances in which sectarianism broke out in February 2006 in a very big way, and it's threatening to overrun the process that they're engaged in. And so, I think the fact that they didn't act properly in the past does not mean that they won't act properly in the future. And I think it is something that we have to give them a chance to do.

Senator MURKOWSKI. And I think the concern that you've heard today is: How long do we give them that chance? And those benchmarks are extremely important.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator BIDEN. Thank you very much.

Secretary RICE. We're going to know very early, Senator, because they have to act very quickly. Their forces will start to come in February 1.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you.

Senator BIDEN. Senator Menendez.

STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW JERSEY

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, thank you for your service to the country.

I didn't vote for the war in Iraq, in the first place. I believe it is one of the best decisions I ever made. And I simply don't believe that the President's escalation of the war will work. It seems to me that it's time for a political surge, not a military escalation. And I also believe it's long past time that we transition both our efforts in Iraq and our mission in Iraq, particularly with our troops, and then ultimately the transition of our troops out of Iraq in order to have the Iraqis to understand what you've talked about here. But they haven't given us any benchmarks that one can measure by. We have to have them understand that they have to make the hard choices, compromises, negotiations necessary for a government of national unity.

When I heard General Pace, last year, say to us that, "We have to get the Iraqis to love their children more than they hate their neighbors," that's a powerful truism. But that does not get achieved by military might.

And so, it seems to me, to paraphrase Shakespeare, an escalation by any other name is an escalation. I know out of the White House, it came as "surge," but "surge" would mean temporary, and that's clearly not the case here. And a failed strategy, however repackaged, is still a failed strategy. We tried this plan before, and it didn't work, when we sent 12,000 troops to Baghdad last summer.

And we heard a panel of witnesses yesterday, and there have been other military experts, who have said that, at this point, reliable Iraqi troops aren't there simply to show up. So, you suggested the President has listened to a wide range of people—the Iraqi Study Group, the Members of Congress, different military options, the American people—but if he listened, I don't think he's heard. I don't think he's heard that wide range of views.

So, I want to ask you, though, even in the midst of my own views, trying to understand what is really new about this effort: Did the President obtain a commitment from Prime Minister Maliki specifically to use Iraqi troops against Muqtada al-Sadr's troops?

Secretary RICE. He obtained an assurance from Prime Minster Maliki that he will go after whoever is killing innocent Iraqis. And I think they fully understand that the Jaish al-Mahdi are part of the problem.

Senator MENENDEZ. Did he speak specifically about—and obtain specific commitments about—going against al-Sadr?

Secretary RICE. He said that whoever they have to go after, and the military thinks they have to go after, they'll go after them.

Senator MENENDEZ. The reason I asked this specific question, is because it's al-Sadr who's keeping his government afloat right now.

Secretary RICE. Well, actually, al-Sadr and his people pulled out of the government, and the government hasn't collapsed. They pulled out, as you remember, because of the Amman meeting with President Bush. And I think that demonstrates that, in fact, they can continue to function even if the Sadr forces are not a part of the government.

Senator MENENDEZ. When the President spoke to these other different groups—there's a broad misgiving among Shiite leaders in the government about the Shiites having a deep-seated fear that the power they want to have at the polls is going to be whittled away by Americans in pursuit of Sunnis—did he get their commitment to support Prime Minister Maliki?

Secretary RICE. I'm sorry. "Their," being the other Shia?

Senator MENENDEZ. The other Shia leaders, the other party leaders.

Secretary RICE. Yes. For instance, the SCIRI supports Prime Minister Maliki in this effort.

Senator MENENDEZ. In the effort to support him in his position as Prime Minister?

Secretary RICE. They support him as Prime Minister. They brought him into power.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, I find it really hard—unless we have a specific—I know the general view, that, "We will go against anyone," but is not, in fact, part of the negotiations that the President had with Prime Minister Maliki to give him more operational control? And, in that operational control, couldn't he circumvent going against al-Sadr?

Secretary RICE. If he circumvents going against the people who are doing the killing, then he's going to fail, and this plan is going to fail. And he understands that.

Senator MENENDEZ. And let's talk about that, then. Let's assume that, for argument's sake—let's not think about the best; the best would be great—let's assume he fails. One of the problems is these benchmarks without timelines or consequences. Even the Iraq Study Group said that, as part of their recommendation—they specifically said, "If the Iraqi Government does not make substantial progress toward the achievement of milestones on national reconciliation, security, and governance, the United States should reduce its political, military, economic support for the Iraqi Govern-

ment." But when I heard your response to Senator Coleman, you said the Iraqis didn't have—you said—you go with plan A, and if plan A doesn't work, then you deal with it subsequently. I think that's been part of our problem here. We have a plan, but even plan A does not have contingencies. It doesn't have benchmarks. How can you ask the American people, and the Members of Congress who represent the American people, to continue to give you a blank check without benchmarks that are definable, without benchmarks that have timelines of some consequence, without consequences to the failure to meet those deadlines? Because we've seen these benchmarks be repackaged from the past. They were benchmarks before. They were not met. There are no consequences. And we continue to create a dependency—by the Iraqis on our forces.

Secretary RICE. But, Senator, first of all, I think you do one strategy at a time. But you can tell—and you can adjust a strategy as you go along. This is not going to unfold all at once. We're going to know whether or not, in fact, the Iraqis are living up to their obligations. And we're going to know, early on. And there are opportunities for adjustment then.

The benchmarks are actually very clear, and the Iraqis themselves have set forward some timetables for those benchmarks, because they've got to get legislation through. They have an international compact that they're trying to respond to.

But I just want to speak to the word—to the point of consequences. There are consequences, in that they will lose the support of the American people, and they'll lose the support of the Iraqi people.

Senator MENENDEZ. But they're there already, Madam Secretary, in terms of the support of the American people. The question is: What will our Government do, specifically, if benchmarks are not met? What will we do? And that's where there is no answer. And, therefore, very difficult to be supportive of any such——

Secretary RICE. Senator——

Senator MENENDEZ [continuing]. Policy.

Secretary RICE. I just think that it's bad policy, frankly, to speculate on what you'll do if a plan fails that you're trying to make work.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, you——

Secretary RICE. I just don't think it's the way to go about it.

Senator MENENDEZ. The President did it in Leave No Child Behind.

Secretary RICE. But——

Senator MENENDEZ. There are real consequences if you, in fact, don't meet certain standards. You lose a lot of money. You get——

Secretary RICE. Yes.

Senator MENENDEZ [continuing]. Categorized as a failed school district. It seems to be a standard that can work here domestically. We're unwilling to give the government—standards that ultimately they would have to meet in order for us to be able to achieve success or, therefore, determine what are the consequences to failure.

Secretary RICE. Senator, as complicated as education policy is, I think Iraq—the circumstances of the Iraqis are very complicated. We're not giving—first of all, we don't expect that anyone here is

giving us a blank check. I understand the skepticism. And I know that if this doesn't show some success, there isn't going to be support for this policy. I understand that.

Senator BIDEN. Thank you——

Secretary RICE. And we said this to the Iraqis, in no uncertain terms. They have to start to deliver. They have to start to deliver now. And if they don't, then I think they know that we're not going to be able to continue to support them at the levels that we do.

Senator BIDEN. Thank you very much.

Senator Isakson.

STATEMENT OF HON. JOHNNY ISAKSON, U.S. SENATOR FROM GEORGIA

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

In respect for Senators Cardin and Casey, Webb and Vitter, I'll be very quick.

In reference to the previous exchange, I would simply say this. It's been my observation in war and in diplomacy, there are times you can answer questions and times you can't. I have great respect for that, and I understand the answers the Secretary has given, and I respect her being here today.

With regard to that, I hope this hearing is the most watched television event in downtown Baghdad right now, which I'm sure it is. And if it is, and Maliki is watching television, I think he realizes that this—in Kenny Rogers old song, "You've gotta know when to hold 'em and know when to fold 'em," it's time for them to deliver on the hand that they've dealt, and there's no folding that will take place. You can't go on, ad infinitum.

And I would say, in response to the exchange—I heard, from the President last night, in the right words, "This one is for all the marbles," vis-a-vis the Iraqi commitment, and it being totally across the board, and there be no cover for Muqtada al-Sadr any more than a Sunni or anybody else that might be around. That's just a—you don't have to answer that. That's just my observation.

My second thing, to live up to my promise to my colleagues, is to say this. Ranking Member Lugar made a very insightful statement with regard to diplomacy. I—it has not gone unnoticed to me that John Negroponte has joined your staff as the No. 2 person, I believe, at State. It also has not gone unnoticed that, when you answered the questions regarding Syria and regarding Iran, they were definitive into what you expected, they were not prospective in what might happen. And I think there's a burden on Iran and Syria to show that there are reasons to come to the table that are in the best interest of the region. The United States is not a nonnegotiable nation. We may, as history has proven, been the best negotiating nation that there ever was, but there's a time to negotiate, and it's after you know what the cards of the other side are going to be, or at least the first card. And I think, the way you stated it was appropriate. And I encourage us to pursue negotiations, but not by giving away, at the outset, what we may have to have in the end.

Senator BIDEN. Thank you very much, Senator. Your generosity is much appreciated.

Senator Cardin.

STATEMENT OF HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, U.S. SENATOR FROM MARYLAND

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And, Madam Secretary, thank you.

I certainly want our foreign policy to succeed, including in Iraq. Several weeks ago, when the President said that he would reevaluate our programs in Iraq and come out with a new policy at the beginning of the year, I was encouraged by that, because I thought: At last, Congress and the President and the American people would be together on a policy in Iraq. I must tell you, I'm extremely disappointed. The Iraq Study Group, the military experts, have all said that it's time to start drawing down our troops. And yet, the plan will increase the number of troops. I don't understand that.

They talk about engaging the international community. And I've listened to your testimony, and I've listened to the President last night, and it seems like we are making a limited effort, not an all-out effort, and we certainly are not holding the Iraqis accountable to stand up to defend their own country.

So, I have one question I want to ask about the troop numbers; how the 20,000-plus troops numbers were determined. I must tell you that if we were looking at how many troops are necessary to quell a civil war that is occurring in Iraq, I think one would pick a much larger number. If we're looking at carrying out our current mission, military experts believe that we should be drawing down, so that we at least give the Iraqis a message that they have to take care of their own country, and we start making it clear this not a United States occupation.

So, I am somewhat suspect that this number was determined, because it's what you have available, that it's not—you don't have many more that you could bring in at this time without creating a significant problem to our military. So, please tell me how this particular number was arrived at.

Secretary RICE. Senator, Chairman Pace answered this question, earlier today, and the requirement was established in the field when the mission was established. And the mission was, first of all, to support the successes that are beginning to emerge in Anbar—that's where the 4,000 came from; and, second, to provide assistance to the Iraqis as they bring in their best forces to be able to deal with the death squads and the organized violence that is going on against Iraqi populations.

Yes; if you were trying to quell a civil war, you would need much larger forces. But if what you're trying to do is to provide population security in relatively defined areas by augmenting Iraqi forces, then that's a much smaller number. And the Joint Chiefs of Staff then resource the plan that is given to them by the military. That's how the number was determined.

Senator CARDIN. All I can tell you is that the information that we've received from people that have been in command indicate that they're—that's—it doesn't add up that way.

But, I tell you, I think it's going to be very transparent to the international community that these numbers are more symbolic, as far as the numbers of it—it's not symbolic to those who are going over, not symbolic to those who are putting their lives on the line—

but it won't make a significant difference as far as the amount of violence in the country itself, but will be very much an indication that the United States is increasing its commitment in Iraq.

One more question, very quickly. The President talked last night about talking to our allies around the world. Can you just list countries that are in support of what we're doing and whether any countries are going to come to our help, as far as providing additional military personnel in Iraq?

Secretary RICE. I think that we don't expect additional military personnel. In fact, our surge of personnel is to support the Iraqis in this very specific mission and to leave behind an Iraqi force that can do this on its own. And so, in fact, I think it's a temporary matter from our point of view, to bridge for the absence of Iraqi forces that are capable of doing this.

We do have allies on the ground with us. We're not alone, Senator Cardin. We do have, still, Australian forces there, Japanese forces, Korean forces, lots of forces from——

Senator CARDIN. And they all concur with this new plan? I mean——

Secretary RICE. We have had—Prime Minister Howard was out this morning saying that this is the right thing to do. We know that Prime Minister Blair agrees. I talked yesterday with leaders—with Foreign Ministers from the region. They understand the need to deal with this.

Senator CARDIN. We all understand the need to deal with it, but——

Secretary RICE. No; they understand what it is we're doing. Their concern is the concern that I'm hearing here: Will the Maliki government do this in an evenhanded fashion that goes both after Shia and Sunni death squads? And that is their concern, not the number of American forces that may be needed.

Senator CARDIN. I'm glad to see this committee is not alone.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll yield back.

Senator BIDEN. Thank you very much.

Senator Vitter.

STATEMENT OF HON. DAVID VITTER, U.S. SENATOR FROM LOUISIANA

Senator VITTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Madam Secretary. Good luck on your upcoming trip.

My main reaction to this initiative and the President's speech is really to think of a number of significant questions, so I want to just go directly to those.

I have not heard General Pace's testimony, so forgive me. I think the President precisely, last night, said "over 20,000 troops." What is that exact number, or what is the upper limit on that?

Secretary RICE. I think it's around 21,500, at most. But I'd like General Pace to speak to that, because they have a way that they intend to flow the troops in that probably affects that number.

Senator VITTER. OK. I know they have a very specific plan for those troops, but, broadbrush and to a layman, that is—what?—roughly 15 percent of what we have there now. So, it is a marginal increase, as compared to a 50-percent increase. And so, that does lead to a concern of mine that we may commit the same mistake

I think we clearly have in the past, which is too little, maybe too late. In light of the past, why shouldn't we take that number and say we're going to increase it 50 percent, we're going to increase it 100 percent?

Secretary RICE. I think if that had been the assessment of the commanders as to what needed to be done, that would have been the recommendation. But this is a very specific purpose. Let's leave aside Anbar, which is really to deal with the positive developments there, in terms of what the sheikhs are doing. But in Baghdad, it is not to make Americans the center of police security or of providing population security for Iraqis in Baghdad, it is to augment Iraqi forces in the lead in doing that, because we recognize that sending Americans in to separate people and neighborhoods, or to go door to door and try to do a census, makes no sense. And so, while there were obviously very detailed calculations done on what that needed to be in the nine districts that are being developed, a battalion per district, and how then to embed people with the Iraqi forces so that they are trained up quickly.

Senator VITTER. Well, I'm——

Secretary RICE. I think that's where the number comes from.

Senator VITTER. I certainly understand all of that. But my point about past history is, I assume it was the commanders' recommendation about numbers in the past that seemed to be—in many cases, have been too low. So: Does the number take account of any drawdown of British or other troops?

Secretary RICE. Because it is a very specific mission in Baghdad to support the Iraqis at this time, it's unaffected by any drawdown that might take place—for instance, in the south of the country.

Senator VITTER. But surely, while the British mission in the south of the country is not what we're talking about, particularly in Baghdad, I assume we consider it significant, so that just forgetting about it has some loss or impact.

Secretary RICE. Well, first of all, the British will continue to be there for some time. But Basrah is being turned over to Iraqi control. And that, by the way, is happening throughout the country—the continuing problems are Anbar, Diala, and Baghdad. In most of the country, responsibility is being turned over to Iraqis; and, as that happens, then people can withdraw their forces.

Senator VITTER. OK. And a final question about troops. As I heard the President, he talked about mostly Baghdad, also some in Anbar, no increased deployment having to do with the borders. And it seems to me, personnel and material coming over the borders is maybe not the dominant problem, but a real problem. And is part of the new plan going to address that in any significant way?

Secretary RICE. Well, what the President has done, on recommendation of his commanders, is to increase our naval and air presence through the carrier presence, and also to give an expanded mission, in terms of breaking up these networks. But we think it's principally an intelligence function, Senator. Those borders are so long and so porous that I don't think you want to try to depend on boots on the ground to actually deal with the borders.

Senator VITTER. OK. I want to turn to Sadr—obviously a big topic of discussion, for obvious reasons. As I understand the status

of the government, he hasn't quite completely left the government. They're boycotting it. It's something in between; correct?

Secretary RICE. Well, he pulled his people out of the government, but they've never really said they wanted to leave the government. The fact of the matter is, the government is functioning without them.

Senator VITTER. But no one different has, for instance, assumed leadership of those ministries, correct?

Secretary RICE. In fact, there are temporary ministers in a couple of those ministries.

Senator VITTER. OK. What different scenarios do you see playing out if, in fact, Prime Minister Maliki is serious and acts on his commitment? Sadr isn't going to like that, clearly doesn't agree, is going to react somehow. So, how would you game out or play out that situation? Because I assume we have to be prepared for that.

Secretary RICE. Well, the first thing is that these death squads, wherever they're coming from—and some of them are being driven by Jaish al Mahdi—have to be dealt with. And Sadr apparently has said that if his people are doing this killing, then they ought to be dealt with. We will see whether he holds to that commitment.

But, ultimately yes, he has, I suppose, the power to threaten the government. But the government can't be intimidated by that. And with enough forces that are reliable and capable, I think they believe they can meet any contingency.

But, again, it goes back to the question of whether or not you believe that this is just a problem of will, or is it a problem of both will and capability? The President, on reflection on his commanders' recommendation, believes that it's both will and capability, will and capability to be able to deal with whatever contingency they face, including contingencies they may face in Sadr City or from the Sadr forces.

Senator VITTER. So, in terms of that playing out, I assume you're fairly confident that the government can continue to survive without him and with an even more complete and full opposition by his forces than exist now.

Secretary RICE. Well, there's also the possibility that he will decide that he wants to continue to be a part of the political process.

Senator VITTER. Right.

Secretary RICE. That's a possibility.

Senator VITTER. Right. I'm not discarding that. I'm just asking your analysis of the other possibility.

Secretary RICE. Well, I think it's become such a critical situation for them that they recognize they've got to take on anybody who stands in their way of bringing population security.

Senator BIDEN. Thank you very much, Senator.

Senator Casey.

STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT P. CASEY, JR., U.S. SENATOR FROM PENNSYLVANIA

Senator CASEY. Mr. Chairman, thank you. And thank you for convening this very important hearing.

Madam Secretary, we appreciate your presence here and your testimony and your public service.

I represent the State of Pennsylvania, along with Senator Specter. We've now lost, as of last week, more than 140 in Iraq. And in a State like ours, apart from the deaths in big cities like Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, most of the deaths, most of the loss of life, are soldiers and marines from very small towns. And, as you can imagine—and I know you appreciate this—when there is a death like that in a small town, it is like an earthquake, it's cataclysmic to the community and obviously to the family. And I think that one of my basic obligations as a U.S. Senator, when it comes to Iraq, one of the obligations I have, when it comes to the question of what we're going to do, going forward in Iraq, is to support policies that, in fact, will be cognizant of those numbers, the loss of life, and to do everything I can to make sure that we reduce, as much as we can, as humanly possible, the likelihood that another one of our sons or daughters are sacrificed for a policy that is flawed.

Based upon your testimony today and based upon what I heard the President say, National Security Advisor—all of the public record that Americans have been reviewing the last couple of days, I have to say I'm not convinced that the escalation of troops that the President formally announced last night has support in a strategy that will work. And I don't think I can meet my obligation and support that kind of an increase in troop levels.

But, I have to say, despite what I might think, I think it's very important—and some of this will be redundant, I realize, but I think it's very important that you tell us, once again, in your own words, but also on behalf of the President and the administration, What is the nexus—and I have not heard this articulated well, so far—what is the nexus between the good news that the Iraqi have developed this plan themselves, that has its genesis or origin in their work and their leadership—but what's the nexus between that Iraqi strategy and the need for approximately 20,000 new troops?

Secretary RICE. Yes. When the Iraqis came to Jordan and they said they really have to get a hold of this Baghdad problem, and recognizing that the Baghdad security plan that had been carried out in the summer did not succeed, they wanted to do it themselves. To be very frank, they wanted to do it themselves. They believe that sectarian violence is their problem, not ours. And I applaud that. I think that's the right responsibility.

It is true that people like Rubaie, who sometimes are very enthusiastic, say, "We can do this on our own." But, in fact, when the experts, including their own defense people, looked at the capabilities that they had and when those capabilities would actually mature, which would be in the summer sometime, there is a gap between the capabilities that will mature by the summer, when we begin to really transfer operational control to them over most of their forces, and what needs to be done in Baghdad now. And so, the President asked his commanders to work with the Iraqis to see what it would take to be able to undertake a population protection—get-control-of-the-capital plan now rather than waiting until the summer, when the Iraqis could do that themselves. And the plan that came back was for an augmentation of American forces so that a battalion could be with each of these nine Iraqi groups

that are going to be in each of these nine military districts. That's where it came from.

And so, the link, Senator, is—again, if you believe—and I understand that people don't believe that the Iraqis have the will, that there's great skepticism as to whether they have the will—if you believe that it's a matter of will, then we should do exactly what people are saying, we should draw back and say, "Go at it. Go at it, and you'd better succeed in getting rid of this sectarian violence, or you're not going to be able to continue to govern." But you believe that it's both will and capability, then telling them to do something that you don't think they're capable of doing is not good policy. And so, the President's policy is premised on the urgency of getting Baghdad under control and what Iraqi capabilities there are and what augmentation we need to do. So, that's how you would think about the relationship between the two.

Senator CASEY. Well, I appreciate your answer, but I do hope that you and other members of the administration continually, in the next couple of days especially, make the case very specifically why you and the President and others think this is necessary, because I don't think the American people are hearing that. They're hearing a lot of the same rhetoric we've heard for a lot of years, in my judgment. The best efforts to make sure that every sound bite is phrased in a way that sounds like, "If we don't do this, it's going to adversely impact the war on terror," which I think the case hasn't been made, with regard to this particular policy.

So, I'll move on. One more question. With regard to diplomacy, we hear it all the time—and this is your business—we hear it all the time. We hear about the necessity of a political strategy and a diplomatic strategy. Can you very quickly—and I'd ask you to submit—amplify this for the record for this hearing, if you could provide that. But, just very quickly, can you summarize for us specific steps you have taken, personally, as Secretary of State, when it comes to dealing with the real crisis that we now have in Iraq, at least in the last 2 years, just a list, if you can.

Secretary RICE. On the diplomatic front?

Senator CASEY. Absolutely.

Secretary RICE. Yes. Well, I have been constantly—whether it's through bilateral discussions or in the multilateral form that we've created, the GCC-plus-two—pressing these states to help the Iraqis send missions to Iraq. And we've succeeded in getting some of them there; getting the Arab League to go there in support because one of the problems is, they see, "Well, perhaps Iran is too influential, but these Iraqis, the Shia there are Arabs." So bringing them into the Arab fold is extremely important.

I have worked very hard to get European Union to go in, in a major way. And, in fact, their commissioner, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, has gone several times, at our urging. But the most important thing that we've done is, we've negotiated, over the last year, almost year now, an international compact for Iraq which has very specific things that the Iraqis are to do, including things like an oil law, anticorruption measures, and so forth, and a series of steps that the international community would take in response. This is something that we used very effectively with Afghanistan, and we think we can use it effectively with Iraq, as well. The debt

relief. We've negotiated, for the Iraqis, 80 percent debt relief from most of the Paris Club debtors, and 100 percent from ourselves and several others. We're trying to get the Gulf States to do the same. So, it's been a very active agenda.

I do think that they've been much more active with Iraq in the last 6 or 7 months, really engaging—really, the last year—really engaging and trying to get Sunnis involved in the process. I suspect that some of the Sunni states have been supportive of what is going on in Anbar, and have had a role in helping that come about.

So, that's how we see the diplomacy. And it's not a question of whether—to my mind, who you talk to; it's a question of what they're prepared to do. And the states that have the same vision of the Middle East, and want an Iraq that is unified, stable, without undue Iranian influence, which is one of the uniting factors for all of these states, I think, is the place to be.

Senator BIDEN. Thank you very much, Senator.

Senator Webb, your patience is commendable, and your experience is extensive.

STATEMENT OF HON. JIM WEBB, U.S. SENATOR FROM VIRGINIA

Senator WEBB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also realize I am the last obstacle between you and lunch, and——

Senator BIDEN. No, no, no, no.

Senator WEBB [continuing]. Secretary Rice and the door. [Laughter.]

So, I'll be as brief as I can.

Secretary Rice, I want to thank you for being here. And I want you to know my door is always open if you ever want to come by and discuss any issue or call me or whatever. I'm looking forward very much to working with you.

I'd like to associate myself with many of the views here, that you've heard, about what I believe is a necessity for us to widen the diplomatic approach, in terms of reaching a solution. I want to make a—just a quick comment that won't require an answer from you, and then I do have a question about something that concerns me a great deal.

With respect to the situation in Iran, and with Iran and the region, there are many, including myself, who warned that invading and occupying Iraq would, in fact, empower Iran. And that has become a reality. We also—there was a great deal of notice and comment recently about the fact that Iran has more power in Iraq than it has had in a very long—perhaps going back a couple of hundred years, and that is a reality. And our options are in—to ignore, to do things informally, as you've been discussing, or to more actively engage.

And when I'm looking at this, one of the things that sticks in my mind is a situation that we had with China in 1971. This was a rogue nation. It had nuclear weapons. It had an American war on its border. The parallels are not exact, but we went forward, without giving up any of our own ideals or our national objectives, and we did a very aggressive engagement process that, over a period of time, has arguably brought China into the international community.

And I just hope you will pass on to their President, (a) my best regards, and (b) that if he were to move in that direction, he certainly would have the strong support of me, and perhaps other people.

The question that I have for you goes back to the Presidential finding on the resolution that authorized force in 2002. And there is a sentence in here which basically says that, "This resolution does not constitute any change in the position of the executive branch with regard to its authority to use force to deter, prevent, or respond to aggression or other threats to United States interests outside of Iraq." This phrase went to situations outside of Iraq. And this is a question that can be answered either, you know, very briefly or through written testimony, but my question is: Is this the—is it the position of this administration that it possesses the authority to take unilateral action against Iran, in the absence of a direct threat, without congressional approval?

Secretary RICE. Senator, I'm really loathe to get into questions of the President's authorities without a rather more clear understanding of what we are actually talking about. So, let me answer you, in fact, in writing. I think that would be the best thing to do.

Senator WEBB. I would appreciate that.

Secretary RICE. But let me just say how we view the situation currently. We continue to believe that our struggle with Iran is a long one. It's a strategic one. It has elements of the fight in the war on terror. It has elements of trying to stabilize a Middle East in which Iran is a tremendously destabilizing force. It has, of course, an Iraq dimension. And it also has an important nuclear dimension. And I think we believe we have the right policy for dealing with those matters, through diplomacy.

Now, what the President was very much referring to is, of course, every American President—and that goes back a very, very long way—has made very clear that we will defend our interests and those of our allies in the Persian Gulf region. And so, there is nothing new in that statement that the President has made.

The one important new fact here is that, for force-protection purposes, we have to worry about what Iran is doing. We all know their activities for these enhanced IEDs and so forth. And we are going to go after the networks that do that.

I believe that—when you talk to the military advisors, they believe that is something that can be done in Iraq, that it is something that is done by good intelligence and by quickness of action. And, in fact, we've had a couple of those occasions recently, where we've gone after these networks.

Senator WEBB. Right. Well, I think that—I think we both probably know what the elephant in the bedroom is here. And I've got a long history of experience in dealing with defense issues. And there is one pretty profound change since I was in the Pentagon, in the Reagan administration, and that is the notion that the executive branch has the power to conduct a preemptive war, as opposed to a preemptive attack. And the situations that you're talking about really go to a preemptive attack against a specific threat, where people on the other side are being threatened. And the concern that I and a number of people have is that this would be inter-

preted as something broader. So, I'd appreciate it if you could give us something in writing on that.

Secretary RICE. I will, certainly.

[The information submitted by the State Department follows:]

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, DC, January 31, 2007.

Hon. JIM WEBB,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR WEBB: In the President's January 10 speech to the American people on the Administration's New Way Forward in Iraq, he made clear that Iran was providing material support for attacks on American forces. He emphasized the importance of disrupting these attacks and interrupting the flow of support from Iran and Syria. The President also noted our intention to seek out and destroy the networks that are providing the advanced weaponry and training that threaten our forces in Iraq. During the January 11 Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on Iraq, you and Senator Biden asked a number of questions concerning the scope of the President's authority to carry out these critical missions.

The Administration believes that there is clear authority for U.S. operations within the territory of Iraq to prevent further Iranian- or Syrian-supported attacks against U.S. forces operating as part of the Multinational Force–Iraq (MNF–I) or against civilian targets. Such attacks directly threaten both the security and stability of Iraq and the safety of our personnel; they also continue to threaten the region's security and stability. U.S. military operations in Iraq are conducted under the President's constitutional authority and the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 (P.L. 107–243), which authorized the use of armed force to defend the national security of the United States against the continuing threat posed by Iraq and to enforce all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions regarding Iraq. The United Nations Security Council has authorized all necessary measures to contribute to the maintenance of Iraq's security and stability, which encompasses MNF–I conducting military operations against any forces that carry out attacks against MNF–I or Iraqi civilian and military targets.

You also ask what authority might be relevant in connection with a hypothetical military operation in Iran. As this Administration has said, we are not planning to invade Iran. For over two years, we have actively pursued a diplomatic strategy to address Iran's nuclear program, and we remain committed to resolving our concerns with Iran diplomatically. Of course, the Constitution charges the President to protect the United States and the American people. As Commander in Chief, he must be able to defend the United States, for example, if U.S. forces come under attack. Whether and how to do so in any specific situation would depend on the facts and circumstances at that time. Administration officials communicate regularly with the leadership and other Members of Congress with regard to the deployment of U.S. forces and the measures that may be necessary to protect the security interests of the United States and will continue to do so.

We hope this information will be helpful to you and thank you for your interest in this important issue.

Sincerely,

JEFFREY T. BERGNER,
Assistant Secretary,
Legislative Affairs.

Senator WEBB. Thank you very much.

Secretary RICE. If I may, just one other point on Senator Webb's earlier point. Senator, we've gone a long way, actually, to offer the opportunity for the Iranians to talk to us. We did it in the context of the nuclear program, because we believe that's a real near-term threat and if we don't get a handle on the nuclear program, we've got a real problem. I want to repeat again—now, if they will stop enriching so that they're not improving their nuclear capability while they're talking, they'll find somebody who's willing to talk to them under any circumstances. But I think short of that, we send a wrong message about our resolve. And, frankly, it has a cost with

nations in the region that are looking very closely at how we are conducting ourselves, vis-a-vis the Iranians.

Senator WEBB. Right. Well, I think that it's important, as the Baker Commission was saying, and a lot of people have been saying, and I've been saying, that when you have a situation with a nation that constitutes this kind of threat, it's very important to confront, as well as to engage. And I personally think it would be a bold act for George W. Bush to get on an airplane and go to Tehran in the same manner that President Nixon did, take a gamble and not give up one thing that we believe in in terms of its moving toward weapons of mass destruction, our belief that Israel needs to be recognized and its interests need to be protected, but to maybe start changing the formula here.

Thank you.

Secretary RICE. Thank you.

Senator BIDEN. Thank you very much.

Senator WEBB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator BIDEN. I thank my colleagues for their patience; and, particularly, I thank the Secretary of State.

Madam Secretary, I'd conclude by just making a few very brief comments.

One is, one of the things that you've learned here today from hearing our colleagues is that there is an overwhelming concern that the reason why we insisted that we not accept the Maliki plan, as he laid it out, is that what he would do is go in and take out the Sunnis and we'd exacerbate the civil war. That may or may not be true, but that's been one of the potential explanations as to why we insisted we go into Baghdad when he said they don't need us in Baghdad. I'm not saying that's right or wrong. Just be aware that that's something that's going to have to be dealt with, in terms of, I suspect, people's judgments about how they feel about the administration's position.

Second, I also want to make it clear, as chairman of the committee, that I feel very strongly that the authorization of the use of force, and the provision that the Senator read from it, explicitly denies you the authority to go into Iran. Let me say that again. Explicitly denies you the authority to go into Iran. We will fight that out if the President moves, but I just want the record to show—and I would like to have a legal response from the State Department, if they think they have authority to pursue networks or anything else across the border into Iran and Iraq. That will generate a constitutional confrontation here in the Senate, I predict to you. At least I will attempt to make it a confrontation.

Third point I would make, Madam Secretary, is that I've sat through a lot of hearings, and you have, too, and, God love you, you've had to do it in a very different position than I have, and I commend you for your patience, but I want to say, again—and I hope you'll convey it to the President, because I'm sure he has not had time to watch our hearing—I think what occurred here today was fairly profound, in the sense that you heard 21 members, with one or two notable exceptions, expressing outright hostility, disagreement, and/or overwhelming concern with the President's proposal. And I think that he will proceed at significant political risk

if there is not a much more intensive and detailed attempt to bring the U.S. Senate and the Congress into his proposals.

As you point out, this surge is a process. This is not going to happen in a day or a week or a month. And we will have time and opportunity to revisit this next month, and in the next 2 months. Because the President is going to, as I understand it, Madam Secretary—and my colleague from Virginia knows more about this than any of us on the committee, having served in the Pentagon—as I understand it, the decision will come across the desk of the President of the United States, or at least through the Secretary of Defense, next week, in 3 weeks or 5 weeks, as to whether he extends 1,500, 2,000, 900, 600, 1,400 marines, sailors, and soldiers. And so, this is a decision that will necessarily have to be revisited privately by the President once a week, once a month, from this point on.

And I see my——

Senator WEBB. Mr. Chairman, if I may, we saw a notice from the Marine Corps this morning about a number of units already having been extended.

Senator BIDEN. Right. But my point is, a month from now, in order to keep the troop level up to accommodating this 21,500 additional forces, that decision will have to be made again.

Senator WEBB. Right. Yes, sir. This was a part of that——

Senator BIDEN. Extending. So——

Senator WEBB [continuing]. His proposal—or the policy that he mentioned last night.

Senator BIDEN. So, the point I'm making is that I don't want anybody to think—and I hope the administration does not think—that the President's made a decision, we're going to go forward with 21,500 people, it's a done deal, that it is finished. He will have an opportunity to revisit it. We will revisit it. And you heard from my colleagues, they are, I don't think it's unfair to say, ranging from skepticism to intense skepticism to outright opposition to the President's proposal.

And I'll end where I began, Madam Secretary. And I realize this is not all on your plate. If we can't figure out how to bring along the American people on this deal, we are—we are in real trouble. We would be making a tragic mistake that I think will mortgage the ability of this President and that of the next President to do what they are going to have to do. And that is, there will be a requirement to deploy force to other parts of the world. We will undermine that in a way that I think will be incredibly damaging to our national interest. So, that's just one man's opinion.

I appreciate, Madam Secretary, your perseverance, your willingness to be here, and the fact that we have cut your lunch hour by 20 minutes. And that's not a minor point. You're going to have to go and sit down in front of the House, as well. But I thank you for your courtesy.

Senator VOINOVICH. Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman.

Senator BIDEN. Yes.

Senator VOINOVICH. I hope that we make it clear to the men and women that are serving our country today in Iraq that this difference of opinion in regard to the President's sending in more troops——

Senator BIDEN. It has nothing to do with them.

Senator VOINOVICH [continuing]. Is that we're supportive of what they're doing, and we're going to provide them the resources so they can do their job, and are protected, to the very best of our ability. Because I wouldn't want anything said in here today to interpret that we're just——

Senator BIDEN. I think that's a valid point to raise again, and we should raise it again and again. In my seven trips to Iraq—and collectively on this committee there's probably been 50 trips to Iraq—I don't know a single person, having voted for or voted against the deployment, having agreed or disagreed with the President, who hasn't been absolutely amazed by the dedication, the service, and the overwhelming commitment of those forces on the ground. And if you want to see how that works, travel to Iraq with a guy that is a noncommissioned officer, and watch how he relates with these folks on the streets of Baghdad and Fallujah and Basrah. It is real. They have our overwhelming support. They have our admiration. And it should not be read that our disagreement, to the extent we disagree with the President, is any reflection on their abilities.

I would close by saying that I also want to thank the Capitol Police for having done, very skillfully and without much fanfare, a very good job in keeping order here today. I want to acknowledge that and thank them.

I want to thank all of you who came to listen, for the orderly way in which you did. I know there are incredibly strong feelings about this issue, and as American citizens, you've conducted yourself in a way that I think makes our democracy one that's the envy of the world.

Again, I thank you, Madam Secretary.

The committee is—oh, I'm supposed to—also, we're supposed to begin this afternoon's hearing at 2 o'clock, but I've been informed by the U.S. Senate that we are going to have two votes at 2 o'clock, that they are—to use Senate jargon, they've been agreed to by unanimous consent, which means they will take place. So, rather than convene at 2 o'clock, we will convene at 2:30. And the list of witnesses we have today are very prominent people who have different views on—and specific plans on—how to proceed in Iraq. They include the Honorable Peter Galbraith, Dr. Frederick Kagan of the American Enterprise Institute, and Dr. Ted Galen Carpenter of the CATO Institute.

So, I thank you, Madam Secretary.

We stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1:23 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL AND QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

POLL PUBLISHED IN THE MILITARY TIMES SUBMITTED BY SENATOR BOXER

(1) Are you on active duty?

Yes—100%
No—0%
(Note: Only active-duty responses were counted in remaining results.)

(2) Service Branch?

Army—46%
Navy—21%
Air Force—23%
Marine Corps—9%
Coast Guard—1%
No response—0%

(3) How many times have you deployed to Iraq?

Once—32%
Twice—12%
Three times—3%
More than three times—3%
Never/no response—50%

(4) How many times have you deployed to Afghanistan?

Once—12%
Twice—1%
Three times—0%
More than three times—0%
Never/no response—85%

(5) In total, I have deployed in support of the war in Afghanistan and/or Iraq for:

Less than 2 months—3%
3–6 months—17%
7–12 months—25%
13–18 months—11%
19 or more months—9%
Haven't deployed/no response—34%

(6) Should the U.S. have gone to war in Iraq?

Yes—41%
No—37%
No opinion/no answer—9%
Decline to answer/no answer—11%

(7) Regardless of whether you think the U.S. should have gone to war, how likely is the U.S. to succeed?

Very likely to succeed—13%
Somewhat likely to succeed—37%
Not very likely to succeed—31%
Not at all likely to succeed—10%
No opinion/no answer—8%

(8) How soon do you think the Iraqi military will be ready to replace large numbers of American troops?

Less than a year—2%
1-2 years—20%
3-5 years—36%
5-10 years—22%
More than 10 years—12%
No opinion/no answer—7%

(9) How long do you think the U.S. will need to stay in Iraq to reach its goals?

Less than a year—2%
1–2 years—8%
3–5 years—26%
5–10 years—31%
More than years—23%

No opinion/no answer—8%

(10) Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the situation with Iraq?

Approve—35%
Disapprove—42%
No opinion—10%
Decline to answer—12%

(11) Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president?

Approve—52%
Disapprove—31%
No opinion—6%
Decline to answer—10%

(12) Do you consider the war in Iraq to be part of the war on terrorism that began Sept. 11, 2001, or do you consider it to be an entirely separate military action?

Part of the war on terrorism—47%
Separate military action—47%
No opinion—5%

(13) We currently have 145,000 troops in Iraq and Kuwait. How many troops do you think we should have there?

Zero—13%
0–50,000—7%
50,000–144,000—6%
145,000—13%
146,000–200,000—22%
200,000+—16%
No opinion/Don't know—23%

(14) We currently have 18,000 troops in Afghanistan. How many troops do you think we should have there?

Zero—8%
0–10,000—7%
10,000–17,000—4%
18,000—15%
19,000–50,000—27%
50,000+—12%
No opinion/Don't know—26%

ARTICLE FROM THE DAILY TELEGRAPH SUBMITTED BY SENATOR BOXER

[From The Daily Telegraph, Jan. 11, 2007]

3,000 BRITISH TROOPS TO BE PULLED OUT OF IRAQ BY MAY

(By Thomas Harding in Basra and Toby Harnden in Washington]

Thousands of British troops will return home from Iraq by the end of May, The Daily Telegraph can reveal today.

Tony Blair will announce within the next fortnight that almost 3,000 troops are to be cut from the current total of 7,200, allowing the military to recover from 4 years of battle that have left it severely overstretched.

In what will be the first substantial cut of British troops serving in southern Iraq, their number will drop to 4,500 on May 31. The announcement will be made by the Prime Minister before he steps down from office as an intended signal of the achievements the British have made in Iraq—albeit at the cost of 128 dead.

The plans for the British withdrawal were revealed as President George W. Bush announced that he was sending an additional 21,500 troops into Iraq.

The primary objective of the five brigades and two U.S. Marine battalions is to curtail sectarian violence in Baghdad and target Sunni insurgent strongholds in western Anbar province.

His high-stakes, prime-time television address to Americans last night signalled a stark divergence of policy on Iraq with that of his British allies.

In an uncharacteristic admission of errors, Mr. Bush made acknowledged "mistakes" in previous "failed" plans to pacify Baghdad.

The troop "surge"—bitterly opposed by Democrats and many Republicans—would bring forward the end of the war, he said. "If we increase our support at this crucial

moment, and help the Iraqis break the cycle of violence, we can hasten the day our troops begin coming home."

He gave warning to Nouri al-Maliki, the Iraqi Premier, that America's patience was running out: "If the Iraqi Government does not follow through on its promises, it will lose the support of the American people and it will lose the support of the Iraqi people."

Mr. Bush's strategy was to be accompanied by a massive influx of American cash for reconstruction and a commitment from the Iraq Government to send three brigades into Baghdad.

A senior British officer serving in Iraq said yesterday: "The U.S. situation appears to be getting worse because they are sending more troops while the British are getting out of Basra. But the situation is different, with the Americans facing a gargantuan problem of sectarian violence."

The precise timetable for the U.K. withdrawal has been disclosed to The Daily Telegraph. Unless there are "major hiccups" in the next few months, 1 Mechanised Brigade will enter Iraq with a much reduced force when it replaces 19 Light Brigade in June for its 6-month tour.

Military planners are drawing up force levels for when Basra comes under "provincial Iraqi control" at the end of spring, when all security will be handed over to the Iraqi police and army.

The British Army will then position its troops at a major base that is being expanded at Basra Air Station, 5 miles west of the city, where they will be on standby. A small force of 200 men will be left in central Basra.

By the end of February the volatile Maysan province, patrolled by the 600-strong battle group of the Queen's Royal Lancers, will be handed over to the local authorities.

RESPONSES OF SECRETARY OF STATE CONDOLEEZZA RICE TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN

Question. Does the executive branch believe the objectives set forth in section 3(a) of Pubic Law 107–243 have been achieved and why?

- If the answer to this question is yes, please elaborate on the authority under U.S. law for the continued use of force by U.S. forces in Iraq.
- If the answer to this question is no—
  - What is the "continuing threat posed by Iraq"?
  - Which United Nations Security Council resolutions regarding Iraq are United States Armed Forces enforcing?

Answer. Section 3(a) of the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 (P.L. 107–243) authorizes the use of armed force to defend the national security of the United States against the continuing threat posed by Iraq and to enforce all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions regarding Iraq.

To date, the United States, working closely with its coalition partners, has achieved certain successes in working toward the objectives in section 3(a) of the AUMF. For example, coalition military operations resulted in the fall of the former Iraqi regime under Saddam Hussein. In addition, coalition military operations allowed weapons inspections that had been blocked for years by the Iraqi Government to take place. The military has been critical in contributing to the ongoing democratic transformation of Iraq, including by supporting two national elections and a referendum that approved Iraq's new constitution and furthering the development of Iraq's new security forces. The use of military force also has disrupted the activities of terrorists plotting acts of violence against Iraqi, American, and other interests.

While certain progress has been made, U.S. military operations continue to be necessary and appropriate to defend the national security of the United States and to eliminate the continuing threat presented by the current circumstances in Iraq. In his January 10 speech on the administration's New Way Forward in Iraq, the President underscored that, for the safety of the American people, the United States must succeed in Iraq. He made it clear that failure in Iraq would lead to radical Islamic extremists growing in strength and resolve and gaining recruits. He noted that, as a result, they would be in a better position to topple moderate governments, create chaos in the region, and use oil revenues to fund their ambitions. He also noted that failure would provide our enemies a safe haven from which to plan and launch attacks on the American people.

As we have consistently made clear in the administration's regular report to the Congress consistent with the War Powers Resolution, the United States also continues to use military force to enforce relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions regarding Iraq. As the AUMF recognizes, the President clearly indicated prior to taking military action that the United States was committed to work with the United Nations Security Council to meet the common challenge posed by Iraq. This commitment has not wavered, and the United States continues to play a leading role in Multinational Force in Iraq, which the Security Council authorized in Resolution 1546, inter alia, to take all necessary measures to contribute to the maintenance of Iraq's security and stability. Moreover, the Security Council has twice unanimously extended this authorization for the Multinational Force, most recently in Resolution 1723. This authorization encompasses MNF–I conducting military operations against any forces that carry out attacks against MNF–I or Iraqi civilian and military targets. As the Department has noted in previous reports to Congress, these contributions in implementation of the Security Council resolutions also assist the Iraqi people in the development of their political and security institutions in accordance with the transitional frameworks established in a series of Security Council resolutions, both of which are critical to the longer term security of the Iraqis.

In light of the foregoing, the administration believes that there continues to be clear authority for U.S. military operations within the territory of Iraq based upon the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 and the President's constitutional authority.

Question. In his January 10 speech, President Bush said, "Succeeding in Iraq also requires defending its territorial integrity and stabilizing the region in the face of extremist challenges. This begins with addressing Iran and Syria. These two regimes are allowing terrorists and insurgents to use their territory to move in and out of Iraq. Iran is providing material support for attacks on American troops. We will disrupt the attacks on our forces. We'll interrupt the flow of support from Iran and Syria. And we will seek out and destroy the networks providing advanced weaponry and training to our enemies in Iraq."

- Does the administration have plans to cross the Syrian and/or Iranian border to pursue those persons or individuals or governments providing that help?
- In your opinion, does the administration have the constitutional authority to pursue networks across Iraq's borders into Iran or Syria?

Answer. In the President's January 10 speech to the American people on the administration's New Way Forward in Iraq, he made clear that Iran was providing material support for attacks on American forces. He emphasized the importance of disrupting these attacks and interrupting the flow of support from Iran and Syria. The President also noted our intention to seek out and destroy the networks that are providing the advanced weaponry and training that threaten our forces in Iraq.

The administration believes that there is clear authority for U.S. operations within the tenitory of Iraq to prevent Syrian- or further Iranian-supported attacks against U.S. forces operating as part of the Multinational Force–Iraq (MNF–I) or against civilian targets. Such attacks directly threaten both the security and stability of Iraq and the safety of our personnel; they also continue to threaten the region's security and stability. U.S. military operations in Iraq are conducted under the President's constitutional authority and the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 (P.L. 107–243), which authorized the use of armed force to defend the national security of the United States against the continuing threat posed by Iraq and to enforce all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions regarding Iraq. The United Nations Security Council has authorized all necessary measures to contribute to the maintenance of Iraq's security and stability, which encompasses MNF–I conducting military operations against any forces that carry out attacks against MNF–I or Iraqi civilian and military targets.

This question also asks what authority might be relevant in connection with a hypothetical military operation into Iran or Syria. We are not planning to invade Iran or Syria. As this administration has said, we have actively pursued a diplomatic strategy to address Iran's nuclear program, and we remain committed to resolving our concerns with Iran diplomatically. We are also committed to using diplomacy to address Syria's facilitation of foreign fighters into Iraq, its harboring of former Iraqi regime elements; and its interference in Lebanon. Of course, the Constitution charges the President to protect the United States and the American people. As Commander in Chief, he must be able to defend the United States if the U.S. forces come under attack. Whether and how to do so in any specific situation would depend on the facts and circumstances at that time. Administration officials communicate regularly with the leadership and other Members of Congress with regard to

the deployment of U.S. forces and the measures that may be necessary to protect the security interests of the United States and will continue to do so.

Question. In March 2006, Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad announced that he had been authorized to hold face-to-face talks with the Iranians in Baghdad. More recently the Bush administration has said that it will engage with Iran only if it suspends its uranium enrichment.

- Does the March 2006 offer still stand? If not, when was it rescinded and under what circumstances? What led to the change in the March 2006 policy?
- How would you characterize Iran's and Syria's involvement in the U.N.-sponsored "international compact"?
- Given the administration's stance on engagement with Iran and Syria, is it supportive of Iran's and Syria's continuing involvement with the "international compact"?

Answer. Secretary Rice previously authorized Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad to speak directly to the Iranians in an "ambassador-to-ambassador" channel on issues relating specifically to Iraq. For various operational reasons at the time, we have not used this channel. Our current offer on the table with the Iranians as announced by Secretary Rice last May is to review with Iran in the Five-Plus-One context the whole range of bilateral and multilateral issues, with the only condition being Iran to suspend its nuclear enrichment efforts just condemned by the U.N. Security Council. On occasion we also use our Swiss channel to communicate specific, topical information to the Iranian Government.

As members of the United Nations, Iran and Syria have both been briefed on the International Compact with Iraq during a meeting at the United Nations in September 2006, and we would expect that the United Nations would invite them to attend future meetings. Neither Iran nor Syria has participated in any Preparatory Group meetings.

We encourage all of Iraq's neighbors to be responsible stakeholders in supporting and assisting the Iraqi Government. To that end, we continue to pressure Iran and Syria to suspend their destabilizing activities. Like Iraq's other neighbors, Iran and Syria must respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq and act in a manner that supports a stable and democratic future for the Iraqi people.

Launching the International Compact with Iraq has been a joint undertaking of the Government of Iraq and the United Nations. The United Nations has hosted two events in New York to engage the international community with the compact; one on September 18, 2006, and the other on November 13, 2006. The United Nations invited all U.N. member countries and the international organizations and financial institutions that are concerned about Iraq and the compact to these events. Thirty-eight countries and organizations attended the first event, and 78 attended the second. Iran and Syria were represented at both events.

Beyond attending these two events, neither Iran nor Syria has played an active role in developing the compact.

Question. Do Iran and Syria assess it in their long-term interest for there to be continuing instability and violence in Iraq?

Answer. Clearly, it should be in the long-term interest of Iran and Syria—and of the rest of the international community—to have an Iraq that can govern itself, defend itself, and sustain itself. We can only infer what Iran and Syria assess is their long-term interest in Iraq by their behavior to date, which has not been constructive. Iran has demonstrated by its support for violence and militias that it does not support a free and democratic Iraq. Iran's continued support for networks that are using explosive devices to attack coalition and Iraqi personnel is a demonstration that they must regard instability and violence as in Iran's interest.

Syria, on the one hand, has a record of supporting Sunni insurgents and has made insufficient progress in clamping down on foreign jihadists crossing its borders into Iraq—a major source of continuing violence and instability. On the other hand, the Syrians have recently signed a memorandum of understanding with the Iraqis to deal with terrorism, border, and security problems. Syria must make good on its commitments to Iraq. We hope that both Iran and Syria will end their destabilizing behavior and become a positive influence on Iraq.

Question. How would Iran and Syria react to the credible threat of a United States redeployment from Iraq? Would this prompt them to further destabilize Iraq? Would this pressure them to seek means to stabilize the situation for fear of a spillover of violence?

Answer. In the absence of United States and coalition forces in Iraq, we have no reason to believe that Iran or Syria would suspend their destabilizing actions. Quite

to the contrary, it appears likely that Iran and Syria would fill the vacuum left by a U.S. withdrawal from Iraq and increase their unhelpful, destabilizing interference in Iraq's internal affairs.

Senior Iranian and Syrian Government officials have made clear in recent statements that they actively seek U.S. withdrawal from not only Iraq, but also the entire region. We believe that redeploying forces from Iraq prematurely would thus send the wrong message not only to Tehran, but also to key gulf allies who feel increasingly concerned by the Iranian regime's aggressive regional policy.

Question. What steps is the United States Government making to weaken the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in northern Iraq? What is the likelihood of a Turkish military intervention against the PKK in northern Iraq?

Answer. The PKK is a Foreign Terrorist Organization as defined by U.S. law. We have worked closely with our allies to convince them to take a tough stance against the organization and dry up its sources of support.

To intensify our work with both the Turkish and Iraqi Governments, on August 28 the Secretary appointed a Special Envoy for Countering the PKK, (Ret.) GEN Joseph Ralston, to focus on this problem. General Ralston is working closely with his Turkish counterpart, General Baser, and Iraqi interlocutor, Minister al-Waeli. Since his appointment as Envoy, General Ralston has traveled repeatedly to the region and attempted to engage productively with both the Turks and the Iraqis.

General Ralston has engaged the Turkish and Iraqi Governments as well as officials of the Kurdistan Regional Government. His conversations have focused on building confidence between Turkey and Iraq and obtaining cooperation to fight against the terrorist Kurdistan Workers Party, which is using northern Iraq as a base of support for attacks against Turkey. Since General Ralston launched his efforts, our Embassy in Baghdad has worked closely with the Iraqis and Turks. As a result of these efforts, the Government of Iraq has shut down several PKK front offices in Iraq and begun closing down Makhmour refugee camp. We also continue to work with our European allies to curb terrorist financing of PKK activities.

Turkey remains a close ally of the United States and works with us on many issues. Turkey is supportive of the President's goal of a united, stable, and prosperous Iraq. We do not expect Turkey to take any action that would undermine this goal. In fact, Turkey is working with us and the Government of Iraq, permiting the transit of military sustainment cargo, promote trade, and encouraging national reconciliation.

Question. Three estimates have been produced on the number of Iraqi civilians killed in violence in 2006. The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) estimated 34,452; a compilation of data from Iraqi Health, Interior, and Defense Ministries puts the number at 12,357; another estimate by the Iraqi Health Ministry put the number at 22,950.

- Which of these is the most accurate figure in your estimation and why?
- What is the State Department's estimate for the number of Iraqi civilians killed in 2006?
- Does the administration have a quantitative definition for what would constitute a civil war in Iraq?
- Does the administration consider Iraq to be in the state of civil war?
- How many Iraqis have been displaced from their homes since the February 2006 bombing at the al-Askariya Mosque in Samarra?
- How many have been displaced in Baghdad?

Answer. While we are aware of the different estimates of several organizations and are quite mindful that thousands have died needlessly at the hands of extremists, the United States maintains no independently developed assessment of Iraqi fatalities.

The current sectarian violence in Iraq is now the main threat to a stable, peaceful future. There are several varying academic definitions for what constitutes a civil war. However, such definitions and labels are not nearly as important as what we and the Iraqis are doing together to stop the violence. As President Bush and Prime Minister Maliki have agreed in their strategy, Iraqi and American forces will pursue all those perpetrating violence in Iraq, regardless of sect or party affiliation.

Following the February 2006 Samarra bombings, estimates of new internally displaced Iraqis range from 360,000 (International Organization for Migration–IOM) to 500,000 (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees–UNHCR). This adds to a long-term caseload of internally displaced persons that both UNHCR and IOM estimate at 1.2 million. In Baghdad alone, IOM has estimated nearly 20,000 Iraqis are displaced.

Question. In your testimony, you said that Iraq's security capabilities will mature during the summer of 2007. How do you define mature? What do you expect the capacity of the Iraqi security forces will be by the summer of 2007 in terms of their ability to take over security responsibility from coalition forces?

Answer. The President noted in his January 10 address to the Nation that the Iraqi Government plans to take responsibility for security in all of Iraq's provinces by November of this year.

As to timing, a Joint MNF–I and Iraqi committee every month assesses which provinces and cities are eligible for this transition of security responsibility to Provincial Iraqi Control (PIC). To date, three provinces have transitioned to PIC: Muthanna in July, Dhi Qar in September, and Najaf in December.

Capabilities of the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) are one of four factors considered, and there is not one-to-one correspondence between ISF capability and GOI assumption of security. The other three factors are a threat assessment, the capability of Iraqi governance (especially at the provincial level), and the ability of MNF–I forces to support.

With regard to control of Iraq's military, currently 5 of 10 Iraq divisions are now under the operational control of Iraqi Ground Forces Command, and more divisions are expected to transition to Iraqi command as forces develop. We expect all 10 Iraqi Army divisions to be under the control of the Iraqi Ground Forces Command by May 2007.

Transfer to PIC and transfer of army divisional command to Iraq does not happen unless Iraqi forces and command relationships have matured sufficiently to be in a leading—as opposed to a supporting—role.

Question. According to the Government Accountability Office, the number of violent attacks per month in Iraq has increased from a few hundred in May 2003 to almost 6,000 in October 2003 [sic]. During this same period the number of trained Iraqi Security Forces has steadily increased to 323,000, according the State Department's reporting.

- Given the sharp increase in the reported capacity of the Iraqi Security Forces, how do you explain the continued deterioration in the security conditions in Iraq?

Answer. The deterioration in the security conditions in Iraq are the direct result of the acceleration of sectarian violence, especially in Baghdad. Provoking sectarian violence has been a long-held goal of al-Qaeda in Iraq. With last February's bombing of the Golden Mosque in Samarra, the success of their plan accelerated. Sectarian passions, incited to violence, now threaten to overwhelm Iraq's fragile, yet promising, process of reconciliation; a process that has produced successful elections and a new constitution, substantial agreement on a law to share Iraq's oil fairly, and commitment to an approach to "de-Baathification" that supports broad national reconciliation goals.

For specific information about the capacity of the Iraqi Security Forces, I would refer you to the Department of Defense.

Question. In your testimony you stated that the administration is "further integrating [its] civil and military operations." Could you explain what this means?

Answer. There must be the fullest possible civilian-military unity of effort if we are to succeed in Iraq. Reconstruction and economic development cannot occur in the absence of security. Once security is achieved, there must be an immediate, targeted civilian effort to capitalize on that gain to benefit the Iraqi people.

To that end, we will immediately begin deploying greater civilian resources alongside our military in Baghdad and Anbar province. The centerpiece of this effort will be the expansion of our Provincial Reconstruction Teams. We will double the number of PRTs from 10 to 20, through a three-phase rollout program, but the extent of our deployment of civilian resources will depend on FY07 budget supplemental funding. We plan to collocate nine new PRTs with Brigade Combat Teams in Baghdad and Anbar. We also plan to add a new PRT in North Babil and augment existing PRTs with specialized civilian technical personnel, based on local needs. PRTs will leverage both civilian and military resources against a common strategic plan to sustain stability, promote economic growth, support Iraqi leaders who reject violence and foster Iraqi self-sufficiency.

Question. You testified, "Out of this planning process came, from our generals, the view that we needed to augment [the Iraqi] forces, as embeds, as, by the way, the Baker-Hamilton Commission recommends, as people who can help them with, in a sense, on-the-job training, who can help them to, kind of, solidify their ability to go after this."

- Will United States forces be under Iraqi command or operational control?
- How will the command arrangements work for embedded American soldiers?

Answer. All coalition forces and embedded transition teams with Iraqi Security Forces remain under the operational command and control of Multi-National Forces–Iraq (MNF–I) commanders. For further details regarding the military command and control structure, the State Department defers to the Department of Defense.

Question. You said in your testimony that "the rules of engagement really were the problem" in Operation Together Forward during the summer and fall of 2006. Could you elaborate? What were the problems with the previous rules of engagement and how have they been corrected?

Answer. In 2006, the Iraqi Government placed political limitations on coalition and Iraqi security operations that undermined the evenhanded pursuit of those engaged in violence. Some, but not all extremists, were approved as acceptable targets of security operations. The President's "New Way Forward" is a joint United States-Iraq strategy for bringing stability to Iraq, with a particular focus on Baghdad and Anbar province. Prime Minister Maliki has now pledged that no neighborhood will be beyond the reach of the Iraqi state, that the central government will pursue all perpetrators of violence regardless of sect or party, and that there will not be political interference in security decisions. President Bush and Secretary Rice have both made very clear that the Iraqi Government must fulfill this pledge for the "New Way Forward" to be successful.

Question. In increasing the number of forces in Baghdad, how will the administration ensure perceptions of evenhandedness in cracking down on Sunni insurgent and terrorist groups and Shiite militias? How will American forces avoid becoming embroiled in Baghdad's sectarian violence?

Answer. It is critically important that Iraqis and Iraq's neighbors perceive that both Iraqi and American security forces are acting in an evenhanded manner against all those who perpetrate violence regardless of sect or party affiliation. Both President Bush and Prime Minister Maliki are committed to pursuing "The New Way Forward" in such an even-handed manner. Prime Minister Maliki has made it clear, publicly, to the Iraqi people that security operations in Baghdad will make no distinction between Shia, Sunni, or other types of illegal militia or illegal activity. He further stated that the Baghdad security plan will not permit a safe haven for any outlaws regardless of their sectarian or political affiliation, nor will there be political influence in security decisions. President Bush has made similar commitments to the American people.

American and Iraqi security forces will operate jointly to ensure that they are pursuing a unified, evenhanded approach to securing neighborhoods and targeting those engaged in violence. At the highest levels, American and Iraqi commanders will work together to plan operations. On the ground, there will be American advisors embedded in all Iraqi units. The establishment of joint security stations in each of the nine Baghdad districts to be manned with Iraqi police, Iraqi Army, and coalition forces should also minimize the likelihood any unit will act in a sectarian manner.

Question. You testified that during Operations Together Forward I and II "there were not enough reliable Iraqi forces."

- How has this problem been remedied?
- How many politically reliable Iraqi Army and police do you assess there to be?
- How many Iraqi security forces do you expect will be in Baghdad as part of the new plan? Which units will participate? What is the readiness levels and sectarian composition of the units?

Answer. The President laid out a revised military approach when he addressed the Nation on January 10 and announced a new strategy, "The New Way Forward," in Iraq. As part of this joint United States-Iraqi plan, Prime Minister Maliki has committed to deploy three additional Iraqi Army Brigades to Baghdad. The Prime Minister has restructured the command arrangements in Baghdad, with one overall military commander, two subordinates, and an Iraqi Army Brigade assigned to each of the nine districts in the city. Joint security stations manned with Iraqi police, Iraqi Army, and coalition forces should minimize the likelihood any unit will act in a sectarian manner.

Details of Iraqi unit participation, sectarian composition, and overall planned force strength in Baghdad have not been released by the Government of Iraq. I would refer you to the Department of Defense for readiness levels of Iraqi units, which are assessed by Multi-National Forces–Iraq (MNF–I).

Question. In June, Prime Minister Maliki offered a 24-point National Reconciliation Program.

- To date, how successful has this program been?
- What have been the areas of notable progress and what are the continuing challenges?
- In the light of Prime Minister Maliki's new strategy, does this 24-point remain operative?

Answer. Since PM Maliki launched his National Reconciliation plan on June 25, the Iraqi Government, through the Ministry of National Reconciliation, sponsored three out of four in a series of reconciliation conferences across Iraq—for tribal leaders, civil society organizations, and political parties. The fourth conference for religious leaders is tentatively scheduled for this month. In addition, the Prime Minister has participated in a conference hosted by the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) held in Mecca, in which religious leaders—both Sunni and Shia—have condemned sectarian violence in Iraq and called for an end to bloodshed.

The conferences have helped to encourage progress on some of the toughest, unresolved political issues. For example, at the political parties' conference in December, PM Maliki helped to further de-Baathifciation reform by reaching out to former Baathists and inviting them to rejoin the military.

The Government of Iraq is currently drafting a law to submit to the Council of Representatives that would reform the de-Baathificiation process by giving thousands of former Baathists the option of returning to their former government jobs or drawing a pension for their past government employment. The Constitutional Review Committee, which met for the first time on November 15, is considering amendments to the constitution, a process critical to keeping Iraq's Sunni Arabs engaged in the reconciliation process. The Iraqis are also close to completing a National Hydrocarbon Law, which we expect they will submit to the Council of Ministers shortly. A fair and equitable Hydrocarbon Law that gives all Iraqis a share of their country's abundant wealth will help support national reconciliation.

In his new security plan, the Prime Minister stated publicly that he will pursue all those engaged in violence, regardless of their sect or party affiliation. This even-handed approach to combating violence is consistent with the Prime Minister's stated national reconciliation goals. If the Iraqi Government successfully fulfills its pledge to pursue all those who perpetrate violence, it will create the conditions necessary to make additional political progress on critical reconciliation issues. It will also improve the Iraqi Government's credibility among its neighbors in the gulf whose support it will need to create a stable, prosperous future.

Question. In your [Secretary Rice's] testimony you said that "the core of the Maliki plan has really been preserved" in the plan of the administration. What are the differences in the two plans? What changes were made to the Maliki plan? What specific commitments has Prime Minister Maliki made to assure the success of the new Baghdad Security Plan? What specific commitments has he given to you [S], President Bush, or other senior members of the administration that he will crack down on the Jaysh al-Mandi? What public statements has he made indicating his willingness to crack down on the Jaysh al-Mandi by name?

Answer. The current Baghdad Security Plan is the result of a collaborative effort. In reviewing PM Maliki's plan, MNF–I assessed that the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) were not yet capable of doing all the tasks, and as a result the current plan has a larger supporting role for MNF–I than first envisioned.

The Prime Minister assured President Bush that there would be even-handedness in pursuing all involved in violence. Maliki has said that his government will make no exception for any group or individual regardless of sect or party affiliation. We expect him to apply this principle universally, including to the Jaysh al-Mandi (JAM).

The Prime Minister assured the President that there would be no political interference with military command decisions.

He also pledged to provide three additional brigades to implement the new Baghdad Security Plan.

Prime Minister Maliki stated publicly on January 26 that: "The Baghdad security plan is now ready, and we will depend on our armed forces to implement it with multinational forces behind them . . . ISF will carry out the plan to restore security for Baghdad, will punish outlaws or those who work according to political or sectarian bias . . . The ISF will be above politics. Political parties and political organizations are barred from political activities among the armed forces . . . Iraq will not allow militias, regardless of sect, to replace the function of the state or interfere with security."

Question. In your testimony you spoke of "surging" the civilian efforts of the Department of State. How many American diplomats does the State Department have in Iraq? By what amount will these numbers increase? Where will they serve? How many will be placed in Provincial Reconstruction Teams? How much experience does the average PRT team leader have?

Answer. Based on the latest staffing figures, there are 334 State Department employees on the ground at Embassy Baghdad, and an additional 46 State Department employees in Regional Embassy Offices and Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs). Other federal agencies, such as DOD and the Department of Justice also have employees working at the Embassy and other sites, who serve under Chief of Mission authority.

We do not anticipate any major staff increases in Embassy Baghdad at this time, but we are establishing new PRTs in Anbar, Baghdad, and North Babil. We also plan to augment several existing PRTs in Anbar, Baghdad, Diyala, Salah ad-Din, Ninawa, Kirkuk, Babil, Dhi Qar, and Basrah.

We are currently reviewing the requirements, both here in Washington and with Embassy Baghdad. In total, we expect to add more than 300 civilian employees in these PRT locations. Some will be State Department Employees, including 10 Senior Foreign Service Officers and specialized direct hires, who will establish the new Provincial Reconstruction Teams. Other team members will come from USAID, DOD, Federal Agencies, and contractors.

PRT leaders are highly competent Senior Foreign Service Officers with extensive overseas experience and proven records of leadership. They can call on the special expertise of their team members, who include experienced city managers, engineers, and others.

Question. In his January 10 speech, President Bush stated his intention to seek $1.2 billion in additional economic and reconstruction funds. According to a January 2007 Government Accountability Office report, "as of August 2006, the government of Iraq had spent . . . 8 percent of its annual capital goods budget and 14 percent of its annual capital projects budget. Iraq's fiscal year begins on January 1 of each year." The report found that in the Ministry of Oil of a $3.533 billion capital budget only $4 million had been expended. Given these funding shortfalls on the Iraqi side, what is the rationale for additional United States reconstruction assistance for Iraq?

Answer. In his January 10 speech, the President stressed the importance of our improving the ability of the Iraqi Government to meet the basic needs of its people, although he did not mention a specific assistance figure for any future budget requests.

The Iraqi Government must do its part to invest in its own economic development and to follow through on our joint strategy. The Government of Iraq is committed to spending $10 billion this year to help create jobs and further national reconciliation. However, Iraq faces major challenges in designing and executing its capital budget. Simply put, Iraq has available assets, the product of last year's underspent budget and profits from higher than anticipated oil prices, but they do not have the mechanisms to spend them—especially with the speed necessary for post-kinetic stabilization in Baghdad and Anbar. Iraq must develop the means to put its money to use, both for short-term "build" efforts and longer term capital investment.

There are several obstacles to better budget execution, including technical problems, such as the lack of the ability to obligate money for multiyear projects, and a lack of training and equipment to process the transactions. The Iraqis are taking steps to address this problem, such as draft 2007 budget provisions that permit the Ministry of Finance to reallocate funding from any ministry that is unable to spend it promptly. If the USG does not continue to provide assistance to the Iraqi Government, the Iraqis will not be able to develop the mechanisms they need to spend effectively their own budget. While we cannot spend their money for them, we must help them get on the path to self-sufficiency.

To help the Iraqi Government improve budget execution and take on more responsibility for Iraq's own economic future, Secretary Rice has appointed Ambassador Tim Carney as her new Coordinator for Economic Transition. Ambassador Carney is now in Baghdad helping the Government of Iraq meet its financial responsibilities, specifically on budget execution, job creation, and capital investment projects.

Continued United States assistance is vital to help Iraq address these problems and allow it to meet the myriad needs of its people. Beginning in FY 2006, we have shifted the emphasis of our assistance away from large reconstruction projects toward programs designed to increase Iraqi capacity to govern at the national and local level. Continued U.S. assistance is vital to establish firmly the roots of democratic and representative governance, to support moderate political forces, to continue economic reforms, and to establish competent and representative government.

It is a critical component of the President's "New Way Forward" strategy to bring stability to Baghdad and the rest of Iraq.

Question. How deep is the Iraqi support for both the administration's new plan and Prime Minister Maliki's security plan?

- Which factions have been publicly supportive and which have opposed?
- How much support do the plans enjoy beyond the office of the Prime Minister?
- How much support is there for the plans from the GCC+2?

Answer. PM Maliki, in his role as Iraq's commander in chief, agreed to the troop increase as part of the Iraqi security plan and on the basis of advice from his military and defense advisors, including Minister of Defense Abd al-Qadir al-Mufraji. Other members of the Iraqi body politic were consulted about the decision, and some leaders, such as Vice President Tariq al-Hashimi, supported the plan, while others were more cautious.

The Prime Minister presented the new Iraqi security plan to the Iraqi Council of Representatives (CoR), which approved it on January 26 following a vigorous debate. The plan's strongest support came from Shia and Kurdish blocs. Some Sunnis in the CoR criticized the plan's details, claiming it specifically targets Sunnis and Sunni neighborhoods. Prime Minister Maliki, who attended the CoR session to present his argument for the plan, responded to such criticisms by explaining that the new security plan targets "all who stand in the way of the law," despite sect, religion, or nationality. The plan's ultimate passage, though, demonstrates support within the Iraqi Government and the Council of Representatives.

During their last meeting, the GCC+2 participants agreed that it was in the interest of all countries for there to be a stable, prosperous, and unified Iraq, based on respect for Iraq's territorial integrity, unity, and sovereignty. They expressed their readiness to support Iraq's efforts in this regard. While supportive of the security plan laid out by President Bush on January 10, the GCC+2 have expressed skepticism about the intentions of the Iraqi Government, and want the Iraqi Government to demonstrate through its actions on the ground that it is a truly national, rather than a sectarian, government.

Question. You testified that there is a "new alignment" of forces in the Middle East pitting "reformers and responsible leaders" against extremists, of every sect and ethnicity, who use violence to spread chaos, to undermine democratic governments, and to impose agendas of hatred and intolerance.

- On which side of the divide to place Muqtada al-Sadr? Jaysh al-Mandi? The Badr Organization?
- How would you characterize Prime Minister Maliki's relationship with Muqtada al-Sadr?
- What is the relationship between the Iraqi Ministry of Interior and the Badr Organization and the Jaysh al-Mandi?

Answer. Any individuals or groups regardless of party or sectarian affiliation, who reject violence and pursue their agendas through peaceful democratic means can be part of the new alignment. Supporters of Muqtada al-Sadr have joined the political process and are part of United Iraqi Coalition (UIC) of which the Prime Minister and his party, Dawa Islamiya, are also a part. The Sadrists have about 30 seats in the Iraqi Parliament and have 6 ministers as part of the Iraqi Government. Muqtada al-Sadr's supporters have chosen to be part of the political process and it is up to him to remain a part of the political process. Sadr appeared to reaffirm his commitment to the political process when he ordered his members of the Council of Representatives (CoR) to return after boycotting the sessions in late November.

We assess that Prime Minister Maliki and Muqtada al-Sadr have good relations. PM Maliki believes the right course is to engage Sadr politically and to try to engage him constructively in the political process and to dissuade him from supporting violence. PM Maliki believes he needs the support of a unified UIC in the Council of Representatives (CoR), and works closely with all the major factions in the UIC, including the Sadrists, in order to keep their support. Sadr himself has not aspired to political office. Instead, he has asked his followers to support other leaders for office, such as PM Maliki.

The Iraqi Government needs to have a monopoly on the legal use of armed force. This means that the Jaysh al-Mandi or any militia cannot continue to take orders from anyone other than the Iraqi Government. Rogue elements must be reined in. This needs to be done by the Iraqis, and quickly.

In 2003, the Badr Organization announced it had officially disbanded its militias. However, reports suggest that elements within the Badr Organization are still active, and we have raised our concerns with the senior leaders of the Organization and with SCIRI.

The Iraqi Ministry of Interior has hired former members of the Badr Organization and members or former members of JAM as part of the police force. Some elements from both Badr and JAM have infiltrated the security ministries, in particular the Ministry of Interior. We are working closely with the Iraqi Government, particularly the Minister of Interior, to reform the Ministry of Interior and police, and to find ways to improve the screening process of those who seek to join the police and security forces in Iraq.

RESPONSES BY SECRETARY OF STATE CONDOLEEZZA RICE TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RICHARD LUGAR

Question. With only the kind of recruiting effort that comes from phone calls from you, yourself, has State been able to meet its staffing goals in Iraq.

Other agencies have also had significant challenges in meeting staffing targets—both budgetary (no international emergency line items in their budgets) as well as legal (the President cannot order civilians to war, they must volunteer, adding to the time it takes to deploy).

Is the President seeking changes to these authorities? What is your vision for fulfilling the civilian mandate?

Will you or other Cabinet Secretaries begin directed assignments?

Answer. Fully staffing our most critical posts, including Baghdad and the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in Iraq, is one of our highest priorities. We have made changes to our Foreign Service bidding and assignments process and offered a generous incentive package to encourage bidders to volunteer for service in Iraq. Even without personal phone calls, State Department employees have willingly responded to the call for service and have volunteered to serve at even the most difficult and dangerous posts abroad.

In the current assignments cycle, we have already filled 89 percent (156 positions out of 176) of Foreign Service positions in Iraq for summer 2007. For Embassy Baghdad, we have committed candidates for 117 out of 128 jobs. For the Iraq PRTs, we have 39 committed candidates for 48 jobs. Personnel in Baghdad are also being provided the opportunity to serve at PRTs and will be able to extend their assignments if they wish to do so. The Bureau of Human Resources, the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, and senior leaders in the Department are reaching out to potential candidates to fill the remaining positions. We are also looking at qualified Civil Service employees or Eligible Family Members to fill some positions in Iraq on limited noncareer appointments. I am confident that these positions will be filled.

At this time, the Department is not seeking any additional authorities related to assignments. The administration has sought various legislative changes to improve the incentives for overseas service. A number of these incentives were included in the FY 2006 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act (P.L. 109–234). During this Congress, the Department will continue to pursue Foreign Service Modernization to make services abroad more attractive and to reduce the 18.6-percent pay gap for overseas service. Other proposals may also be forthcoming, as we reevaluate the existing incentives for hardship service and determine if other legislative changes are needed to support and compensate our employees who serve in the most difficult posts overseas.

The Department's FY 2007 supplemental request for operations includes funds to enable State to reimburse other civilian agencies for personnel they make available for service in Iraq. We believe that this will overcome a significant obstacle to recruiting qualified personnel from other agencies.

To date, we have not had to utilize directed assignments to meet our staffing needs in Iraq. We are prepared to direct the assignment of Foreign Service members should that become necessary. Our goal, however, is continuing to fill the positions in Iraq and in all of our missions around the world with qualified, willing employees who can carry out our crucial U.S. foreign policy objectives overseas. Questions about other Cabinet Secretaries' decisions to direct assignments of their employees may be best addressed by those agencies directly.

Question. What are the political trends outside Baghdad? Have the PRTs been effective in empowering moderate parties? Is that a part of the mandate?

Answer. Political trends outside of Baghdad vary from province to province. Parts of Iraq, such as the Kurdistan region, are enjoying relative security and prosperity. Ninawa, Tamim (Kirkuk), and Salah al-Din have occasional acts of terrorism, but political life continues despite this. In Anbar and Diyala, acts of violence are disrupting political life. In south-central Iraq, sectarian violence is negligible, but there have been sporadic episodes of Shia-on-Shia violence between Badr Organization

and Jaysh al-Mandi elements, or involving fringe groups, such as the Soldiers of Heaven just outside of Najaf. In Basrah, militias and political disputes play a negative role on the political development of that province.

The President has decided to expand the size and reach of the PRTs due to their success in building Iraqi capacity and self-sufficiency to date. Since 2005, PRTs have invested effectively in moderate Iraqi leaders on the local level by:

- Reaching out to local and provincial leaders (including grassroots groups) who want to make a difference in making Iraq's democracy work;
- Conducting extensive training in governance and municipal planning for provincial, district, and subdistrict offices;
- Working with Provincial Reconstruction Development Committees to improve the provincial governments' ability to identify and prioritize systematically the reconstruction and development needs of their provinces and to improve the delivery of essential services;
- Facilitating better working relationships between provincial leaders and their counterparts in the central government, improving their ability to secure funds from the centre to pay for provincial projects.

A core objective of the President's new strategy is to empower moderates—those Iraqis who renounce violence and pursue their interests peacefully, politically, and under the rule of law. The expanded PRT program will be central to that effort. PRTs will support local, moderate Iraqi leaders through targeted assistance, such as microloans and grants to foster new businesses, create jobs, and develop provincial capacity to govern in an effective, sustainable manner. The expanded PRT program will be central to that effort. PRTs will support local, moderate Iraqi leaders through targeted assistance, such as microloans and grants to foster new businesses, create jobs, and develop provincial capacity to govern in an effective, sustainable manner.

Question. Can you describe recent efforts we have heard about in Al Anbar province to reach out to disenfranchised Sunni Shaikhs? Are these having any measurable effects politically or against al-Qaeda—Iraq? How can we keep from being used as one of our witnesses yesterday suggested may be happening?

Answer. In early 2006, several tribes, including those who have links to insurgent groups, began efforts to root out foreign militants in their region. Some of these tribal leaders have met with Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki in a show of support for his government and in an effort to become involved in the political process. Many of these tribal shaikhs have concluded that they can no longer watch the destruction of their areas. They see no positive future with al-Qaeda.

Although parts of Anbar remain dangerous, in particular in the areas immediately surrounding Ramadi, we have started to notice some improvement, such as additional shops opening and an increase in the number of the police force in Anbar province in general. USG-sponsored reconstruction programs have already begun in parts of Anbar. Anbar province enjoys perhaps the highest level of electricity anywhere in Iraq. We hope that more tribal leaders will be motivated to join the process after witnessing the tangible improvements brought about by reconstruction programs.

Question. In your strategic review, has anyone modeled the negative economic impacts a precipitous withdrawal and collapsed state would mean to the region and the world?

Answer. We are unaware of any formal models, econometric or other, of the negative economic impacts that a precipitous U.S./coalition withdrawal from Iraq and the (probable) ensuing collapse of the Iraqi state would mean to the region and the world. The impacts modeled would depend on the model's assumptions. However, if a U.S./coalition withdrawal was followed by the collapse of the Iraqi state, then that would almost certainly cause a serious decline in Iraqi oil output for some period of time.

International oil markets would be most affected by a collapse scenario. The loss of Iraq's oil from world markets could have a serious impact on the world oil market, both from the immediate shortage and from the higher "risk premium" that the market would demand. However, this could be mitigated by the current excess capacity in world oil production (e.g., Saudi Arabia's excess production capacity of about 2 million barrels per day is greater than Iraq's production for world markets of 1.5 million barrels per day). In addition, in any serious disruption of oil supplies, one option is that the members of the International Energy Agency could consider a drawdown of oil stocks.

Collapse of the Iraqi Government would also almost certainly result in a major outflow of refugees. The economic consequences for neighboring countries (Iran, Jor-

dan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Turkey) would be severe, as they struggled to provide food, shelter, and security. In addition, Iraq's neighbors export and transship significant amounts of goods of all types to Iraq and would be affected by an Iraqi collapse.

Question. One of our witnesses yesterday brought up the Iraq compact. Can you share specifics on that with us for the record?

Answer. The International Compact with Iraq (ICI) is a framework for the international community to support the Government of Iraq in exchange for Iraq making a series of commitments to essential economic initiatives and reforms—including and extending beyond Iraq's commitments under its IMF Stand-By Arrangements (SBA). The ICI also defines the political and security context required for the economic reforms to succeed. Iraq developed the ICI with the support of the United Nations, World Bank, IMF, and its major international donor partners. International contributions for the ICI will come in a variety of forms, including technical support, debt forgiveness, loans, private investment, and grants. The ultimate goal of the ICI is to set Iraq on a path to financial and economic self-sufficiency.

The ICI demonstrates the increasing capabilities and determination of the Iraqi Government to determine its future. The goals, commitments, and benchmarks in the ICI were primarily developed by the Iraqis themselves, and the ICI document has been approved by Iraq's Council of Ministers. Iraq is already moving forward to implement aspects of the ICI, for example, its progress to develop a new hydrocarbons law.

The next step is for Iraq and the United Nations to convene a meeting to close the text of the ICI documents. At that time, the ICI document and annexes will be publicly released in final form for review by the international community in anticipation of a high-level international conference for formal adoption of the ICI in the near future.

More information about the work to develop the ICI can be found at www.IraqCompact.org (a Web site maintained by the United Nations).

Question. Please provide for the committee the latest draft of the hydrocarbons law and relevant details of negotiations.

Answer. The Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government have made significant progress in narrowing their disagreements. We expect them to submit a completed draft law to the Council of Ministers (their Cabinet) shortly and to the Council of Representatives (their Parliament) sometime in March. However, differences remain over where to draw the lines of authority for approving exploration and production contracts. The Iraqi negotiators are hard at work resolving these differences.

Due to the ongoing nature of the negotiations, the U.S. Government does not have an up-to-date draft of the law. Based on our conversations with Iraqi officials, we understand the current version contains the following elements:

(1) A framework for developing Iraq's oil and gas sector, based upon free market principles and encouragement of private sector investment;

(2) A set of governing principles and broad organization of the sector;

(3) Key principles for revenue sharing, including, that after funding of its national responsibilities, the central government will collect and distribute revenue to local authorities according to a formula that will include population as a basis.

The law also stipulates that separate, complementary laws will follow the main hydrocarbon law and will contain the following elements:

(1) Specific implementation details on revenue sharing;

(2) Definition of the roles of the Iraqi National Oil Company and the Ministry of Oil;

(3) There could also be subsequent legislation on petroleum taxation.

Question. Each nation in the region has its own interests in mind when it comes to a particular outcome in Iraq. Other than Iran and Syria, what indications do we have from regional leaders that they are willing to put Iraq's interests first? Are they taking any constructive steps worth mentioning?

Answer. Iraq does not exist in isolation from the region. Overcoming governance and security challenges will require the help and support of its neighbors. On governance issues, the international community can have a large impact through its participation in the International Compact with Iraq (ICI). Under the ICI, Iraq has committed to a series of primarily economic reforms that will allow it to become self-sufficient over the next 5 years. In exchange, its international partners will support Iraq through new assistance to Iraq, debt forgiveness, and investments. The com-

pact provides a framework for Iraq's economic transformation and integration into the regional and global economy. We expect the compact to be completed and signed in the coming months.

On security, Iraq's neighbors can be helpful by supporting the Iraqi Government and stopping the flow of terrorists elements across their borders. While we are working with our partners in the region to strengthen peace, two governments—Syria and Iran—have chosen to align themselves with the forces of violent extremism in Iraq and elsewhere. The problem is not a lack of dialog, but a lack of positive action by those states.

As you know, I recently returned from travel to Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait to urge support for the Government of Iraq and the new strategy. My interlocutors expressed their strong concern over the growth of negative Iranian involvement in Iraq and al-Qaeda terror. At the same time, they made clear their concern that the current Iraqi Government was acting in a manner that reflected a sectarian rather than national agenda.

We understand these concerns and we believe the Iraqi Government understands them as well. Prime Minister Maliki and his government have pledged not to tolerate any act of violence from any community or group. That means that all those engaged in killing and intimidation, whether Shia or Sunni, need to be confronted.

Only through new facts on the ground—tangible evidence of action against all those who pursue violence can the Government of Iraq establish the credibility at home and abroad that it needs to chart a successful future.

Question. An important element in planning successfully is sequencing. Can we bring the proper resources to focus at the right time? Can the Iraqis and we maintain the "hold" long enough to build? What should that building entail? As you understand it, would this be done by uniformed forces, civilians, or Iraqis?

Answer. As you know, the President has decided to augment our own troop levels in Baghdad and Anbar by 21,500. The mission of this enhanced force is to support Iraqi troops and commanders, who are now in the lead, to help clear and secure neighborhoods, protect the local population, provide essential services, and create conditions necessary to spur local economic development.

The Department of State is contributing robustly to this effort by expanding our present close coordination with our military counterparts in and outside of Baghdad, and with the Iraqi Government to capitalize on security improvements by creating jobs and promoting economic revitalization. There must be the fullest possible civilian-military unity of effort if we are to be successful.

To that end, we will immediately deploy greater resources alongside our military in Baghdad and Anbar. The centerpiece of this effort will be our expansion of our Provincial Reconstruction Teams. We will double our PRTs from 10 to 20, adding more than 300 new personnel. We will expand our PRTs in three phases with the first phase occurring over the next 3 months to complement our enhanced military efforts. In that time, we plan to colocate nine new PRTs—six in Baghdad and three in Anbar—with Brigade Combat Teams engaged in security operations.

The Department will recruit and deploy senior-level Team Leaders for these nine new PRTs who will work jointly with brigade commanders to develop plans for the "build" phase of clear, hold, and build. Well-qualified officers have already stepped forward for these assignments.

PRTs will target both civilian and military resources, including foreign assistance and the Commanders' Emergency Response Program, as part of a strategic plan to sustain stability, promote economic growth, and foster Iraqi self-sufficiency where we have made security gains.

In the next two phases of our PRT expansion, we will add a new PRT in North Babil and augment our existing PRTs with specialized technical personnel, such as irrigation specialists, veterinarians, and agribusiness development experts, based on local provincial needs.

PRTs will support local moderate Iraqi leaders through targeted assistance, such as microloans and grants to foster new businesses, create jobs, and develop provincial capacity to govern in an effective and sustainable way. We intend to complete all three phases of our PRT expansion by the end of the calendar year. Completion, however, will be dependent both on funding levels and circumstances on the ground.

ALTERNATIVE PLANS: TROOP SURGE, PARTITION, WITHDRAWAL, OR STRENGTHEN THE CENTER

THURSDAY, JANUARY 11, 2007 [P.M.]

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:50 p.m., in room SD–106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Joseph R. Biden, Jr. (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Biden, Menendez, Bill Nelson, Casey, Webb, Lugar, Corker, and Isakson.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR., U.S. SENATOR FROM DELAWARE

The CHAIRMAN. The committee will come to order. I apologize to our distinguished witnesses. As they know, the hearing was supposed to start at 2 o'clock. They—please sit, gentlemen—they adjusted their schedules to accommodate us, and, unfortunately, neither Senator Lugar nor I have control over the Senate floor. Nor do I want it. But I truly appreciate their indulgence.

This afternoon, we begin our examination of the various plans for securing our interests in Iraq. We obviously heard from "the plan" this morning, the plan put forward by the President of the United States. And I appreciate the Secretary coming to attempt to make a case for that plan. But, as I said at the outset of these hearings, in announcing these hearings, the process here was to get a lay of the land, to get a historical perspective, an intelligence perspective, which we did, the previous 2 days. And then we began, with the Secretary, to hear the credible alternatives that have been offered—left, right, and center—Republican, Democrat, Independent, think tank, and individual Members of the Congress—for example, Jack Murtha, at some point, will come and testify, and as will, I suspect, former Speaker Gingrich. So, the whole idea here is for the public to understand what the various alternatives offered by serious people are, that are out there, so they understand there is not only a single alternative—"Either you do this, or we," quote, "leave," although that may be a plan, as well.

So, today we'll hear three starkly different, but well-informed, proposals from thoughtful and very articulate witnesses. While each of them has very different ideas on how to proceed from this point out, they're united in their devotion to this country and their desire to see us through this difficult time.

We're going to begin today with Ambassador Peter Galbraith, senior diplomatic fellow with the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation. He's also, from our perspective and the perspectives of the people sitting behind me—his greatest credential is, he was a staff member on this committee in decades gone by, and we're delighted to have him back. Ambassador Galbraith argues that we should accept a partition of Iraq—that has already taken place, withdraw from Arab Iraq, and redeploy a small force in Kurdistan that can strike at al-Qaeda if necessary.

Next, we will hear from Dr. Frederick Kagan, resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute. Dr. Kagan has authored a recent study that, "calls for a sustained surge of American combat forces into Iraq in order to restore and maintain stability and security in Baghdad, reduce sectarian violence, protect the Iraqi population, and help establish a normal life for the Iraqi people." I found it very interesting. I read your entire report, and I'm anxious to hear you expound on it.

We'll then hear from Dr. Ted Galen Carpenter, the vice president of defense and foreign policy studies at the CATO Institute. Dr. Carpenter argues, and I quote, "The President should begin the process of removing American troops immediately, and that process needs to be completed in no less than 6 months."

To state again for the record what is obvious: These are all very well-informed, very bright, and very patriotic Americans with three, essentially, totally different views as to how to proceed from this point. And I am confident that their testimony will help enlighten and inform the committee.

I would now yield to my colleague, Chairman Lugar, if he wishes to make any opening statement.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD G. LUGAR, U.S. SENATOR FROM INDIANA

Senator LUGAR. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

The President has offered a plan that he believes will advance United States interests in Iraq and the Middle East. In recent conversations with the President, I have tried to underscore the need for a thorough effort to involve Congress in the decisionmaking process. As we conduct dialog with the executive branch, Members of Congress have a responsibility to make informed and reasoned judgments about what the President is proposing. Congress must carefully study how the President's plan will affect the welfare of American service men and women, the prospects for success in Iraq, and the future of our broader strategic interests.

This morning, our committee had an opportunity to engage Secretary Rice in a frank discussion about the President's plan and the situation in Iraq. This afternoon, we will continue our inquiry, with the help of an impressive panel of witnesses, who represent competing points of view.

In my comments at the hearing this morning, I outlined what I believe are United States primary strategic objectives in Iraq, and they are: Preventing the use of Iraq as a safe haven or training ground for terrorism; preventing civil war and upheaval in Iraq from creating instability that leads to regional war, the overthrow of friendly governments, the destruction of oil facilities or other ca-

lamities; and preventing a loss of U.S. credibility in the region and the world; and preventing Iran, finally, from dominating the region.

I suggest that, given these objectives, the outcome in Iraq is intimately connected with what happens beyond Iraq's borders. On this basis, I believe that any plan for Iraq must include a vigorous and creative regional diplomatic component that makes use of our strengths, including our stabilizing military presence in the region.

The options that will be presented by our witnesses center on fundamental questions of whether the United States should continue its military presence in Iraq. As you make your arguments, I'll be interested in how you prescribe the broader strategic context of the Middle East that is vital national security. My own view is that we must have a military presence in Iraq indefinitely and that we ought to inform all the border countries of that proposition, in addition to Iraqis. The positioning of those forces is at issue, and hopefully you will have some comments about that.

I'll look forward to your insights and our experts as they come along the trail throughout the hearings that Senator Biden has planned.

And I thank the chairman, again, for holding this hearing this afternoon.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Ambassador Galbraith.

STATEMENT OF HON. PETER W. GALBRAITH, SENIOR DIPLOMATIC FELLOW, CENTER FOR ARMS CONTROL AND NONPROLIFERATION, WASHINGTON, DC

Ambassador GALBRAITH. Mr. Chairman, Senator Lugar, members of the Committee on Foreign Relations, thank you for the invitation to testify before this committee on alternative strategies toward Iraq. It's a special privilege for me to be here, since the committee was my professional home for 14 years, and it is here where I had a great deal of my education on Iraq, as some of the more senior members of the committee may recall.

I have submitted a detailed statement, together with a one-page summary of my plan, and I hope that they will be included in the record of these hearings.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection, they will be.

Ambassador GALBRAITH. And before I begin, I was asked by the committee staff to clarify my relationship with the Kurdistan Regional Government. I've sent an e-mail explaining this. As described in my book, I've been friends with the Kurdish leaders, and, for that matter, many other Iraqi leaders, for a very long period of time, but I do not have a paid relationship with the Kurdistan Regional Government.

Iraq has broken up, and it is in the midst of a civil war. Reality, and not wishes, must dictate our strategy. President Bush's new strategy relies on two elements that simply do not exist: First, an inclusive national unity government in Iraq; and, second, Iraqi security services—that is, the army and the police—that are loyal to Iraq and not to their sect or ethnic group. The Maliki government is a sectarian Shiite government that is regarded as alien, and in-

deed even non-Iraqi, by the Sunni Arabs, and as irrelevant by the Kurds. The government's conduct—the protection of Shiite militias, its selective provision of government services, the manner in which it carried out Saddam's execution—provides no evidence that it can transform itself into something different from what it is.

But even if Iraq had a genuine government of national unity, it would be largely irrelevant. There is no part of the country where the government actually exercises significant authority.

In the southern half of Iraq and eastern Baghdad, Shiite religious parties have created local theocracies that use militias to enforce a version of Islamic law modeled on Iran, but far stricter. The much-vaunted human rights provisions of the Iraqi Constitution do not apply.

Kurdistan, in the north, is a de facto independent state with its own army and its own flag. The Iraqi Army is barred from the region. Flying the Iraqi flag is prohibited, and central-government ministries are not present. Further, the Kurdish people voted, 98.5 percent for independence, in a nonbinding referendum held in January 2005.

The Sunni center is a battleground between insurgents that command widespread local support and U.S. forces. And Baghdad is the front line of the Sunni-Shiite civil war. The Mahdi Army, the radical Shiite militia, controls the capital's Shiite neighbors in the east, while al-Qaeda, its offshoots, and Baathists control Sunni districts in the west. In Baghdad and in other formerly mixed areas, extremists are engaging in brutal sectarian cleansing, with a death toll that may well be in excess of 200 a day.

Iraq's army and police reflect Iraq's divisions. They are either Sunni or Shiite. The Shiite police include the death squads that target Sunnis. In Sunni areas, the police are either insurgent sympathizers or insurgents. Iraq's Army, while somewhat better, is divided into Shiite, Sunni, and Kurdish battalions. They are ultimately loyal not to the nominal chain of command, but to their political party leaders or, in the case of the Kurds, to the Kurdistan Regional Government. Iraq's security forces are not neutral guarantors of public security, but combatants in a civil war. United States training has not, and will not, make these forces into Iraqis; it will only create more lethal combatants in a civil war.

The goal of a self-sustaining, unified, and democratic Iraq would require a vast expansion of the United States military mission in Iraq, to include disarming Shiite militias, dismantling the theocracies, and policing Iraq's mixed areas in order to end the civil war. The Iraqi Government has no intention of taking on the Shiite militias, and Iraq's security forces cannot police Iraq's mixed areas, since there are no such forces that are trusted by both Sunnis and Shiites.

The President's plan, in short, does nothing to stop Iraq's civil war or to build a unified Iraq. The alternative is to accept the reality that Iraq has broken up, and to work with its components. We should get out of the business of nation-building in Iraq and respect the democratic decision of the Iraqis to have a country of very strong regions and a powerless center. Iraq's Constitution, adopted by 80 percent of Iraq's people, is a roadmap to partition. It recognizes Kurdistan as a self-governing region and permits other parts

of the country to form regions. Iraq's Council of Representatives has already passed a law paving the way to the formation of a Shiite super-region in the south in the next 15 months.

Under Iraq's Constitution, regions can have their own armies, called regional guards, and exercise substantial control over their natural resources, including oil. Except for the short list of exclusive federal powers listed in article 110 of the Iraqi Constitution, regional law is superior to federal law in Iraq. By design, Iraq's Constitution makes it difficult for the central government to function, and its few powers do not even include taxation.

The regionalization of Iraq is a fact. It also provides the best hope for security, and, therefore, opens the way to a United States withdrawal. Without any significant coalition presence, Kurdistan has already made itself into the one secure and reasonably democratic part of Iraq. The south is also reasonably secure, and will become more so as it forms its regional institutions. No purpose is served by a coalition presence in the south, and it should be withdrawn immediately.

Regionalization makes for a more effective strategy in combating the Sunni insurgency. Right now, U.S. forces battle Sunni insurgents on behalf of a Shiite-led government and a Shiite-dominated military. Sunnis see these forces as alien and dangerous. Too many Sunnis see the choice today as one between their own extremists and a pro-Iranian Shiite government that sponsors anti-Sunni death squads. The Sunni extremists are not trying to kill you, whereas the other guys are. By forming their own region, Sunni Arabs can provide for their own security, and there could be economic and other incentives to combat extremists. In my view, the United States should state that it will withdraw from the Sunni Arab region when a Sunni regional guard is established.

So far, the Sunni Arabs have been the strongest opponents of federalism in Iraq. But with Kurdistan already in existence and a Shiite region likely on its way, the Sunnis are faced with a choice between governing themselves or being governed by a Shiite-dominated central government in Baghdad.

The United States has one achievable overriding interest in Iraq today, which is to keep al-Qaeda and its ilk from having a base from which they can attack the United States. If Sunni Arabs cannot provide for their own security, then the United States must be prepared to reengage in the Sunni areas. This is best accomplished by placing a small over-the-horizon force in Kurdistan. Kurdistan has the Western-oriented aspiring democracy that the United States once hoped for all of Iraq, and the Kurds are among the most pro-American people in the world. They would welcome a United States base, not least because it would provide them a measure of security against Arab Iraqis, who may seek revenge against the Kurds for having collaborated with the United States in Iraq. From Kurdistan, the United States military could readily move back into any Sunni Arab area where al-Qaeda or its allies established a base. The Kurdistan peshmerga would willingly assist their American allies with intelligence and other support.

By deploying to what is still, nominally, Iraqi territory, the United States would avoid the political complications in the United States and in Iraq involved in reentering Iraq following a total

withdrawal. Partition, as noted by the Baker-Hamilton Commission and by many experts, is not an easy solution, but many of the worst consequences of partition, including sectarian killing and an Iranian-dominated Shiite south, have already happened. And the United States has no plan to reverse any of this.

Mr. Chairman, I'm often asked: What is the difference between the plan that you and Les Gelb have put forward and the plan that I have outlined? We agree that the future of Iraq is up to the Iraqis. You and Les Gelb are more optimistic that Iraq may hold together and, if you're right, I think that would be terrific. I'm pessimistic that the country can hold together over the long term. But, nonetheless, the fundamental premise of both plans is that the United States should not be engaged in nation-building in Iraq; this should be left to the Iraqis.

Partition is an Iraqi solution. It does not require the United States to do anything, although we can, and should, take steps, diplomatically and through our financial assistance, that can smooth the process, and also to try to deal with the regional consequences.

The alternative to partition is a continued U.S.-led effort at nation-building that has not worked for the last 4 years, and, in my view, has no prospect for success. That, Mr. Chairman, is a formula for war without an end.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Galbraith follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF AMBASSADOR PETER W. GALBRAITH, SENIOR DIPLOMATIC FELLOW, CENTER FOR ARMS CONTROL AND NON-PROLIFERATION, WASHINGTON, DC

Chairman Biden, Senator Lugar, members of the Committee on Foreign Relations, thank you for the invitation to testify before this committee on alternative strategies toward Iraq. It is a special privilege to be here since the committee staff was my professional home for 14 years and it is here where I began my education on Iraq.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR U.S. STRATEGY

It is clear that our present strategy for Iraq has failed miserably both in concept and execution. Any new strategy should, I believe, be based on the following premises:

First, the United States needs to extricate itself from Iraq as soon as feasible so that we can address other more urgent threats to our national security, including from nuclear North Korea and nuclear ambitious Iran.

Second, any new strategy should focus on the objectives that are achievable in Iraq consistent with the military and other resources we are prepared to commit.

Third, the starting point for any new strategy for Iraq should be the country as it is, not as we wish it were.

IRAQ: BROKEN APART AND IN CIVIL WAR

The reality of Iraq is stark. The country has broken up and is in the midst of a civil war.

In the southern half of Iraq, Shiite religious parties and clerics have created theocracies policed by militias that number well over 100,000. In Basra, three religious parties control—and sometimes fight over—the 100,000 barrels of oil diverted each day from legal exports into smuggling. To the extent that the central government has authority in the south, it is because the same Shiite parties that dominate the center also control the south.

Kurdistan in the north is de facto an independent state with its own army and its own flag. The Iraqi Army is barred from the region, flying the Iraqi flag prohibited, and central government ministries are not present. The Kurdish people voted 98.5 percent for independence in an informal referendum in January 2005.

The Sunni center is a battleground between insurgents that command widespread local support and U.S. forces. The Iraqi Army, which we proclaim to be a national

institution, is seen by the Sunni Arabs as a largely Shiite force loyal to a Shiite-led government that they see as an ally of national enemy, Iran.

Baghdad is the front line of Iraq's Sunni-Shiite civil war. The Mahdi army, the radical Shiite militia, controls the capital's Shiite neighborhoods in the east while al-Qaeda offshoots and Baathists control the Sunni districts in the west. In Baghdad, and in other formerly mixed areas, extremists are engaging in brutal sectarian cleansing with a death toll probably in excess of 200 a day.

TWIN PILLARS OF CURRENT STRATEGY

The Bush administration's strategy for Iraq rests on two pillars: First, an inclusive and effective national unity government that represents Iraq's Shiites, Sunnis, and Kurds; and, second, the development of effective Iraqi Army and police that can take over security responsibilities from U.S. forces.

Iraq does not have a government of national unity. Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki pursues a sectarian Shiite agenda, as seen most dramatically in the manner in which he carried out Saddam Hussein's execution. The Maliki government is keen to fight the Sunni insurgents—or to be more precise, to have the U.S. military fight Sunni insurgents—but has resisted all steps to disband Shiite militias. But, even if Iraq had a genuine national unity government, it would be largely irrelevant. There is no part of the country where the government actually exercises significant authority.

Iraq's Army and police are either Shiite or Sunni. In Baghdad, the Shiite death squads that target Sunnis are the police. In Sunni areas, the police are often insurgent sympathizers or insurgents. Iraq's Army, while somewhat better, is divided into Shiite, Sunni, and Kurdish battalions. These are ultimately loyal not to the nominal chain of command, but to their sects, or, in the case of the Kurds, to the Kurdistan Regional Government. In a country in the midst of a civil war, it is unrealistic to believe that Iraq's security forces can somehow be different from the country itself.

Iraq's security forces are not neutral guarantors of public security but combatants in a civil war. U.S. training has not made, and will not make, these forces into Iraqis. It will only create more lethal combatants in a civil war.

WHAT WOULD BE REQUIRED TO ACHIEVE A DEMOCRATIC AND UNIFIED IRAQ

To achieve the Bush administration's stated goal of a self-sustaining unified and democratic Iraq, the United States would have to undertake two major military missions that it is not now undertaking.

First, it would have to disarm, forcefully, Iraq's Shiite militias and dismantle the Shiite theocracies that these militias keep in power. This would bring the United States into direct conflict with Iraq's Shiite power structure. The Shiites are three times as numerous as the Sunni Arabs, possess more powerful armed forces, and have in neighboring Iran a powerful ally.

Second, the United States would have to end Iraq's civil war. This means deploying U.S. troops to serve as the police in Baghdad and other mixed areas for an indefinite period of time. These are not tasks that can be handled by Iraqi security forces since there are no such forces that are trusted by both Sunnis and Shiites.

The Bush administration has no intention of undertaking either of these missions which would require many more troops, mean significantly greater casualties (especially if we tried to use our troops as police), and probably not succeed.

IRAQ'S CONSTITUTION: A ROADMAP TO PARTITION

The alternative is to accept the reality—an Iraq that has broken up—and work with its components. We should get out of the business of nation-building in Iraq and respect the democratic decision of the Iraqis to have a country of strong regions and a powerless center.

Iraq's Constitution, adopted by 80 percent of Iraq's people, is a roadmap to partition. It recognizes Kurdistan as a self-governing region and permits other parts of the country to form regions. Iraq's Council of Representatives has already passed a law paving the way to the formation of a Shiite "super region" in 15 months.

Under the constitution, Iraq's regions can have their own armies (called Regional Guards) and exercise substantial control over their natural resources including oil. Except for the short list of exclusive federal powers listed in article 110 of the Iraqi Constitution, regional law is superior to federal law. By design, Iraq's Constitution makes it difficult for the central government to function and its few powers do not even include taxation.

WITHDRAW WHERE WE HAVE NO ACHIEVABLE MISSION

By accepting the reality of Iraq, we can see a path to withdrawal. The Shiite south is stable, albeit theocratic and pro-Iranian. If we are not going to disband the militias and local theocracies—which we allowed to become established during the CPA's formal occupation of Iraq—there is no purpose served by a continued coalition presence in the Shiite southern half of Iraq. We should withdraw immediately.

In the Sunni center, our current strategy involves handing off combat duties to the Iraqi Army. Mostly, it is Shiite battalions that fight in the Sunni Arab areas, as the Sunni units are not reliable. What the Bush administration portrays as Iraqi, the local population sees as a hostile force loyal to a Shiite-dominated government in Baghdad installed by the Americans invader and closely aligned with the traditional enemy, Iran. The more we "Iraqize" the fight in the Sunni heartland, the more we strengthen the insurgency.

If the Sunni Arabs were to form their own region, they could take control of their own security. Right now, the choice for ordinary Sunnis is between what they see as a radical Shiite government that sponsors anti-Sunni death squads and their own extremists. Within the establishment of a Sunni region, the choice becomes one between nationalist and traditional leadership on the one hand and the Islamic extremists on the other. Outsiders can influence this choice by providing economic incentives for a more moderate Sunni Arab government. The United States should state that it will withdraw from the Sunni Arab region when its Regional Guard is established.

So far, the Sunni Arabs have been the strongest opponents of federalism in Iraq. But, with Kurdistan already in existence and a Shiite region likely on its way, the Sunnis are faced with a choice between governing themselves or being governed by a Shiite-dominated central government in Baghdad.

BAGHDAD

Because it is Iraq's most mixed city, Baghdad is the front line of Iraq's Sunni-Shiite civil war. It is tragedy for its people—most of whom do not share the sectarian hatred that is fueling a killing spree that is taking several thousand lives a month. Iraqi forces cannot end the civil war because many of them are partisans of one side, and the proposed surge of U.S. troops will not end it. There is no good solution to Baghdad. Ideally, the United States could help broker a political deal for power-sharing among Sunnis and Shiites (with space for the much smaller Christian, Mandean/Sabean, Turkmen, and Kurdish communities). But, the reality is that Baghdad is already divided. A formal division into Shiite and Sunni sectors may be the only way to halt the effort by Shiite militias to enlarge the Shiite parts of the city.

Unless the United States is prepared to assume long-term police duties in Baghdad, we should withdraw our troops from the city. If we withdraw, there will be sectarian cleansing of mixed neighborhoods and sectarian killing. And, this will be the case if we stay with our current forces or even after the modest surge now being discussed.

KURDISTAN

Kurdistan is Iraq's most stable region. It is the one part of the country that is the pro-Western, secular, and aspiring democracy that the Bush administration had hoped for all of Iraq. The United States should work to strengthen democratic institutions in Kurdistan as well as the military capabilities of the Kurdistan military (the peshmerga) which is Iraq's only reliable indigenous military force.

Iraq's Constitution provides for a referendum to be held by the end of this year to determine the status of Kirkuk and other areas disputed between Kurds and Arabs. Holding this referendum has the potential to increase, significantly, violence in areas that are ethnically mixed. On the other hand, Kirkuk has been a source of conflict in Iraq for seven decades. Failing to resolve the matter at a time when there is a constitutionally agreed process to do so is also likely to produce conflict and is destabilizing over the long term.

Because of our special relationship with the Kurds, the United States has clout that it does not enjoy elsewhere in the country. The United States should engage in a major diplomatic effort to resolve the boundaries of Kurdistan through negotiation wherever possible. The Kurds, who hold the upper hand in much of this disputed territory, should be cautioned about the dangers of overreaching. With regard to Kirkuk, the U.S. diplomacy should focus on entrenching power-sharing among the governorate's four communities—Kurds, Turkmen, Arabs, and Chaldean/

Assyrians—so that all have a stake in Kirkuk regardless of the outcome of the referendum.

PREVENTING AL-QAEDA FROM HAVING A BASE

The United States has one overriding interest in Iraq today—to keep al-Qaeda and like-minded Salafi terrorist groups from having a base from which they can plot attacks on the United States. If Sunni Arabs cannot provide for their own security, the United States must be prepared to reengage.

This is best accomplished by placing a small over-the-horizon force in Kurdistan. The Kurds are among the most pro-American people in the world and would welcome a U.S. military presence, not the least because it would help protect them from Arab Iraqis who resent their close cooperation with the United States during the 2003 war and thereafter. From Kurdistan, the U.S. military could readily move back into any Sunni Arab area where al-Qaeda or its allies established a base. The Kurdish peshmerga would willingly assist their American allies with intelligence and operationally. By deploying to what is still nominally Iraqi territory, the United States would avoid the political complications—in the United States and in Iraq—involved in reentering Iraq following a total withdrawal.

WILL IRAQ STAY TOGETHER?

Can Iraq survive as a loose federation? Over the short term, Iraq's Kurdish and Shiite leaders are committed to the constitutional arrangements while the Sunni Arabs say that they want a more centralized state. Both Sunni Arabs and Shiites identify as Iraqis, although they have radically different visions as to what Iraq should be. The creation of Sunni and Shiite federal units, therefore, is not likely to lead to a full separation. Rather, by giving each community their own entity, federalism can help avoid the alternative where Sunnis and Shiites fight a prolonged civil war for control of all Arab Iraq.

The Kurds do not identify as Iraqis. They associate Iraq with decades of repression and with Saddam Hussein's genocide. Almost unanimously, Iraqi Kurds want their own independent state. Keeping people in a state they hate is a formula for never ending conflict of the sort that has characterized the entire history of modern Iraq. The United States may—and for the time being probably should—delay Kurdistan's full independence, but we cannot prevent it. Our real interest is in preventing the violent break up of Iraq, and not in holding together a country that brought nonstop misery to the majority of its people for its entire history.

PARTITION AND WITHDRAW: A STRATEGY TO GET THE U.S. OUT OF IRAQ

Summary: Accept the partition of Iraq that has already taken place, withdraw from Arab Iraq, and redeploy a small force to Kurdistan that can strike at al-Qaeda if necessary.

Key Facts: Iraq has broken up and is in the midst of a civil war. Kurdistan in the north is a de facto independent state with its own army. The Shiite south is governed separately from Baghdad. The Iraqi Parliament has approved a law paving the way for the formation of a Shiite "super region" in 15 months. The Sunni center is a battleground and Baghdad is the front line of the Sunni-Shiite civil war.

Iraq's Constitution ratifies the country's partition, recognizing Kurdistan as a self-governing region and permitting other parts of the country to form regions. Under the Constitution, Iraq's regions can have their own armies (called Regional Guards) and exercise substantial control over their natural resources including oil. Except for the short list of exclusive federal powers listed in Article 110 of the Iraqi Constitution, regional law is superior to federal law. By design, Iraq's Constitution makes it difficult for the central government to function and its few powers do not even include taxation. To achieve a unified and democratic Iraq, the United States would have to use its military to end the civil war, build a strong central government over the objections of the Kurds and many Shiites, and be prepared to remain in Iraq indefinitely. Even so, the prospects for success would be minimal.

Policy Recommendations:

1. Accept the reality of partition and work with the regions that emerge to develop stable regional governments with competent security forces.
2. Use deplomacy to smooth the path to partition by helping resolve territorial disputes between regions, and notably between Kurdistan and Arab Iraq over Kirkuk.
3. Facilitate a solution to Baghdad either by devising a plan for power sharing between Sunnis and Shiites in the city or by dividing it along current sectarian boundaries.

4. Mitigate the humanitarian consequences of Iraq's civil war with assistance to displaced populations.
5. Withdraw coalition forces immediately from Iraq's Shiite south where they are not needed for stability.
6. Withdraw rapidly from most of Baghdad recognizing that the U.S. military is not prepared to become the police of the city.
7. State that the U.S. will withdraw from the Iraq's Sunni areas at such time as the Sunnis are prepared to assume security for their own region.
8. Retain an "over-the-horizon" U.S. military force in pro-American Kurdistan that could intervene against al-Qaeda and other global terrorist organizations if necessary.
9. Delay Iraq's formal breakup as long as possible while preparing neighbors to accept peacefully the new reality.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Dr. Kagan.

STATEMENT OF FREDERICK W. KAGAN, RESIDENT SCHOLAR, AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE, WASHINGTON, DC

Dr. KAGAN. Mr. Chairman, honorable members of this——

The CHAIRMAN. Again, welcome.

Dr. KAGAN [continuing]. Committee, I'm very grateful for the opportunity to speak before you today on this issue that is of such great importance to our Nation.

Iraq is clearly in a very dire situation right now, and no objective observer could deny that. And we face, at this moment, I believe, a series of very difficult choices among options, none of which are pleasant, none of which can promise success, all of which carry increased risk, of one form or another.

I'd like to stress that I do believe that there is an option that can succeed in at least offering us a chance to move forward toward a road that would actually be acceptable to us over the long term. And I do believe that that option is embodied in the plan that I have presented at AEI, some time ago, in the report called "Choosing Victory."

But I'd like, first, to highlight the fact that I believe that we have come to a point of bifurcation in the history of the world. And I don't think that's too strong a statement. I think that it is impossible to overstate how much rides on the outcome of the war in Iraq today.

A number of experts from various parties and persuasions have looked at the possibility and likelihood of containing a civil war in Iraq that is now underway, and preventing it from spreading throughout the region, without actually tamping it down and bringing it under control in Iraq. And the conclusions are very, very poor; very, very pessimistic.

Judging from past civil wars, ethnosectarian conflicts around the world, it is very clear that a civil war, allowed to proceed unchecked in Iraq as the result of a precipitate American withdrawal, is highly likely to spread violence throughout the entire region, destabilize Iraq's neighbors, and may quite possibly lead to regional conflict. This is not something that the United States could view with any degree of equanimity. This is not Southeast Asia, this is not a part of the world that we can walk away from, this is a region that will always be at the center of America's vital interests in the world, and not an area where we can simply watch idly as conflict expands and brings in ever more warriors.

Unfortunately, I think this nightmare scenario is not improbable if we do not bring the violence in Iraq under control and work hard to reestablish an Iraqi State that can govern its territory and maintain its own security and defend itself against foes, internal and external. And I do believe that it is possible to do that.

We have not succeeded in Iraq, so far, because we have not applied sound strategy to this conflict. I think that's very clear. I've been making that case consistently, honestly, even since before the war began. Sound strategy requires—sound strategy in counterinsurgency requires, first and foremost, providing security to the population. When people have to wake up in the morning and wonder and worry if they and their families will live to see the evening, they will not participate in the political process in a normal way, they will not participate in economic processes in a normal way, they will not interact with one another, even with family and friends and neighbors, in a normal way. That is a fact of human nature, and it has been seen in many, many conflicts.

It is no surprise to me, therefore, that the Iraqis, thus far, have not been behaving in the manner that we would like them to behave in. That is to say, a manner that is characterized by compromise and civility and inclusiveness. When the violence has reached the point that we have allowed it to reach through not working hard enough to bring it under control, it is natural for Iraqi sects and groups to turn to them—to turn to their own powers and their own capabilities to defend each other, and it is, unfortunately, also natural for them to begin to attack each other.

Iraq does not, in fact, have a long history of vast sectarian conflict ripping it apart from age to age. The level of violence that we're seeing now is unusual in Iraqi history, as it is unusual in the history of most states. I do believe that we can work to bring it under control, and I do believe that bringing security to the Iraqi people, in the first instance, will enable them to begin to make the difficult choices and compromises that will be so essential to allow them to move forward to create the sort of stable state that we desire, and that they desire.

I do not believe that solutions such as partition will be effective or will be, rather, tolerable. Unfortunately, it is not the case that Iraq is now divided neatly into three zones which can simply each be given its own government. Although there has been sectarian cleansing going on in Baghdad and in other cities in Iraq, Baghdad remains a mixed city. Many of its neighborhoods remain mixed between sects. And actually dividing the country into three zones will require, de facto, an enormous amount more sectarian cleansing. Another word for this process, I believe, will be "genocide," as I believe that the increasing escalation of violence that is the normal part of any widespread sectarian cleansing generally leads to such efforts.

I do not believe that the United States can stand by, purely from an ethical perspective, and watch that occur. And I would remind the committee that it was the position of especially the Democratic Party and the Clinton administration in the 1990s that it was intolerable for the United States to stand idly by and watch as ethnic cleansing and genocide went on in the Balkans. I really can't imagine how we could believe that it could be tolerable now to permit,

and, indeed, even encourage, that to occur, when we are so clearly partially responsible for the circumstances in which this violence has developed.

But I want to emphasize, we are not in Iraq, in my view, for the benefit of the Iraqis; we are in Iraq, in my view, in pursuit of American national interests. And the national interest, at this point, is the prevention of the development of regional civil war and regional violence on a scale that would be intolerable to us. And I believe that, purely in the service of our own interests, if nothing else, it is vital that we work to bring the violence under control.

Now, we have put forward a plan, which we have presented in great detail, called "Choosing Victory," in which we recommend the introduction of additional U.S. forces into Baghdad and into Al Anbar province. We believe that this plan is workable. We brought together a group of military planners with significant experience—recent experience—in Iraq. We were advised, by General Jack Keane, the former Chief—Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, and lieutenant general, retired, David Barno, and a number of other officers who gave us their wisdom. And we looked very carefully at what we believed the military requirements would be of bringing security to the vital Sunni and mixed Sunni-Shia neighborhoods in Baghdad as the beginning of an operation to pacify the entire city, which would then enable us to move beyond Baghdad into troubled areas in Diyala, Salah ad-Din, and elsewhere. We also believe that it was necessary to increase our forces in Al Anbar province, which is another base of the Sunni insurgency, in order to prevent insurgents from moving easily back and forth between that province and Baghdad.

We emphasize that we do not believe that this security operation, by itself, will lead to success in Iraq. It is, rather, the essential precondition for moving forward with the host of reconciliation initiatives, political developments, and economic development that will be vital, in the end, to resolving this conflict.

There has been much complaint about the fact that the Iraqi Armed Forces are not ethnically mixed, not sectarianly mixed. Of course they're not. You do not—you cannot recruit Sunni Arabs into a force when the insurgents are terrorizing their families and killing their family members when they join the army. As we have seen in Tal Afar and Ramadi and in other places, when you can bring security to an area, you can then begin to recruit Sunni Arabs and other ethnicities and sects into the armed forces and produce a more balanced force. Security is the precondition.

I will freely say, because I have said it consistently all along, that the Bush administration has made an error in not prioritizing the establishment of security in Iraq. I do not believe—and it was our considered opinion when we studied this problem very carefully—we do not believe that the situation is so far gone that no solution is feasible.

People have challenged the numbers of troops that would be required to do this. I would say they should explain—the burden is on them to explain what forces they think would be necessary, and on what basis they make the calculation. We have been completely open and transparent on the basis for our force calculations, which

are in line with traditional counterinsurgency practice and also with the experience of operations in Iraq previously. We believe that these forces will be adequate to provide security in the areas of Baghdad that we think is most important.

We recommended a significant reconstruction effort to accompany this program. We are going to be continuing, in subsequent phases of this project, to examine changes that we think need to be made in the training of the Iraqi Army, the training of the Iraqi police, reconstruction efforts, and the development of Iraqi governmental structures, and so forth. We clearly do believe our study is something that will take some time, and the reconstruction of Iraq is something that will take some time, but we are absolutely convinced that simply allowing Iraq to collapse now by withdrawing our forces, or by trying to carve off some piece of Iraq and protect only that, is not in the interest of the United States of America and will, in fact, put us in tremendous jeopardy over the long run, and possibly even in the short run. And we, therefore, believe that it is vital and urgent that we work now to bring the situation under control.

I thank you.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Kagan follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. FREDERICK W. KAGAN, RESIDENT SCHOLAR, AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE, WASHINGTON, DC

CHOOSING VICTORY: A PLAN FOR SUCCESS IN IRAQ—PHASE I REPORT
(A REPORT OF THE IRAQ PLANNING GROUP AT THE AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Victory is still an option in Iraq. America, a country of 300 million people with a GDP of $12 trillion and more than 1 million soldiers and marines, has the resources to stabilize Iraq, a state the size of California with a population of 25 million and a GDP under $100 billion. America must use its resources skillfully and decisively to help build a successful democratically elected, sovereign government in Iraq.

Victory in Iraq is vital to America's security. Defeat will likely lead to regional conflict, humanitarian catastrophe, and increased global terrorism.

Iraq has reached a critical point. The strategy of relying on a political process to eliminate the insurgency has failed. Rising sectarian violence threatens to break America's will to fight. This violence will destroy the Iraqi Government, armed forces, and people if it is not rapidly controlled.

Victory in Iraq is still possible at an acceptable level of effort. We must adopt a new approach to the war and implement it quickly and decisively.

We must act now to restore security and stability to Baghdad. We and the enemy have identified it as the decisive point.

There is a way to do this.

- We must balance our focus on training Iraqi soldiers with a determined effort to secure the Iraqi population and contain the rising violence. Securing the population has never been the primary mission of the U.S. military effort in Iraq, and now it must become the first priority.
- We must send more American combat forces into Iraq and especially into Baghdad to support this operation. A surge of seven Army brigades and Marine regiments to support clear-and-hold operations that begin in the spring of 2007 is necessary, possible, and will be sufficient to improve security and set conditions for economic development, political development, reconciliation, and the development of Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) to provide permanent security.
- American forces, partnered with Iraqi units, will clear high-violence Sunni and mixed Sunni-Shia neighborhoods, primarily on the west side of the city.
- After those neighborhoods are cleared, U.S. soldiers and marines, again partnered with Iraqis, will remain behind to maintain security, reconstitute police forces, and integrate police and Iraqi Army efforts to maintain the population's security.

- As security is established, reconstruction aid will help to reestablish normal life, bolster employment, and, working through Iraqi officials, strengthen Iraqi local government.
- Securing the population strengthens the ability of Iraq's central government to exercise its sovereign powers.

This approach requires a national commitment to victory in Iraq:

- The ground forces must accept longer tours for several years. National Guard units will have to accept increased deployments during this period.
- Equipment shortages must be overcome by transferring equipment from non-deploying Active Duty, National Guard, and Reserve units to those about to deploy. Military industry must be mobilized to provide replacement equipment sets urgently.
- The President must request a dramatic increase in reconstruction aid for Iraq. Responsibility and accountability for reconstruction must be assigned to established agencies. The President must insist upon the completion of reconstruction projects. The President should also request a dramatic increase in Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP) funds.
- The President must request a substantial increase in ground forces end-strength. This increase is vital to sustaining the morale of the combat forces by ensuring that relief is on the way. The President must issue a personal call for young Americans to volunteer to fight in the decisive conflict of this generation.
- The President and his representatives in Iraq must forge unity of effort with the Iraqi Government.

Other courses of action have been proposed. All will fail.

- Withdraw immediately. This approach will lead to immediate defeat. The Iraqi Security Forces are entirely dependent upon American support to survive and function. If U.S. forces withdraw now, the Iraqi forces will collapse. Iraq will descend into total civil war that will rapidly spread throughout the Middle East.
- Engage Iraq's neighbors. This approach will fail. The basic causes of violence and sources of manpower and resources for the warring sides come from within Iraq. Iraq's neighbors are encouraging the violence, but they cannot stop it.
- Increase embedded trainers dramatically. This approach cannot succeed rapidly enough to prevent defeat. Removing U.S. forces from patrolling neighborhoods to embed them as trainers will lead to an immediate rise in violence. This rise in violence will destroy America's remaining will to fight and escalate the cycle of sectarian violence in Iraq beyond anything an Iraqi Army could bring under control.

Failure in Iraq today will require far greater sacrifices tomorrow in far more desperate circumstances.

Committing to victory now will demonstrate America's strength to our friends and enemies around the world.

INTRODUCTION

American forces in Iraq today are engaged in the pivotal struggle of our age. If the United States allows Iraq to slide into full-scale civil war, characterized by the collapse of the central government and the widespread mobilization of the population in internal conflict, the consequences will be epochal. Internal strife in Iraq has already generated a large displaced population within the country and significant refugee flows into neighboring lands. Those neighbors, both Sunni and Shia, have already made clear their determination to enter Iraq and its struggles if America withdraws and the conflict escalates into greater sectarian violence or civil war. Iraq's diverse neighbors, however, have opposing interests in how the conflict is settled. Consequently, failure in Iraq now will likely lead to regional war, destabilizing important states in the Middle East and creating a fertile ground for terrorism.

Success in Iraq, on the other hand, would transform the international situation. Success will give the United States critical leverage against Iran, which is now positioning itself to become the regional hegemon after our anticipated defeat. It will strengthen America's position around the world, where our inability to contain conflict in Iraq is badly tarnishing our stature. And success will convert a violent, chaotic region in the heart of the Middle East and on the front line of the Sunni-Shiite divide into a secure state able to support peace within its borders and throughout the region. There can be no question that victory in Iraq is worth considerable American effort or that defeat would be catastrophic.

Some now argue that victory is beyond our grasp. America cannot (or should not) involve itself in civil, sectarian conflicts, they say, and the troops required to control such conflicts are larger than the U.S. military could possibly deploy. Neither of

these arguments is valid. The United States has faced ethnosectarian conflict on at least five occasions in the past 15 years. In Somalia, Afghanistan, and Rwanda, successive American administrations allowed the conflicts to continue without making any serious attempts to control or contain them. The results have been disastrous. Inaction in Afghanistan in the 1990s led to the rise of the Taliban and its support for Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda—and therefore indirectly to the 9/11 attacks. Inaction, indeed humiliation, in Somalia led to a larger civil war in which radical Islamists took control of most of the country by the end of 2006. In late December, the conflict took a new turn as Ethiopian troops invaded Somalia in support of the internationally recognized transitional government. A civil war has become a regional war, as civil wars often do. In Rwanda, civil war and genocide also spread, involving Congo and, indeed, much of sub-Saharan Africa in widespread conflict and death. One clear lesson of post-cold-war conflicts is that ignoring civil wars is dangerous and can generate grave, unintended consequences for America's future security.

The United States has recently intervened, along with its allies, to control ethnically and religiously motivated civil wars on two occasions, however, in 1995 in Bosnia and in 1999 in Kosovo. Both efforts were successful in ending the violence and creating the preconditions for peace and political and economic development. The parallels are, of course, imperfect; much of the ethnic cleansing had already been accomplished in both areas before the United States intervened with armed force. In the Balkans, however, the levels of violence and death as a proportion of the population were much higher than they have been in Iraq. Additionally, the armed forces of the states neighboring Bosnia and Kosovo were much more directly involved in the struggle than those of Iraq's neighbors. Above all, the introduction of U.S. and European forces in strength in Bosnia and Kosovo has ended the killing and prevented that conflict from spreading throughout the region, as it threatened to do in the 1990s. It is possible to contain ethnosectarian civil wars, but only by ending them.

The United States has the military power necessary to control the violence in Iraq. The main purpose of the report that follows is to consider in detail what amount of armed force would be needed to bring the sectarian violence in Baghdad down to levels that would permit economic and political development and real national reconciliation. Before turning to that consideration, however, we should reflect on the fact that the United States between 2001 and 2006 has committed only a small proportion of its total national strength to this struggle. There are more than 1 million soldiers in the Active and Reserve ground forces, and only 140,000 of them are in Iraq at the moment. Many others are engaged in vital tasks in the United States and elsewhere from which they could not easily be moved, and soldiers and marines are not interchangeable beans. If this war were the vital national priority that it should be, however, the United States could commit many more soldiers to the fight. This report will address in greater detail some of the ways of making more forces available for this struggle.

The United States could also devote a significantly higher proportion of its national wealth to this problem in two ways. First, the President has finally called for a significant increase in the size of the ground forces—the warriors who are actually shouldering much of the burden in this conflict. The United States can and should sustain larger ground forces than it now has, both to support operations in Iraq and to be prepared for likely contingencies elsewhere. Five years into the global war on terror, the Bush administration has recognized this urgent need and begun to address it.

Second, the United States can and must devote significantly more resources to helping reconstruction and economic development in Iraq. The American GDP is over $13 trillion; Iraq's is about $100 billion. America's ability to improve the daily lives of Iraqis is very great, even at levels of expenditure that would barely affect the U.S. economy. Effective reconstruction and economic development are essential components of any counterinsurgency campaign and are urgently needed in Iraq. This report will consider how to improve some aspects of these necessary programs, which will be considered in more detail in subsequent phases of this project.

But reconstruction, economic development, national reconciliation, political development, and many other essential elements of the solution to Iraq's problems are all unattainable in the current security environment. Violence in Iraq has risen every year since 2003. Last year was the bloodiest on record, despite significant military operations aimed at reducing the violence in Baghdad. The bombing of the Golden Mosque of Samarra in February 2006 accelerated the sectarian conflict dramatically, and the fighting has moved beyond insurgents and organized militias to neighborhood watch groups engaging in their own local violence. This development is ominous because it signals that significant portions of the Iraqi population have

begun to mobilize for full-scale civil war. In this violent context, when so many Iraqi individuals and families must worry about their physical survival on a daily basis, American proposals that rely on diplomatic, political, and economic efforts to resolve the crisis are doomed to failure. Such efforts will not succeed until Iraq's population is secure from rampant violence. Establishing security in Baghdad, and then in the violent regions that surround it, must become the top priority of the American military presence in Iraq today. Securing Baghdad to bring the violence in Iraq's capital under control must be the centerpiece of a military operation that should be launched as rapidly as possible. Effective reconstruction and the building of Iraqi governing institutions will accompany and follow this military operation. Without such an operation, America's defeat in Iraq appears imminent, regardless of any other efforts the United States might undertake. The remainder of this report will consider the shape and requirements of such an operation, the likely enemy responses, and the ways of overcoming them.

SECURING THE POPULATION

The recently released military doctrinal manual on counterinsurgency operations declares, "The cornerstone of any [counterinsurgency] effort is establishing security for the civilian populace. Without a secure environment, no permanent reforms can be implemented and disorder spreads." This statement encapsulates the wisdom of generations of counterinsurgent theorists and practitioners. The importance of establishing security is manifold. First, people who are constantly in fear for their lives and for their loved ones do not participate in political, economic, or social processes in a normal way. The fear of violence and death distorts everything they do, think, and feel, and it often changes how they interact even with neighbors and friends. When violence reaches a level at which most people feel themselves to be in danger, as it has in many areas of Baghdad and Anbar, then political processes largely cease to function.

It is not usually possible to use those collapsing processes to redress or control the violence, moreover. In Iraq, as in many other insurgencies, rebel groups take up arms in part to gain leverage that the political process would not otherwise give them. The Sunni Arab rejectionists in Iraq have preferred violence to democracy from the outset because they know that they will not control a truly democratic Iraq. They have, therefore, hoped to use violence and its threat to force the Shiite majority to give them a much greater say in governing Iraq than their proportion in the population would attain. As long as they believe that violence is providing them with political leverage, they will continue to prefer violence to dialogue. Encouraging the Shiite government to negotiate with them without first containing the violence only reinforces the Sunni Arab rejectionists' belief in the efficacy of violence to advance their cause.

Ongoing violence within a state, finally saps the legitimacy of that state's government in the eyes of its citizens. As the U.S. military's counterinsurgency manual explains, the first indicator of a government's legitimacy is "the ability to provide security for the population (including protection from internal and external threats)." Providing security for its people is the core mission of any state. Continual violence and death eliminate the people's support for the government, leading to an increase in violence as individuals and groups undertake to protect and avenge themselves independently of state structures, legal institutions, or government sanction. Allowing disorder to persist over the long term is extremely hazardous to the health of any government. And America's objective in Iraq is creating a secure and sovereign national government elected by the Iraqi people.

The U.S. Government has not given priority to providing security to the Iraqi population from the outset of the war, however. The inadequacy of coalition forces at the end of major combat operations to maintain order is well-known and well-documented now. It is less well-known that American forces continued to underemphasize the importance of establishing and maintaining security even after the military command and the administration recognized that insurgency and low-grade civil war were erupting in Iraq. America's commanders in Iraq, notably Generals John Abizaid, commander of U.S. Central Command since mid-2003, and George Casey, commander of Multi-National Forces–Iraq (MNF–I) since mid-2004, have instead emphasized the need for Iraqis to solve their own security problems. The leading U.S. commanders have, therefore, prioritized using U.S. troops to establish and train Iraqi Security Forces. Indeed, American military commanders have never pursued the defeat of the enemy even after it became obvious that Iraqi forces lacked the ability to do so. As a result, the United States has ceded the initiative to the enemies of the United States and the Iraqi Government and permitted the steady deterioration of the security situation.

The basis of the Abizaid-Casey strategy is twofold: American forces in Iraq are an irritant and generate insurgents who want to drive us out of their country, and the Iraqis must be able to create and maintain their own stability lest they become permanently dependent on our military presence. Both of these arguments contain elements of truth, but realities in Iraq are much more complex.

The coalition presence in Iraq is an irritant in many areas, and it has generated a number of insurgents particularly among former Baathists, al-Qaeda and its affiliates, and Sunni Arab rejectionists. But this argument is less helpful in evaluating courses of action than is commonly supposed. U.S. forces in Iraq currently maintain a very light footprint—140,000 troops in a country of 25 million people. Most Iraqis surveyed report that they rarely if ever see American forces. There is no reason to imagine, moreover, that it matters to the insurgency whether there are 100,000, 140,000, or 200,000 Americans in Iraq.

Insurgent rhetoric does not count our soldiers; rather, it denounces the presence of any American troops on Iraqi soil. Osama bin Laden launched the 9/11 attacks in part because of a far lighter American presence in Saudi Arabia—a presence similar to what almost every plan for withdrawal from Iraq proposes to maintain in the country or the region for years to come. Increases on the scale proposed in this report are extraordinarily unlikely to lead to any significant increase in the "irritation" caused by our presence, particularly in the most vivid manifestation of that "irritation," which is the propaganda of our enemies. We should remember that our enemies in Iraq try to shift blame for their own mass murder attacks against innocent civilians to the coalition forces that are assisting the Iraqi Government. The problem in Iraq is not so much that coalition forces are perceived as occupiers, but rather that coalition forces are occupiers who have not made good on their primary responsibility—securing the population.

The argument that Iraqis must be able to maintain their own security is also valid but incomplete. American forces can clearly leave Iraq, successfully, only when there is an Iraqi Government in place that controls its own forces and maintains the safety of its people. Training Iraqi Security Forces, both the Iraqi Army and police forces of various types, is clearly an essential precondition for the ultimate withdrawal of U.S. troops. It is not true, however, that the United States should allow the violence in Iraq to continue until the Iraqi Security Forces can bring it under control on their own or even with our support.

In the first place, there is a world of difference between training security forces that can maintain a peace that has already been established and training those capable of conducting the complex and large-scale counterinsurgency operations that the situation now demands. The coalition and the Iraqi Government have been placing nascent Iraqi units and their soldiers in extremely difficult and dangerous situations that require sophisticated command structures, excellent equipment, organization, superior leadership, and exceptional individual discipline. By focusing on preparing the Iraqis to do everything, the U.S. military command has set the bar too high. There are tasks in Iraq, such as clearing enemies out of high-violence neighborhoods and securing their populations, that only American forces will be able to do for some time. These tasks will not have to be repeated if they are done properly the first time. As new, properly trained Iraqi units become available, they will be more capable of holding areas that have already been cleared and secured than of clearing and securing those areas themselves.

In the second place, the emphasis on training Iraqi forces to establish security, themselves, ignores the transition from insurgency to nascent civil war now going on in Iraq. Preparing a largely Shiite Iraqi Army to suppress a Sunni Arab insurgency always posed a number of daunting challenges—many Shia do not want to march into Sunni lands to fight; the presence of Shia military units inflames Sunni Arab sentiment as much or more than the presence of American forces; and Shia military units are much more open both to corruption and to committing atrocities that stoke the insurgency than are coalition forces.

But the United States cannot rely on a primarily Shiite army to bring order to a land torn by sectarian strife because that policy is unlikely to end violence in a way that permits national reconciliation. Shiite military units cannot be seen as honest brokers in mixed Sunni-Shia neighborhoods. As the violence continues to rise, moreover, the members of the army—all of whom belong to one sect or another—come under increasing pressure to desert, commit atrocities, or otherwise undermine efforts at national reconciliation. Something similar happened to the large and professional Yugoslav Army in the early 1990s. Rather than keeping the fragmenting state together, the army itself fragmented, sending weapons and experienced soldiers to the various warring sides and fueling the civil war. If no external force works to reduce the violence while the Iraqi Army is training, it is virtually

certain that the army will sooner or later break under the sectarian strain—and with it will go Iraq's only hope for peace in this generation.

Indeed, improved security is a precondition for rebalancing the demographic composition of security forces, which is, in turn, a prerequisite for preventing their involvement in sectarian or civil war and establishing their legitimacy with the Iraqi population. The lack of Sunni representation in security forces stems mainly from the enemy's ability to hold hostage the families of potential recruits. Recent efforts to reconstitute the police and recruit soldiers in predominantly Sunni areas such as Tall Afar and Ramadi demonstrate that improved security leads to more representative and legitimate security forces.

The right strategy is to strike a balance among three concerns rather than between two: The United States should be sensitive to the danger of flooding Iraq with too many coalition soldiers and of making the Iraqis too dependent on the coalition to do everything, but America must balance those fears against the imminent danger of allowing the security situation to collapse completely.

The strategy proposed in this plan attempts to redress the imbalance in the United States approach so far. This plan proposes a moderate increase in American troop levels, but one far below anything likely to provoke a massive reaction by the Iraqi people. The plan proposes to continue training Iraqi troops, placing them either in the lead or in partnership with American units wherever possible. The plan encourages such partnership efforts as a path to transferring control of Iraq's security to well-prepared Iraqi forces directed by its autonomous government, albeit on a more realistic timeline than the ones currently under discussion. Above all, the plan proposes to redress MNF–I's continual failure to prioritize securing the Iraqi people.

MNF–I's strategy so far has focused on increasing Iraqi capabilities, but the violence continues to rise faster than those capabilities. Nascent Iraqi forces are not prepared to operate effectively in areas where the enemy has succeeded in intimidating and coercing the population or has established a strong defensive capability. Coalition forces are needed to set conditions for the development of ISF as well as the introduction of ISF into contentious areas. The correct approach, embodied in the plan proposed below, works both to increase Iraqi capabilities and to decrease the violence to a level the Iraqis themselves can control. This strategy is the only one that can succeed in creating a secure, autonomous, and democratic Iraq free of sectarian violence, insurgency, and civil war.

THE CHALLENGE

The challenge facing the United States in Iraq comes primarily from a series of enemies who are actively trying to stoke violence and create chaos to destroy the current political and social order. Some people examining Iraq have become so frustrated and confused by the complexity of this challenge that they prefer to throw up their hands rather than attempt to cope with it. The challenge is, nevertheless, comprehensible. To understand it, one must first consider the geography and demography of the capital region and then describe the enemy in some detail.

Geography and Demography

Baghdad is the center of gravity of the conflict in Iraq at this moment. Insurgents on all sides have declared that they intend to win or die there. It is the capital and center of Iraqi Government. It is the base of American power and influence in the country. It is the largest and most populous city in Iraq. It is home to one of Iraq's largest Shiite communities, but also to many mixed Sunni and Shiite communities. Widely publicized American efforts to gain control of the violence in Baghdad in Operation Together Forward (conducted in two phases in 2006) connected American success in Iraq overall to success in Baghdad. For good or ill, the pivotal struggle for Iraq is occurring in its capital.

Baghdad is a city of some 6 million people that straddles the Tigris River. Northeast of the Army Canal that divides the eastern side of the city lies Sadr City, a Shiite slum of more than 2 million people. Ministries and government buildings line the Tigris on either side. On the western bank lies the Green Zone, an area secured by American military forces that houses U.S. military and political headquarters, critical Iraqi governmental institutions, and bases for some American soldiers. On the western edge of the city is Baghdad International Airport (BIAP), home of Camp Victory, one of the largest U.S. bases in the country. The road from BIAP to the Green Zone is known as "Route Irish," which has gained notoriety for being one of the most dangerous stretches of road in Iraq.

Baghdad is a mixed city on many levels. Most of Baghdad's Shiite population live in and around Sadr City and its two satellite neighborhoods of Shaab and Ur; many of the Sunnis live on the western side of the city. But many neighborhoods and dis-

tricts are themselves mixed, especially those between BIAP and the Green Zone and immediately around the Green Zone on both sides of the river. Rising sectarian violence is changing this demographic pattern, however, and the mixed neighborhoods are increasingly being "cleansed" and becoming more homogeneous.

Neither the challenges in Iraq nor the solutions even to Baghdad's problems are contained entirely in Baghdad, however. Anbar province, the large, mostly desert area to the west of Baghdad, contains the core of the Sunni Arab rejectionist insurgency. U.S. and Iraqi forces fight insurgents for control of Anbar's largest cities, Ramadi and Fallujah, while Marines work to root out al-Qaeda and other insurgent and terrorist groups throughout the vast province. Insurgents move from Anbar into Baghdad and back again, linking these two problematic areas inextricably. Even the insurgents who regularly operate in Baghdad have bases outside of the city, especially in the villages near Taji to the north and Iskandariyah to the south. These two settlement belts provide a great deal of support to the enemy operating in the capital. Diyala province, which lies to the north and east of Baghdad, is another important insurgent base. The Diyala River flows through its province's capital city of Baquba and, finally, into the Tigris River just south of Baghdad. Sunni rejectionists and al-Qaeda operatives follow the Diyala River toward Baghdad and then, leaving its course, launch strikes into the heart of Sadr City. Baghdad is, therefore, a nexus of violence drawn from a number of regions outside the city. Baghdad also contains its own internal violent dynamic into which these outside forces flow.

The Enemy

There is violence in Iraq today because it suits certain groups and individuals to disrupt the development of normal political and economic life in that country through intimidation, terrorism, and killing. Violence on this scale is not historically normal to Iraq (or virtually any other country, for that matter), and it is not a force of nature. Too often violent events in Iraq are reported in the passive voice, as though no agent in particular caused them. This sense of directionless, almost purposeless violence is one of the major factors hindering the intelligent consideration of America's options in this conflict. Before entering into the consideration of one such option, therefore, we must first consider the enemies of peace and order in Iraq. These can be broken into six main groups: Three Sunni Arab and three Shiite.

Sunni Arab Insurgent Groups. Sunni Arab violence in Iraq has gone through three main phases. Even before coalition forces invaded in March 2003, Saddam Hussein had prepared to sustain a guerrilla war if he was attacked. He formed the Fedayeen Saddam, fighters trained and motivated to conduct irregular warfare, and sprinkled them throughout Iraq (most likely to suppress the Shiite insurgency he expected to follow an American withdrawal, as had happened after the 1991 invasion). When major combat operations ended without securing much of the country, these fighters joined thousands of soldiers and officers of the defeated conventional army in an inchoate resistance. This resistance was networked but not centrally directed, although Saddam and his sons, Uday and Qusay, tried to organize it when they were in hiding. When coalition forces killed Uday and Qusay in Mosul in July 2003 and captured Saddam in December 2003 near Tikrit, the Baathist resistance was weakened but not destroyed. It continues to play an important part in generating anticoalition violence, especially in Anbar and Baghdad.

At the turn of 2004, however, a new force was emerging within the Sunni Arab resistance—terrorist organizations like al-Qaeda in Iraq (run by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi until his death in June 2006 and now by Abu Ayyub al-Masri, also known as Abu Hamza al-Muhajer) and Ansar al-Sunna. Al-Qaeda in Iraq focused its efforts on more spectacularly violent and symbolic attacks, rather than conducting the smaller attacks upon coalition troops using the improvised explosive devices (IEDs) favored by the Baathists. Al-Qaeda in Iraq also favored attacking Iraqi civilians and government leaders. Zarqawi struck Iraqis who were cooperating with the government, but also attacked the Shiite community aggressively with the avowed aim of provoking a Sunni-Shia civil war. His efforts culminated with the destruction of the Golden Mosque of Samarra in February 2006, which incited a dramatic increase in the level of Sunni-Shia violence in Iraq, an increase that has continued even after his death.

The increase in sectarian violence has spawned yet another type of Sunni Arab group—vigilantes who organize as neighborhood defense militias in Baghdad ostensibly to protect their areas from Shiite attacks. These groups have formed primarily because American forces have chosen not to provide security to the population and Iraqis have been unable to do so; while Shiite militias (which this report will consider presently) have ruthlessly targeted Sunni Arab civilians. These groups tend to be self-organizing and to have more limited goals, although some become tied to

al-Qaeda in Iraq, Ansar al-Sunna, Baathists, or other larger organizations. The rise of these vigilante groups is in some respects the most disturbing phenomenon in Iraq. It indicates a dramatic increase in popular participation in the struggle and is a step on the road to the mobilization of the Iraqi population for full-scale civil war. This vigilante violence is also more inchoate and less subject to either negotiation or political control. It is an extremely dangerous development that must be checked as rapidly as possible.

The goals of these various groups are divergent but in some respects complementary. The Baathists initially sought the restoration of Saddam Hussein or one of their leaders to power. The trial and execution of Saddam have largely eliminated that goal, but the Baathist movement has resurrected itself as an Iraqi nationalist front aimed at ridding Iraq of foreign "occupying" forces and restoring the rule of the Sunni Arabs in some form. Baathists are also posing as defenders of local populations against Shiite depredations. The absence of security in Sunni neighborhoods makes this enemy's claim credible to local populations and enables Baathists to recruit more insurgents to their cause.

The ideology of al-Qaeda in Iraq and affiliated groups complements that of the Baathists in some respects, but not in others. These various groups agree that they want coalition forces out of Iraq and the Sunni Arabs in control of the country. But whereas the Baathists pursue a more secularist and nationalist agenda, the aim of al-Qaeda in Iraq is to establish Taliban-style sharia government in Iraq. They hope then to use Iraq as a base from which to expand their theocracy to other Muslim states. Al-Qaeda in Iraq has been working tirelessly since early 2004 to incite sectarian violence in the belief that it would energize the Sunni community in Iraq and provide the terrorists with the recruits they need to triumph there and elsewhere in the Muslim world. To this end, they have focused on mass attacks against civilians and major landmarks such as the Golden Mosque, while the Baathists have focused much more heavily on coalition and Iraqi military targets. The lines between these two groups are blurring, however, as the first generation of fighters is being killed off and replaced by Sunni nationalists with stronger Islamist leanings. It is becoming in some ways more difficult rather than less to contemplate splitting these two groups apart.

The aims of Sunni vigilante groups are more disparate and less clear. Most were formed to protect local Sunni populations from Shiite attacks, and that security function remains the core of their identity. Some have taken advantage of opportunities to drive Shiites out of their neighborhoods or nearby areas, contributing to the sectarian cleansing in Baghdad. Some are drawn to the Baathist or terrorist ideologies. These groups conduct small-scale attacks and are not centralized or highly coordinated.

The Sunni Arab insurgent groups cooperate relatively well despite disagreements about their ultimate aims. This cooperation results mainly from their shared sense that the Sunni community is under attack and fighting for its survival. The secular Baathists, Islamist terrorists, and vigilante groups could not form a coherent political program and would not try to do so. Baathists and Islamists cooperate in attacking coalition targets, but even within the Islamist community there is growing disagreement about the desirability or morality of attacking Iraqi civilians—al-Qaeda in Iraq continues to pursue this approach, but Ansar al-Sunna rejects it. Vigilante groups attack Shiite civilians in the name of self-defense because of the lack of security in and around their communities. As long as the Sunni Arabs feel besieged and beleaguered, attempts to splinter these groups politically are unlikely to be successful despite the differences in their aims and targeting preferences. All of them draw great strength and their main recruiting tools from the violence in Iraq and the growing sectarian struggle. They are not likely to abandon their own use of force as long as that violence remains at a high enough level to justify their actions as attempts to defend the Sunni Arab community from attack while they further their own ideological objectives.

Shiite Insurgent Groups. The Shiite political community in Iraq is broken into a number of significant groups and parties, but Shiite insurgents generally fall into one of three groups. The Jaysh al-Mahdi (Mahdi Army) is nominally under the control of renegade cleric Moqtada al-Sadr. This group took to the streets in large numbers in 2004, especially in its strongholds of Najaf and Karbala, from which it was cleared by a large scale yet careful coalition military operation. The Badr Corps is the military arm of the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), of which Abdul Aziz al-Hakim is the leader. This group was formed and supported by Iran in the 1980s and continues to maintain close ties to Tehran, although the degree of Iran's control of SCIRI and the Badr Corps is unclear. The third group of Shiite fighters is the vigilantes who have sprung up in Sadr City and Shiite and

mixed neighborhoods in Baghdad, much as the Sunni vigilante groups have grown in this period of chaos.

The Badr Corps and the Jaysh al-Mahdi share some goals and concerns, but not others. They both seek to establish Shiite sharia law in Iraq and to ensure Shiite domination of the country. They are both concerned about Sunni rejectionism and the Sunni insurgency, which has provided the principal justification for their efforts to recruit and maintain their militias. Al-Qaeda in Iraq's relentless attacks on Shiite civilians have powerfully supported their justification and aided their recruiting.

Hakim and Sadr also agree in principle that the coalition forces should withdraw rapidly, but they do not agree on the importance of this objective or the need to take action to secure it. Sadr has long identified the U.S. presence as an intolerable violation of Iraq's sovereignty, and his forces have often attacked coalition forces in an effort to force them to withdraw. Hakim and SCIRI have taken a much more moderate approach. They understand that the aims of coalition policy in Iraq would leave the Shiites in control of the country, and they are more tolerant of the presence of coalition forces that keep the Sunni insurgency under control. They have been far less aggressive about attacking coalition forces. Both groups have, however, consistently supported the killing and torture of Sunni Arabs to cleanse areas and neighborhoods and create solid blocks of Shiite habitation.

The Jaysh al-Mahdi and the Badr Corps will be the main military rivals for power in a post-U.S. Iraq. Both observed the destruction of Sadr's militia in 2004 and are reluctant to repeat that experience because of the need to maintain their military force for use against one another in the expected battle for dominance after the United States leaves. This rivalry, which is manifested on the political as well as the military plane, hinders the cooperation of these two groups, which are also increasingly separate geographically: The Jaysh al-Mahdi is based in Sadr City, whereas the main strength of the Badr Corps is in the southern part of Iraq.

The political aims, rivalries, and maneuverings of the Jaysh al-Mahdi and the Badr Corps are far removed from the aims of most of the Shiite vigilante groups operating in Baghdad. Like their Sunni counterparts, these groups are mainly concerned with defending their neighborhoods against Sunni (especially al-Qaeda in Iraq) attacks. They also opportunistically engage in sectarian cleansing and "reprisal" attacks (often the same thing). The strength and organization of the Jaysh al-Mahdi and the Badr Corps makes it easier for Shiite vigilante groups to cohere. Yet, as with all vigilante groups, negotiation and political accommodation with local fighters is unlikely to be productive by itself because they are responding to localized violence.

Crime. It is important to understand that a significant part of the violence in Iraq is not orchestrated by any political group at all, but is simply the crime and gang violence that flourishes in the absence of order and government control. This problem is not restricted to Baghdad or Anbar, moreover. The British raid against the aptly named "serious crimes unit" in Basra in December 2006 underlines the breadth of the difficulty. Many individuals and groups throughout Iraq have taken advantage of the government's weakness to organize kidnapping rings, smuggling rings, and other criminal enterprises. With much of the Iraqi police force either engaged in sectarian violence or criminality, or else devoted to the counterinsurgency effort, rule of law in Iraq is extremely weak. Both insurgents and criminals have deeply infiltrated the police and partially infiltrated the army, underscoring in a different way the impossibility of handing responsibility for security and maintaining the rule of law to either organization very rapidly.

Criminal activity is not merely a problem for civil society in Iraq, however. It also supports the insurgency. A significant portion of the insurgency's financial resources comes from criminal activities of one sort or another—including a variety of scams that divert revenue from the oil industry into insurgent coffers. Insurgents and criminals can also hide behind one another, confusing efforts to identify the agent behind particular murders and other sorts of attacks. Criminality is an important issue for coalition forces in Iraq that must be addressed in order to improve the overall security and political situations.

THE PLAN

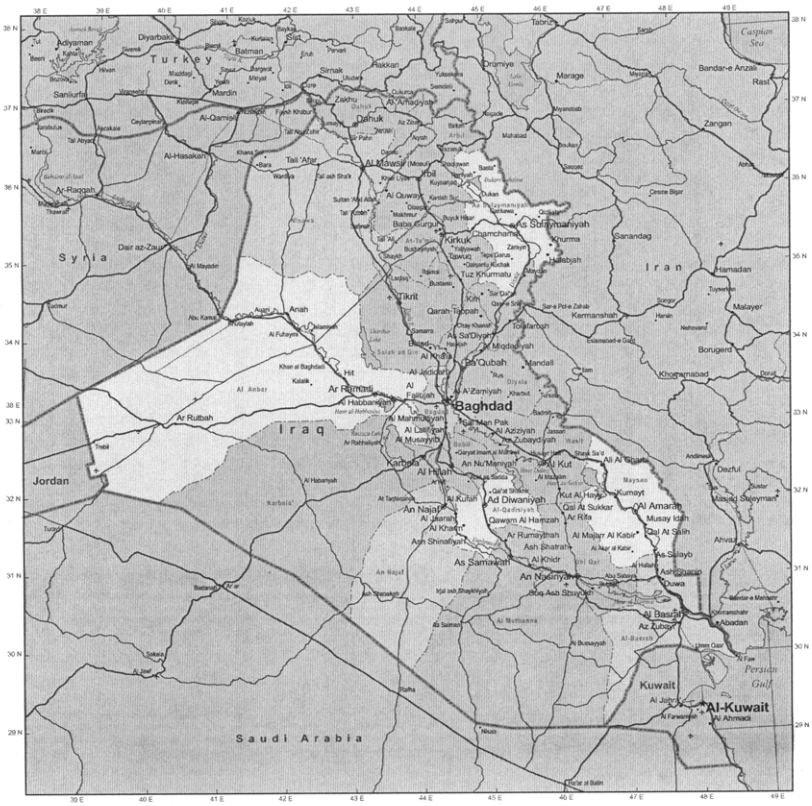
No military operation by itself can resolve Iraq's problems. Success in Iraq can only emerge when political, economic, diplomatic, and reconciliation initiatives resolve underlying tensions and grievances and give the Iraqi people reason to accept the legitimacy of their government. The security situation in Iraq and particularly Baghdad is so grave, however, that political, economic, diplomatic, and reconciliation initiatives will fail unless a well-conceived and properly supported military operation secures the population first and quickly. The purpose of this operation is to

reduce sectarian violence to levels low enough to permit political and economic development, reconciliation, and the recruitment and training of an Iraqi Army and police force with an appropriate regional and sectarian balance. This report focuses on military operations in and around Baghdad because the security situation there is deteriorating quickly and requires the urgent attention of the United States Armed Forces. Subsequent working groups and reports will consider initiatives vital to allowing the Iraqis to take control of their country, armed forces, and security; political developments; and regional issues. The emphasis on military operations in this first phase of this project does not indicate any denigration of the importance of the nonmilitary elements of a solution to the crisis in Iraq.

Why Baghdad?

From the standpoint of security and violence, Iraq consists of three zones. The Kurdish provinces to the north are extremely secure—violence is rare and economic development (fueled by the period of de facto autonomy in the 1990s) is well underway. Most of the Shiite provinces to the south of Baghdad are very secure, although Basra still faces a worrisome amount of violence and criminality. The vast majority of attacks occur in the four provinces of Anbar, Baghdad, Salaheddin, and Diyala, with Ninawa a more distant fifth. Polling data partially reflect this distribution of attacks: Iraqis in the Shiite south and Kurdish north overwhelmingly feel safe in their neighborhoods, while those in the five violent provinces feel extremely unsafe.

FIGURE 1
IRAQ, SHOWING PROVINCES



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Of these provinces, Anbar, Baghdad, and Diyala are currently of greatest concern. Salaheddin, which contains Saddam Hussein's hometown near Tikrit as well as

Samarra, has been the scene of a large number of attacks, but it contains relatively few large concentrated settlements and is relatively farther from Baghdad. Ninawa is worrisome because it contains Mosul, one of Iraq's largest mixed cities, but the clear-and-hold operation that began in Tall Afar in September 2005 has reduced the violence in this province greatly. Anbar has been a hotbed of the insurgency almost from its outset, and two of its major cities, Fallujah and Ramadi, have been centers of the fight against Sunni Arab rejectionists since early 2004. Anbar serves as a base of Sunni fighters who move into and attack targets in Baghdad. Diyala has also become a critical battleground, especially the city of Baquba, where Zarqawi was found and killed in June 2006. It is a mixed province in which considerable sectarian cleansing and displacement have occurred; and it is close enough to Baghdad that fighters on both sides commute between the two cities. Diyala province is also becoming a significant al-Qaeda base from which the enemy launches attacks against Shiites in Sadr City, Baghdad.

Before the effects of the Samarra mosque bombing had become clear, it might have been reasonable to consider operations along the Euphrates, Tigris, and Diyala River valleys (that is, in Anbar, Ninawa, Salaheddin, and Diyala provinces), postponing the more difficult task of clearing and holding Baghdad. The rise of sectarian violence within the capital and the repeated declarations of all sides that Baghdad is the key to victory or defeat have removed this alternative option. The violence in the central areas of Iraq is now so high that few reporters venture far from the Green Zone. Consequently, events within a relatively small area of the capital now disproportionately shape the world's perceptions of the situation in the country. It is necessary to focus on securing these areas in order to retain the American people's support for the war and increase international support. More importantly, it is necessary to prevent the sectarian cleansing in the heart of Baghdad from spreading further through the rest of Iraq. The populations of other mixed cities, such as Mosul, Kirkuk, and Tall Afar, are watching how the coalition forces and Iraqi Government respond to sectarian violence in Baghdad. If Baghdad is truly cleansed and divided, then similar sectarian violence will follow in these other mixed cities. The result will be a bloody civil war that permanently destroys any concept of Iraq as a mixed state. For good or for ill, the decisive struggle in this war will be played out in Iraq's capital.

Any plan for bringing security to Iraq must therefore address Baghdad first of all, but it cannot entirely neglect Anbar and Diyala provinces, which are tied so tightly to the challenges of Baghdad. This report, therefore, identifies Baghdad as the main effort to which all necessary resources should be devoted, and it identifies operations in Anbar and possibly Diyala as supporting efforts—secondary operations that help to accomplish the main effort but receive just enough force to succeed without compromising the main effort.

Forces Required

Having identified Baghdad as the main effort, we can then consider the problem of securing that city in more detail. There is considerable theory and historical evidence about the numbers of troops required to provide security to a given population in a counterinsurgency. The military's counterinsurgency manual concludes that a ratio of one soldier for every 40 or 50 inhabitants provides a good rule of thumb for such calculations. COL H.R. McMaster and the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment used a ratio of about 1 soldier per every 40 inhabitants to secure Tall Afar in 2005. American soldiers and marines in Ramadi have made considerable progress in securing that city, although much lower force ratios have slowed and limited that progress. MG Peter Chiarelli put down the Sadrist uprising in Sadr City in mid-2004, on the other hand, with one division (under 20,000 soldiers) in a population of over 2 million.

The population of Baghdad is around 6 million, which would require, in theory, around 150,000 counterinsurgents to maintain security. It is neither necessary nor wise to try to clear and hold the entire city all at once, however. The Jaysh al-Mahdi based in Sadr City has demonstrated its reluctance to engage in a full-scale conflict with American forces, ever since coalition forces defeated Moqtada al-Sadr and his army in Najaf in the summer of 2004. Rather, the Jaysh al-Mahdi now needs to preserve its fighters in order to maintain its strength against the Badr Corps in the struggle for control of post-coalition Iraq. Attempting to clear Sadr City at this moment would almost certainly force the Jaysh al-Mahdi, into precisely such a confrontation with American troops, however. It would also do enormous damage to Prime Minister Nouri Kamel al-Maliki's political base and would probably lead to the collapse of the Iraqi Government. Clearing Sadr City is both unwise and unnecessary at this time.

Many attacks against Sunni neighborhoods in Baghdad emanate from Sadr City. There are two ways to resolve that problem. The first is to attack Sadr City by targeting known militia bases and concentrations with discrete strikes. This option initially requires the fewest number of forces. But such operations would almost certainly provoke a massive political and military conflagration. They ultimately will demand high force concentrations and generate instability in the current Iraqi Government, as described above. This option is, therefore, extremely risky. It would be better, instead, to secure the Sunni and mixed Sunni-Shia neighborhoods by deploying American and Iraqi forces into them and protecting their inhabitants from all violent attacks coming from any area. This second approach also accords with sound counterinsurgency practice, which favors defensive strategies aimed at protecting the population over offensive strategies aimed at killing insurgents.

The first phase of this plan, therefore, excludes military operations within Sadr City and focuses on securing the Sunni and mixed Sunni-Shia neighborhoods around the Green Zone and between that area and Baghdad International Airport/Camp Victory. This approach establishes security among a population of perhaps 2 million people, which would require, according to historical norms, between 40,000 and 50,000 counterinsurgent troops. Generating proper force ratios to secure the population in these neighborhoods is much more feasible than generating the force ratios to confront the Jaysh al-Mahdi in Sadr City or to secure the entire population of Baghdad at once. Yet securing the population in these neighborhoods is likely to reduce levels of violence elsewhere in Baghdad.

The working group also calculated the forces required for this operation in another way. The area we have identified as being the "critical terrain" in Baghdad (because of its mixed ethnicity and its geographic centrality) consists of about 23 districts. Clearing and holding a city district in Baghdad requires an American force of about one battalion (approximately 600 soldiers organized into four companies of about 150 soldiers each). We have considerable evidence about what force levels are necessary for such operations because of recent and current operations in Baghdad. There is now about one battalion deployed in the district of Dora (the area south of the Karadah Peninsula just south of the Green Zone). Dora is a very dangerous neighborhood that is difficult to control, and the troops there are barely managing. Dora would benefit from reinforcements or from having the adjoining areas brought more securely under control. Many other neighborhoods that would be cleared under this proposal would require fewer troops because they are less violent and large; some might require more. On balance, current operations suggest that one battalion per district would provide a sufficient overall force level to bring the violence in these 23 districts under control.

There are three battalions in an Army Brigade Combat Team or BCT, which, together with all of its supportinng elements, numbers around 5,000 soldiers. Twenty-three districts would require eight BCTs (which would leave one battalion to spare as a Reserve), or around 40,000 soldiers. Since operations would be going on around the Green Zone and Camp Victory, it would be necessary to maintain additional forces to guard and garrison those areas, amounting to perhaps another BCT, for a total of nine (around 45,000 troops total).

Whether we calculate the forces necessary based on historical ratios or on units engaged in current operations, the results are very similar: We can reasonably expect that between 40,000 and 50,000 soldiers could establish and maintain security in the 23 critical Sunni and mixed districts in the center of Baghdad in the first phase of an operation aimed at ending violence in the city, securing its population, and securing Iraq.

Current and Proposed Deployments

The United States currently has approximately 140,000 troops in Iraq, including about 70,000 in 13 Army Brigade Combat Teams and two Marine Regimental Combat Teams (RCTs—the Marines slightly smaller equivalent of brigades). Of the remaining 70,000 soldiers, many are engaged in the enormous task of providing supplies to coalition soldiers and to the 134,000 soldiers in the Iraqi Army, who are almost entirely dependent on American logistics to survive and operate. A large number of American troops are engaged in securing the long lines of communication from Kuwait to Baghdad (600 miles) and from there to U.S. forward operating bases (FOBs) around the country. Around 6,000 soldiers are now involved in training Iraqi Army and police units as well. The BCTs and RCTs are the forces that would be used in clearing and holding Baghdad, so the rest of this report will focus on them, recognizing that the number of these units significantly underrepresents the total size of the American combat presence in Iraq.

Seven BCTs, the largest concentration of the BCTs and RCTs now in Iraq, operate in and around Baghdad. Five BCTs operate within the city itself (although they

mostly live on FOBs in the city's suburbs and drive to their areas of operations to conduct patrols). One BCT operates in the insurgent belts to the north around Taji and the remaining BCT operates in the belts to the south around Iskandariyah (the so-called Triangle of Death). Two Marine RCTs and one Army BCT operate in Anbar. Their bases are located in Ramadi, Fallujah, and Al Asad. The remaining five Army BCTs operate mostly to the north of Baghdad in Ninawa, Salaheddin, and Diyala provinces in cities like Mosul, Tikrit, Samarra, and Baquba.

An Army National Guard Brigade is stationed in a static defensive position in Kuwait guarding the enormous supply and training areas there. Recent news reports suggest that a brigade of the 82nd Airborne Division has been ordered to Kuwait as well, although the purpose of that deployment is not clear at the time that this report is being written. The BCT of the 82nd Airborne Division might be deployed to Iraq to engage in combat missions there in the near future; the National Guard brigade could not leave Kuwait without endangering the security of U.S. supply lines and bases.

The current deployment of U.S. forces in and around Baghdad, therefore, provides approximately four BCTs (12 battalions or about 20,000 troops in all) for conducting combat operations in the city. The equivalent of one BCT is required for base security. Such a force level is evidently inadequate for clearing and holding any sizable portion of Baghdad. The Army and Marine presence in Anbar is inadequate to maintain even the most basic security in that province. The situation in Diyala is almost as dire. Pulling troops from either province to reinforce operations in Baghdad would almost surely lead to the further collapse of those regions. Salaheddin is similarly problematic, while security in Ninawa is extremely precarious. Any attempt to concentrate forces in Baghdad by moving them from elsewhere in Iraq would precipitate greater violence in the outlying areas. Such violence would eventually move down the river valleys to Baghdad and undermine attempts to succeed in the capital, as occurred in 2004. This plan will, therefore, require a deployment of at least four Army Brigade Combat Teams (approximately 20,000 soldiers) into Baghdad from outside Iraq.

Because of the close relationship between the insurgency in Anbar and the violence in Baghdad, it would be desirable to address both areas at once. In reality, the United States simply cannot make available enough forces to bring Anbar under control at the same time as it tries to secure the critical neighborhoods of Baghdad. A deployment of additional troops into Baghdad will, nevertheless, both generate and suffer from spillover effects in Anbar. This very real risk calls for a preplanned response. This report, therefore, proposes to add two additional Marine RCTs to the two RCTs and one Army BCT that are already in Anbar. This force (five brigade-equivalents, or about 18,000 soldiers and marines) is too small to secure the major cities in Anbar, let alone the entire province. Five brigade-equivalents would, however, suffice to cover the roads from Anbar to Baghdad, intercept insurgents, and prevent the establishment of new rebel strongholds in the province. Such operations would properly support the main effort in Baghdad by controlling spillover effects.

The commander on the ground in Iraq could use the two additional RCTs designated for Anbar elsewhere, of course. It might prove more important to interdict movement between Diyala and Baghdad than to reinforce American troops now in Anbar. In the worst case, the commander could move these regiments into the capital if unexpectedly high violence erupted in Baghdad itself during the clear-and-hold operation there. By deploying these two additional RCTs into Iraq, the commander on the ground will gain the flexibility to respond to unforeseen difficulties or opportunities in and around Baghdad without having to accept any additional risk in outlying areas.

The Army Brigade in Anbar, finally, was initially deployed to Iraq in January 2006. By the time the recommended operations would begin, it will have been in Iraq for nearly 15 months. This plan, therefore, proposes to send a fresh Army BCT into Anbar to replace that unit, which has already had its tour extended. It would require a total deployment of five Army BCTs and two Marine RCTs in addition to the forces already in Iraq. In an emergency, of course, the commander in Iraq could keep the existing brigade in Anbar and use the brigade designated to replace it as a further Reserve for deployment in Baghdad or elsewhere. The plan, therefore, commits four additional BCTs into Baghdad, designates two RCTs for Anbar but makes them available elsewhere if necessary, and designates one BCT that could be used as a Reserve in an emergency.

Clearing and Holding

What actually happens on the ground determines whether this or any plan succeeds or fails. American forces have gained considerable expertise in clearing and holding operations in Iraq from their failures, such as the first Battle of Fallujah

in April 2004, and from their successes, such as operations in Tall Afar in September 2005. (The report discusses the general character and specific phases of clear-and-hold operations in several sections below.) Recent operations in Baghdad emphasize the skill with which U.S. troops can clear enemies from urban areas. In 2006, American forces in Baghdad conducted Operation Together Forward (OTF) in two phases: The first from June 14 to July 24, 2006; the second from August 1 through October 24, 2006. In both operations, the clear phase went well. Violence dropped in cleared neighborhoods and some economic activity resumed.

But the U.S. command committed inadequate combat power to hold operations, relying instead on Iraqi police and soldiers to maintain the security that joint U.S. and Iraqi patrols had established. The United States added two brigades (fewer than 10,000 troops) to support the first phase of OTF and one brigade (plus additional detachments coming to around 7,000 soldiers) to support the second. Because there were too few American troops, and because American commanders wished to rely heavily on Iraqi forces, U.S. troops did not remain in cleared neighborhoods either to defend them or to support and improve the Iraqi forces trying to maintain order there. The different Sunni and Shiite enemy groups made a point of surging into the cleared but undefended neighborhoods to demonstrate the futility of the operations, and they also attacked neighborhoods that were not being cleared by American and Iraqi troops. Violence overall in Baghdad soared.

The plan proposed in this report would use established practices for clearing neighborhoods, but would provide adequate American forces to hold them, in partnership with Iraqi forces. American units remain in neighborhoods to secure the population and to support and strengthen Iraqi forces until they are able to hold the area without coalition support. These undertakings are firmly in accord with recommended counterinsurgency doctrine.

Clearing operations generally proceed as follows. American troops partner with Iraqi troops before the operation. They plan the operation and train for it together. Since American and Iraqi units are already operating throughout Baghdad's neighborhoods, they gather intelligence in the targeted area prior to the operation. They determine the enemy's strength and disposition, how the enemy is organized and conducts operations, and so on. When the operation begins, joint U.S.-Iraqi teams isolate the district through checkpoints and other outposts, patrols, surveillance, and obstacles. American and Iraqi infantry then sweep through the district. They cordon off each house or apartment block and then knock on the door, asking to examine the inside. If they are granted permission, they enter politely and then examine every part of the structure for weapons caches and evidence of enemy activity. The Iraqi forces with them provide a vital cultural interface with the inhabitants both by communicating with them and by sensing irregularities. On the rare occasions when the occupants attempt to refuse permission to examine the house, Iraqi and U.S. soldiers enter by force and continue their search.

When every structure in the district (including every mosque) has been searched and all weapons caches and suspicious individuals have been removed, neither the American nor the Iraqi soldiers leave the neighborhood. Instead, they establish permanent positions in disused factories, houses, apartments, government buildings, and, if necessary, schools (although coalition forces prefer to avoid occupying schools because it sends a bad signal to the neighborhood). American and Iraqi teams man each position jointly. They allow traffic into the neighborhood to resume, although they continue to man joint outposts at critical intersections. They conduct regular joint foot and vehicle patrols throughout the neighborhood, maintaining contact with the local population and establishing trust. Over time, U.S. forces will assist Iraqis in developing comprehensive, sustainable human intelligence networks in the area.

The tactics described above are illustrative, not prescriptive. They are based on practices that American units have used in Iraq in the past. Commanders will apply techniques appropriate to the areas in which they are operating. Every such combined operation requires that American forces, Iraqi Army units, and Iraqi police formations all work toward a common goal and within a single command structure. Unity of effort is essential for success in this kind of endeavor.

According to military officers who have experience with clearing operations in Iraq, after 2 weeks of improved security and continued force presence, the local people typically begin providing the coalition forces in their neighborhoods with valuable tactical intelligence. As the enemy attempts to reinfiltrate the neighborhood, locals report some of them. Savvy Iraqi or even American soldiers note new faces and begin to ask questions. When bombs or IEDs go off, locals reveal the perpetrators. Before long, they begin to warn coalition troops when LEDs have been placed. At that point, violence begins to drop significantly and economic and political progress can begin.

There is nothing novel about this approach to counterinsurgency. It has been practiced in some form in almost every successful counterinsurgent operation. It was successful on a local level in Vietnam in the form of the Combined Action Platoon (CAP) program, which many observers felt should have been extended to more of that country. It has worked in Tall Afar and, insofar as it was applied, even in Baghdad. It is working now in Ramadi and in south Baghdad. If properly resourced, it can bring large sections of the capital under control.

Curiously, though proven effective, this approach runs counter to the current MNF–I concept of disengaging from populated areas and rapidly handing over security responsibility to Iraqi forces of dubious capability.

It is vital to sustain the hold part of the operation for months after the initial clearing operation. Previous failed clear-and-hold operations in Iraq suggest that the enemy can reinfiltrate a cleared area in about 90 days. Within 6 months, the enemy can be operating openly once more. In a dense urban environment like Baghdad, the enemy can reconstitute even faster. In addition, the enemy in Iraq has historically pursued a pattern of going to ground when coalition forces are present and waiting for them to leave. By withdrawing American troops from the hold phase of an operation too quickly, the United States plays into this enemy strategy. Any sound clear-and-hold approach, therefore, will require the presence of significant American forces in neighborhoods, supporting and strengthening Iraqi troops and police, for at least 9–12 months after the start of operations.

Training

This long-hold period allows time for Iraqi troops and police to gain the capability and confidence they need reliably to assume responsibility for maintaining secured areas. Phase II of this project will address the challenges of training Iraqi military and police forces in greater detail, but some observations are appropriate here.

Discussions of military policy in Iraq frequently present efforts to train Iraqi forces as antithetical to efforts to use American forces to help bring security to the Iraqi people. The Iraq Study Group report and several other proposals emphasizing training Iraqis have suggested increasing the number of U.S. soldiers embedded within Iraqi units and decreasing the number of Americans actually conducting operations. These proposals claim that increasing the number of embedded trainers will accelerate the training of Iraqi units. Such ideas ignore a critical fact joint, sustained clear-and-hold operations that involve both Americans and Iraqis working in partnership are one of the most effective ways to train Iraqi units rapidly and to a high standard.

To begin with, the United States has a small pool of soldiers whose job is to train indigenous troops—the Special Forces (which was created in the 1960s to perform this mission). Those soldiers spend their careers learning how to train others, and they are superb at it. In the past year, however, Special Forces have come to concentrate more heavily on what is called "direct action"—tracking terrorists, kicking in doors, and seizing enemies. The large size of the Iraqi Army, furthermore, requires more trainers than the Special Forces can provide. For both reasons, the training mission in Iraq has been given to soldiers drawn from the conventional forces, both Active Duty and National Guard. These soldiers receive some training in how to train Iraqis and then embed with Iraqi units to accomplish their task. America's flexible and creative soldiers respond well to this challenge, but the skills of the conventional forces soldiers detailed to this task are generally lower than those of the Special Forces troops specifically trained for it. Although the U.S. Army is now training more conventional soldiers for these responsibilities, it cannot do so fast enough to embed enough trained, conventional soldiers with Iraqi units rapidly. The more the United States tries to accelerate training Iraqi units by embedding soldiers, the lower the average quality of that training will be.

This kind of training also takes a much larger toll on the American ground forces than most people imagine. The number of embedded trainers is small compared to the total number of U.S. forces in Iraq, but the effect on the Army is disproportionately high. Training teams have a high proportion of officers and noncommissioned officers and a relatively small complement of enlisted soldiers. Each training team, therefore, effectively removes the leadership cadre of an American battalion. The enlisted personnel of the battalion will often have remained behind, and so the battalion is not counted as being "deployed," but neither can it be used for combat without the replacement of its leadership team. This process is having an important negative effect on the deployability of units in the Army that would appear on paper to be usable.

Iraqi units operating together with American units learn a great deal very quickly. They interact with U.S. command teams as they plan operations, and then they execute those operations alongside the best and most professional soldiers in

the world. There is no substitute for this kind of training. It is one thing for an advisor to describe what to do; it is another to watch a superb soldier and unit do it expertly. If the only training of Iraqi troops is being conducted by embedded American trainers, Iraqis will never see what excellence looks like. When they fight alongside excellent soldiers, they see it vividly and understand better what to aim for. Combined clear-and-hold operations are an essential means for bringing the Iraqi Army up to the necessary levels of capability as quickly as possible.

THE ENEMY'S RESPONSES

The enemy will respond to American and Iraqi efforts to establish security in Baghdad. No one can predict their response with certainty, but after nearly 4 years in this struggle planners can observe the patterns in their behavior that suggest their likely reactions. Different groups will, of course, respond differently to ongoing operations. Above all, the action of clearing and holding a large part of central Baghdad will change the relationship between groups and even the political dynamics within Iraq. This report will not consider these second-order effects in detail, but subsequent phases of the project will do so. For now this report remains focused on the most essential task facing the U.S. and Iraqi governments today: Defeating enemy attempts to disrupt our efforts to establish security.

General Enemy Responses

The clear-and-hold operation occurs in four main phases: (1) The deployment of U.S. and Iraqi forces to their designated areas, (2) the establishment of those forces in their areas and efforts to acquire necessary intelligence and physical bases from which to conduct operations, (3) the clearing of the neighborhoods, and (4) holding cleared areas. This report first considers the possible reactions of all enemy groups taken together in each phase and then the possible reactions of each individual group separately. The report will consider what each enemy is most likely to do, and what actions each enemy could undertake that would most endanger the mission and American interests.

Phase I: Deployment and Marshalling of Resources. This phase extends from the announcement of the President's intention to conduct clear-and-hold operations until all units involved in that operation are physically on the ground in and around Baghdad and Anbar. In general terms, this is a dangerous time. The President will have announced his intentions, but American reinforcements will not yet have arrived in theater. Enemy groups might take advantage of this interval to increase sectarian cleansing and to establish themselves in strong positions in targeted neighborhoods in the hopes of making the clearing operations too painful for U.S. forces to conduct. This is the most dangerous course of action they could take, but it is not the most likely if the President acts quickly and decisively and forces arrive in theater before spring. Many enemies in Iraq are fair-weather foes: Violence generally drops after Ramadan and remains relatively lower through the winter. It is most likely that the enemy will conduct an expanded propaganda campaign aimed at intimidating civilians and raising enemy morale during the first phase of American operations.

The best coalition responses include developing an effective and clear information campaign that underlines the scale, duration, and determination of the coming effort; stepping up the "presence patrols" of units already in Baghdad; emphasizing that the aim of coming operations is to protect civilians of all sects and ethnicities; and countering enemy disinformation. To prevent sabotage in future phases, coalition forces must secure the resources needed for reconstruction and reconstitution of police in the targeted areas.

Phase II: Preparation. In this phase, coalition units begin to arrive in their designated areas. They start developing intelligence, establishing relationships with the population and ISF, and assessing the overall situation. Extremists are likely to respond by increasing the number of suicide bombings and targeted murders of civilians. Local vigilante groups are more likely to go to ground and avoid direct confrontations with coalition forces. Rather, these groups will rely on indirect attacks on coalition forces, including IEDs and mortar fire. They may also attack civilians. Some enemy groups may attempt to move from threatened districts to areas they perceive as safer and wait out the operation. U.S. forces must anticipate such movements, and units must be prepared to conduct raids and other short operations to deny the enemy safe haven in other areas. Most enemies will continue their efforts to infiltrate the Iraqi Army and police units in their areas.

During this phase, the most damaging actions the enemy could take would be to surge the level of their violence dramatically in an effort to discredit the security effort and the Iraqi Government, to complete sectarian cleansing campaigns, and to intimidate the population. This course of action is less likely because most insurgent

groups have only a limited capability to surge on short notice, because most will avoid using up all available fighters and suicide bombers at the outset of a campaign, and because U.S. and Iraqi forces are already present and patrolling in Baghdad. The appropriate coalition response is again to increase presence and patrols throughout the capital, especially in the areas beyond those designated for clearing operations, in order to deny the enemy safe havens. The coalition will also have to conduct an intelligent information campaign that makes clear that the violence is the result of an increase in insurgent attacks aimed at harming the Iraqi people, but that future operations will end the violence permanently. The coalition must also be prepared for humanitarian efforts to handle increased refugee flows within Baghdad and beyond.

Phase III: Clearing. The insurgents in Iraq have fallen into a pattern in response to clear-and-hold operations. At the beginning of such operations, they normally surge their attacks and target both coalition forces and Iraqi civilians. They bring in specialized capabilities, such as snipers and IED cells, to inflict casualties on American and Iraqi forces in order to test their resolve. When it becomes clear that the coalition intends to pursue the operation, most enemy groups then go to ground. They use contacts in the Iraqi Government to attempt to discredit the operation, constrain it, or cancel it altogether. They expect that any clearing operation will be short-lived, and that U.S. forces will leave vulnerable Iraqi Army and police forces unsupported when the operations end. They, therefore, conserve their fighters and weapons while the Americans are present. They anticipate unleashing them on the civilian population if political efforts to forestall the operation fail or Iraqi forces and Americans leave. This surge—go to ground—surge pattern is the likeliest enemy response to the clearing operations proposed in this report.

It requires careful consideration and response. First and foremost, the American Government and the American people, as well as the Iraqi Government and the Iraqi people, must understand the importance of seeing the clear-and-hold operation through to its conclusion. If the operation begins in March and violence begins to wane in May, the governments and publics cannot, thereby, conclude that the operation has succeeded beyond expectations and start to wind down. The United States must continue to maintain its forces to support Iraqi troops in their hold operations for months after violence in cleared neighborhoods has begun to fall, because the odds are that the enemy is trying to husband its resources for a future attack when U.S. forces leave.

In addition, the American and Iraqi Governments and people must recognize that a surge in enemy violence later in 2007 is very likely even if this operation is successful. The insurgents regularly increase the level of their violence in Ramadan each year. If this operation begins in March and violence wanes through the summer, it is very likely that the violence will escalate again in the fall. This pattern is normal and to be expected. To the extent that a reduction in violence is the measure of success of this operation, we must be prepared to compare Ramadan 2007 with Ramadan 2006 rather than with June or July 2007.

It should be possible, moreover, to mitigate the magnitude of the late-2007 enemy surge. American forces working with Iraqis in permanent positions in cleared neighborhoods will acquire a great deal of intelligence about the enemy. They will be able to identify and stop many attempts to infiltrate cleared neighborhoods again. As they gain the trust of the population, they will receive more information about enemies who escaped when the area was cleared. They will locate more weapons caches and limit the flow of new weapons into the neighborhood. Long-term presence will help reduce the enemy's ability to launch new attacks later in the year.

During the third phase, the most dangerous course of action the enemy might take is an Iraqi equivalent of the Tet offensive, in which all or most enemy groups converge on coalition forces in large-scale and spectacular attacks. Enemy groups conduct mass-casualty attacks on mixed neighborhoods that coalition forces are attempting to clear, suborn Iraqi security forces, and launch high-profile attacks in other Iraqi cities. Some enemy groups might assassinate prominent civil or religious leaders or destroy important religious landmarks.

This course of action is less likely because it requires the insurgents to expend most of their fighters and weapons rapidly at the beginning of the operation, something they have generally avoided in the past. It can be countered by ensuring that clearing operations proceed rapidly and simultaneously in multiple neighborhoods. The coalition must also devote particular attention to protecting likely high-profile targets in Baghdad and around the country. The United States must maintain a sizable Reserve to offset the danger that the enemy might attempt to generate high levels of violence in neighborhoods or cities that are not being cleared. American commanders must have uncommitted troops that can be sent to troubled areas rapidly and on short notice without detracting from the main effort to clear the des-

ignated communities. If U.S. commanders attempt to conduct this operation with precisely the number of soldiers they think they might need to clear neighborhoods, but do not retain a substantial Reserve, they entice the enemy to choose this most dangerous option and severely constrain their own ability to respond to this contingency. A significant Reserve (at least one brigade combat team) is an essential component of this or any sound plan.

Phase IV: Hold and Build. By this phase of the operation, U.S. and Iraqi forces will have examined every structure in a neighborhood, removed all weapons caches that they have identified, and detained many suspicious individuals, some of whom will turn out to be members of enemy groups. The hold-and-build phase of this operation is one of the most dangerous for the population of the cleared neighborhood. The detainment of suspicious individuals involves removing many of the young, tough, armed men who were defending the neighborhood from outside attack (whatever violence of their own they might have been committing). Unless the coalition maintains a robust armed presence in the cleared area, the remaining inhabitants—disproportionately including the elderly, women, and children—will be highly vulnerable to enemy strikes.

Past clearing operations followed by premature American withdrawals have conditioned enemies to wait for this phase to strike. Consequently, this plan argues that enemy groups are likely to revert to their past pattern of surging violently, going to ground, and subsequently surging very violently. Once the insurgents find that American forces are remaining in force in cleared neighborhoods, they will probably adopt a different approach. Surging fighters and weapons into protected neighborhoods exposes the insurgents to losses without giving them any benefits. They are more likely, therefore, to increase the number of high casualty attacks, especially vehicle-borne IEDs (VBIEDs or car bombs) and suicide bombers. It is extremely difficult to stop all such attacks, and some will inevitably reach their targets. If they are relatively low in number and isolated rather than massed, then they will not likely be sufficient to derail reconstruction and political development. Active patrolling, intelligence-gathering, and control of critical access points can help reduce the number and effectiveness of such attacks.

The enemy is likely, then, to attempt to move into uncleared neighborhoods and destabilize them by striking less-well-defended targets. The enemy may also attempt to increase the level of violence in cities beyond Baghdad, attempt to conduct high-profile assassinations, or try to destroy prominent religious landmarks. In the worst case, they may try to surge back into cleared neighborhoods to demonstrate the futility of the clearing effort.

The most effective responses to such insurgent efforts, once again, rely on having a readily available Reserve Force. Reserves must be able to reinforce cleared neighborhoods threatened by large surges of violence, to control increasing violence in uncleared neighborhoods, and to address attacks in cities outside of Baghdad. The plan in this proposal designates one BCT as a Reserve for Baghdad and two RCTs in Iraq as potential Reserves in case of emergency. The plan calls for deploying those RCTs into Anbar province in the expectation that threatened Sunni insurgents will return to their base. It might prove necessary, however, to deploy one or both of those RCTs into Diyala, another al-Qaeda base that emerges, or even into Baghdad or its nearer suburbs.

These decisions can only be made by the commander on the ground in light of changing circumstances, but his Reserve Forces can only achieve the effects he desires if they are already near Baghdad. Kuwait is 600 miles from the Iraqi capital—Reserve Forces held there might take too long to arrive in response to a crisis. Forces stationed in the United States, even if alerted for possible deployment, would almost certainly take too long to respond. Reacting effectively to likely enemy challenges requires positioning significant Reserve Forces already near the scene of the fighting.

Specific Enemy Responses

Although the discussion above captures the likely aggregate of enemy responses, it is important to consider how each individual enemy group is likely to respond as well, since the particularities of those responses can have a profound impact on the developing political situation in Iraq. The major insurgent groupings are the Jaysh al-Mahdi, the Badr Corps, al-Qaeda in Iraq and associated Islamist groups, the Baathists and military nationalists, and vigilante groups on both sides. As we have seen, the Shiite militias share many common aims but are also rivals for power. They may cooperate in some scenarios, but there is reason to believe that they can be kept apart in others. The Sunni groups have cooperated more closely because of their sense of being beleaguered, but their divergent aims and methods will likely lead to different responses to the proposed clearing and holding operations. Despite

the conflicting sectarian makeup and aims of the vigilante groups, on the other hand, their motivations and methods make it likely that their responses to clear-and-hold operations will be similar to one another.

Jaysh al-Mahdi. Moqtada al-Sadr's militia, the Jaysh al-Mahdi, presents one of the greatest dangers to this operation. It is based in Sadr City, which it largely controls through a Hezbollah model of providing services, including security, that the local government is unable to offer. It is impossible to estimate with accuracy how many fighters the Jaysh al-Mahdi could muster in total, let alone how many are still under Sadr's control. There are certainly thousands of armed militiamen, however—more than enough to force a bloody showdown with coalition forces if provoked or driven to full-scale conflict.

Moqtada al-Sadr himself has also become a force in the political process, moreover. His 30-seat bloc of parliamentarians is an important element of Maliki's government (although his recent "walkout" from Parliament underlined the feasibility of forming a coalition government without him if necessary—which was one of the reasons why his followers returned to their seats relatively quickly). A full-scale confrontation with the Jaysh al-Mahdi would not only be bloody, but it would also be a political crisis of the first order in Iraq. It is thus highly desirable to avoid such a confrontation if it is at all possible.

The Jaysh al-Mahdi has been conducting numerous murderous raids from Sadr City into Sunni and mixed neighborhoods and has caused many of the American casualties in Baghdad. Clearing operations in Sunni and mixed districts will lead to conflict with isolated groups of Jaysh al-Mahdi fighters. Efforts to contain the flow of such fighters from Sadr City into Baghdad will require coalition forces to patrol the borders of Sadr City (which they are already doing) and possibly to restrict access to Sadr City periodically. These actions will place coalition forces in close proximity to the heart of the Jaysh al-Mahdi's power. The desire to appear evenhanded by attacking Shiite militias even as operations bring Sunni-sponsored violence under control also creates pressure to launch isolated raids into Sadr City itself.

If coalition operations are skillfully conceived and executed, they will not provoke a full-scale confrontation with Sadr and the Jaysh al-Mahdi. It is not in Sadr's interest to engage in a full-scale confrontadon. His experiences in 2004 in Najaf and Karbala made clear that whatever political damage he might be able to cause through such violence, American forces will decimate his fighters. He cannot afford to lose his warriors. He is not popular within the Iraqi political system and draws much of his political strength from his militia. He also requires a strong military arm to confront the Badr Corps and SCIRI in the fight for control of a post-coalition Iraq. Whatever harm Sadrists might do to coalition hopes for success in Iraq by confronting coalition forces directly, this path would almost certainly be political suicide for Sadr. He is unlikely to choose direct confrontation with the coalition unless it is forced upon him.

Invading or sealing off Sadr City would force Sadr to resist coalition forces vigorously, regardless of the cost. Even launching isolated raids in and around Sadr City is dangerous. Such raids might lead to escalation on both sides and an unintended, major confrontation that both sides wish to avoid. For that reason, this plan focuses on responding to Jaysh al-Mahdi attacks by protecting the neighborhoods they are targeting, rather than by striking at the sources of their power.

Such defensive operations will, nevertheless, lead to the killing and capturing of Jaysh al-Mahdi fighters, but they are not likely to provoke Sadr or his unruly lieutenants into full-scale conflict. For months, coalition forces have been engaged with Jaysh al-Mahdi fighters in discrete operations. On each occasion when coalition forces have captured or killed members of death squads, Sadr and the Jaysh al-Mahdi leadership have abandoned their compromised militiamen, declaring them "rogue elements" or criminals masquerading as warriors. This past restraint on their part is evidence of their desire to avoid a full-fledged conflict. As long as coalition forces demonstrate similar restraint with regard to Sadr City, it is likely that the Jaysh al-Mahdi will remain relatively quiescent.

If large-scale conflict with the Jaysh al-Mahdi nevertheless erupts, the plan proposed in this report would require substantial modification. It would be necessary to abandon much of the effort to clear and hold Sunni and mixed neighborhoods in central Baghdad in order to focus instead on clearing Sadr City. Clearing operations in Sadr City would be bloody—the Jaysh al-Mahdi has had a long time to fortify the area—but the result is not in doubt. Coalition forces would destroy the Jaysh al-Mahdi and clear the Shiite neighborhoods. Depending on the political and security situation, it would then be necessary to turn back to the problem of suppressing the Sunni Arab insurgency and securing the neighborhoods in the center of Baghdad.

Large-scale conflict with the Jaysh al-Mahdi would probably lead to the withdrawal of Sadr from the political process and might lead to the fall of the Maliki government. Such an occurrence would be unfortunate but not necessarily devastating. Even if the Maliki government fell, executive power would remain in the Iraqi Presidential Council, which could form an emergency government. Iraq would remain a sovereign state. Conflict with the Jaysh al-Mahdi is clearly undesirable and dangerous, and every effort should be made to avoid it. It would not, however, necessarily lead to immediate coalition defeat.

The Badr Corps. Abdul Aziz al-Hakim's Badr Corps is an important player in Iraqi politics, but it has relatively little presence in Baghdad, where Sadr and the Jaysh al-Mahdi are the dominant militia group. Hakim has already manifested his concern that Sadr is gaining the upper hand in the Shiite community, particularly in central Iraq. He could do little to influence the fighting in Baghdad directly except by increasing the flow of Shiite fighters from the south into the capital.

If coalition operations are clearly aimed at establishing security in central Baghdad and not attacking the Shiite communities in and around Sadr City, it is unlikely that the Badr Corps will play a very large role. If the United States attacked Sadr City, however, Hakim might make common cause with Sadr and attempt to inflame the south and all of Shiite Iraq against the coalition. In this worst case, coalition defeat is very likely—the Iraqi Government could not survive such a challenge, and coalition forces could not likely handle the military threat throughout Iraq. This is yet another reason to avoid any direct attack on Sadr City or actions that are likely to lead to a full-scale confrontation with Sadr.

It is even less in Hakim's interest to provoke a full-scale confrontation with the coalition than it is in Sadr's. Sadr has gained political influence by taking a strong anti-American position. Hakim has been much more moderate, apparently concentrating on the likelihood that the U.S. presence will lead in the end to a Shiite state that he hopes to rule. No part of the plan proposed in this report directly threatens the outcome he desires. On the contrary, clearing and holding the Sunni and mixed neighborhoods in Baghdad and suppressing the Sunni Arab insurgency in Anbar forwards Hakim's goals. It is very likely that Hakim will publicly protest against Shiite casualties and denounce the operation, but it is extremely unlikely that he will support Sadr or throw large numbers of his own fighters into the fray—as long as the core of the Shiite community is not threatened.

Iran. It is more difficult to estimate likely Iranian actions to the various possibilities outlined above, but the range of Tehran's possible responses is rather narrowly constrained. Iran is certainly unlikely to watch the destruction of the Badr Corps or even the Jaysh al-Mahdi with equanimity, and would probably increase dramatically the level of its support for those groups, even including direct support through Iranian advisors. This is yet another reason why courting a full-scale confrontation with the Shiite militias in the first stage of the operation would be unwise. Iran is likely to increase its support of the militias and other fighting groups in Iraq in response to any American operation. The impact of such an increase will be muted as long as the United States sends and maintains an adequate troop presence to secure and hold designated neighborhoods. Iran is highly unlikely to court a direct military confrontation with the United States during such an operation—by sending disguised fighters against our supply lines in the south, for instance, or taking any other military action that could be traced directly back to Tehran.

Al-Qaeda in Iraq and Other Islamist Groups. Al-Qaeda in Iraq is one of the most dangerous enemies facing coalition forces, not because of its power but because of its goals. Unique among the major insurgent groups, al-Qaeda in Iraq aims directly at regional objectives and sees operations in Iraq as merely a steppingstone to achieving larger goals. This group is also motivated by an apocalyptic vision of the grand struggle between righteous Islam and "heresy" within the Muslim community (including Shiism), and between Islam and the infidel West. Zarqawi, the group's leader until his death in June 2006, adopted a Leninist strategy, according to which "the worse it is, the better it is" for the insurgent groups. Zarqawi used a series of spectacular attacks on Shiite (and even Sunni) civilians deliberately to ignite sectarian conflict. This approach drew criticism even from other parts of the global al-Qaeda movement—Aymara al-Zawahiri, the group's ideological leader, criticized Zarqawi for his attacks on Shiites. Other Islamist groups in Iraq, including Ansar al-Sunna, also question the religious justification for attacking fellow Muslims in such an instrumental way.

But Zargawi's strategy was effective. The Shiite community in Iraq endured nearly 2 years of attacks without responding on a large scale, but the bombing of the Golden Mosque in February 2006 proved too much for that community to withstand. The cycling sectarian violence in Iraq owes a great deal to Zargawi's deter-

mined efforts to provoke full-scale civil war and chaotic violence, from which he thought his group would benefit.

Al-Qaeda in Iraq can be expected to continue to pursue this approach during the proposed clear-and-hold operation. In general terms, the group will probably continue to target Shiite civilians, both ordinary people and key figures in the government and within the Shiite religious community. It is likely to work to generate more spectacular attacks like the Golden Mosque bombing or mass-casualty attacks in Shiite communities. If such attacks succeed in significant numbers, they will undermine confidence in the clearing operation, spur the Shiite militias to even greater sectarian violence, and may ultimately break the Iraqi Government.

It is not clear how, specifically, al-Qaeda in Iraq and associated groups will respond to the proposed clearing operation. Faced with a substantial attempt to end the violence in Baghdad, they might embrace an apocalyptic fight with coalition forces in the heart of the capital, surging all of their resources against coalition and especially Iraqi civilian targets. This approach would generate a lot of violence in the initial phase of the clearing operation, but would not necessarily be the most dangerous response they might make. By striking the coalition when coalition forces were most prepared, the Islamists will lose many fighters and use up their limited supply of suicide bombers and car bombs. If the U.S. and Iraqi forces pursue the operation to its conclusion, they will significantly reduce this particular enemy's ability to undertake subsequent surges of violence, and the prospects for the success of the operation will increase.

It is more likely that al-Qaeda in Iraq and other Islamist groups will act as they have in the past: They will increase violence at the start of the operation and then go to ground either in Baghdad neighborhoods not designated for clearing or in the surrounding cities and towns. There, they will hope to reconstitute and prepare for a major surge of violence after the clearing operations have ended. They will also prepare spectacular mass-casualty attacks against targets in Baghdad and elsewhere.

The coalition must maintain great pressure on the Islamists in Baghdad and beyond. Clearing and holding neighborhoods over the long term will help mitigate the risks of attacks in those neighborhoods, but the presence of large Reserves is once again essential to preventing the Islamists from establishing safe bases elsewhere from which to prepare devastating attacks. The regions around Taji, to the north of Baghdad, and Iskandariyah, to the south, merit particular attention. There are already two American BCTs operating there, one in each region, and they should not be moved. They may need to be reinforced. Additionally, because al-Qaeda has bases in Diyala province, coalition forces may have to seal off the roads from Diyala into Baghdad or to divert Reserves into Diyala itself. The main al-Qaeda bases, of course, are in Anbar, which is why the proposed plan devotes two additional RCTs to that province.

Baathists and Military Nationalists. These groups have sustained a de facto working alliance with the Islamists because of the perceived danger to the Sunni Arab community in Iraq, but they disagree both on objectives and on methods (although the turnover in leadership is leading to greater convergence, as noted above). The Baathists and military nationalists include the most experienced insurgent fighters, many drawn from the ranks of Saddam's army. They have focused their attacks heavily on coalition forces, including Iraqi Security Forces, which they regard as legitimate targets, but have eschewed attacks on Iraqi civilians. They are not in favor of accelerating the civil war simply for the purpose of generating chaos from which they hope to benefit—on the contrary, they aim to bring the civil war under control after they win the struggle, as they expect to do.

The aims of these groups are also confined more narrowly to Iraq. They are unlikely to be as willing as the Islamists to condemn Iraq to an annihilating sectarian conflict in the hopes of achieving some greater regional benefit. They are much more likely, therefore, to become open to negotiation and political persuasion if they come to believe that their military struggle is hopeless.

The Baathists pose a significant danger in the first three phases of the proposed operation. They are likely to launch a significant propaganda effort during the deployment of coalition forces. They will attempt to portray the planned operation as an assault on the Sunni community. They may seek, thereby, to bring regional and international pressure to bear on the United States to abandon the plan entirely. As the operation begins, the Baathists are likely to launch increased attacks against coalition forces. Because the Baathists are the most militarily skilled among enemy groups, they may pose the most serious challenge to forces clearing those neighborhoods where they have been able to establish strongpoints and defensive positions. The worst case scenarios involve increased cooperation between the Baathists and

the Islamists, including Baathist support for mass-casualty or spectacular attacks on Shiite targets.

The coalition must counter Baathist propaganda efforts with skillful information operations that emphasize that the coalition's goal is to protect the population, both Sunni and Shia, from criminals and terrorists. Initiating reconstruction activities in the immediate wake of the clearing operation (a policy considered in more detail below) will also help offset the impression that this mission is aimed at harming the Sunnis. Most of Iraq's Sunni neighbors, and many Sunni states beyond Iraq's borders, have become extremely concerned about the danger of a spreading civil war. Many are quietly suggesting that an American withdrawal would be disastrous and are advocating for a surge aimed at bringing the violence under control. They might posture in various ways publicly, but they are extremely unlikely to bring any effective pressure to bear to stop an operation that suits their interests, regardless of Baathist propaganda.

Greater Baathist cooperation with the Islamists cannot be discounted, but it is not yet certain. The continual al-Qaeda in Iraq attacks against Shiite civilians have alienated many insurgents on both sides, and this trend is likely to continue. The Baathist desire to rule a unified Iraq clashes with the Islamist willingness to destroy Iraq in the name of larger regional gains, a fact that will make increased cooperation between the groups difficult. But as time elapses, and a younger generation of Iraqi nationalists takes leadership positions in what was originally the Baathist resistance movement, they may work more closely than their predecessors with the Islamists.

Perhaps the most dangerous option the Baathists could choose would be to try to force Sunni politicians to leave the government, possibly by moving their base of operations out of Baghdad and into Anbar and Diyala. The coalition must work to foreclose this option by retaining control in Anbar and by maintaining a sufficient Reserve to respond to shifts in Baathist attack patterns and movements.

Vigilante Groups, Sunni and Shia. The main justification for vigilante groups on both sides is the need to protect their neighborhoods from sectarian attacks. Many of these groups are also involved in criminal activity, and some are taking advantage of the situation to engage in sectarian cleansing of their own. It is highly unlikely, nevertheless, that members of these groups would actively resist a large-scale clearing operation. The most radical might join hardcore insurgent groups. Some might attempt to accelerate sectarian cleansing before coalition forces arrived in force. Most, however, are likely to blend back into the population during the clearing operation and wait to see what happens.

As long as peace is maintained in the cleared neighborhoods during the hold phase, the members of these vigilante groups are unlikely to cause much trouble. They retain a latent potential for violence if the coalition allows a security vacuum to develop. Some of them will be dissatisfied by the transition from being the big men around town, protecting their people, to being unemployed youths. Employment programs and other reconstruction efforts may help, but the coalition and the Iraqis must also consider ways of addressing individuals' and groups' loss of honor and prestige during this transition. Reintegrating members of the vigilante groups into their neighborhoods is not a simple process. Rather, it requires careful thought, appropriate planning, and adequate preparation.

Timeline

The operations proposed in this plan would take most of 2007 to complete. As we shall see, most of the necessary reinforcements would not arrive in their designated areas until March; active clearing operations would probably not begin until early April. Past examples suggest that preparation and clearing operations will take about 90 days, and so should be completed by midsummer. It will then be necessary to support Iraqi forces in hold-and-build operations through the end of 2007 in order to continue to degrade insurgent networks, prevent infiltration of cleared areas again, and mitigate likely enemy efforts to launch an autumn surge against coalition, civilian, symbolic, and high-profile targets. By early 2008, it should become possible to begin moving some American forces out of the cleared areas of Baghdad, although it is unlikely that large numbers of U.S. troops could begin to return home until much later in 2008, for reasons described below.

2007 will be a violent year in Iraq. If this proposal is not adopted, then insurgent and sectarian violence will continue to increase unabated, as it has every year since the invasion. If this plan is adopted, then the pattern of the violence will probably change. There will be a significant increase in violence as clearing operations commence, probably followed by a reduction in violence in the summer, followed by a substantial surge of violence in the fall. If the United States continues on its present course, American and Iraqi casualties will be spread more evenly over the year, but

all will be wasted because success is extraordinarily unlikely. If this plan is adopted, there will probably be higher casualties in the spring and fall, but far fewer by the end of the year. The coalition, moreover, will have made significant progress toward establishing security in Iraq's capital and paving the way for a sustainable transition to Iraqi control and responsibility.

WHAT IF? WHAT NEXT?

Sound military planning requires considering "branches and sequels": How to handle contingencies that are likely to arise during the course of operations, and how to prepare for subsequent operations when the current one has been completed. The consideration of enemy courses of action above included a number of likely branches to handle possible contingencies. The most probable branches include:

1. Deploying Reserve Forces into neighborhoods not being cleared as enemy groups attempt to attack more vulnerable targets;
2. Restricting movement between Baghdad and either Anbar or Diyala or both, in order to prevent insurgents from shifting their bases;
3. Deploying Reserves in areas of Baghdad being cleared to overcome unexpected resistance;
4. Deploying significant Reserve Forces either to Anbar, Diyala, or elsewhere in response to enemy efforts to launch attacks outside of the capital;
5. Reinforcing security for high-profile targets (both people and structures) in Baghdad, the north, and the Shia areas to the south.

Less probable branches include:

1. Sealing Sadr City off either from the rest of Baghdad or from Diyala;
2. Attacking into Sadr City in the event of an unplanned major confrontation with Shiite militias (although this plan stresses the desirability of avoiding such a confrontation as much as possible);
3. Conducting operations against the Badr Corps in southern Iraq in the event of a major confrontation with SCIRI. (Again, this can result only from great misfortune or ineptitude on the part of the coalition, since its aim should be to avoid such a confrontation.)

Executing the more probable branches requires having a significant Reserve ready and stationed within Iraq. Forces in Kuwait, let alone the United States, are too far away to respond rapidly to most of the likely contingencies. If commanders deploy only the force necessary to conduct the clearing operation, optimistically assuming that the enemy will not react or adapt to the clear-and-hold operation, they would be pursuing an irresponsible and dangerous policy.

The operation to clear and hold the center of Baghdad is only the beginning of a larger effort to pacify Iraq. It is difficult to predict with any precision what operations would be necessary upon the conclusion of this one, particularly since clearing and holding the center of Baghdad would transform not only the security but also the political situation in the country. Some sequels are very likely to be necessary, however:

1. Bringing Sadr City under control (see below);
2. Redeploying forces from Baghdad to clear and hold Anbar, beginning with Ramadi and Fallujah and then expanding up the Euphrates and out to the Syrian border;
3. Moving forces from Baghdad up the Diyala to Baquba and clearing that area;
4. Reinforcing security in the north, particularly in Ninawa, including Mosul.

It is possible that the successful clearing of central Baghdad will leave Moqtada al-Sadr and the Jaysh al-Mahdi still defiantly in control of Sadr City. If that is the case, then U.S. and Iraqi forces will have to clear that Shiite stronghold by force and disarm the militia. It is also possible, however, that the clear-and-hold operation in central Baghdad will weaken Sadr's power base in Sadr City and support a predominantly political solution to that problem. The sectarian violence now raging in Baghdad is one of the most powerful recruiting tools for the Jaysh al-Mahdi, and one of its most potent overt justifications. If that violence is dramatically reduced, it is likely that some Jaysh al-Mahdi fighters will begin to fall away from the group, reducing Sadr's leverage within the Shiite community and within Iraq as a whole. Such a weakening might well induce him and many of his followers to enter the political fold wholeheartedly rather than halfheartedly, as they have so far done. The United States must be clear, though, that the elimination of the Jaysh al-Mahdi as an effective fighting force in Baghdad, either through negotiation or by force, is the essential next step after the clearing of the central areas of the city.

The sequence of these operations matters a great deal. The persistence of the Sunni insurgency justifies the strength of the Shiite militias and continues Maliki's

dependence upon them. If the United States insists on attacking Sadr and his supporters first, Maliki and the Iraqi Government will have no leverage with him or justification for permitting that attack, which will look like American support to the Sunni insurgency. If, instead, the coalition begins by clearing and holding Sunni and mixed Sunni-Shiite neighborhoods in Baghdad, as well as conducting more aggressive operations in Anbar, the United States and the Iraqi Government will show that they are determined to suppress the Sunni insurgency and to protect both Sunnis and Shiites. That demonstration will make subsequent operations against Shiite militias much more politically palatable in Iraq. Eliminating the raging Sunni insurgency will also eliminate the ostensible justification for those militias, liberating Maliki to support their disarmament. The challenges in Iraq are complex, but not an insoluble puzzle if they are approached in the right order.

RECONSTRUCTION

Military operations alone cannot solve Iraq's problems. Any complete solution must address a host of political, economic, diplomatic, and social challenges as well as the security situation. This proposal emphasizes the military portion of the solution because it is urgent to bring the violence under control before it tears Iraq apart completely. Subsequent phases and working groups will examine the other aspects of the problem in much greater detail. Reconstruction deserves consideration even at this early phase, even though it will be addressed again in more detail.

Soldiers, whether American or Iraqi, moving through a neighborhood to clear it inevitably do damage. Violence flares up, and innocent people are invariably killed. Past experience shows that many neighborhoods are willing to accept this price in the hope of having security and peace thereafter, but it is important to provide them with a more immediate and tangible compensation for the violence as well. In addition, it is clear that high levels of unemployment in Iraq create a pool of potential recruits for militias and violent organizations. The lack of essential services in many neighborhoods also provides an opportunity for more organized enemy groups such as militias to usurp the government's traditional roles (the Hezbollah model).

For all of these reasons, therefore, every clear-and-hold operation must be accompanied by an immediate reconstruction program. As military commanders move into neighborhoods to establish security, they should also reach out to local leaders to find out what essential services must be restored quickly to permit a basic level of normal life to resume. The military now encapsulates the most common list of essential services in the abbreviation SWET: Sewage, water, electricity, and trash removal. Most neighborhoods will require SWET packages to begin operating, ideally within hours of the end of combat operations.

Managing this reconstruction effort is an enormous challenge, and this phase of the report can only suggest some of the complexities without offering detailed solutions. It is vital that the Iraqi people associate the Iraqi Government with the reconstruction effort as much as possible. Defeating the enemy's Hezbollah model requires getting Iraqis accustomed to looking to their local and central government to provide essential services. Even when the money and capability to provide those services are coming from the coalition, therefore, it is vital that the local inhabitants attribute the provision of the services themselves to legitimate local leaders.

It is not possible, however, to conduct such efforts through the Iraqi central government. The responsible ministries are often highly corrupt and unable to perform their basic functions properly. Some of the most important "service" ministries are controlled by Sadr and his lieutenants—political figures whom the coalition emphatically does not wish to legitimate or support. Few ministries actually have connections to local government, moreover. Providing the ministries with funds to conduct local reconstruction will most likely result in strengthening the insurgency.

The American Government is not well organized to oversee extensive reconstruction projects on a local level, however. Reconstruction efforts to date have been disorganized. They have generated enormous friction between responsible agencies, and they have had inadequate results for the Iraqi people. Resolving these difficulties will require a significant effort to reorganize the way the American Government does business in such conflicts (an effort that we must undertake urgently, since Iraq is not the first and will not be the last place the United States will have to engage in reconstruction of one sort or another). In the short term, however, the only organization capable of planning and executing reconstruction projects in combat zones is the U.S. military. The essential SWET programs, therefore, must be the responsibility of local commanders. Those commanders will need representatives from USAID, the State Department, the Department of Agriculture, and other government agencies to advise them about developing and executing their programs,

but the responsibility and the authority to dispense the necessary funds must lie with the commanders.

The absence of security has hampered reconstruction projects throughout Iraq so far. Reports indicate that as much as 30 percent of the resources designated for reconstruction projects has been diverted to providing security for those projects. Insecurity raises the cost in other ways as well, since local and international contractors and employees demand higher wages and prices for operating in dangerous areas. Establishing real security in central Baghdad and then maintaining it with a large American troop presence will greatly mitigate these problems, allowing a much higher proportion of reconstruction funds to go to actually improving the lives of Iraqis and encouraging them to reject violence.

It is not enough simply to restore essential services in cleared neighborhoods, however. The American relationship with Iraq has been deteriorating steadily over the past several months as U.S. leaders have begun to chastise Maliki and other Iraqis for failing to contain the violence and the militias on their own. The hectoring and insulting tone that has entered this discourse is manifested in the notion of "incentivizing" the Iraqis to take responsibility for their own security. Upon examination, however, it becomes clear that all the incentives commonly suggested are negative: If the Iraqis do not disarm the militias, then the United States will leave and abandon them to genocide and civil war. This is not the way to encourage a desired behavior or to maintain good relations with an ally.

The United States must develop a set of positive incentives to encourage and reward Iraqis at all levels for taking the desired steps toward pacifying their country. One such way would be to create a second tier of reconstruction projects beyond SWET packages. As commanders discuss with local leaders what essential services to restore at the end of combat operations, they should also discuss what reconstruction projects could dramatically increase quality of life in the neighborhood thereafter. They should indicate that funds for those projects will be released when the neighborhood fully complies with a set of requirements to support coalition efforts to maintain peace: Disarming remaining militias, turning over criminals, reporting insurgent efforts to infiltrate the neighborhood again, warning coalition forces about IEDs and imminent attacks, and so on. Any neighborhood meeting these requirements would receive the Tier II reconstruction package.

This approach would redress another problem with a reconstruction program aimed only at restoring services in cleared areas: It allows reconstruction to proceed in neighborhoods that were stable to begin with. Giving SWET packages exclusively to cleared areas, in effect, rewards bad neighborhoods and punishes good ones. A Tier II package could go to any neighborhood in which basic security prevails and the inhabitants of which comply with the requirements of the program. Since the initial focus of operations in Baghdad would be on Sunni and mixed neighborhoods, a Tier II program would also help to ensure that Baghdad's Shiites received tangible benefits from the operation as well.

In addition to these programmed reconstruction activities, Congress should also fund the Commander's Emergency Response Program at a high level. This program has proven invaluable since the start of the insurgency because it allows local commanders to allocate resources on the spot to critical reconstruction efforts as the need for them arises. It gives commanders necessary flexibility and allows them to target funds to projects that directly support ongoing operations or forestall impending crises.

MAKING THE FORCES AVAILABLE

This plan requires the deployment to Iraq of an additional five Army BCTs and two Marine RCTs. Any lesser force will entail a much greater risk of failure. The strain on the Army and Marines of maintaining even the current level of forces in Iraq is well-known, and this proposal does not underestimate the challenge of generating additional forces for the 18–24 months required by this plan. It is, however, possible to do so within the constraints of the All-Volunteer Force.

There are currently 13 Army BCTs and 2 Marine RCTs in Iraq. The Army and Marines have already developed their plans for rotating fresh units into the country over the course of 2007, and they are as follows:

- One BCT and two RCTs are scheduled to deploy to Iraq in the first quarter.
- Four BCTs will deploy in the second quarter.
- Six BCTs will deploy in the third quarter.
- One BCT and two RCTs will deploy in the fourth quarter.

Since the aim of this force generation model has been to maintain a steady state of 15 brigades and regiments in Iraq, the Pentagon has planned to remove the same number of units from Iraq as are sent in. In place of this approach, this plan pro-

poses to extend the tours of most Army BCTs now in Iraq from 12 months to 15 months, and of the Marine RCTs from 7 months to 12 months. This plan also proposes to accelerate the deployment of the four BCTs scheduled to enter Iraq in the second quarter so that they arrive instead in March. These changes in the deployment schedule would produce a surge of two Marine RCTs and five Army BCTs in the first quarter and sustain it throughout 2007, using only Active-Duty Forces already scheduled to deploy to Iraq in that year.

Sustaining such a large presence through 2008, which is probably necessary, requires mobilizing about six National Guard brigades that are not currently scheduled to deploy. The President has the legal authority to make such a callup, but Pentagon policy has, hitherto, been to avoid using so many National Guard brigades in Iraq in 2008. The proposed deployment plan would require a change in Pentagon policy, but not additional congressional authorization. Even though these brigades would not deploy until well into 2008 (and into a much more benign security environment than the active units now in Iraq face), the military must begin to alert and prepare them right now. Adopting the plan proposed in this report requires changing Pentagon policy immediately to grant the chief of staff of the Army full access to the National Guard and Reserve.

Extending the tours of units and mobilizing the National Guard and Reserve will place a greater strain on soldiers and their families. If there were any option that did not threaten to place an unbearable burden on the military, other than the defeat of the United States, this plan would propose it. Maintaining anything like the current course will continue to strain the military badly and will also lead to failure. Withdrawing forces now will accelerate defeat, violence, and failure. It is worth considering in some detail what that failure would look like.

It is possible to surmise what will occur in Iraq when the U.S. Armed Forces withdraw in the current environment on the basis of what has happened in the past when U.S. forces have withdrawn prematurely from areas in Iraq. Enemy groups round up Iraqis who collaborate with Americans and their own government, then publicly torture and kill these people, often along with their entire families. Death squads commit horrific atrocities against one another but most often against innocent civilians, leaving their mangled corpses on streets and in yards. To many Americans watching from afar, these are just dead bodies and evidence of failure. But to the soldiers preparing to withdraw, they are people the United States has betrayed and abandoned to horrible deaths.

As soldiers establish themselves in neighborhoods, they work hard to gain the trust of the locals. That trust is essential in persuading local leaders and citizens to provide critical information soldiers need to identify and capture enemies, avoid ambushes and IEDs, and perform almost any military mission. American soldiers and marines are well aware of the reciprocal obligation they undertake to protect those Iraqis who trust them enough to provide intelligence. One of the greatest frustrations American soldiers are experiencing today is the inability to fulfill that implicit promise.

American withdrawal from Iraq will be a searing and scarring experience. U.S. soldiers will be forced to confront the results of America's defeat on the most personal level. Terrorists will videotape death squads operating with American troops stacking arms in the background. Al Jazeera and other Muslim media outlets will play the tapes endlessly, accompanied by claims that the Americans were committing or abetting the atrocities. The process of such a defeat will demoralize the Army and Marines far more dramatically and permanently than asking brigades to serve a few additional months in the course of a successful operation that brings the United States closer to victory. The strain on the Army and Marines is very real and a serious concern, but it is not correctable with any simple solution—not even immediate withdrawal.

The President has already embraced an essential element of the longer term solution for the strain, however: Increasing the end-strength of the ground forces. It has been clear for some time that the Active-Duty Army and Marines were too small for the challenges they face in Iraq, Afghanistan, and around the world. The President's call for enlarging them comes not a moment too soon.

For some time now, skeptics of such enlargement have argued that it would not be possible to recruit more soldiers in time of war into the volunteer force, but recruiting does not appear to be the factor limiting the expansion of the ground forces. Instead, the ability of the training base to accept new recruits and give them basic soldier skills before sending them to their units regulates the pace of expanding the Army and the Marines. Part of the problem is that the training base is not expansible and has not been prepared for a serious effort to build the sort of ground forces the nation needs in this time of crisis. That inadequacy must also change. In addition to making a national call for young people to serve in the military, the Presi-

dent must also make a priority of expanding the ground forces training base as quickly as possible to permit a more rapid expansion of the Army and Marines. Current estimates suggest that the Army could grow by only about 7,000 soldiers per year for the next few years. That figure is wholly inadequate. Many estimates of the appropriate size of the active Army suggest that the United States needs at least 50,000 more soldiers—or even more. The United States cannot wait 5 years to achieve this necessary increase in end-strength. The Secretary of Defense must make it a priority to create the capability to expand the Army much more rapidly, and the United States should maintain that capability indefinitely to avoid finding the country again unable to add forces rapidly in wartime in the future.

The most serious challenge in accelerating the deployment of brigades scheduled to enter Iraq this year, however, has nothing to do with the number of people in the Armed Forces. The Army and Marines have worn out their equipment. Tanks, Bradleys, and Humvees are not designed to drive thousands of miles a year, but they have been doing so for years in extremely harsh conditions. News reports indicate that many units in the Army are at low levels of readiness because they do not have enough functioning equipment to take to the field. Units regularly swap equipment with one another as they prepare to deploy. Sometimes soldiers getting ready to move to Iraq do not receive the equipment they need until a few weeks before they start their deployment.

Congress has recognized this problem and has appropriated funds to "reset" the Army and Marines—primarily by buying or repairing the necessary equipment. But even recent increases in these appropriations have not brought America's military industry to anything like full mobilization. Army depots are operating far below their maximum capability despite this equipment crisis. This situation is unacceptable. The Department of Defense must request and Congress should authorize an additional significant increase in funds for reequipping the military, and all available military industrial resources should be brought to bear on this challenge as rapidly as possible.

Many of the proposals in this section can be summed up briefly: The Nation must be put on a war footing. That does not mean a return to the draft. It is possible and necessary to maintain a volunteer military while fighting this war and beyond. It does, however, mean abandoning peacetime bureaucratic routines within the Pentagon and throughout the defense establishment. It means that the President must issue a call to arms. It means that Congress must provide the necessary financial support. It means that everyone involved in the defense of the Nation must make supporting the troops fighting this war the number one priority. It is disgraceful that the Nation has not been placed on a war footing even this far into such an important conflict, but it is essential to transform this state of affairs if the United States is to conduct the operations necessary to avoid imminent defeat and pursue victory.

OTHER PROPOSALS AND THEIR CHALLENGES

There are a number of other proposals for resolving the crisis in Iraq, most of which fall into one or more of the following categories:

- Train Iraqi forces and transition more rapidly to full Iraqi control (the current U.S. military strategy).
- Increase the training of Iraqi forces and engage Iraq's neighbors to reduce the violence (the core of the Iraq Study Group report).
- Partition Iraq (Senator Joseph Biden's [D-Del.] proposal).
- Withdraw U.S. forces immediately (House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.] and Senator Carl Levin's [D-Mich.] suggestion).

None of these proposals offers any prospect for success in Iraq; all, in fact, make defeat and regional war far more likely.

Train and Transition

This is the current U.S. military strategy as outlined repeatedly by MNF–I commander, GEN George Casey. This approach is at odds with the "clear-hold-build" strategy outlined by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and President George W. Bush more than a year ago. The American Military command has never tried to implement clear-hold-build because it has never given U.S. forces in Iraq the mission of providing security to the Iraqi people. MNF–I has instead focused on training Iraqi forces and has used its mobile units reactively to regain control of insurgent strongholds. The exceptions to this principle proved the rule: Operations Together Forward I and II used American forces to clear neighborhoods, but sought to rely exclusively on Iraqis to hold them afterward—the main reason for the failure of those operations.

The creation of a trained Iraqi Army of more than 130,000 soldiers in just a few years starting from scratch has been an amazing accomplishment. The determination of Iraqi soldiers, who put their lives on the line just to enlist in an environment in which terrorists regularly target recruiting stations, is astonishing. But as the capabilities of the Iraqi Army have steadily increased, the sectarian violence has increased even faster. Unless the United States takes action to bring the violence down to a level at which the growing Iraqi Security Forces can control it, then the violence will ultimately destroy those security forces as well. Although MNF–I has repeatedly published maps of Iraq with expanding areas of green, denoting regions that have been "transitioned" to Iraqi control, these graphics and metrics do not correctly indicate whether the United States is succeeding or failing in Iraq. Despite these transitions, the United States is on a glide-path to defeat and not victory. The current strategy has clearly failed and must be replaced quickly.

Train and Negotiate

The Iraq Study Group (ISG) proposed to increase the number of embedded trainers, eliminate almost all other U.S. combat forces in Iraq, and negotiate with Iran and Syria to control the violence. This report has already considered why simply embedding more soldiers with Iraqi units is not likely to increase the capability of the Iraqi Army rapidly and may even slow down its improvement by removing opportunities for the Iraqis to conduct operations together with America's outstanding soldiers and marines. The ISG report also ignores the significant delay before new Iraqi forces can take the field, even with accelerated training. What will happen to the insurgency and violence in that time? Clearly it will continue to grow. Very likely it will rapidly grow beyond the point at which any plausible increase in Iraqi forces' capabilities could control it.

The ISG counters by proposing that the United States and the Iraqi Government open negotiations with Iran and Syria in an effort to persuade them to contain the growing sectarian violence. It is beyond the scope of this report to consider whether the Iranians or Syrians are likely to be helpful in such negotiations, but there is no reason to imagine that they could control the violence in Iraq even if they wished to.

Iran provides Shiite groups of all varieties with weapons, expertise, advice, and money. Syria tacitly permits the movement of insurgents across its borders. This assistance to the rebels increases the overall level of violence in Iraq, as well as the lethality of certain insurgent attacks. But could the Iranians and the Syrians turn the violence off?

To begin with, there is ample evidence that the various insurgencies in Iraq have developed their own multifarious sources of funding, mostly resulting from criminal activities and corruption that they siphon off for their own purposes. They also have an ample stock of high explosives: Saddam Hussein packed his country with ammunition warehouses for more than a decade. As one observer put it: "There's enough high explosives in Iraq now to maintain the current level of violence for a thousand years." If the Iranians cut off their supplies, the insurgents would still be able to fund their enterprises. They would still have the wherewithal to make IEDs and car bombs, and they would still recruit suicide bombers. Outside sources of assistance help them, but the withdrawal of those resources would not stop them.

Could the Iranians order SCIRI or the Jaysh al-Mahdi to stop their attacks? It is extremely unlikely. To begin with, although SCIRI and Jaysh al-Mahdi are Shiites, they are Arabs, not Persians. It will always be difficult for Iraqi Shiites to obey explicit instructions from Iranians for cultural reasons. But, above all, the escalating violence in Iraq results less from Iranian encouragement than from the internal dynamics of Iraq itself.

The Shiite community in Iraq remained remarkably quiescent under increasing Sunni attacks through 2004 and 2005, despite rapidly growing tensions between Iran and the United States. The explosion in sectarian violence followed the bombing of the Samarra mosque. The recruiting and propaganda of Shiite groups relies heavily on portraying them as defenders of the Shiite people against Sunni assaults. It is difficult to imagine how they would explain abandoning their fight in the face of continuing Sunni attacks simply because the Iranians tell them to do so. The vigilante groups that are in some respects the most worrisome manifestation of the nascent civil war will not listen to the Iranians at all. These are mostly local, self-organized groups aimed at preventing and avenging attacks on their communities. The only way to bring such groups under control is to establish security, thereby removing their only real reason for being.

And who could bring the Sunni Arab insurgents under control? Syria, still less Iran, does not control al-Qaeda in Iraq or Ansar al-Sunna. Such groups take orders from no state and cannot be made to stop their activities by a diktat from Damascus

or Tehran. The Baathists are no more likely to stop their fighting simply because the Syrians intervene with them. To begin with, the Baathists are Iraqi nationalists, unlikely to take orders from foreign regimes. Neither are they organized into a neat hierarchical system that would facilitate Syrian discussions with them. When the United States destroyed the Iraqi Baathist state in 2003, it also destroyed the political and some of the social hierarchy in the Sunni Arab community. The lack of a clear hierarchy that controls its followers has severely hindered the U.S. ability to negotiate with the insurgents during its attempts to do so and will limit the Syrians no less.

The problem with relying on Iraq's neighbors to control the violence is less that they will not do so than that they cannot. This approach is a blind alley that will lead nowhere because it misrepresents the fundamental nature of the problem in Iraq.

Partition Iraq

This approach takes as its basis the assumption that Iraq naturally falls into three parts. Supporters of it usually point to one of two mutually contradictory facts: Iraq has three main social groups (Sunni Arabs, Shiites, and Kurds), and the Iraqi state was formed in 1921 from three Ottoman vilayets or administrative districts. Iraq, advocates of this view say, is an artificial creation that would be more stable if we allowed it to fall back into its natural, trinary form.

To begin with, the fact that the Ottoman Empire chose to rule what is now Iraq via three administrative districts does not make the present Iraqi state an artificial creation. On the contrary, from prehistoric times the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers and the land between them have formed a single community, often composed of multiple ethnicities and religions but functioning as an economic and often political unit.

Ottoman administrative practice should not convince modern observers that Iraq is by nature a tripartite state. The Ottomans did not align territory according to modern concepts of national self-determination. They divided and conquered, as did most other empires. The notion of some preindependence Iraqi system in which each social group controlled its own area in peace is a myth. Any such tripartite structure would itself be an artificial innovation with no historical basis.

The Ottoman vilayets (of Mosul, Baghdad, and Basra) were not themselves homogeneous ethnic or sectarian groupings. Mosul, Baghdad, Baquba, and Kirkuk, four of Iraq's principal cities, have long been mixed at both the metropolitan and the neighborhood level.

Even now, a high proportion of Iraqis live in mixed communities. Partitioning the country could only result from the migration of millions of people. Many would resist. Bloodbaths would ensue. When this process occurred in the Balkans in the 1990s the international community called it "ethnic cleansing" and "genocide." It is difficult to imagine how the United States and the international community could now accept and even propose a solution that they rightly condemned not a decade ago.

These principled considerations parallel practical concerns. Who would get Baghdad? The capital is now mixed between Sunni and Shia. Depriving one group of that city and giving it to another would create an obvious sense of victory and defeat between the groups—not something that bodes well for subsequent stability. If the international community sought to divide Baghdad, where would it draw the line? The Tigris seems an obvious choice, but it has already become impossible. There are many Sunnis living east of the river and many Shiites living to the west. Jaysh al-Mahdi fighters are working hard to seize more territory on the West Bank and drive the Sunnis farther out. If the United States allows this process to continue, as advocates of partition suggest, America will de facto be giving Baghdad to the Shiites at the cost of the dislocation of 2 or 3 million Sunnis. Again, this is a process that can only come at the price of hideous suffering and death. Last, there is the problem of oil. The Kurds have oil fields. The Shiites have oil fields. The Sunni Arabs do not. Fear of the loss of oil revenue is one factor driving the Sunni insurgency now. Partitioning Iraq would make that fear a permanent reality. Why would the Sunnis stop fighting? They would not. Partition is not only a historical abomination and an invitation for sectarian cleansing and genocide on a vast scale—it is also a recipe for perpetual conflict in Mesopotamia.

Iraq does not break down cleanly into Kurdish, Shia, or Sunni Arab areas either demographically or historically. Rather, within these broad categories there are serious fissures and rivalries which have been exploited by overlords (Ottoman, British, and Iraqi) to maintain central control. These rivalries will not disappear by a simple ethnic or sectarian realignment or oil-sharing scheme. Shia factions will war with each other, and Shia violence could spill into other Arab Shia tribes in the region.

Sunni tribal forces, urban Baathists, Islamic radicals, and other interested states will not allow a peaceful Sunni heartland to be established, even if they could somehow be reconciled to a strip of the upper Euphrates and the Anbar desert. The integration of Kurds into this realignment, and the minority populations that live in Kurdish areas, is far more complicated than most observers recognize, starting with the fact that there are two rival Kurdish parties now, reflecting important linguistic and tribal distinctions. Considering the presence of large numbers of Turkmen, Yazidi, and other minority groups in the lands that a partition would give to Kurdistan presents another set of problems that partitioning will only exacerbate.

Withdrawal

Advocates of immediate withdrawal fall into a number of camps. Some propose pulling American forces out of Iraq because they opposed the war to begin with. Others argue that we have already lost and that further efforts to turn the tide are useless. Still others claim that American interests would be better served by withdrawing to other parts of region—or withdrawing from the region altogether. Slightly more sophisticated advocates of this plan argue that the American presence in Iraq is an irritant and permits a sort of laziness on the part of the Iraqi Government. Consequently, they say, a U.S. withdrawal would both reduce the violence and force the Iraqis to contribute more effectively. Many of these arguments are irrelevant or invalid. All face a challenge that advocates have an obligation to answer: What will happen in Iraq and in the region following a withdrawal of U.S. forces, and why will that be better for America than attempting to win?

The War Was Wrong From the Beginning. This argument for withdrawal is without any logical foundation. Whatever the wisdom or folly of the initial decision to invade Iraq in 2003, the problems the United States faces there now are real and imminent. The lives of millions of people literally hang in the balance in a country poised on the brink of full-scale civil war. The issues at stake are far too important to allow resentment at an earlier decision to prevent a rational assessment of the best course of action today. America has a responsibility to pursue its own interests in Iraq, and those interests require establishing security and a legitimate government. And America has an obligation to the Iraqi people that it would be immoral and reprehensible to ignore.

The War Is Already Lost. The war is not lost. The legitimate, elected Iraqi Government remains stable and commands the support of the majority of the Iraqi people. The Armed Forces of Iraq are at their posts, training and fighting every day. The levels of violence in Iraq per capita are far lower than those of Bosnia and Kosovo in the 1990s, and the United States was able to contain those conflicts. By any measure, victory in Iraq is still possible if the United States has the will and the skill to seek it.

Those who disagree with this assessment still have an obligation, moreover, to propose a positive strategy for moving forward. Accepting defeat might solve an immediate problem, but international politics will not stop when we have done so. What will happen in Iraq? What will happen in the region? What will the United States have to do? Will that situation actually be better or worse than attempting to fight through a difficult time now? Advocating immediate withdrawal without answering these questions persuasively and in detail is irresponsible.

Many who prefer immediate withdrawal implicitly or explicitly believe that the United States can find a "soft landing" that will contain the violence and prevent it from spreading throughout the region. After all, no sensible and responsible person could advocate an approach that would ignite the entire Middle East in full-scale sectarian war. A forthcoming study from the Saban Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institute, whose interim findings have been publicly presented, casts serious doubt on the likelihood of any "soft landing," however. The study's codirector, Kenneth Pollack, argues that the history of civil wars strongly suggests that the Iraq conflict will spill over onto Iraq's neighbors on a large scale. It is highly likely not only to involve them in Iraq's struggles, but to ignite secondary civil wars within those states that may spread even further. He argues that there is no natural checking mechanism that would build up any sort of resistance to this conflict spreading. On the contrary, refugee flows from Iraq are already changing the demographics of the region and will continue to do so. Refugees will appeal to similar ethnic and sectarian groups in their new host countries to involve themselves in the larger struggle. War will spread, involving American interests and allies. It is nearly certain that the United States will find itself reengaging in the Middle East on far worse terms than it now faces. Withdrawal promises at best a partial relief from the immediate pain at the expense of far worse suffering for years to come.

The United States Could Accomplish Its Regional Goals Better by Leaving. Various attempts at sophisticated argumentation claim that America could best regain its lost leverage in the Middle East by pulling back from Iraq and focusing on other issues. Again, advocates of this approach rarely consider the likely consequences of withdrawal and how the prospects of regional war will probably destroy any leverage the United States might hypothetically gain. They ignore completely, moreover, the fact that America's defeat in Iraq will destroy its credibility in the region and around the world for years to come.

When the United States first invaded Iraq in 2003, the Iranian regime was clearly frightened. It responded to that fear by lying low and reducing the level of tension with the West. By mid-2004, Tehran had decided that the United States was bogged down in a war it was losing. The Iranians seized that opportunity to move forward aggressively with their nuclear program despite international opposition, to court conflict with the United States, and to increase support for Shiite militias in Iraq. What will happen if the United States withdraws from Iraq and abandons that country to chaos? The likeliest outcome is that Iran will seek and possibly achieve hegemony in the region. Iran is by far the largest and strongest state in the Middle East, even without nuclear weapons. The creation of a power vacuum on its western frontier would make it stronger still. With neither a strong Iraqi nor an American presence, Tehran's writ would run throughout the gulf region virtually unopposed. It is very difficult to see how such an outcome restores any degree of leverage in the Middle East to a defeated United States.

The American Presence in Iraq Is the Problem. This argument is simply untrue. There are two simple tests to apply: How has the pattern of violence in Iraq correlated with the size of American forces, and whom are the insurgents attacking? If the irritating presence of American soldiers were the primary cause of violence in Iraq, then more American troops should lead to more violence and fewer troops would produce less violence. In fact, the opposite has been the case. When the United States has increased force levels in Iraq in the past in order to provide security for elections and the constitutional referendum, violence dropped significantly. When U.S. forces cleared Tall Afar, Mosul, and Sadr City in 2004, violence dropped. As MNF–I has attempted to reduce the American presence in Iraq prematurely, violence has increased. Correlating American presence with violence does not suggest that American forces are the problem, but rather that they are part of the solution.

The idea that American troops are the irritant in Iraq does not explain the fact that attacks by Iraqis on other Iraqis are steadily increasing. If the American troop presence is causing the bloodshed, why are Iraqis killing each other, rather than coalition forces, in growing numbers? This explanation also suffers from the fact that repeated anecdotes reveal that many Iraqis prefer to see American troops rather than Iraqi police. Sunnis in Baghdad warn each other that they should trust Iraqi Government forces only when they are accompanied by American soldiers. It is difficult to see in such examples proof of the theorem that the U.S. presence is the source of the problem, still less that removing U.S. forces would lead to peace.

CONCLUSION

America faces a serious challenge in Iraq today, and there are no simple or easy solutions. The proposal described in this report is only the essential first step on a long road. Successful counterinsurgency strategy requires a skillful blend of military, political, economic, diplomatic, and social initiatives. Although attempts to suppress rebellions through brute force have succeeded in the past on occasion, the methods required to implement them are repugnant to Americans and have rightly been rejected. The emphasis on military power in this proposal does not come from any belief that such power can bring success on its own. On the contrary, the successive phases of this project will examine various aspects of training the Iraqi Security Forces, transitioning to Iraqi governmental control, and other political, economic, and diplomatic developments that are essential components of any successful strategy.

But there is no prospect for any positive developments in Iraq today until the security situation is brought under control. Political processes cannot resolve, absorb, or control communal and terrorist violence at the current levels. Economic development cannot even begin in earnest amidst such bloodshed. Diplomatic approaches cannot resolve a conflict that is driven by internal factors. The top priority of American strategy in Iraq today must be to secure the population and bring the violence under control. Making political progress of any sort a precondition for the start of such an operation will virtually ensure failure and defeat.

There is risk in any military operation, and America and the Iraqi Government and people face a number of clever and determined enemies. The United States has

consistently underestimated the skill and capability of these enemies and relied on overly optimistic assumptions about what would happen in Iraq. It is time to accept reality. The fight in Iraq is difficult. The enemy will work hard to defeat the coalition and the Iraqi Government. Things will not go according to plan. The coalition and the Iraqi Government may fail. But failure is neither inevitable nor tolerable, and so the United States must redouble its efforts to succeed. America must adopt a new strategy based more firmly on successful counterinsurgency practices, and the Nation must provide its commanders with the troops they need to execute that strategy in the face of a thinking enemy. The enemy has been at war with us for nearly 4 years. The United States has emphasized restraint and caution. It is time for America to go to war and win. And America can.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Dr. Kagan.

Dr. Carpenter.

STATEMENT OF DR. TED GALEN CARPENTER, VICE PRESIDENT OF DEFENSE AND FOREIGN POLICY STUDIES, CATO INSTITUTE, WASHINGTON, DC

Dr. CARPENTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I want to thank the committee for the invitation to offer my views this afternoon.

I have provided a longer written statement, and I would request that that be included in the record.

The CHAIRMAN. In the case of all of you, if you have a written statement that exceeded or was different than what your verbal testimony is, that'll be included in the record.

Dr. CARPENTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Optimism about the United States mission in Iraq has faded dramatically in the past few months. The bipartisan Iraq Study Group accurately concluded that the situation was, "grave and deteriorating." The Pentagon's report to Congress in November 2006 paints a similarly dismal picture, with attacks on United States troops, Iraqi security forces, and Iraqi civilians all at record levels. Yet, proponents of the war refuse to admit what is increasingly obvious: That Washington's Iraq occupation and democratization mission is failing and there is little realistic prospect that its fortunes will improve. Something much more dramatic than a modest course correction is needed.

It is essential to ask the administration and its supporters at what point they will admit that the costs of this venture have become unbearable. How much longer are they willing to have our troops stay in Iraq? Two years? Five years? Ten years? How many more tax dollars are they willing to pour into Iraq? Another $300 billion? $600 billion? One trillion? And, most crucial of all, how many more American lives are they willing to sacrifice? Two thousand? Five thousand? Ten thousand? It is time for the supporters of the war to be specific.

Proponents of the mission avoid addressing such unpleasant questions. Instead, they act as though victory in Iraq can be achieved merely through the exercise of willpower, that we can simply choose victory.

Whether or not one describes it as a civil war, the security situation in Iraq is extraordinarily violent and chaotic. Moreover, the nature of the violence has shifted, with the principal component now sectarian strife between Sunnis and Shiites. The Iraq Study Group noted that 4 of Iraq's 18 provinces are, "highly insecure." And those provinces account for 40 percent of the country's population.

A November 2006 U.N. report highlights the extent of the growing bloodshed. The carnage is now running at at least 120 victims each day. We must remember, this is occurring in a country of barely 26 million people. A comparable pace in the United States would be a horrifying 1,400 deaths per day, or nearly 500,000 a year. If political violence were consuming that many American lives, there would be little debate about whether the United States was in a civil war.

In addition to the growing violence, there is mounting evidence that the majority of Iraqis no longer want United States troops in their country. The bottom line is that the United States is mired in a country that is already in the early stages of an exceedingly complex multisided civil war, and this is not just a war between Sunnis and Shia, this is a war with multiple factions, including internal conflicts among the various sects. It is also a situation where all significant factions, save one—the Kurds—want American troops to leave. That is an untenable situation.

Increasing the number of United States troops in Iraq by 21,000 or so is a futile attempt to salvage a mission that has gone terribly wrong. It would merely increase the number of casualties, both American and Iraqi, over the short term, while having little long-term impact on the security environment. Moreover, the magnitude of the proposed buildup falls far short of the numbers needed to give the occupation forces a realistic prospect of suppressing the violence. Experts on counterinsurgency, for many, many years, have consistently concluded that at least 10 soldiers per 1,000 population are required to have a sufficient impact. And, indeed, many experts have argued that, in cases where armed resistance is intense and pervasive, which certainly seems to apply to Iraq, deployments of 20 soldiers per 1,000 may be needed. Given Iraq's population of 26 million, such a mission would require the deployment of at least 260,000 ground forces, and probably as many as 520,000. We simply don't have the troops for that kind of mission.

A limited surge of additional troops is the latest illusory panacea offered by the people who brought us the Iraq quagmire in the first place. It is an idea that should be rejected, and, instead, the United States needs to withdraw from Iraq.

Proponents of staying in Iraq offer several reasons why a prompt withdrawal would be bad for the United States. They argue that al-Qaeda's 1,300 fighters will somehow take over Iraq, that a United States withdrawal will embolden Islamic radicals worldwide, that a withdrawal will lead to a regional Sunni-Shiite proxy war, and that leaving Iraq without achieving our goals would betray a moral obligation to the Iraqi people. I deal with all of those allegations, at some length, in my written statement. Suffice it to say here that those arguments vary in terms of plausibility. Some, especially the notion that al-Qaeda will be able to take over Iraq, are farfetched; others, especially the concern about a regional proxy war, have some validity. All of them, though, are ultimately deficient as a reason for keeping United States troops in Iraq.

A decision to withdraw and leave Iraq to its own fate is certainly not without adverse consequences. America's terrorist adversaries will portray the pullout as a defeat for U.S. policy. But staying on

indefinitely in a dire and deteriorating security environment is even worse for our country.

The costs, both tangible and intangible, of a prompt exit must be measured against the costs of staying in Iraq. Moreover, even if the United States absorbs the costs of a prolonged mission, there is no realistic prospect that anything resembling victory resides at the end of that effort. Indeed, most of the indicators suggest that we would be merely delaying the inevitable.

The intangible costs are already considerable. America's reputation in the Muslim world is at its lowest level in history, largely because of the Iraq mission. America's reputation elsewhere in the world, including among longstanding allies and friends, has, likewise, taken a major hit. The All-Volunteer Force has been strained to the breaking point, and the social wounds that the Vietnam war inflicted on our society, which took so long to heal, have been ripped open. Our country is, once again, bitterly divided over a murky war. The longer we stay in Iraq, the worse all of those problems will become.

The tangible costs are even more depressing. The financial tab for the Iraq mission is already some $350 billion, and the meter is running at approximately $8 billion a month, and that is before the President's new escalation. Furthermore, even those appalling figures do not take into account substantial indirect costs, such as the expense of long-term care for wounded Iraq war veterans.

The United States needs to adopt a decisive withdrawal strategy, measured in months, not years. A longer schedule would simply prolong the agony. Emotionally, deciding to leave under current conditions will not be easy, for it requires an implicit admission that Washington has failed in its ambitious goal to create a stable, united, democratic secular Iraq that would be a model for peace throughout the Middle East. But that goal was unrealistic, from the outset. It is difficult for any nation, and especially the American superpower, to admit failure. However, it is better to admit failure while the adverse consequences are manageable. Failure in Iraq would be a setback for the United States, particularly in terms of global clout and credibility, but one of the advantages to being a superpower is that the country can absorb a setback without experiencing catastrophic damages to its core interests or capabilities. Failure in Iraq does not even come close to threatening those core interests and capabilities. Most important, a withdrawal now will be less painful than withdrawing years from now, when the cost in blood, treasure, and credibility will be even greater.

The withdrawal needs to be comprehensive, not partial. The only troops remaining in Iraq should be a modest number of special forces personnel who would work with political factions to eradicate the al-Qaeda interlopers in their country. It must be clear to Iraqis and to populations throughout the Muslim world that Washington has no intention of trying to maintain a military presence in Iraq. That has already become a lightning rod for the Muslim world. Above all, United States policymakers need to absorb the larger lesson of the Iraq debacle. Launching an elective war in pursuit of a nation-building fantasy was an act of folly. It is a folly that policymakers should vow never to repeat.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Carpenter follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. TED GALEN CARPENTER, VICE PRESIDENT OF DEFENSE AND FOREIGN POLICY STUDIES, CATO INSTITUTE, WASHINGTON, DC

Optimism about the U.S. mission in Iraq has faded dramatically in the past few months. The bipartisan Iraq Study Group conceded that the situation in Iraq was "grave and deteriorating." The Pentagon's report to Congress in November 2006 paints a similarly dismal picture, with attacks on U.S. troops, Iraqi security forces, and Iraqi civilians at record levels.

Yet proponents of the war refuse to admit what is becoming increasingly obvious: Washington's Iraq occupation and democratization mission is failing, and there is little realistic prospect that its fortunes will improve. Something much more dramatic than a modest course correction is needed.

It is essential to ask the administration and its hawkish backers at what point they will admit that the costs of this venture have become unbearable. How much longer are they willing to have our troops stay in Iraq? Five years? Ten years? Twenty years? How many more tax dollars are they willing to pour into Iraq? Another $300 billion? $600 billion? $1 trillion? And most crucial of all, how many more American lives are they willing to sacrifice? Two thousand? Five thousand? Ten thousand?

Proponents of the mission avoid addressing such unpleasant questions. Instead, they act as though victory in Iraq can be achieved merely through the exercise of will power.

THE DIRE SECURITY SITUATION IN IRAQ

Whether or not one describes it as a civil war, the security situation in Iraq is extraordinarily violent and chaotic. Moreover, the nature of the violence in that country has shifted since the February 2006 bombing of the Golden Mosque in Samarra, one of Shia Islam's holiest sites. The Sunni-led insurgency against United States and British occupation forces and the security forces of the U.S.-sponsored Iraqi Government is still a significant factor, but it is no longer the dominant one. The turmoil now centers around sectarian violence between Sunnis and Shiites. Baghdad is the epicenter of that strife, but it has erupted in other parts of the country as well. The Iraq Study Group noted that four of Iraq's 18 provinces are "highly insecure." Those provinces account for about 40 percent of the country's population.

A November 2006 U.N. report highlights the extent of the growing bloodshed. The carnage is now running at approximately 120 victims each day. This is occurring in a country of barely 26 million people. A comparable pace in the United States would be a horrifying 1,400 deaths per day—or nearly 500,000 per year. If violence between feuding political or ethno-religious factions was consuming that many American lives, there would be little debate about whether the United States was experiencing a civil war.

In addition to the casualties in Iraq, there are other human costs. The United Nations estimates that some 1.6 million people have been displaced inside Iraq (i.e., they are "internal refugees") as a result of the fighting. Another 1.8 million have fled the country entirely, mostly to Jordan and Syria. Moreover, the pace of the exodus is accelerating. Refugees are now leaving Iraq at the rate of nearly 3,000 a day. The bulk of those refugees are middle and upper class families. Indeed, there are affluent neighborhoods in Baghdad and other cities that now resemble ghost towns.

THE COMPLEX NATURE OF THE VIOLENCE

The mounting chaos in Iraq is not simply a case of Sunni-Shiite sectarian violence, although that is the dominant theme. The Iraq Study Group notes the complexity of Iraq's security turmoil. "In Kirkuk, the struggle is between Kurds, Arabs, and Turkmen. In Basra and the south, the violence is largely an intra-Shia struggle." Implicitly rejecting the arguments of those who contend that the violence is primarily a Sunni-Shia conflict confined to Baghdad, the members of the commission point out that "most of Iraq's cities have a sectarian mix and are plagued by persistent violence. Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki warns that conflicts in the various regions could be "Shiite versus Shiite and Sunni versus Sunni."

There is also mounting evidence that the majority of Iraqis no longer want U.S. troops in their country. The bottom line is that the United States is mired in a country that is already in the early stages of an exceedingly complex, multisided civil war, and where all significant factions save one (the Kurds) want American troops to leave. That is an untenable situation.

ILLUSORY SOLUTION—SEND MORE TROOPS

Increasing the number of U.S. troops in Iraq by 20,000 or so is a futile attempt to salvage a mission that has gone terribly wrong. In all likelihood, it would merely increase the number of casualties—both American and Iraqi—over the short term while having little long-term impact on the security environment. Moreover, the magnitude of the proposed buildup falls far short of the numbers needed to give the occupation forces a realistic prospect of suppressing the violence. Experts on counterinsurgency strategies have consistently concluded that at least 10 soldiers per 1,000 population are required to have a sufficient impact. Indeed, some experts have argued that in cases where armed resistance is intense and pervasive (which certainly seems to apply to Iraq), deployments of 20 soldiers per thousand may be needed.

Given Iraq's population (26 million) such a mission would require the deployment of at least 260,000 ground forces (an increase of 115,000 from current levels) and probably as many as 520,000. Even the lower requirement will strain the U.S. Army and Marine Corps to the breaking point. Yet a lesser deployment would have no realistic chance to get the job done. A limited "surge" of additional troops is the latest illusory panacea offered by the people who brought us the Iraq quagmire in the first place. It is an idea that should be rejected.

CONSEQUENCES OF LEAVING

Proponents of staying in Iraq offer several reasons why a prompt withdrawal would be bad for the United States. Those arguments vary in terms of plausibility. All of them, though, are ultimately deficient as a reason for keeping U.S. troops in Iraq.

Allegation: Al-Qaeda would take over Iraq

Administration officials and other supporters of the war have warned repeatedly that a "premature" withdrawal of U.S. forces would enable al-Qaeda to turn Iraq into a sanctuary to plot and launch attacks against the United States and other Western countries. But al-Qaeda taking over Iraq is an extremely improbable scenario. The Iraq Study Group put the figure of foreign fighters at only 1,300; a relatively small component of the Sunni insurgency against U.S. forces. It strains credulity to imagine 1,300 fighters (and foreigners at that) taking over and controlling a country of 26 million people.

The challenge for al-Qaeda would be even more daunting than those raw numbers suggest. The organization does have some support among the Sunni Arabs in Iraq, but opinion even among that segment of the population is divided. A September 2006 poll conducted by the Program on International Policy Attitudes at the University of Maryland found that 94 percent of Sunnis had a somewhat, or highly, unfavorable attitude toward al-Qaeda. As the violence of al-Qaeda attacks has mounted, and the victims are increasingly Iraqis—not Americans—many Sunnis have turned against the terrorists. There have even been a growing number of reports during the past year of armed conflicts between Iraqi Sunnis and foreign fighters.

The PIPA poll also showed that 98 percent of Shiite respondents and 100 percent of Kurdish respondents had somewhat, or very, unfavorable views of al-Qaeda. The notion that a Shiite-Kurdish-dominated government would tolerate Iraq becoming a safe haven for al-Qaeda is improbable on its face. And even if U.S. troops left Iraq, the successor government would continue to be dominated by the Kurds and Shiites, since they make up more than 80 percent of Iraq's population and, in marked contrast to the situation under Saddam Hussein, they now control the military and police. That doesn't suggest a reliable safe haven for al-Qaeda.

Allegation: The terrorists would be emboldened worldwide

In urging the United States to persevere in Iraq, President Bush has warned that an early military withdrawal would encourage al-Qaeda and other terrorist organizations. Weak U.S. responses to challenges over the previous quarter century, especially in Lebanon and Somalia, had emboldened such people, Bush argues. Hawkish pundits have made similar allegations.

It is a curious line of argument with ominous implications, for it assumes that the United States should have stayed in both countries, despite the military debacles there. The mistake, according to that logic, was not the original decision to intervene but the decision to limit American losses and terminate the missions. That is a classic case of learning the wrong lessons from history.

Yes, al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups apparently concluded that the Lebanon and Somalia episodes showed that U.S. leaders and the American people have no stomach for enduring murky missions that entail significant casualties. They are

likely to draw a similar lesson if the United States withdraws from Iraq without an irrefutable triumph. That is why it is so imperative to be cautious about a decision to intervene in the first place. Military missions should not be undertaken unless there are indisputably vital American security interests at stake.

A decision to withdraw and leave Iraq to its own fate is not without adverse consequences. America's terrorist adversaries will portray a pullout as a defeat for U.S. policy. But the cost of staying on indefinitely in a dire security environment is even worse for our country. President Bush and his advisors need to consider the possibility that the United States might stay in Iraq for many years to come and still not achieve its policy goals. And the costs, both in blood and treasure, continue to mount.

Allegation: The conflict will spill over Iraq's borders and create regional chaos

That concern does have some validity. The ingredients are in place for a regional Sunni-Shia "proxy war." Predominantly Shiite Iran has already taken a great interest in political and military developments in its western neighbor. Indeed, Washington has repeatedly accused Tehran of interfering in Iraq. There is little doubt that Iran wants to see a Shiite-controlled government in Baghdad and would react badly if it appeared that Iraq's Sunni minority might be poised to regain power and once again subjugate the Shiite majority. The current Iraqi Government is quite friendly to Iran, and Tehran can be expected to take steps to protect the new-found influence it enjoys in Baghdad.

But Iraq's other neighbors are apprehensive about the specter of a Shiite-controlled Iraq. Saudi Arabia, in particular, regards the prospect of such a state on its northern border as anathema, worrying about the impact on its own Shia minority—which is concentrated in the principal oil-producing region. There are indications that wealthy Saudis are already providing funds to Sunni forces in Iraq.

A regional Sunni-Shiite proxy war in Iraq would turn the Bush administration's policy there into even more of a debacle than it has already become. Even worse, Iraq's neighbors could be drawn in as direct participants in the fighting. Washington should take steps to head off those dangers.

Probably the best approach would be for the United States to convene a regional conference that included (at a minimum) Iran, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Jordan, and Turkey. The purpose of such a conference should be to make all parties confront the danger of the Iraqi turmoil mushrooming into a regional armed struggle that ultimately would not be in the best interests of any country involved. Ideally, that realization might lead to a commitment by the neighboring states to refrain from—or at least bound the extent of—meddling in the escalating violence in Iraq

Ultimately, though, maintaining a U.S. military occupation of Iraq to forestall a possible regional proxy war is simply too high a price to pay, both in money spent and American lives sacrificed.

Allegation: Leaving Iraq would betray a moral obligation to the Iraqi people

In addition to their other objections, opponents of withdrawal protest that we will leave Iraq in chaos, and that would be an immoral action on the part of the United States. Even some critics of the war have been susceptible to that argument, invoking the so-called Pottery Barn principle: "You broke it, you bought it."

There are two major problems with that argument. First, unless some restrictions are put in place, the obligation is seemingly open-ended. There is little question that chaos might increase in Iraq after U.S. forces leave, but advocates of staying the course do not explain how the United States can prevent the contending factions in Iraq from fighting the civil war they already seem to have started. At least, no one has explained how the United States can restore the peace there at anything resembling a reasonable cost in American blood and treasure.

Leaving aside the very real possibility that the job of building a stable democracy might never be done, the moral obligation thesis begs a fundamental question: What about the moral obligation of the U.S. Government to its own soldiers and to the American people? There is clearly an obligation not to waste either American lives or American tax dollars. We are doing both in Iraq. Staying the course is not a moral strategy; it is the epitome of an immoral one.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF STAYING IN IRAQ

Leaving Iraq is clearly not cost-free, but the costs (both tangible and intangible) of a prompt exit must be measured against the costs of staying the course. Moreover, even if the United States absorbs the costs of a prolonged mission, there is no certainty that anything resembling victory resides at the end of that effort. Indeed, most of the indicators suggest that we would be merely delaying defeat.

Damage to America's standing in the world

Even the September 2006 National Intelligence Estimate on Iraq conceded that the U.S. occupation of Iraq had served as a focal point and inspiration for Muslim extremists. Equally worrisome, it had also served as a training arena for such militants to hone their military and terrorist skills. An al-Qaeda letter intercepted by the U.S. military indicates that the organization itself regards a continued U.S. military presence and, consequently, a long war in Iraq as a boon to its cause.

A December 2006 Zogby poll of populations in five Arab nations reveals just how much anti-U.S. sentiment has increased throughout that region. Opinions of the United States, which were already rather negative, have grown significantly worse in the past year.

Outside the Arab world, there also has been a hardening of attitudes toward the United States. Even among longstanding friends and allies (in such places as Europe and East Asia), the United States is viewed in a significantly more negative light. The longer we stay in Iraq, the worse those problems will become.

Straining the All-Volunteer military

Even some hawks are concerned about the negative impact of the Iraq mission on the All-Volunteer Force (AVF). They should be concerned. In December 2006, GEN Peter J. Schoomaker, the Army's Chief of Staff, bluntly told a House committee that the Active-Duty Army "will break" unless there was a permanent increase in force structure. And that is before any contemplated additional deployments to Iraq.

The military leaders are not exaggerating. Already the Army has struggled to meet its recruiting goals, even though it has diluted the standards for new recruits, including by issuing waivers in cases where there is evidence of criminal behavior or mental illness. Indeed, the Iraq occupation has been sustained to this point only through extraordinary exertions, including an unprecedented number of "stop loss" orders, preventing military personnel from returning to civilian life when their terms of enlistment are up, and recalling members of the Reserves—including some people in their forties and fifties. The AVF is straining to the breaking point already, and the longer we stay in Iraq, the worse those strains will become.

Costs in blood and treasure

The tab for the Iraq mission is already more than $350 billion, and the meter is now running at approximately $8 billion a month. Furthermore, even those appalling figures do not take into account indirect costs, such as long-term care for wounded Iraq war veterans.

Except when the survival of the Nation is at stake, all military missions must be judged according to a cost-benefit calculation. Iraq has never come close to being a war for America's survival. Even the connection of the Iraq mission to the larger war against radical Islamic terrorism was always tenuous, at best. For all of his odious qualities, Saddam Hussein was a secular tyrant, not an Islamic radical. Indeed, the radical Islamists expressed nearly as much hatred for Saddam as they did for the United States. Iraq was an elective war—a war of choice, and a bad choice at that.

DECIDING TO LEAVE

The United States needs to adopt a withdrawal strategy measured in months, not years. Indeed, the President should begin the process of removing American troops immediately, and that process needs to be complete in no more than 6 months. A longer schedule would simply prolong the agony. It would also afford various Iraq factions (especially the Kurds and some of the Shia political players) the opportunity to try to entice or manipulate the United States into delaying the withdrawal of its forces still further.

Emotionally, deciding to leave under current conditions will not be easy, for it requires an implicit admission that Washington has failed in its ambitious goal to create a stable, united, democratic, secular Iraq that would be a model for peace throughout the Middle East. But that goal was unrealistic from the outset. It is difficult for any nation, and especially the American superpower, to admit failure. However, it is better to admit failure when the adverse consequences are relatively modest. A defeat in Iraq would assuredly be a setback for the United States, particularly in terms of global clout and credibility. But one of the advantages to being a superpower is that the country can absorb a setback without experiencing catastrophic damage to its core interests or capabilities. Defeat in Iraq does not even come close to threatening those interests or capabilities. Most important, a withdrawal now will be less painful than withdrawing years from now when the cost in blood, treasure, and credibility will prove far greater.

The withdrawal needs to be comprehensive, not partial. The only troops remaining in Iraq should be a modest number of Special Forces personnel who would work with political factions in Iraq inclined to eradicate the al-Qaeda interlopers in their country. It must be clear to Iraqis and populations throughout the Muslim world that Washington has no intention of trying to maintain a military presence in Iraq.

Above all, U.S. policymakers need to absorb the larger lesson of the Iraq debacle. Launching an elective war in pursuit of a nation-building chimera was an act of folly. It is a folly they should vow never to repeat in any other country.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Dr. Carpenter.

I'd like to—because my colleagues have been so patient today, why don't I yield my time and I'll ask questions last on our side. And I'll yield first to Senator Menendez.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the courtesy.

I want to thank all of the panelists for their testimony.

I'd like to start with you, Dr. Kagan. Did you have an opportunity to advise the White House about your plan?

Dr. KAGAN. Senator, I have not spoken with the President, but I have spoken with individuals in the White House.

Senator MENENDEZ. Are they senior officials of the White House?

Dr. KAGAN. Yes, Senator.

Senator MENENDEZ. Is the plan that you heard the President describe last night, would you say it is largely your plan?

Dr. KAGAN. Senator, it's very difficult for me to tell. The President gave a very general speech—the elements of the plan relating to the change of mission, the new strategy to try to secure Iraq, the commitment of five additional combat brigades to Baghdad, certainly those are things that we recommended. I have not yet seen, in any detail, the actual military proposal that the President intends to pursue, and so, I can't really say to what extent this is my plan.

Senator MENENDEZ. Do you agree with the essence of his plan last night?

Dr. KAGAN. Well, I certainly believe that the change in strategy is essential, that the—we must commit to trying to establish security in Baghdad first. And I do believe that we need additional forces in order to do that.

Senator MENENDEZ. So, what is the timeframe for that? How long do we stay there, under—even under your plan—let's assume, for argument sakes, this is your plan—how long do we stay?

Dr. KAGAN. Our estimates were that we would be able to establish security in Baghdad, at least in the neighborhoods that we were proposing to operate in, by the end of 2007. We believe that we would need to sustain this higher force level into 2008 in order to support operations in Al Anbar, Diyala, and elsewhere. And we believe that somewhere in the 18- to 24-month period, we would be able to begin turning over responsibilities to Iraqi forces and withdrawing.

Senator MENENDEZ. OK. Now, we lead—under your plan, we lead this fight, do we not?

Dr. KAGAN. Under my plan, we would be working together with the Iraqis to clear and hold neighborhoods.

Senator MENENDEZ. But we've heard a lot of testimony, including before this committee the other day—yesterday I think—and we've heard from others, that the Iraqis don't have, at this point, the

ability to show up for the purposes that have been outlined in the securing of Baghdad. Isn't that true? Isn't that pretty much recognized?

Dr. KAGAN. Senator, when we developed our plan, we took into account the possibility that the Iraqis would not come in the numbers that might be desirable. And so, we attempted to define a force level for American troops that would be adequate, even if the Iraqis disappointed us.

Senator MENENDEZ. You know, it just seems to me that we need to be honest with the American people in this plan. This plan, as I see it, including that which is described by the President, wants to be sugarcoated under the guise that Iraqis are going to lead, and we are somehow going to follow and give them assistance. And I clearly have the picture that these American troops who will lead, will be at the forefront, will be the targets, and we will have some Iraqis assisting along the way. And that is a fundamentally different mission than both the President tried to suggest and I heard Secretary Rice try to suggest, this morning, in her opening statement. And I think it's not quite—well, it's not quite honest about what is taking place.

Now, before I came to this afternoon's hearing, I got a notice that the New Jersey National Guard troops currently stationed in Iraq are going to have their tours extended by 120 days as a result of the President's policy to add to the war effort. And I think there is some release out saying that extension of troop tours by both the Guard and Reserve is now going to be part of the policy of the United States for up to an additional year. Isn't that going to have real consequences on a military that is already far stretched and cannot meet these challenges—on morale, on performance in the field, and ultimately on the very recruitment that we need to build up the Armed Forces strength of the United States?

Dr. KAGAN. Senator, I and the Active Duty and retired officers who developed this plan are all very concerned about the strains on the Army and the Marine Corps and the National Guard and Reserves, but we think that, set against that, we must also be extremely concerned about the prospect that the damage that'll be done to the volunteer force by defeat in Iraq, which we believe will be drawn out, at painful and extremely emotionally searing event, and we think that it will actually do much greater damage to the force than the relatively short——

Senator MENENDEZ. Is there an answer to how many lives and how much money?

Dr. KAGAN. Senator, it was not——

Senator MENENDEZ. Where is it that you define, Dr. Kagan, and those who advocate along your lines—where is it that you define that if you do not have success, as you have pointed out a way that you believe we can achieve success, where is the tipping point? Because to listen to those advocates who say that we cannot fail in Iraq and believe that failure, in terms of the military options, is the driving force in—i.e., to create security—we have had escalations and they have not succeeded. Because, in my mind, we haven't had the political surge to do it. Now, you reject that.

The point being, at what point, when you do not succeed again, if you do not succeed again—at what point will you come and tell

us, "Well, if we had another 20, 30, 40,000 troops, we could ultimately succeed here"? It just seems to me that we've been through this in our history before. Where is the tipping point in which you are willing to admit that a different course, than even the one you suggest, is appropriate?

Dr. KAGAN. Senator, I have high confidence that the plan that we proposed will bring down the level of violence in Baghdad, and I believe that that will be a positive good, even if we ultimately have to withdraw from the country because of other unfortunate developments in the political realm. I believe that we need to take this opportunity to try to restore order and try to get ourselves on a track that will avoid some of the terrible consequences of defeat. If that doesn't work, then obviously we will have to reconsider.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you.

Dr. Carpenter, very quickly—I have about a minute left—in your testimony—in your written testimony, you talk about bringing others in a regional conference, including Iran, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Jordan, and Turkey. You heard that maybe—I don't know if you heard—the Secretary of State's answers to two of those partners along the way of not having them engage. Could you give your own reflections on that, and how does bringing Saudi Arabia and Turkey to the table at the same time, in a regional context, gives us an opportunity to offset some of her concerns, and—how do you view that?

Dr. CARPENTER. Senator, I think it is absolutely essential to involve all of Iraq's neighbors in an attempt to try to at least quarantine the violence in that country and prevent it from becoming a regional proxy war, or, even worse, a regional war. That simply cannot be accomplished without involving Iran and Syria. As distasteful as we rightfully regard those governments, they are important actors in the region. And one of the basic lessons I think we need to learn for American foreign policy generally is that it is not very effective to refuse to talk to one's adversaries, that the most difficult task of diplomacy is getting results from regimes that you, quite frankly, wish didn't exist. It's easy to talk to one's friends; it is very, very difficult, but ever so necessary, to talk to one's adversaries. And we are not going to get any kind of solution, even the limited solution of quarantining the violence in Iraq, unless we draw in Iran and Syria, as well as Iraq's other neighbors, into this process.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator.

Senator Lugar.

Senator LUGAR. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I'm going to follow your good example and yield to Senator Corker.

The CHAIRMAN. If I can interrupt for just one moment, I would say to my colleagues, if, in fact, you have additional questions, in light of the relatively small number here, my intention would be to allow you to go back for a second round, if the panel would be willing to stick around.

Thank you.

Senator CORKER. Thank you, gentlemen. I appreciate it.

I enjoyed your remarks. And, again, I want to thank our chairman for the distinguished panelists that we continue to have in these meetings.

I think that we talk a great deal about ending the war in Iraq and withdrawing our troops, but I think we all know that the war in Iraq is going to continue for years, in one way or another, if we leave. And so, I'd like for each of you to respond, if you will, to us, if we, in fact, do withdraw, if, in fact, President Bush's plan is not followed—I'd like for you all to paint the picture—I know there's going to be tremendous civil strife, tens and thousands of lives will be lost in the following period—describe to us, if you will, if withdrawal does occur in a timely fashion—6 months, 9 months—how you view Iraq to be when that occurs.

Ambassador GALBRAITH. Let me take a crack at that, Senator.

Certainly, if we withdraw, there is going to be continued sectarian killing between Sunnis and Shiites. Iran will exercise enormous influence in Iraq. For decades Iran sponsored the Shiite religious parties that, as a result of the U.S. invasion, now control Iraq's government. The central government will not exercise any more authority than it does now, which is to say it will have basically no authority. Kurdistan will continue to be, de facto, independent.

And if we stay in Iraq, all of this will also be the case. There is a civil war in Iraq which we are not containing that civil war. There is terrible sectarian killing, and we're not able to stop it. An increase in the number of troops is not going to help control the killing. Our troops are not trained to be police. They don't speak the language. They don't have the local knowledge. And if they are relying on so-called Iraqi troops, you have to ask the question: Who are those Iraqi troops? They are going to be either Sunni or Shiite or Kurdish peshmerga. If a Sunni or Shiite stops at a roadblock manned by troops or police of the opposite sect, his life is in danger. Unless a Baghdad resident knows the local troops or police are from his own sect, he's not going to feel safe.

So, the short answer is that Iraq after withdrawal and Iraq today are not going to look very much different. There is just the one achievable goal, which is one that Senator Lugar mentioned. We can, I think, disrupt al-Qaeda.

Dr. KAGAN. Senator, if I may, I must respectfully disagree. Iraq, after withdrawal, will look very different. It is not the case that we are doing nothing at all to contain the civil war, and we should not delude ourselves into imagining that if we left, it would simply continue in this similar fashion.

It is certainly true that when Iraqis come to Iraqi checkpoints manned only by Iraqis, at this point, they're frequently nervous if those Iraqis are from another sect, unless there are American soldiers present with them. And right now, we have been very effective in a number of places in maintaining order, keeping a lid on things, working together with Iraqi troops that are there; who do perform infinitely better when we are there and are much more restrained in their behavior and much more tolerated and trusted by the Iraqi population. And you can even see this on Sunni blogs in Iraq, where Sunnis warn each other, "If the Iraqi police come by themselves, we should be very worried about that. If they come

with American troops, it's OK." Now, that's obviously not a good sign for being able to do any sort of rapid transition to the Iraqi police, but that's hardly news. It does mean, first of all, that the Iraqis are less hostile to our presence than many people make out, and it also means that we are playing an important role.

If we were to withdraw precipitantly, the violence would increase dramatically—I think, by orders of magnitude. I think you would end up seeing millions of people displaced. We're already seeing this process underway, and it's extremely unfortunate. I believe that Iraq's neighbors would begin to get involved. They would have to, in terms of self-defense. There are already 900,000 Iraqi refugees in Jordan, for instance. I believe that they would attempt to resolve this problem by moving their own forces forward into Iraq in order to stem the refugee tides and contain the violence before it reaches their borders. I think they would be drawn rapidly into the conflict. I think some of them would seek to be drawn into the conflict by supporting one side or the other. I think, before very long, you would find that the regional—that Iraq's neighbors would see themselves as stakeholders in various parts of the outcome of this conflict, and would begin mobilizing increased degrees of military power to back their stakes.

In short, I believe it's very likely that we would find ourselves in the midst of a regional conflict in a region from which we cannot leave, in an area which we simply cannot abandon, and with the stakes much higher, and the conditions for us much worse, even apart from the humanitarian catastrophe that would be involved.

Senator CORKER. And that sounds a lot like escalation to me, but—go ahead.

Dr. CARPENTER. Senator, first of all, I would agree with almost everything that Ambassador Galbraith said. I think it's important to emphasize that the civil war is already underway in Iraq. We have a situation—I've already cited the number of people dying on a daily basis: 1.6 million people have been displaced internally, largely moving from areas where they are an ethnic minority to one where they are in the majority, so ethnic cleansing and the sectarian divide is growing almost by the day; 1.8 million people have already left the country entirely, and those are primarily the middle-class Iraqis, the very people that we want as the building blocks for a strong civil society—they're leaving. This is with the American troop presence there.

We face the prospect now of trying to play referee in an ongoing multisided civil war. I can't think of anything that would be a more futile and frustrating task than trying to play that role.

And, for Dr. Kagan, I think it's important to stress that this kind of commitment would be open-ended. We would be refereeing this conflict, year after year after year. There would be no discernible end in sight.

As Ambassador Galbraith has already delineated, Iraq has already fragmented. We're seeing this process proceed. But it is very, very unlikely that it's going to be reversed.

Senator CORKER. Well, thank you for your comments. And I really do ask these questions without bias. And I know my time is up, but let me—so, what you're saying is, you would sense no intensified killing, no escalation whatsoever, whether we are there or

not there. You think it will remain exactly as is today. That's what Dr. Galbraith said.

Dr. CARPENTER. I think we're going to see an intensification where—whenever we leave, whether that is 6 months from now or 6 years from now. What we need to focus on—and I agree with him fully—is making sure that al-Qaeda cannot use any portion of Iraq for a safe haven. I think that danger is exaggerated, but it's not insignificant. We do have to deal with that problem. And we need to focus on a limited attainable objective—namely, quarantining that violence in Iraq so that it does not become a regional war. And I believe there is a reasonable prospect of convincing even Iran and Syria that a proxy war can easily spiral out of control and it would not be in their best interest to tolerate that kind of development, that it is better to quarantine this conflict and allow the dynamics in Iraq to play themselves out. Perhaps, at some point, the various factions in Iraq will agree on compromise, either a reasonably peaceful formal partition or a very loose federation with adequate political compromise, but they have to determine that. We cannot determine that outcome for them.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

I say to my friend from Florida, I have taken his advice and—if it's all right with him, right?

Senator Casey.

Senator CASEY. I was fully prepared to give back the favor that Senator Nelson gave me yesterday, but—thank you.

Mr. Chairman, thank you. And I appreciate this opportunity. Not that I don't want to see my colleagues, but this is a nice way to do a hearing. [Laughter.]

You get to this end quicker this way. No; I'm grateful for this opportunity, and I'm grateful for the three of you spending the time and providing the scholarship that you provide for this important discussion today.

My friends in the media should cover this, as they did this morning's hearing, but that's not the way things are done here.

But let me get right to a couple of basic questions. And I think I'll direct some of these at each member of the panel, but, in particular, I guess, the first one, I'd direct in—with specificity, to Dr. Galbraith—Ambassador Galbraith.

You mentioned the presence of, and the activity of, what you called "local theocracies." That's the first time I had heard that kind of pinpoint analysis of what's happening, really, in neighborhoods, so to speak, on that. You talked about local theocracies operating, and action taking place at the local level, which is in contravention of, or in conflict with, the Constitution. Could you amplify that?

Ambassador GALBRAITH. Senator, we talk about Iraq as if there were a functioning Iraqi Government, and that the violence is somehow directed against that government. But the reality is very different. Various Shiite political parties control different parts of the south. In Baghdad, the Mahdi Army controls the Shiite neighborhoods. These political parties and militias enforce their own law. If you're accused of a crime or some offense against the religious law, you don't necessarily go to the state-run courts but, quite often, end up before an ad hoc court that will hand out a summary

punishment. Although the sale of alcohol, for example, is not illegal in Iraq, Christians who sell alcohol have been summarily executed based upon unofficial religious law.

Nonetheless, the Shiite south is relatively a stable situation. To get rid of religious party rule would entail a major military operation involving several hundred thousand troops.

The one place in the south that is not stable is Basrah where three different Shiite parties are vying for the control of the city, and, more importantly, are vying for the control of the smuggling of oil. I have been told by Iraq's Oil Ministry that 100,000 barrels less a day enters the pipeline near Basrah than actually gets on the ships in the Persian Gulf. And this oil is funding these three parties and their militias.

Senator CASEY. And the next question I have pertains just to diplomacy, generally. I'll direct it to the Ambassador, but certainly, Dr. Carpenter, Dr. Kagan, can also weigh in on this, and you should, if—I think we've got enough time. The question of diplomacy. Ambassador, if you had a—I want to say "if you had a magic wand"—but if you had the opportunity to construct a diplomatic strategy, starting today and going forward, forget about the past—there's a lot we could talk about, what I would judge failures, but let's just start from today, going forward—what's the best strategy, in your mind, in terms of dealing with the cards we've been dealt, in terms of an overall fully engaged diplomatic strategy?

Ambassador GALBRAITH. Well, first, I think we need to be clear about our objectives. And even if we wished Iraq were to hold together, we need to be realistic about what is achievable. I believe our top priority should be to avoid—or minimize—the violence that accompanies Iraq's breakup. This violence could escalate sharply if the regional states were to intervene. There is a danger Turkey might intervene in Kirkuk, where a referendum is supposed to be held at the end of this year. Iran might increase its already large role in Iraq. The Saudis have threatened to intervene on behalf of the Sunnis, although I think that's largely an empty threat. Our diplomacy should be aimed at helping Iraq's neighbors face up to the new realities in Iraq, try to make whatever is going to develop as palatable to them as possible.

I don't subscribe to the notion, in the Baker-Hamilton Report, that talking to Iran or Syria would improve the situation in Iraq, because Iran, in fact, supports the same Shiite-led government that we do. The people in power in Iraq are Iran's best friends. Iran has no desire to undermine the Iraqi Government, even if it opposes our presence. And Syria is not a large player; and so, there isn't much to be accomplished there.

I do believe, however, that we should talk to Iran and Syria on other issues. As President Kennedy said in his inaugural address, "we should never negotiate out of fear, but we should never fear to negotiate." I think this advice is highly relevant to Iran and Syria. I might add that I also like this line because it was my father who wrote it for President Kennedy.

The CHAIRMAN. I should be attributing that to your father, then, rather than President Kennedy. That's a great line, and it's a good point.

Senator CASEY. I wanted to ask one more question, but, Dr. Carpenter, Dr. Kagan, if you wanted to weigh in?

Dr. KAGAN. Sure. I think we have to be realistic about what diplomacy can achieve and what diplomacy cannot achieve. I'm not going to say, a priori, that we should or should not negotiate with any state in the region. What I am going to say is that the problems in Iraq that we're facing right now are internal Iraqi problems, primarily. The money for the insurgency is coming primarily from corruption and crime and other things that are internal to Iraq. There are weapons that are coming into Iraq, but, as a friend of mine in the United States military said once, there's enough high explosive in Iraq to keep this conflict going at this level for 1,000 years. There is no real prospect for cutting off supply to this insurgency or to this violence, and thereby turning it off. And therefore, with all of the goodwill in the world, I do not believe that the Iranians or the Syrians are capable of helping us materially in Iraq, even were we to talk to them.

Neither do I believe that it would be effective to try to negotiate with the states or the region in order to get them to hold the ring while their coreligionists slug it out in a vicious sectarian genocidal civil war. I think, you know, it is very odd to me that people are ready to say that the Iraqis are irrational and will not act in their own interests, and that they're simply hopeless, and yet say that, nevertheless, the Iranians will be perfectly rational, despite evidence to the contrary, and other states in the region will behave with perfect rationality, even as the stakes go up and the atrocities mount. I find that, frankly, unlikely.

Senator CASEY. I know we're out of time. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. You had one other question?

Senator CASEY. One quick one. I don't know if it's a yes or no. But in terms of the mechanics of constructing a diplomatic strategy, going forward, what does that mean, specifically, in any of your opinions? Does it mean Secretary Rice, who's leaving, I guess, tomorrow, and will be there for an extended period of time—does that mean she's—in your judgment, stays? Does it mean an envoy? What does it mean? Does it mean the President has to have more personal involvement? What are the building blocks of that kind of a—we can all talk about diplomacy, but what does that mean, practically, in terms of time and personnel and attention, if you get my drift?

Dr. CARPENTER. There are a number of possible options. I would suggest putting a special envoy in charge. I think that's probably the more direct approach. We also have to be realistic. As much as it might be constructive over the long term to engage with Iran and other countries on a variety of issues, the more issues we add to the agenda, the greater the likelihood of a breakdown. And I speak, specifically, if we start bringing in the Israeli-Palestinian dispute into the mix. That almost guarantees failure. I would have a very narrow, very focused agenda, and that is, let's prevent the tragedy in Iraq—and it certainly is that—from becoming a full-blown regional tragedy. That goal, I believe, is attainable. There's no guarantee that we're going to succeed, but we ought to make the effort, and I think there is at least a reasonable prospect we can succeed with that narrow, but extremely important, goal.

Senator CASEY. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Lugar.

Senator LUGAR. Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask, of the panel, reaction to these observations. It would appear that—this may be over generalized, so correct me if I'm wrong—but prior to now our United States forces were, if not on the periphery of Baghdad, were clearly not embedded, as the term is now being used, in the nine police districts of Baghdad. So, if our forces acted within the city, they were on patrol or had been called upon, coming in from the outside, took action, perhaps alongside the police or the army, and withdrew again to the outskirts of the city. And this, at least, is the mode of operations that is being pointed out as permitting a great deal more Iraqi casualties, irrespective of whether those killings are civil war or sectarian violence. But the killings escalated because of certain events. So, it would appear that the plan now being presented by the President is to have Americans embedded; although it is yet been revealed, specifically, what the role of the Americans will be. Some have said, no, it will not be a door-to-door visit alongside an Iraqi police officer; rather, we'll be back at the headquarters, we'll be monitoring the conduct of the Iraqis to make sure that it is neutral with regard to whomever they might encounter on patrol. And, in this way, essentially, there'll be, potentially, better goodwill built among the populace so that the government may have some chance of operating and coming to decisions.

Now, I would suggest that this may be the most important goal. But, on the other hand, weigh this against the fact that some who are arguing this already in the Senate or Congress or the public would say, "This is the last chance, this is an opportunity to stop the unacceptable violence in the Baghdad area. If it doesn't work, we're out of there." And they mean out of Iraq, not out of Baghdad. Now, this concerns me a great deal, because I see that domestic political dynamics might very well lead that way. The President asked for support of his policy, and should it—for some reason, not work very soon, or maybe not work very well at all, and people say, "That's enough."

Now, leaving aside the strategies you all have presented today, in which perhaps you, Dr. Carpenter, have come closest to advocating a total withdrawal of American forces from Iraq. Although I suspect you would have disagreement, as to what American forces do. Some of us have argued that the important objective, really, is to have Americans in Iraq somewhere, and for quite a while, largely to reduce the potential for sectarian violence across the region, and, likewise, to prevent a series of tragedies that could result. It is also important for Secretary Rice on her tour now, or subsequent ones, to convey explicitly that we are going to be there; and, therefore, they can count on that. It's not a negotiation, but it's information. Likewise, maybe if she is successful, she gets a roundtable of all the groups that are involved, the nations, so they all inform each other of what their intent may be. Everybody, sort of, hears it, so that the chances for some regional stability are enhanced in that process.

Now, Ambassador Galbraith has suggested that Americans might, in fact, reside in Kurdistan as—or the Kurd part of the

country, as at least one place that they are welcomed and relatively safe as may be in the area, but this could be any number of places, and I don't want to game that out.

I'm just asking, I suppose, for some advice as to whether, in this current political situation, not only in Iraq, but in the Middle East and here, is it not a more prudent step to think in terms of how we maintain a presence, and that we argue about that, as opposed to numbers, surges, precisely what the Americans will do, door to door or in the headquarters?

Does anyone have a general comment on this?

Ambassador.

Ambassador GALBRAITH. Senator Lugar, the point you make is very similar to the one that I've made in my testimony. That is, the United States does have some remaining achievable objectives. The most important is one that you mentioned: Namely, disrupting al-Qaeda. That is one reason not to withdraw completely. There is some advantage to having United States forces in Iraq as a deterrent. Being in Kurdistan would help stabilize the situation as between Kurdistan and Turkey. I think the independence of Kurdistan is inevitable. It may not be desirable, but it is inevitable. But it's not immediate. And, in that sense, a United States presence can help bring stability to that region, and provide reassurance to Turkey, as well as deter any kind of action that might be taken by the surrounding states.

The reason I argue for a United States military presence in Kurdistan is that that's where our forces would be welcome. If they are anyplace else in the country, they will have to devote large resources to force protection.

I want to come back to a fundamental problem, which I think everybody who has a plan for Iraq must address—what happens after you've done all these things, be it the President's plan or my proposal for a redeployment to Kurdistan? The situation in Iraq is not going to change in any fundamental way. The government of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki reflects the will of the 60 percent of the Iraqi population—the Shiites—who voted for it. The Shiite electorate wishes to define Iraq as a Shiite state. And even Sunnis who despised Saddam Hussein are not going to accept that definition of the state. On the other hand, the Shiites are not going to give up on it. So, you are never going to get to an inclusive state. I don't discuss the Kurds, because, for all practical purposes, they're out of Iraq already.

Dr. KAGAN. Senator, if I could respond, as well. I—first of all, Ambassador Galbraith has made this point repeatedly, but I do find it a little bit odd—I understand the Kurdish perspective, but I find it a little bit odd to say that the Kurds are out of there already, when the President of Iraq is a Kurd, and when there is a substantial bloc of Kurdish representatives in Parliament—in the Iraqi Parliament who have been extremely active. The Kurds may think that they're out, in some respects, but they're clearly continuing to play. And I think the reason for that is that they understand that, at the end of the day, it is not in the interests of Kurdistan for Kurdistan to break off from Iraq and have vast sectarian civil war going on immediately to their south, which will inevitably push refugees in their direction and involve them in vio-

lence along their borders. That's not in their interest. And I credit the Kurds with more self-interest—more understanding of their self-interest than that, than to think that they imagine that that's going to be a happy scenario for them.

I'm very concerned about the practicalities—the military practicalities, of a plan for maintaining United States forces in Kurdistan, with the expectation that they will be doing things in Iraq. Where will they draw their supplies from? They certainly can't maintain a supply line the length of Iraq into Kurdistan without having a very substantial presence that would run against the concept. They will have to draw their supplies from Turkey. Well, the Turks might well allow that to happen, for a variety of reasons, but I'm curious about what demands the Turks would end up making on the Kurds in return for support of our presence there. After all, the people who most adamantly oppose the idea of an independent Kurdistan are the Turks. And the problems of the PKK and the fear of terrorism based in Kurdistan, I fear, could lead to a very, very nasty situation very rapidly.

In addition to that, Kurdistan is far away from any of the regions where we would have to be most concerned about al-Qaeda infiltration. And I think we have to ask ourselves: What do we think the military operations look like? Are we going to fly our soldiers in helicopters across uncontrolled hostile terrain spotted with surface-to-air missiles and a variety of other dangers, to land in unknown places, conduct operations and leave? Those are very daunting military operations. It's much harder—if your concern is dealing with al-Qaeda, it's much harder and more dangerous to our soldiers to undertake those kinds of operations than it is to attempt to bring the security situation under control more generally and have a firm base in Iraq from which you can deal with these things on a local basis.

I'm also very concerned about the prospect of having American soldiers flown in, on call, from local Iraqis to deal with what problems that they report. We've seen that, all too often, when our soldiers are flying in from afar, coming in from afar, and do not know the local situation, they can easily be drawn into actions that are counterproductive. When they're present, and when they can understand the neighborhood—and to talk about local knowledge at this point and say that our soldiers don't have it, when many of them are going back on their third tours into Iraq, I must say, I think we have a pretty fair amount of understanding of Iraq in the army, at this point—our soldiers on the ground are able to recognize situations that they should not involve themselves in, but only if they're there.

Dr. CARPENTER. Mr. Chairman, if I could respond briefly. In one sense, the President's new proposal is regressive, in that it further Americanizes the war, which I think is exactly the opposite direction that we ought to be going.

There is also an inherent contradiction in his speech last night. On the one hand, he contends that it would be absolutely disastrous for the United States to leave Iraq with something less than a victory; on the other hand, he sets up these milestones for the Iraqi Government with, certainly, the implied threat that if the Iraqi Government does not meet those milestones, our commitment

is not unlimited and it's not open-ended, that we might then withdraw, presumably with something less than a victory. I would maintain he can't have it both ways. If it is true that any withdrawal from Iraq with less than a victory would truly be disastrous for the United States, then we are stuck in Iraq indefinitely; we have to stay there even if the Iraqi Government were the biggest collection of villains or buffoons on the planet, because our own vital interests would dictate that we stay.

I would argue that, in fact, it would be far less than a disaster for the United States to leave Iraq, and that, ultimately, we have a choice of leaving now, having spent $350 billion and 3,000 American lives, or the committee can have a similar hearing 2 years from now, when the costs may very well be $600 billion and 5,500 or 6,000 American lives. That's the choice we really face.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. I'd say to my colleagues, I've just been informed there is a—is it a vote or a live quorum? There's a live quorum that just began. I would suggest—it's up to the Senator from Florida—he can begin his questions, if he'd like to do that, or we can recess and go, and then I'll ask my questions last. Are you ready to go?

Well, what I'm going to do is turn the gavel over to the Senator from Florida, and we'll go vote, and hopefully by the time he finishes his questions, if we're not back, if you could recess for 3 or 4 minutes, and we'll take the intervening time, because I have some questions, and anyone else who has any more can come back. But I'd like to spend 10 minutes with you. So—if I may.

So, I—I'm going to go vote. I guess others are, as well. But the chair is yours, sir. And we'll be back shortly.

Senator BILL NELSON. So, I get to completely run the——

The CHAIRMAN. You get to completely run the committee. You can get unanimous consent for anything you want if you're the only one here. [Laughter.]

And so—I've always enjoyed it when I was in that position.

Senator BILL NELSON. Can I——

The CHAIRMAN. As a matter of fact, you have a lot more power than any chairman has.

Senator BILL NELSON. You mean I can get unanimous consent on changing the rules about seniority? [Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. Yeah, you could probably do that, until I come back and seek a vote on it. [Laughter.]

But—no, but it's all yours, sir.

Senator BILL NELSON [presiding]. Well, what do you all think the President meant when he said America's commitment is not open-ended?

Dr. CARPENTER. I have to admit I'm a bit cynical about it. I think it is an empty threat, it is a bluff, it is an attempt to get the Maliki government to do what Ambassador Galbraith has demonstrated pretty clearly it is not either willing or capable of doing. And this threat is not going to be taken seriously by the Maliki government. They feel that we are in Iraq for the long term and that they will not respond to this setting of milestones without penalties. And, frankly, if you don't have very specific penalties, milestones become largely meaningless.

Ambassador GALBRAITH. We're not far from the day when the Maliki government might be just as happy to see us go. The civil war can end either in power-sharing—regionalization is a type of power-sharing—or it can end in victory for one side. Scholars who have look at civil wars fought since World War II note that, maybe, 15 percent have ended with power-sharing while the other 85 percent have ended with one side winning. And who's going to win the civil war in Iraq? The Shiites are three times as numerous, and they have, in neighboring Iran, a very powerful ally. The Shiites have much larger armed forces than the Sunni Arabs, and they control the mechanisms of the state. The Sunni Arab countries that might ally with the Iraqi Sunnis are relatively weak states. The Saudis have money, but limited ability to project power. Jordan is far from the populated parts of Iraq. The Syrian position is ambivalent. Syria is an ally of Iran, and it's ruled by the Alawites, who are a Shiite sect, even though Syria is a Sunni majority state. So, the alternative to power-sharing and regionalization is a Shiite victory in the civil war which, in turn, might well lead to the genocide that Dr. Kagan has warned about. But, from the point of view of the Maliki government, a U.S. withdrawal may not be the end of the world.

Dr. KAGAN. Senator, I think that—I disagree with the notion that the Iraqis think that we're staying there forever. I think, on the contrary, that the Iraqi Shia, for the most part, decided some time ago that we were going to be out quickly. And I believe that the Iraqi Sunni Arabs have also decided that we are on the way out. And I believe that the various intelligence estimates that we heard at the end of last year suggest that a number of these groups are already ready to do their victory dances, because they think that they have defeated us and that we will be, shortly, leaving. And I think that we have seen the beginning of a dominance dance in Iraq already, as rival Shia groups begin to position themselves for a contest that they expect to occur within their own community over which Shia group will run a Shia-dominated Iraq.

I don't think that the problem is convincing the Iraqis that we are going to leave at some point. I think that the Iraqis expect us to leave shortly. And I don't think that the Maliki government has been failing to do what it is that we want them to do because they think that we're going to be there forever and that that's a good thing. I think that they have not been doing what we wanted them to do, in the first instance, in many cases, because they were incapable of it, because we were expecting of them things that were unreasonable, and the standards that we have set for what we want the Iraqi security forces to be able to do by themselves, I've thought, have been unreasonable for a long time, which is why I think that it's very important that the President come forward with a plan that recognizes the limitations of those forces and the importance of having American forces in the lead. I recognize that's not what he said, but that is what we recommended, and I believe that that would be the appropriate way to approach this problem.

There's been a lot of talk about incentivizing the Iraqi Government. And I have to confess that I have a problem with a lot of that conversation, because what we're really proposing to incentivize them with is the threat of unleashing complete genocide

on the Iraqi people by pulling out and allowing the civil war to escalate unchecked and making no effort to restrain it. I find that to be a somewhat ambivalent ethical position to take, to say that, "If you don't do what we say, we're going to allow you to plunge into this horrible abyss." It also is a strange position to take toward a government that we wish to regard as an allied government, that our notion of incentivizing them is hurling repeated threats of such catastrophe at them.

I think it's worth discussing what we could do to incentive the Maliki government, either positively or negatively, but I don't think that it's appropriate for us to throw threats at them that we will simply withdraw, in spite of our concern for them, in spite of our ethical position, and in spite of our own interests, simply as a way of attempting to compel them to do the things that we think they need to do.

Senator BILL NELSON. What are your expectations of the Maliki government? And when?

Dr. KAGAN. I expect that the Maliki government will, in the first instance, tolerate the operation that we are proposing, and they have already shown that they will tolerate it. I expect them to send Iraqi forces to assist in it, and they have already begun to do that, as General Pace testified, earlier in the day. I expect that to continue, although I, frankly, expect to be disappointed by the number of troops that actually show up, as we regularly have been. But I expect them to show up in greater numbers than they have before. I expect them to cooperate with us actively as we work to establish security for their people in the capital. And I expect, as that security proceeds, that they will begin to make important strides in the direction of the reconciliation initiatives that are going to be so important to the long-term settlement of this conflict.

I do expect them to undertake those things. I expect that the process will be arduous, there will be setbacks, and there will be disappointments.

Senator BILL NELSON. So, you think it will meet the President's test.

Dr. KAGAN. I believe that we will be able to attain a stable and secure state in Iraq.

Senator BILL NELSON. Well, I hope you're right, but I don't believe it. And that's my impression.

Ambassador GALBRAITH. Mr. Chairman.

Senator BILL NELSON. And my impression is that increased troops in Anbar province will help, but not in Baghdad.

Mr. Galbraith.

Ambassador GALBRAITH. Here's what I expect from the Maliki government. I expect it to say what it wants us to hear, and I don't expect it to do very many of those things at all. Perhaps the best example of this is the Prime Minister's repeated statements that militias are incompatible with the functioning of a democratic Iraq, and then he does precisely nothing about the militias. And that is not because he's weak, that's not because he's dependent on the Sadrists for support, but it is because he is part of the system of sectarian Shiite rule that includes the Shiite militias.

The character of the Maliki government was perhaps best demonstrated by the manner in which it executed Saddam Hussein. In

his rush to execute Saddam for a 1982 crime against supporters of his Dawa Party, Maliki cut short Saddam's ongoing trial for the Kurdish genocide, a case that involved a thousand times as many dead as did the Dujail case. He acted over the protests of the Kurds and, in the rush to execution, did not follow Iraq's constitutional procedures that require all three Presidents to ratify a death sentence. He allowed the Mahdi Army militiamen to participate in the execution. That wasn't incompetence, that was the way his government is.

Senator BILL NELSON. Mr. Carpenter. Just a minute, and then I'm going to have to run to make this vote.

Dr. CARPENTER. I would take a position roughly midpoint between what Ambassador Galbraith has said and what Dr. Kagan has said. I think the Maliki government will participate, with some vigor, in operations to crack down on the Sunni insurgents and Sunni neighborhoods in Baghdad, and it will do little or nothing when it comes to operations to crack down on the Shiite militias. This is a sectarian government, as much as the Bush administration really doesn't want to admit that reality, and it is a participant in the ongoing civil war. It is not a neutral arbiter. We have to understand that point.

What I worry about is the American troops increasingly being embedded with Iraqi security forces. I think that was one of the worst proposals of the Iraq Study Group; and, unfortunately, it's one of the main things the Bush administration has adopted. One of the reasons we have been able to keep——

Senator BILL NELSON. Why? Why, on the embedding?

Dr. CARPENTER. Why they adopted it? Or why is it——

Senator BILL NELSON. Why do you disagree with the embedding?

Dr. CARPENTER I think one of the reasons that we've been able to keep casuality rates relatively low is the American——

Senator BILL NELSON. OK. So, you think it would increase American casualties.

Dr. CARPENTER. It makes them more and more vulnerable. They're going to be dependent on their security on their Iraqi counterparts.

Senator BILL NELSON. OK.

The committee will stand in recess, subject to the call of the Chair. Thank you all very much.

[Recess.]

The CHAIRMAN [presiding]. We'll come back to order.

I thank you for your patience. I know the Ambassador, after 14 years up here, knows what it's like here. The reason why Senator Lugar and I hung around over there, we were told there was going to be an immediate vote, and they're still—it probably won't occur til tomorrow morning. But, I apologize.

Gentlemen, I—the reason I asked you to stay is, I've been impressed with what you've written in the past and how cogent your arguments are for your various positions. And, as I said earlier, my intention, along with Chairman Lugar, is to try to, as thoroughly and as clearly as possible, lay out for our colleagues what options people—bright people think exist out there, because I don't think any one of us would suggest there's any, "good answer" left. I know what each of you are proposing is not what you would do if you

could wave a wand and come to a—what you would think would be the best outcome for Iraq and for the United States.

But let me start off with a broad question and ask each of you to respond—in any order. And that is—tell me, if you will—and this may be a way to meet my objective of trying to focus, for my colleagues and for me, the alternatives—how does what you are proposing differ—and why—from what the President has proposed? In other words, maybe starting with you, Dr. Kagan, I read your report, "Choosing Victory: A Plan for Success in Iraq." I may be mistaken, but it seems as though what the President proposed has the elements of what you have proposed, but not, if I may, the weight of how you proposed it. And you very clearly lay out that the first stage in the process is the Sunni neighborhoods, if I'm not mistaken—is it 19 or—you list a specific number.

Dr. KAGAN. Twenty-three, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Twenty-three. Then Sadr City, then Anbar province—which makes sense to me. I mean, if you're going to adopt the proposal, or if you think the best outcome, and the way to achieve it, is to surge force, you have been, in my view, the most thoroughly honest, in the sense of laying out, from beginning to end, what you think has to happen for there to be success.

And so, why don't we start—as succinctly as you can, but take what time you need. Tell me how—and I'm not looking for you to criticize the President. I'm just—I'm just trying to have everybody understand where the gaps are, so that when they take a look, they know what they're talking about, what's being said. Tell me how what you have proposed, in broad strokes or as specific as you can get, is different than—not just what we heard last night, but the actual plan, which obviously the President didn't have a chance to go into every jot and tittle of his plan—how it differs, as best you know it.

Dr. KAGAN. Mr. Chairman, I thank you very much for your kind remarks about our report and also for the opportunity to speak with you about this.

I will answer your question directly, but I would like to offer a couple of caveats. First of all, I don't feel like I know what the President's plan is, in any great detail. We can look at some——

The CHAIRMAN. Fair enough.

Dr. KAGAN [continuing]. Of the things that he said.

The CHAIRMAN. I'm not sure, either.

Dr. KAGAN. And I'd also like to make the point that we are going to have, apparently, a change of command in Iraq shortly, from General Casey to General Petraeus, I hope—a man for whom I have a tremendous amount of respect.

The CHAIRMAN. I share your view about Petraeus.

Dr. KAGAN. And when General Petraeus takes command, he will have to look at the situation afresh and develop a plan that he's going to be comfortable executing. He's certainly not simply going to take the plan that has been developed, you know, before he got there, and execute it. So, I would expect to see some changes, even in the plan that has been outlined so far, when the actual commander gets there. That would be normal.

Having said that, I think that the plan that the President outlined, insofar as he did, is similar to ours in its large aspects, ap-

parently differs from ours in some more tactical details, which I think are extremely important.

He did say that he would change the strategy and that he would change the mission of United States forces in Iraq from having the primary goal of training and transitioning to having the primary goal of establishing security. And I think that's a terrifically important change in strategy. It is the one that we recommended.

And I'd like to make a point that people are focusing on the number of additional troops that will be sent in as being the delta between what we've been doing and what we will be doing. And that's actually not right. We have, already, something like 20 or 25,000 American soldiers in and around Baghdad. They have not had it as their primary mission to establish and maintain security in Baghdad for most of the time. That will now become their mission. So, we're actually talking about an increase of, you know, more like 40 or 50,000 American soldiers dedicated to this mission over what we've had previously. And so, the change is actually rather more significant than people have been focusing on. And that is in accord with what we recommended.

He did say that he would send five additional combat brigades to Baghdad as rapidly as they can get there. And that is also what we recommended. And that is the size of the force that we recommended.

There's been some confusion because of the way the administration has presented numbers to match the brigades, and I believe that that has to do with—there are different ways of counting how many troops there are in a brigade. So, we gave a total force increment for Iraq of 35,000. The President is talking about 20-some thousand. I think that's a difference in counting, more than anything else, because we recommended five additional Army brigades and two additional Marine regimental combat teams. The President said that it would be five American brigades and one regimental combat team. So, the forces that he's proposing are very parallel in size to the forces that we proposed. And we think it's very important to have all of those forces. And, if it were me, I would continue to fight for the additional regimental combat team, as well, because I think it's important to have reserves available for this operation.

Now, the President did say that the Iraqis would be in the lead. He did talk about our forces supporting them. And he did talk about increasing the number of our forces embedded in Iraqi units conducting these operations. Those statements are not in accord with what we had recommended. We believe that, in the first instance, this has to be an American-led operation, simply because there are not enough Iraqi forces, and they are not trained adequately to be in the lead. And so, that is an area of divergence.

The CHAIRMAN. If I could interrupt for a moment, we heard testimony yesterday from a counterpart of yours, different organization, but—Mr. O'Hanlon, and asked him how many, "politically reliable," not just trained, but politically reliable combat forces he thought were available from the Iraqi side right now, and he gave a number of 5,000. What is your sense of the number of available trained Iraqi forces that could be, "counted upon" to fill the mission you have envisioned for them?

Dr. KAGAN. I'm sorry to say that it's not really possible to answer that question with any degree of precision, because I'm not sure that that knowledge actually exists.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, quite frankly, I would have been disappointed if you had—had you given me a number, because I share your view. I don't know——

Dr. KAGAN. Right.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. How anybody knows that number.

Dr. KAGAN. And that's why we—that's why we—when we sat down to look at this operation, we attempted to design an operation that could succeed even with a very low level of Iraqi participation.

The CHAIRMAN. Gotcha.

Dr. KAGAN. We think that the Iraqi participation is important, not so much because it will provide bodies, but because we need the—we need to have an Iraqi face on the operation, as much as possible, and the Iraqis to interact with their own populations, as much as possible, with our forces present. But we are not relying on large numbers of Iraqi forces coming, and we certainly do not want them to be operating on their own——

The CHAIRMAN. Quite frankly, that was my reading of your report. The second thing is—it leads me to this point, I hope I don't come across as being cynical here, but I believe the reason why the President and his team rejected Maliki's plan, which was, "You Americans stay outside the city, we'll go in, you essentially reinforce us"—is that they feared one of two things, probably both: That they would not be competent to do the job, and they would essentially be Shia—I don't want to be too—Shia forces cleansing Sunni areas, and that what we would be doing is indirectly giving a green light to what would be further sectarian violence rather than limiting or eliminating sectarian violence.

Dr. KAGAN. Mr. Chairman, of course, I don't know—I don't know the details of the plan that Maliki presented or why the administration——

The CHAIRMAN. All I know is——

Dr. KAGAN [continuing]. Reacted as it did.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. What was characterized by——

Dr. KAGAN. I understand.

If I had been presented with such a plan by the government, I would have opposed it, on more or less precisely those grounds.

The CHAIRMAN. Yeah. OK.

And you mentioned Tal Afar as an example in your report, and I think you did in your statement. And in 2005, we had roughly 5,000 American forces, with some Iraqi forces—but 5,000 American forces, if memory serves me—in a city, in a population of about 200,000. We're talking about—and I understand your point, I think it's a fair point—there are roughly 25,000 American forces in and around Baghdad with a mission other than the one that's now being assigned them. So, it's arguably—it's intellectually credible to say that, since the mission is being changed, the multiplier effect here is—add those 25,000, that have been there, to the 15 or 16 or 17, whatever the number comes to—to President's total of 21,500, and—at least that's what the Secretary said today, four going to Anbar. So, let's say you're adding, on top of that—you're talking roughly—you could argue, 40,000 folks with a new mission.

Because I was wondering how you get to the counterinsurgency ratio that most of the military people with whom I have spoken, as far back as 3 years ago with General Donovan, who was very frustrated that he wasn't getting the support—the number of troops he needed, and his talking about Anbar province—I remember him saying—and I'm paraphrasing—that every officer learns in war college that the ratio needs to be, and then he named it and said—not 100 to 1, not 150 to 1, and so on.

So, if you were to use your numbers in the multiplier, my word—since it's a different mission, arguing you actually have more people moving here is in the 25,000 range already, then I assume that's how you make your argument that the counterinsurgency ratio required is closer to what is taught at the academies and the war college and—than it otherwise would be. Is that——

Dr. KAGAN. Yes, Mr. Chairman. I think if you look at the population of the area that we were proposing to clear and hold, in the first instance, it's something under 2 million——

The CHAIRMAN. Right.

Dr. KAGAN [continuing]. Which would call for a force ratio of between 40 or 50,000 in——

The CHAIRMAN. Right.

Dr. KAGAN [continuing]. Order to meet that. And that is the force ratio that we—that our plan would bring into that area, because we would make full use of the forces that are already there——

The CHAIRMAN. Gotcha.

Dr. KAGAN [continuing]. And this increment.

The CHAIRMAN. I will not belabor this, but this is helpful to me—one further apparent difference is—the President said, last night, and I asked the Secretary today, and others did, as well, that they are not limiting this effort to the 23 neighborhoods. Now, I don't know whether they answered the question for political reasons or if substantively it's correct. I'm not sure which. When it was asked, "Do they have the green light to go into Sadr City? Do they have the green light to deal with the militia?"—the answer was, "Yes; that would be the case." But is your understanding that the first phase, or the phase the President is talking about, or Petraeus may be talking about, is more in line with your plan—to only focus on the 23 neighborhoods, 2 million people, as opposed to the totality of Baghdad and 6-plus-million people?

Dr. KAGAN. Mr. Chairman, we've been explicit, on a number of occasions, that our plan does see, in the initial phase, focusing on the 23 Sunni and mixed Sunni-Shia neighborhoods and not going into Sadr City, in the first instance. Now, that was predicated on a number of assumptions about the difficulty that would be entailed in going into Sadr City—in part, assuming that the Maliki government would not be forthcoming with support for doing that. If, in fact, the Maliki government is going to be forthcoming with that support, then that would change the equation, but we have not had the opportunity to go back and reevaluate, you know, what our force ratio assumptions would be in that circumstance.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I'd respectfully suggest, if that is the case, the force ratios are a little out of whack, and you're going to be dealing with the different situation.

The last question on this point, and again, I have so many questions. My temptation would be to keep you here all night, all of you. Where Petraeus has been successful—and he has been—in the past, north of Baghdad, in dealing with an insurgency, it's been an insurgency, as opposed to sectarian strife and a civil war. Say it another way. A mixed neighborhood in Baghdad is different than going into Tal Afar, where the insurgents are the former Baathists, Saddamists, et cetera, and/or al-Qaeda, and their target being us and/or government troops. When you go into a neighborhood—and I want the public to understand we're not talking about a neighborhood of 500 people, we're talking about neighborhoods that are tens of thousands of people—when you go in a neighborhood where the problem is within the neighborhood, if it's a mixed neighborhood, people are, figuratively speaking, crossing the street, killing each other, and/or if it's not an integrated neighborhood, primarily a Shia neighborhood, you have death squads wearing uniforms and/or the Mahdi Militia coming in and taking them out. That's a little different circumstance than dealing with an insurgency, isn't it?

Dr. KAGAN. Mr. Chairman, I have to, respectfully, disagree with your premise. Tal Afar actually is a mixed city. It is mixed Sunni/Shia. It's also mixed between Arab and Turkoman and Kurd. And all of those factions were, in fact, shooting at one another, and H.R. McMaster, the commander of the unit that cleared Tal Afar in 2005, has described, in great detail, there would be circumstances where Sunni snipers would climb turrets, fire into Shia neighborhoods to commit casualties, and then those same Sunni snipers would actually climb down, cross over into the Shia neighborhoods and fire back into the Sunni neighborhoods to commit atrocities in precisely the same sort of effort, to incite sectarian civil war within Tal Afar. And so, it actually was very similar to what's going on in Baghdad, and, in many respects——

The CHAIRMAN. Had the mosque—had the Samarra mosque been taken out, at that point?

Dr. KAGAN. No, Mr. Chairman; it hadn't. And, even so, there was this very high level of intersectarian violence. And, in addition to that, the Sunni insurgents had established real strongholds in Tal Afar. They had video booths where they would tape their messages and beheadings. I mean, they had a real professional apparatus, and were ready to receive us.

The CHAIRMAN. Gotcha.

Dr. KAGAN. Because we've been operating continually in a lot of the Baghdad neighborhoods that we're talking about going into, in most of those areas they don't have anything like the same degree of preparation. But, no; I think we actually already have seen success in dealing with this sort of sectarian conflict.

The CHAIRMAN. OK. Last question for you, if I may. We heard, this morning, about the successes that are taking place in Anbar province, according to the Secretary. And she cited that certain of the tribal chiefs, very upset with the al-Qaeda, have sent their sons to Jordan to be trained to come back, ostensibly, and be a resistance to al-Qaeda intervention, and, I suspect, to not be as cooperative with the insurgency, the former Saddamists and Baathists. Can you tell me if you know anything about that?

Dr. KAGAN. Mr. Chairman, only what I've seen in newspapers and what I've heard about. I mean, it does appear that some of the sheikhs in Anbar have become frustrated with the ongoing civil war. And I think it's very important to understand that the Sunni Arab insurgency is not monolithic, either.

The CHAIRMAN. No.

Dr. KAGAN. And there is divergence of views even within the Islamist wing. Al-Qaeda in Iraq says that it's OK to kill Iraqi civilians. Ansar al-Sunna has taken the position, often, that it isn't. There are disputes among these groups about tactics, techniques, goals, and so forth. And I think what we're seeing in Anbar province is the beginning of a splintering of this movement. Now, I think if we continue the process of establishing security to make it possible for these guys to participate more directly, and if the Maliki government will reach out in a situation of improving security, to offer the necessary reconciliation to bring them into the fold, I think it's possible that we can see significant political progress.

The CHAIRMAN. Question for the three of you. And you need not answer it, if you choose not to. If you had to take a bet, how many of you would bet that Maliki is the Prime Minister in November of this year?

Dr. CARPENTER. The answer to that question, Mr. Chairman, depends very much on whether we are serious about pressing the Maliki government to take on the Shiite militias and to neutralize Muqtada Sadr. If we are serious about that, I think that places Maliki in an almost impossible position and that that will severely undercut his political base. It would make it very likely that he would not be Prime Minister by November. If this is merely a rhetorical flourish on the part of the Bush administration, and this is substantively an effort to go after the Sunni neighborhoods in Baghdad, and to suppress the Sunni insurgency, and the talk of going after the Shia militia is just political cover, then I think Maliki may be a skillful enough politician to survive and be Prime Minister at the end of the year.

The CHAIRMAN. Ambassador.

Ambassador GALBRAITH. I think Dr. Carpenter's analysis is as good as any. The problem is that the Maliki government rests on a narrow margin within the I'tilaf, within the Shiite Alliance. In the electoral battle between Abel Abdul Mahdi and Jaafari, Jaafari prevailed by one vote. And other elements, notably the Kurds, but perhaps some of the Sunnis, might well prefer Mahdi to Maliki. Indeed, the Bush administration may tire of Maliki, because he's not much more effective than Jaafari. Although he doesn't have some of Jaafari's annoying personal traits, he hasn't been much more effective as a leader.

No matter who is the Government of Iraq we're going to get tired of them, because they're not going to be effective, because they don't have the agenda that we want them to have, and they don't exercise the power that we wish they would.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Ambassador, let's just ask: In your partition scenario, what happens to Iraqis' oil wealth?

Ambassador GALBRAITH. The Iraqis are on the verge of concluding a deal that will, at least for some period of time, share the

oil revenues on the basis of population. The distribution of oil revenues has never been a central issue. The central issue has been who controls the oilfields. And that has been central for the Kurds, and some of the Shiites, because they do not want to go back to the situation where Baghdad cuts the check and Baghdad has all the power.

The CHAIRMAN. Right.

Ambassador GALBRAITH. Like any federal system, frankly, they understand that it works only when there are local sources of revenue. But, in terms of how that revenue is distributed, there is a broad consensus to share it. Now, if Iraq does not hold together as a state, then you——

The CHAIRMAN. Well, under your scenario, it's not a state, correct?

Ambassador GALBRAITH. Well, it—my view is that, over the long term, it will not survive as a single state.

The CHAIRMAN. Right.

Ambassador GALBRAITH. Which, incidently, doesn't mean that I think it's going to split into three states. If you asked them, both Sunnis and Shiites would say, "Yes; we're Iraqis." The trouble is, they have such radically vision of what that means that I believe it is better to do what the Shiites want to do and what the Sunnis still resist, which is to have their own regions. But that's really a decision for the Sunnis to make. The Kurds, it's entirely different. They——

The CHAIRMAN. No, I——

Ambassador GALBRAITH [continuing]. They don't want to be part of Iraq.

The CHAIRMAN. No; I got that, about the Kurds. My concern is that I don't see, absent essentially letting a civil war rage from Anbar province down through Basrah, and let the outcome dictate who runs the show in those two areas—short of that, I don't know what's left for the Sunnis. I mean, if they end up with three different states, in effect, the inclination to share oil ain't gonna be around, and there's nothing there, there in Anbar province.

Ambassador GALBRAITH. First, if the Kurds actually leave, they will take with them a percentage of Iraq's oil reserves that is approximately the same as their share of Iraq's population. So, that's——

The CHAIRMAN. Right.

Ambassador GALBRAITH [continuing]. That's not a big issue. So, the issue is in Arab Iraq.

The CHAIRMAN. Right.

Ambassador GALBRAITH. Will the Shiites be prepared to give to the Sunni region a percentage that is equal to the Sunni percentage of the population? I don't know the answer to that. Right now, the Shiites have agreed to such a formula. That they'll continue to be generous toward the Sunnis in conditions of an ongong civil war, or if the civil war intensifies, is not likely. And, in fact, it——

The CHAIRMAN. Right.

Ambassador GALBRAITH [continuing]. Could have a very bad ending. And that is why, with regard to Arab Iraq, I believe that the plan that I've put forward and that you have put forward is the only way to go. It is a plan that protects the Sunnis by allowing

them to have their own region, to provide for their own security, and, if it's implemented soon, would come at time when there is still enough political will there to guarantee them a share of revenue. This revenue-sharing should be done through legislation—as has already been agreed—and not by trying to change the Iraqi Constitution, which is as difficult to change as our own. But if the Sunnis don't move to establish their own region, if the civil war spins on for another year or two, I think it's unlikely——

The CHAIRMAN. Just—let me just—one of things I want to get straight here, make sure I understand it. The legislation that's already agreed to is agreed to, in principle, by a committee, a group of people meeting. There has not been any legislation introduced, there has not been any legislation passed, am I correct in that? The Iraqi Parliament has not passed any legislation saying that—I remember, I was in—over the Fourth of July, I met with Mr. Maliki in his office, and I asked him about two issues. One was federation or regionalism, as their Constitution calls for, and the second was about allocation of oil revenues. He said, "Aw, the Constitution has already taken care of that." And I said, "Well, with all due respect, Mr. Prime Minister, you and I may be the only two who have read the Constitution. It doesn't say that. It says 'equitable share,' or some such language, but there's no guarantee what that means." Said, "There's no need for that."

So, I just want to be clear that whether or not there is—if you know if there is, or is about to be introduced—legislation that the tribal chiefs in—the tribal leaders in Anbar province can say, "I know I'm now going to get"——

Ambassador GALBRAITH. Well, the——

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. "20 percent of the revenue, or whatever."

Ambassador GALBRAITH [continuing]. The legislation that is pending is an oil law, and it's a very complicated law that entails many compromises. It's one thing to say, as does the Constitution, that the regions have control over new oil, but to implement that, in terms of——

The CHAIRMAN. It's very hard.

Ambassador GALBRAITH [continuing]. Pipelines and everything else is difficult. But the oil law will do this and it is mostly agreed. Some issues remain between Kurdistan and Arab Iraq, but there's a good chance that they'll be resolved.

The CHAIRMAN. Well——

Ambassador GALBRAITH. It also includes the provisions for revenue-sharing, which, however, will be done in a separate law. The problem is this. The Sunnis do not consider 20 percent to be their share of the population, and they don't consider it, therefore, to be their fair share of the oil wealth. And, furthermore, until 2003, they got 70 to 80 percent of the oil wealth.

The CHAIRMAN. Oh, I know that. That was——

Ambassador GALBRAITH. So, 20 percent is—even if we think it's fair, they don't think it's fair.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, you know, it's amazing how people's attitudes change when faced with the realistic alternatives they may face. In my meeting with major oil executives—not just American-based companies, but foreign companies—I don't understand why,

3 years ago, the President didn't bring some of these guys in, and bring in the major informed elements of the three communities, and say, "Look, you know, you're not—listen to these guys, they're not going to invest the $40 billion you need to develop your fields unless you have a national oil policy, unless you have some reason to make them believe you're going to be able to do this without any real prospect of them being blown up." But that goes another way.

Let me ask another question, and I won't keep you much longer. Up until recently—and I'm not sure what I think right now, but up until recently, I have come away from my visits to Iraq with the following sense of things: That, from 2004—really, early 2005, up until mid-2006, the Kurds, although overwhelmingly wanting independence, reached the tentative conclusion that—if they seek independence, or if the nation falls apart, and they are able to declare themselves independent because there is an all-out civil war—that they are not about to give up on Kirkuk, and the Turks aren't about to let them have their way in Kirkuk; and that, although, on the one hand, they would look like they're in pretty good shape, they would be inviting both the Iranians and the Turks to come after them. And so, it's better for them to be in a position where this gets played out over a longer haul, as long as they're able to maintain the autonomy they now have; and that the Sunnis, at least the tribal leadership, has reached the conclusion they're not going to be in control like they were—I mean, 70 percent of the oil, 90 percent of the power, et cetera—in their lifetimes, and it's better to work out some accommodation where at least they're secure, as long as they actually have a source of revenue. And the Shia, although they now have met their expectation and desire to be the dominant political force, absent some kind of ultimate arrangement, they are not going to be in a position to be able to prevent, "their mosques" from being blown up over the next decade, and more. And so, there was the possibility of a political accommodation.

But I'm not sure that prevails anymore, because, talking to these folks, I think the Shia think they can take out the Sunnis, the Sunnis think they can take out the Shia, and the Kurds think they could probably negotiate, literally negotiate, their independent status without having a full-blown conflict with the Turks and the Iranians.

Give me your sense of what the mindset, in your view, is. And I realize that there's Shia on Shia, as well as Shia on Sunni, and so on. I realize there will be competition within a Shia region, if it were to be voted. I think that's one of the reasons why Sadr sided with the Sunnis in voting against the legislation to allow for the regional system to come into play 18 months from now. But, what do you think—how do you think they view their equities, each of the parties, the major parties, in an all-out conflict?

Dr. KAGAN. I think we need to address that question in two ways, because I think, right—there is how they feel about that now, and there's the question of how they would feel about that if we actually could get the security situation under control, because I think it's not possible to overestimate the impact that the current violence has on everyone's attitudes, and also that everyone's beliefs about our intentions have on their attitudes. I think that cur-

rent Shia attitudes are heavily fueled by the fact that the Sunni insurgency is not under control and they are under continual attack, and by the belief that we are not going to bring the Sunni insurgency under control, and that we are, in fact, going to leave, shortly, which I do believe is their actual mindset, or had been, to this point.

Now, if we make it clear that we actually are going to bring the Sunni insurgency under control and we are going to provide them with a basic level of security, and, therefore, we're going to eliminate the need for them to go out and do that on their own, which does pose significant challenges and costs to them—and I think we should keep that in mind—I think that much as Maliki might lean in that direction if no other solution is presented to him, he does have to recognize that even a Shia victory, in that context, will be unutterably bloody for him and will impose all sorts of costs on his government and on different factions within the Shia groups, will compromise their ability to form a subsequent stable government, and so forth, and will lead to perennial instability.

So, I think the issue is: How will they feel about that, when we have offered them an alternative, when we have made it clear that we are going to bring the Sunni insurgency under control, and that they don't have to do that? I believe that that will change their attitudes pretty fundamentally. Now, I believe, in addition to that, that there is evidence, especially, as you've brought up, in Anbar from among the tribal sheikhs and elsewhere, and even from things that I hear from the—my former students, who are now in Baghdad and who tell me about popular attitudes that they're encountering as they patrol the streets—and some of them actually are living in the neighborhoods now—among the Sunni. And there is some evidence, I think, that this—there is beginning to be a weariness of this conflict and a willingness to end it in a more reasonable way if they could be assured that they were not going to be under continual attack by Shia militias.

And so, I think the issue is, we have to be able to imagine what Iraq looks like when we have brought the violence in the mixed areas of Baghdad actually under control. I believe we can. We can have an argument about whether we can or not. But if we do, then that will change the political equation very fundamentally, in my view.

The CHAIRMAN. That's the basic premise of your position.

Dr. KAGAN. Yes; exactly.

Dr. CARPENTER. Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

Dr. CARPENTER. I think that's the crux of the disagreement. I do not believe there is a realistic prospect that we can achieve a secure environment, that we can suppress the Sunni insurgency, at least that we can do so at anything resembling a reasonable cost, in terms of blood and treasure, to our own country. Yes; if we occupied Iraq with a very large army, 4 or 500,000 troops, and were willing to stay for many, many years, we would have a chance of stabilizing the security environment. But we don't have that option. I don't think there would be 1 American in 20 who would favor paying the price that would be required to achieve that result. Absent that result, what we're seeing in Iraq is this ongoing civil war,

where the Shia have concluded this is their moment, this is when they can reverse decades, generations, of subjugation by the Sunnis. They are not going to pass up that opportunity, and they are not likely to be gentle when they do achieve full power.

The Sunnis increasingly are in defensive mode. Rather than having as the primary objective—driving American forces out of Iraq—it is the terrible fear that, if they don't forestall the establishment of a Shia-dominated government on a permanent basis, that they are faced with, at best, massive discrimination, third-class citizenship in their own country, and, at worse, ongoing ethnic cleansing and terrible consequences in that regard.

The Kurds are off with their own agenda. What we're going to see is Kurdistan become the Taiwan of that part of the world. It will be an independent country in everything except extensive international diplomatic recognition, but it will be an independent country. The danger for the Kurds is what you have identified—that they could overreach. If they insist on gaining the oil riches in and around Kirkuk, they create the risk of outside intervention, certainly by Turkey, perhaps by Iran. Where we can play a constructive role there is to convince Turkey, especially, that this would be an unwise move, that it is, in fact, in Turkey's best interest to have a stable, democratic Kurdistan as a buffer between Turkey and what is likely to be "Chaos-stan" in the rest of Iraq. That is, again, an achievable objective, I think, if we work hard at it. And Kurdistan may be able to have a reasonably stable and peaceful existence. The rest of Iraq is going to be a cauldron of chaos unless we are willing to pay a huge price, over a very long term, in both blood and treasure.

Ambassador GALBRAITH. First, I think I agree with what Dr. Carpenter has just said, so I won't repeat it. But I agree with your point that the space for political compromise has diminished and perhaps disappeared. But the fundamental problem is that Maliki represents a Shiite constituency that wants to define Iraq as a Shiite state. And, for the Sunnis, there is no way—even for those who despise the insurgency—that they can accept that definition of Iraq. It does not include them. They see Iraq's Shiite rulers as alien. On the gallows, Saddam Hussein spoke for many Sunnis when he warned against "the Persians" by which he clearly meant Iraq's Shiite leaders. With differences that are so deep, these other fixes, such as sharing oil revenue, are not going to satisfy the Sunnis.

With regard to the Kurds, my view is simple, and certainly influenced by my experience in the Balkans, which is where you have people who unanimously don't want to be part of a state, you can only keep them in that state by brute force. Now, the fortunate thing that distinguishes Iraq from Yugoslavia in 1991, is the Kurds—unlike the Slovenes and Croatians—are bent on a headstrong rush to immediate independence. So, I think there's a period of time to work out many of the problems could result from full independence. I think what Dr. Carpenter said is right; Kurdistan is already Taiwan. Just as, if Taiwan would declare itself independent if the opportunity arose, so will Kurdistan. The Kurds believe this time will come and they won't do anything precipitate.

My final point relates to the major outstanding issue for Kurdistan, namely boundaries of Kurdistan? Disputes between Kurds and Arabs over these boundaries could, by the end of this year, be a whole new source of violence in Iraq. Now, this is an issue on which the United States can do something diplomatically, and yet has been totally absent. Why can we do something diplomatically? Because we actually have influence with the Kurds. We can help Kurds and Arabs draw lines that both see as fair. But, I also think we can use our influence with the Kurds to caution them against overreaching on the territorial issue, because, at the moment, they have the upper hand.

That, then, leaves the issue of Kirkuk. There is, in Iraq's Constitution, a formula for solving Kirkuk through a referendum. Kirkuk has been a source of conflict in Iraq for the entire history of Iraq. I don't see any merit in postponing or getting rid of this provision. The issue needs to be settled. But what can be done in advance of the referendum is to entrench power-sharing in Kirkuk among its four communities—the Kurds, the Turkomen, the Arabs, and the Christians—so that after the referendum, none of these communities feel that they're losers. But, again, the time to do that is now. Once you have the referendum and it's part of Kurdistan, which is what I expect, or it's not, then the possibilities for compromise are much worse. After the referendum is too late.

The CHAIRMAN. Gentlemen, there is a lot more I'd like to ask you. I wish I could say there will be no need to call you back, but my guess is that we'll need your advice and input several months from now, as well. And, again, I genuinely appreciate the amount of time, effort, expertise, and commitment you've all applied in arriving at your various positions.

I thought this morning's hearing was—the term is overused, to say it was historic, but I thought it was extremely significant, in that it would be impossible for anyone to have listened to it this morning and not come to the conclusion that there is very little support for the approach the President is pursuing. And I hope he'll be willing to adjust, as he moves forward. My prayer would be his proposal is right, it works, everything works out. That would be my prayer, but that is, I think, just that; a prayer.

Let me also note that I was informed by my staff that our bad fortune is Dr. Galbraith's good fortune, and that is that Nancy Stetson, who has been a senior member of this committee for a couple of decades, is—is that—am I correct?—is joining—oh, I thought you were joining it. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I thought—actually, our bad fortune is your missed opportunity. [Laughter.]

I thought, Nance, the note I got, to show you how smart I am, I thought it said you were joining Ambassador Galbraith. They got a—you had a better offer, OK. I—well, I'm getting out of this negotiation, I tell you right now. [Laughter.]

Anyway, Nancy, we're going to miss you. You've been an incredible, incredible resource for the committee, and for me, personally, and so, you'll be joining the ranks of the famous no-longer-employed Foreign Relations Committee staffers, and I hope your success is as stellar as the Ambassador's has been.

Ambassador GALBRAITH. And, if I may add, we'll be seeing her in New England, where we also expect to be seeing you.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, you will be seeing me in New England. I don't know—guessing the outcome of that is probably easier than guessing the outcome of Iraq.

But, anyway, at any rate, I thank you all very, very much. I thank the audience for your interest here. There's a lot at stake. And, as I said, this has been very helpful.

We will adjourn.

[Whereupon, at 5:35 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL STATEMENT SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DANIEL SERWER, VICE PRESIDENT, PEACE AND STABILITY OPERATIONS, U.S. INSTITUTE OF PEACE, WASHINGTON, DC *

TROOPS ALONE ARE NOT THE ANSWER—CIVILIAN EFFORTS IN IRAQ NEED STRENGTHENING

As vice president for peace and stability operations at the U.S. Institute of Peace, I have, for 3 years, supervised a congressionally funded peacebuilding effort in Iraq, after a decade spent on Balkans peacebuilding efforts both at the State Department and USIP. I also acted as executive director of the Iraq Study Group last year. But I offer you today only my personal views—I do not speak for USIP or for the Study Group.

Vital American interests should determine our future course of action in Iraq. I would list them in the following order:

1. *Stabilize a united Iraq and the region.* We have to tamp down the civil conflict and prevent it from spreading to, or involving, Iraq's neighbors.
2. *Prevent terrorist threats to America and its allies.* We must ensure that Iraq does not become a platform for operations abroad by al-Qaeda or other terrorists.
3. *Restore flexibility in the use of U.S. forces.* Our military is overcommitted today; we need to rebuild its capacity to react to events elsewhere in the world.
4. *Return America to a preeminent global position.* We need to regain moral, military, and diplomatic standing in a world that views us as compromised, weakened, and ineffective.

Let me also mention interests we should renounce: We need no guaranteed access to oil or permanent bases, and we must not take sides in a civil war or a broader Sunni-Shia conflict.

No simple solution

There is no simple course of action that will satisfy our vital interests. Precipitous withdrawal of American forces from Iraq might help us regain flexibility, but would not prevent parts of Iraq from being used as a terrorist platform. Nor would withdrawal stabilize the country or the region. Breaking Iraq up into sectarian zones would likewise allow parts of Iraq to be used by terrorists and would destabilize the region.

I am not a military expert, but to me additional U.S. forces make sense only in support of a broader civilian peacebuilding effort aimed at political reconciliation and economic stabilization, and only if there is a target date for turnover of combat responsibilities to Iraqi forces. The political situation in Iraq and in the United States will not permit American forces to continue combat for several years. Nor will the global situation, which requires U.S. forces to be available for contingencies elsewhere. In any event, Sunni and Shia both need the wakeup call that a target date will provide.

Increasing troop levels will not suffice—we need a broader approach

So much attention has been paid to troop levels that other requirements to stabilize Iraq are not being discussed. The grave and deteriorating situation in Iraq is not due to military failure. Our troops have fought well and hard. It is due to indigenous political forces largely beyond our control, as well as planning, diplomatic and economic failures, all of which are civilian responsibilities. If we only beef up U.S. troop presence, without intensifying civilian efforts, the situation will continue to deteriorate.

Additional civilian resources are required. Only a small fraction of the funds Congress has appropriated for Iraq has gone to civilian efforts—less than 10 percent.

Future funding should include $5 billion for civilian peacebuilding. Five times the current level—below $1 billion per year—this is still a small percentage of the total.

What can be done with new civilian resources? The primary goal should be national reconciliation through strengthening rule of law and the moderate center. Holding Iraq together will require increasing governing capacity at the central, regional, and provincial levels including the judicial as well as the executive and legislative branches—and building up civil society. We should support the many courageous Iraqis who are willing to reach across sectarian lines to build a democratic Iraq.

The U.S. Institute of Peace has been engaged since early 2004 in this work, devoting a modest but productive $5 million per year provided by Congress to prevent sectarian violence, build up the rule of law, and educate and train a new generation of leaders. For example, we support a network of 25 Iraqis who undertake intersectarian dialog efforts in their own communities, demonstrably reducing violence. Does it make sense that USIP's appropriation for Iraq has been cut 40 percent? Similar cuts are affecting the work of other organizations doing vital reconciliation work in Iraq.

What about the economic front? I do not believe jobs will prevent terrorism. I also doubt the ability of the U.S. Government to create jobs in the private sector at home, much less abroad. The best we can do for the Iraqis is to help with their oil sector, which they should run as a commercial enterprise in the interests of the whole country. We should also provide microcredits to small enterprises and funds to our military commanders, embassy and provincial reconstruction teams, for small-scale improvements to stabilize local situations. But I would not suggest a massive national jobs program, which would likely be exploited by insurgents and militias for their own purposes.

Neither politics nor the economy in Iraq will go far on American money alone. The Iraqis need to take on far more responsibility. Prime Minister Maliki's "milestones" have now been published: We have target dates for passage of the oil law, rolling back de-Baathification, and a clampdown on militias. He is already at risk of missing several of them. We need to convey a much more serious message about the need to meet milestones, and our willingness to assist, while remaining flexible about timing and realistic about the capacity of any leadership in Iraq today to meet expectations.

Diplomacy is an essential ingredient

Neither military nor civilian efforts will be successful inside Iraq without a diplomatic component. We need help from our friends and allies as well as self-interested cooperation from Iraq's neighbors, two of which are our adversaries.

Our diplomatic strategy should be multilateral: We need a "contact group" that includes all of Iraq's immediate neighbors. It is within this multilateral forum that we should talk with Syria and Iran, as we are doing with North Korea in the six-party talks.

The purpose of talking with Damascus and Tehran is to discover if there are areas of mutual interest, in particular in stabilizing Iraq as U.S. troops begin to withdraw. Both Syria and Iran stand to lose a great deal if Iraq comes apart. Neither is likely to be able to seal itself off from refugees and internal unrest (at the least among the Kurds and possibly among other groups, including the Sunni majority in Syria). Neither Iran nor Syria is in good shape to meet these challenges. While their concept of what contributes to stability may not coincide with ours, there is a real possibility of finding some areas of mutual interest, as we did with Iran on Afghanistan.

The only reason for not talking with Damascus and Tehran is hope that the regimes will soon change for the better. I am not in principle opposed to regime change—I played a role in conceptualizing the effort that brought down Slobodan Milosevic peacefully. But I see no evidence that regime change is imminent.

Conclusions

Let me summarize in conclusion the course of action I would propose for the United States in Iraq today, and that I hope might find support on both sides of the aisle in Congress:

1. Washington should commit itself to an intensified diplomatic, political, economic, and if necessary, military effort over the course of this year to stabilize Iraq and to lay the basis for beginning to drawdown U.S. combat troops by a date certain.

2. Civilian resources for Iraq should be increased sharply to $5 billion per year, with a multiyear commitment to strengthening Iraqi institutions at all

levels and supporting those in civil society prepared to contribute to peace-building.

3. The political effort should focus on reconciliation—helping the Iraqis to meet clearly defined milestones and building up governing capacity at all levels.

4. The essential diplomatic component should be multilateral and include direct talks with Damascus and Tehran. A Presidential envoy—someone whom the President trusts to pursue U.S. interests with vigor—should be appointed for this purpose.

I hasten to add that if my suggestions were fully adopted, the likelihood of even relative success would increase only marginally. We are in deep; getting out is not going to be easy, painless, or quick. Nor can we get out completely: We will have to remain engaged in Iraq for years to come, and in the region for the foreseeable future. How we handle Iraq will have repercussions for many years to come. We need to use the next year for a last, best effort to achieve relative success. After that I see no alternative to phasing out the U.S. combat role and allowing the Iraqis to cope for themselves, with—conditions permitting—training and other military assistance and a robust, continuing civilian assistance effort.

*(Note.—This testimony presents the personal views of the author, not those of the United States Institute of Peace, which does not take positions on policy issues.)

REGIONAL DIPLOMATIC STRATEGY

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2007

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:30 a.m., in room SH–216, Hart Senate Office Building, Hon. Joseph R. Biden, Jr. (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Biden, Dodd, Kerry, Feingold, Bill Nelson, Obama, Menendez, Cardin, Casey, Webb, Lugar, Hagel, Coleman, Corker, Sununu, Murkowski, Isakson, and Vitter.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR., U.S. SENATOR FROM DELAWARE

The CHAIRMAN. The hearing will come to order, please.

Today, we continue our comprehensive examination of the remaining options in Iraq. And our witnesses today have multiple talents, but they're going to focus, I hope, on helping us evaluate the role of regional diplomacy and what role it can play, if any, in stabilizing Iraq or in containing the fallout within Iraq if stability within Iraq proves elusive.

It is one thing to call for regional diplomacy, as many have. It's another thing to actually do it. And it seems to me we have to start with answers to some very critical questions, or at least a shot at them.

One is: How do Iraqis' neighbors see their interests? And do these interests overlap or conflict with ours? Is it possible to devise a framework that would encourage Iraq's neighbors to work cooperatively to stabilize Iraq? Can Iraq's neighbors influence groups within Iraq with whom they have close ties? And what role, if any, should the United States play in forging this regional cooperation? Is there a price for such cooperation? And, if so, what is it? And is the alternative to cooperation a regional proxy war?

As we explore the answers to these questions, I'd like to make one thing clear at the outset so I don't fly under any false colors here. I have trouble accepting—as a matter of fact, I don't accept—the notion that there is a direct linkage between the situation in Iraq and the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Arab-Israeli conflict, peace between the Arabs and the Israelis or Palestinians, is obviously worth pursuing, worth pursuing vigorously, and worth pursuing vigorously on its own merits. But, even if a peace treaty were signed tomorrow, I do not believe it would end the civil war in Iraq. And maybe our colleagues can speak to that connection, if there is any.

To help guide our discussion today, we're joined by a very strong panel of witnesses, and that is not hyperbole. They have tremendous experience in the region. It's doubtful we could get three people with stronger views and more serious high-level experience in the region.

Ambassador Richard Haass is the president of the Council on Foreign Relations, and, from 2001 to 2003, he was the director of the Policy Planning Staff at the State Department. He's also a very good friend of this committee, and I consider him a friend, if that doesn't hurt his reputation. But every member on this committee, I suspect, feels the same way. He's also the author of a first-rate article entitled, "The New Middle East," in the recent issue of Foreign Affairs magazine. I recommend it to everyone.

Ambassador Dennis Ross' name is synonymous with the Arab-Israeli peace process. For more than 12 years, spanning two administrations, one Republican, one Democrat, he led our Nation's efforts to secure a lasting peace in the Middle East. He's currently a counselor and the Ziegler distinguished fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

And Dr. Vali Nasr is a professor of national security affairs at the Naval Postgraduate School. His recent book, which I read with great interest, "The Shia Revival," has made, I think, a significant contribution to our understanding of the forces that have been unleashed by the war in Iraq.

We are incredibly fortunate to have these three men with us today, and I look forward to hearing their testimony.

I'll now yield to Chairman Lugar.

STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD G. LUGAR, U.S. SENATOR FROM INDIANA

Senator LUGAR. Mr. Chairman, I thank you for holding this hearing, which I believe is one of the most important ones in our series.

National debate on Iraq is focused intensely on what the role of United States forces should be at this stage of the war. The stakes surrounding this decision are particularly high, as American service men and women have made enormous sacrifices in Iraq during the last 4 years. Should we attempt to expand neighborhood-level security in Baghdad or elsewhere? Can such a strategy help establish order and create space for the government and the security forces to solidify themselves? Should we increase troop levels to achieve such a mission?

We have heard testimony from experts with a wide range of opinions on these questions. Some back the President's plan to commit more troops, others suggest this is a waste of time and resources, or that the President's remedy will fall far short of what is needed. But, even as we debate specific issues of military policy and troop deployment, we must see the broader picture. And whenever we begin to think of Iraq as a set piece, an isolated problem that can be solved outside the context of our broader Middle East interest, we should reexamine our frame of reference.

The underlying issue for American foreign policy is how we defend our interests in the Middle East, given the new realities that our 4 years in Iraq have imposed. This hearing will focus on this broader question. Both our friends and our enemies must know we

are willing to exercise the substantial leverage we possess in the region in the form of military presence, financial assistance, diplomatic context, and other resources. Although a political settlement in Iraq cannot be imposed from the outside, it is equally unlikely that one will succeed in the absence of external pressure and incentives.

Some strategists within our Government saw the intervention in Iraq as a geostrategic chess move designed to remake the Middle East. But even if the President's current plan substantially improves conditions in Iraq, the outcome in that country is going to be imperfect. Iraq will not soon become the type of pluralist unified democratic bulwark in the center of the Middle East for which some in the Bush administration had hoped.

Developing a broader Middle East strategy is all the more urgent, given that our intervention in Iraq has fundamentally changed the power balance in the region. In particular, the fall of Saddam Hussein's Sunni government opened up opportunities for Iran to seek much greater influence in Iraq. An Iran that is bolstered by an alliance with a Shiite government in Iraq, or a separate Shiite state in southern Iraq, would pose serious challenges for Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, and other Arab governments. Iran is pressing a broad agenda in the Middle East, with uncertain consequences, for weapons proliferation, terrorism, the security of Israel, and other United States interests. Any course we adopt in Iraq should consider how it will impact the regional influence of Iran.

Despite our current focus on Iraq, the President and the Congress must be preparing the American people and our allies for what comes next. We should recognize that conditions of national fatigue can impose severe limits on our decisionmaking. If the President's Iraq plan is not successful, calls for a rapid withdrawal from Iraq will intensify. If a withdrawal eventually does occur, it may happen in an atmosphere in which American fatigue with Iraq deployment limits our ability to address issues of vital national urgency elsewhere in the Middle East. We need frank policy discussions in this country about our vital interests in the region.

The difficulties we have had in Iraq make a strong presence in the Middle East more imperative, and not less. Our Nation must understand that, if and when we withdraw, or redeployment from Iraq occurs, it will not mean that our interests in the Middle East have diminished. In fact, it may mean we will need to bolster our military, diplomatic, and economic presence elsewhere in the Middle East.

Regardless of decisions on troop levels in Iraq, we must go to work now on a broader Middle East strategy that reveals critical relationships in the region, includes an attempt to reinvigorate the Arab-Israeli peace process. We should also be planning how we can continue to project military power in the Middle East, how we bolster allies in the region, how we protect oil flows, how we prevent and react to terrorist threats. This will require sustained engagement by our Government. Secretary Rice has begun that process with her current trip to the region, and I'm hopeful she will get the support and priority that she needs to accelerate our diplomacy in the Middle East.

I am also hopeful our Government will be aggressive and creative in pursuing a regional dialog. Inevitably, when anyone suggests such a diplomatic course, it is interpreted as advocating talks with Syria and Iran, nations that have overtly and covertly worked against our interests and violated international norms. As I stated at the hearing with Secretary Rice, the purpose of talks is not to change our posture toward those countries, nor should we compromise vital interests or strike ethereal bargains that cannot be verified. But if we lack the flexibility to communicate with unfriendly regimes, we increase the chances of miscalculation, undercut our ability to take advantage of any favorable situations, and potentially limit the regional leverage with which we can confront Iran and Syria.

We should be mindful that Iranian ambitions, coupled with disorder in Iraq, have caused consternation in many parts of the Arab world. Under certain scenarios, Arab governments may become more receptive to coordination with the United States on a variety of fronts. In addition, though Iran—or, rather, though Iran and Syria cooperate closely, their interests diverge, in many cases. And the regional dialog I am suggesting does not have to occur in a formal conference setting, but it needs to occur, and it needs to be sustained.

I welcome, along with the chairman, a very distinguished panel, and we look forward to your insights.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator.

With the chairman's permission, I think we'll limit our rounds to 8 minutes, and try to get through. And I will suggest to our witnesses that, since it's only 8 minutes, when the clock begins, I may direct questions to you individually. Each of you are fully capable of answering every one of the questions I have, but, in order to try to get more questions in, quite frankly, I'm going to just put one of you in the barrel each time, if that's OK with you.

I asked the staff what the protocol here is, that both Richard and Dennis have had significant positions in the administration. I don't know who goes first, so I decided to go with age. So, we're going to start with you, Dennis, first, and——

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. And then we'll go to Richard, and then we'll go to Dr. Nasr.

And welcome, again. We're delighted to have you here.

STATEMENT OF HON. DENNIS ROSS, COUNSELOR AND ZIEGLER DISTINGUISHED FELLOW, THE WASHINGTON INSTITUTE FOR NEAR EAST POLICY, WASHINGTON, DC

Ambassador ROSS. Thank you. I'm always happy to be the oldest one to present first. [Laughter.]

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And it's—I think it's an important time to be here. And I think this is an—a particularly important part of the way of looking at this issue.

I'm looking at this from the standpoint of what will be the regional dimension and its impact on Iraq; less, really, the impact of Iraq on the region, although I'll touch on that somewhat.

I have submitted a longer statement for the record, but I'm going to highlight my comments in a number of areas.

The CHAIRMAN. And the entire statement will be placed in the record.

Ambassador ROSS. Thank you.

First, I start with a premise that the solution to Iraq is going to be found within Iraq, not outside of Iraq. If we got every one of Iraq's neighbors to do exactly what we wanted them to do, what we would be able to do, I suspect, is to contain the conflict within Iraq, and to defuse it, which is very important, but we would not be able to settle it. The salvation for Iraq is going to be found inside Iraq, not outside of it, No. 1.

No. 2, I think the assessment of Iraq's reality in the Iraq Study Group was first rate and, I think, reveals lots of insights. I think its discussion of the region, I find much less compelling. The argument that every issue in the region is inextricably linked, I think, belies the reality in the region, tends to put too much of an emphasis on the outside, and especially on the Arab-Israeli conflict, which is not to say, as you were saying before, Mr. Chairman, that this is an issue that doesn't affect the whole region. Of course it affects the region. It affects the climate in the region, it affects the perception of what we're doing, it affects the perception of who's up, who's down in the region, radical Islamicists exploit the Israeli-Palestinian issue to recruit new followers, to manipulate anger against us. But if you solve the Palestinian problem tomorrow, you are not going to change what's happening in Iraq, you are not going to affect the Sunni insurgency in Anbar province, you are not going to affect the Shia militias who are fighting a sectarian war, maybe, in their eyes, for defensive reasons. If you solve this problem, maybe you affect our standing, but you don't affect that reality.

There's another, I would say, mythology that's going around that says, you know, we would get Sunni governments in the region to do much more in Iraq if only we could take the Palestinian problem off their back. And, here again, I would say this is a mythology. The Saudis have a stake in what's going on in Iraq, and the proof of that is, they're contemplating a $12 billion security barrier along their border. The Jordanians have a stake of what's going on in Iraq. They have absorbed 750,000 Iraqi refugees. They can ill-afford to absorb any more. They clearly have a stake in what happens in Iraq. The reason they are not as active—all the Sunni governments are not as active in Iraq as we would like, from a political standpoint, from an economic standpoint—is because they are concerned about promoting Shia dominance in Iraq, not because they're held back, in some fashion, by the Palestinians. They may well intervene in Iraq if the situation in Iraq becomes much worse. We face an irony. The worse the situation gets in Iraq, the more they're likely to intervene, not necessarily the way we would like.

If you look at the Syrians and the Iranians, here again I would say, they also have leverage, although I would not put the Syrians and the Iranians in the same category. The Iranian points of leverage are much greater than the Syrian points of leverage. It's pretty well known they played a major role, at least in the past, in organizing, training, financing, and arming the Shia militias. I would say their leverage, in some respects, is going up, not down, because, as power within Iraq becomes more diffuse, as there's frag-

mentation within the militias, as we see power devolve more and more to the local levels, the Iranian points of access increase.

That said, if tomorrow the Iranians decided that they were going to cut off the militias, the militias, at this point, have their own means of financing and have enough weapons to continue to fight, and they probably would. So, Iran has influence, but they don't have control.

Are either the Iranians or the Syrians prepared to change their behavior today? I would say no. I don't think they're particularly unhappy with what's going on there. Could they be induced into changing their behavior in Iraq? I doubt it. Are we in a situation where they would be more inclined to pull our chestnuts out of the fire? I don't think so, unless the cost to them, in their eyes, was to go up dramatically, or, alternatively, if they began to believe that, in a sense, their own chestnuts within Iraq were somehow at stake.

And, here again, we begin to see another one of the ironies. The worse the situation gets in Iraq, the more the incentive for intervention from the outside goes up. It can be negative intervention, it can be positive intervention. The reality is, all of Iraq's neighbors are afraid of a convulsion within Iraq. All of them understand that if you suddenly had a convulsion, you could have millions of refugees, you could have instability within Iraq that would bleed across the borders, you could have every one of their neighbors become competitors, in terms of creating and turning Iraq into a platform for potential threats to them.

So, they have a stake in preventing the worst in Iraq. The problem is, today they have a situation that is basically tolerable, either the Iranians actually find it good, because it keeps us tied down, or, at this stage, they don't believe that it imposes enough of a risk to them for them to change their behavior.

The paradox, interestingly enough, is, if you take a look at all of the neighbors, if they suddenly thought the situation became much more dangerous to them, they might have an incentive in coming together in some fashion to try to at least contain that reality. One thing I can tell you from all my experience in the Middle East, nothing good in the Middle East ever happens on its own. Plenty of bad things happen on their own, but nothing good ever happens on its own. So, if you wanted to orchestrate this, you probably would need—and I know you've called for this, at one point—you probably would need some kind of regional conference, which, again, would have to be orchestrated. It couldn't just be established as a big photo op. You'd have to prepare the ground before you went there, you'd have to work on it when you got there.

But, even here, I would caution and note that this is not likely, right now, to work the way we might want, because, again, the realities on the ground have to change to the point that what's going on there isn't tolerable for everybody. And I'm afraid, today, that it is.

In a sense, I think, also, there's a parallel here with what's happening on the inside. No one on the inside within Iraq, none of the—not the Iraqi leadership, not the current Iraqi Government, not the different sectarian leaders, find the situation sufficiently intolerable—as bad as we might think it is, none of them find it suffi-

ciently intolerable to change their behavior. Prime Minister Maliki has now made a series of commitments to President Bush, ranging from increasing the number of Iraqi forces, to protecting Sunni and Shia neighborhoods equally, to finally working out a sharing of oil revenues, producing a fair process for the amendments to the Constitution, a new law on de-Baathification, providing reconstruction moneys, including to Anbar province. I could go on and on and on. All of these commitments are very important. Had any of them taken place before, we wouldn't need a surge right now. The reality is, here, I don't have high expectations it's going to work, because, once again, unless, in fact, Prime Minister Maliki is convinced that he's on the brink of great danger if he doesn't act, I don't think we're going to see either Prime Minister Maliki or other leaders take what are, for them, excruciating decisions and change their behavior, unless they feel they have to.

In the case of the Sunnis, they haven't made the emotional adjustment to being, in a sense, subordinate to the Shia. In the case of the Shia, the Shia operate on the premise that they're a majority, but they could lose their power at any moment. Because they fear that, they continue to act the way they do.

And, in a sense, this brings me to a broader conclusion, and that broader conclusion is, we face an unfortunate paradox. The unfortunate paradox is, so long as we keep the lid on within Iraq, everybody on the outside of Iraq and everybody on the inside of Iraq has no reason to change their behavior. The paradox for us is that we have very good reasons to keep the lid on, because we don't have an interest in seeing a major convulsion within Iraq, we don't have an interest in seeing a free-for-all there, we don't have an interest in seeing the instability there radiate outward. But, unfortunately, unless we can somehow convince everybody that the lid is going to come off, I don't believe that any of them are going to change their behaviors, whether we're talking about any of the neighbors or we're talking about those on the inside.

And I'll stop there.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Ross follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. DENNIS ROSS, COUNSELOR AND ZIEGLER DISTINGUISHED FELLOW, THE WASHINGTON INSTITUTE FOR NEAR EAST POLICY, WASHINGTON, DC

I have been asked to discuss Iraq in a regional context. I interpret the request to be less about how Iraq fits in the region and more about how the region may affect Iraq and its future.

I take this view largely because most Americans—and I presume this committee—are principally concerned with how we are going to manage the best possible outcome in Iraq. The starting point for achieving the best possible outcome, or more accurately the least bad one, is understanding that the future of Iraq is going to be determined by Iraqis. While Iraq's neighbors certainly have influence on different sectarian groups within Iraq, their influence is limited.

The Iraq Study Group's assessment of the internal reality of Iraq was extraordinary in its candor and its insights. Its emphasis on the role of the outside world was far less so. Saying that all issues in the Middle East are inextricably linked belies reality and placed a misleading focus on the role of Syria and Iran and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

It is certainly fair to say that the different conflicts in the area affect the broader climate, the expectations of different regional leaders and publics, the likelihood of who is on the defensive and who is on the offensive, and whether or not it pays to be an American friend or foe. From that perspective, it is certainly true that settling the Israeli-Palestinian conflict would take away a basic source of grievance

that Islamists exploit to recruit new followers and to manipulate anger against the United States.

Beyond that, the Israeli-Palestinian has precious little relevance to Iraq. If there were no Palestinian conflict, we would still face a Sunni insurgency in Anbar province. We would still face Shia militias determined to protect against Sunni insurgent attacks and to wreak vengeance either in response to, or unfortunately, in anticipation of such assaults.

While I support intensive efforts to defuse the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, I do it for reasons completely unrelated to Iraq. I do it because it is right to try to reduce the violence and settle the conflict on its own merits. It is right to remove a source of radicalism in the region. It is right not simply to deny Islamists a grievance, but also the ability to transform what has been a national conflict into a religious conflict—almost assuredly what could happen if Palestinians come to believe that there is no possibility of settling the conflict and Hamas comes to dominate the Palestinian future. It is right also to correct the impression that much of the Muslim—and certainly nearly all the Arab—world have presently of the United States: That given the Bush administration's disengagement from the peace process for the last 6 years, the United States is simply indifferent on an issue that matters deeply to them.

But there should be no illusions. Our efforts to settle the conflict are not going to materially change the challenges we face in Iraq. Moreover, the notion that if we do more to settle the Palestinian conflict, the Saudis and Jordanians will become more helpful on Iraq is also illusory. Both have a stake in what happens in Iraq. Neither can be indifferent. The Saudis are contemplating a $12 billion security barrier along their border with Iraq, fearing the spillover of terror or refugees or instability otherwise. Similarly, Jordan has already absorbed 750,000 Iraq refugees. It cannot absorb more—and yet an all-out convulsion within Iraq would certainly confront Jordan with the prospect of having to absorb thousands more.

Neither the Saudis nor Jordanians want to see Iraq fall apart; nor do they want to see a Shia-dominated state with very close ties to Iran. Today, they seem to be more concerned about the latter than the former. They see Sunnis under constant assault from Shia militias; they see Sunnis being driven from their homes in mixed neighborhoods; they see Iran with increasing presence and influence. It is not the Palestinian issue that has led the Saudis, Jordanians, and other leading Sunni countries and leaders to hesitate in providing the kind of support they could to the Iraqi Government. What holds them back is their dislike for what they see emerging in the new Iraq.

One development that might trigger far greater involvement by the Sunni regimes is a negative one. The more they see the Sunni tribes threatened by the Shia, the more likely the Saudis and Jordanians are to intervene. Until that point we can push and cajole, but I suspect, with marginal affect.

We are led back again to Iraq and its internal dynamics. The Palestinian-conflict cannot affect these dynamics; but could Iran and Syria? Again, the answer is probably more as spoilers rather than as fixers, though Iran is undoubtedly more of a problem in this connection than Syria. Bear in mind that Iran has unmistakable links to the Mahdi Army and to the Badr organization, and has helped to arm, organize, and finance both. While today neither of these militias is any longer primarily dependent on Iran for money and weaponry, given their access to governmental and nongovernmental coffers, Iran can certainly wield influence with these militias and with different Shia political figures. Moreover, as power and the militias have become more diffused, localized, and less hierarchical, Iran's capacity to be a spoiler has probably increased, particularly as militias and criminal gangs merge at local levels and as Iran can provide them material support.

What this suggests is that all the neighbors—Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Kuwait, Turkey, Syria, and Iran—can probably add to Iraq's problems. They are far less capable of being the key to Iraq's salvation; only the Iraqis can provide that. Only Iraqis can decide whether they will forge a national compact. To date, they have done little to indicate that national reconciliation is a serious priority. And, unfortunately, the Maliki government chose to handle the execution of Saddam Hussein, not as a moment for reconciliation but, instead, for conveying to the Sunnis that the Shia now ruled, that the Sunnis were powerless in the new Iraq, and that the Shia would act without regard for Sunni sensibilities. While the execution could have been seized by the Maliki government as an opportunity to send a message to the Sunnis that now was a time to end a chapter of Iraqi history in which all sides had been brutalized and chart a new future together, it preferred to signal its dominance and its need for vengeance.

This is the context in Iraq in which the President has made his decision to increase our forces in Baghdad and Anbar province. Maliki's commitment to act on

a new security plan and to treat Shia and Sunnis similarly, no longer favoring Shia militias, is unlikely to be believed within Iraq. Previously, he has said he would not tolerate lawlessness or the militias and not only never acted against them, but has consistently turned a blind eye to the infiltration of the militias in the Interior Ministry and the police forces. In the eyes of the Sunnis, he has tacitly supported Shia death squads and the depopulation of Sunnis in the mixed neighborhoods of Baghdad.

Words won't convince Sunnis that Maliki is serious about a new strategy to provide protection to all Iraqis regardless of sect. There will need to be demonstrations of his national, not sectarian, commitment. It won't take long to know whether his commitments are real or merely rhetorical. Will Iraqi forces join ours in the numbers the security plan calls for? Will they protect Shia and Sunni populations equally? Will legislation finally be adopted on sharing oil revenues with a mechanism for implementing these shared provisions according to population? Will there be a fair process finally for dealing with the amendments to the constitution? Will the Iraqi reconstruction moneys materialize and be available also in Anbar province? Will former Baath officials below the highest levels be rehabilitated and integrated back into ministries?

Without even confronting the Mahdi Army, which I doubt is realistic for the time being, all the actions implied in the answers to these questions would signal a profound change—and President Bush, in effect, has offered all of these as measures of why the surge will work now as opposed to all previous efforts. To be sure, Iraq's neighbors could make these behaviors more likely if they were prepared to make a collective effort to use their respective leverage. In theory, Iran could press both Abdul Aziz al-Hakim and Muqtada al-Sadr—given their weight within the Parliament and their leadership of competing Shia militias—to support Prime Minister Maliki in taking such steps. The Saudis and Jordanians could use their connections with the leading Sunni tribes to get them to show they will meet the Prime Minister part way and to reciprocate when the Maliki government takes steps toward them. The Syrians could make it easier for Sunni tribal leaders to reach out by working to prevent jihadists from crossing into Iraq and threatening them.

But turning theory into reality seems highly improbable at this time. Unless the Iranians and Saudis are prepared to forge a deal on Iraq, I suspect that Iraq's neighbors will not contribute to defusing tensions among the different sectarian groups. Indeed, the only circumstance in which I see Iran and Saudi Arabia behaving differently is if they both became fearful that a precipitous U.S. withdrawal might trigger a real convulsion in Iraq. Potentially millions of refugees on the move, instability bleeding across Iraq's borders, and competition to bolster their friends in Iraq that intensifies and proves very expensive to both the Saudis and Iranians could conceivably create enough of a convergence of interest in Iraq to lead the two to explore a possible deal.

There is irony here—only if the reality in Iraq threatens to be far more costly to both the Saudis and Iranians are they likely to contemplate some limited understanding on Iraq. I don't have high expectations. Iran may think they are more insulated from spillover of instability in Iraq and in any case they would rather back 60 percent of the population than the 20 percent the Saudis would be supporting. Nonetheless, the Saudi capacity to underwrite the Sunnis could give the Iranians pause.

I would support a regional conference with the neighbors, including Iran and Syria, not because I expect much to come of it, but because all sides might come to see some value in tempering their spoiling instincts. The U.S. role at such a conference might be to see whether there is a potential for some understandings on Iraq, and to cultivate them even between the Saudis and Iranians if we deem them to be of any value.

While worth considering, I don't believe that any such deals are on the horizon. In fact, I suspect that at this point they are about as likely as seeing Iraqis begin to act on national reconciliation. In either case, it will take discomfort to get Iraq's neighbors or Iraq's Government and sectarian leaders to transform their behaviors. The situation may be objectively terrible in Iraq, but it has not been sufficiently bad to catalyze a change in behavior of Iraq's leaders and Iraq's neighbors. By keeping the lid on with our forces, and preventing a real collapse, we make it safe enough for everyone—next to and within Iraq to avoid taking what they regard as excruciating decisions.

It is not an accident that Iraq's leaders have avoided the hard choices required to create a national compact. Sunnis continue to resist at least emotionally that they must be subservient to the Shia. The Shia are a majority who act as if they believe they will lose their dominant position in governing Iraq unless they hold the line

every day against the Sunnis. Insurgent attacks justify the maintenance of militias, which in the eyes of Shia, protect them when no one else will.

In my experience, leaders don't cross thresholds in historic conflicts because they are induced into doing so. They may approach the thresholds given certain promises about the future, but they don't cross them unless they see the costs—as they measure them—if they fail to act.

President Bush has now established the key measures that will show whether the Iraqi Government and its Shia leaders are prepared to change their behavior in a way that also produces Sunni responses. If there is no consequence for the Iraqi Government for failing to meet their commitments, I believe that neither the different Iraqi leaders nor their counterparts in the neighboring states will perceive that the United States will decide to give up our readiness to keep the lid on in Iraq—regardless of the cost to us.

The great paradox of Iraq today is that our fear of an Iraqi collapse keeps us there and reduces the need for either Iraqis or their neighbors to change course.

The CHAIRMAN. Thanks.

Mr. Secretary.

STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD HAASS, PRESIDENT, COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS, NEW YORK, NY

Ambassador HAASS. Thank you, sir. Thank you, again, for having me back and for testifying on the situation on Iraq.

To the extent one is judged by those one testifies with, I'm flattered by being with Dennis Ross and Vali Nasr.

What I'd like to do is just make some remarks and put the full statement in the record——

The CHAIRMAN. The entire statement will be placed in the record.

Ambassador HAASS [continuing]. And just to make clear that my views also are my own and I'm not speaking on behalf of the Council.

I won't take your time, Senator Biden, rehearsing how we got to where we are in Iraq, other than to say the United States continues to pay an enormous price for the decision to attack Iraq and for subsequent decisions made in the aftermath of its liberation. The decision to attack, in 2003, was a classic war of choice, and it's been followed by any number of bad choices since. And the result is an early end to the era of American primacy in the Middle East and the emergence of a region more likely to do damage to itself, the United States, and the world. And this is the context in which we have to look at Iraq, which has now become a hybrid. It's become part civil war, part failed state, and part regional conflict. All of this has real consequences for the United States.

Let me take a step back. Foreign policy must always be about achieving the best possible outcome. Iraq is not going to be a model society or a functioning democracy anytime soon. We should expunge such words as "success" and "victory" from our vocabulary. Ambitious goals are simply beyond reach, given the nature of Iraqi society and the number of people there prepared to kill one another. It would be wise to emphasize not what the United States can accomplish in Iraq, but what it can avoid.

In this context, I believe there are two reasons to support a surge, in principle. One is the possibility that it may work, that it may provide the time and space for Iraqi authorities to introduce power and revenue-sharing and improve the quality of Iraq's military and police. And the second argument, in principle, in favor of surge, is that if it fails—if it fails to turn things around and Iraq descends further into chaos, it will help make clear that the onus

for Iraqi's failure falls on the Iraqis themselves. And such a perception would be less costly, all things being equal, for our reputation than a judgment that Iraq was lost because of a lack of American staying power.

There are, however, several downsides to the decision to surge forces. And, to begin with, a surge is not a strategy, it's simply a tactic. And the premise behind it seems to be that all the Iraqi Government requires is a few months to get its house in order. But if the Iraqis were prepared to do what was needed, a surge would not be necessary. And if they're not willing to do what is called for, a surge will not be enough.

This, to me, suggests what may be the fundamental flaw implicit in the new policy. The United States goal is to work with Iraqis to establish a functioning democracy in which the interests and rights of minorities are protected. But the goal of the Iraqi Government is different. It appears to be to establish a country in which the rights and interests of the Shia majority are protected above all else.

A second drawback of the surge is that it will entail real costs—economic, military, and human. A surge is not an abstraction. It will change the lives of tens of thousands of individuals and families in this country.

And, third, a drawback I would mention is that if a surge in U.S. forces cannot alter the fundamental dynamics of Iraq, as Senator Lugar mentioned, calls will mount here at home for U.S. military withdrawal, based on the judgment the United States has done all it can and that doing more would be futile. So, ironically, doing more in the short run will make it more difficult to sustain a United States presence in Iraq in the long run.

All those drawbacks notwithstanding, let me also add that opposition to a surge does not constitute a strategy. A rapid withdrawal of U.S. forces would certainly intensify the civil conflict, produce humanitarian disaster, provide a sanctuary and a school for terrorists, and draw in many of Iraq's neighbors, turning the country, and possibly the region, into a battleground. In addition, a rapid withdrawal of U.S. forces would also increase the cost to U.S. foreign policy worldwide, as it would raise questions everywhere about U.S. predictability and reliability.

I do think there is an alternative to both a surge and to near-term withdrawal. It would entail reductions in U.S. force levels. It would call for less participation in Iraq's civil fighting. It would require more emphasis on training and advising of Iraq military and police. It would continue work with local leaders to forge compromise. And it would involve invigorated diplomacy at the regional level. I would call it some version of "Iraqification," with a diplomatic dimension.

Let me make clear, in advocating this, though, that such an approach would not solve the Iraq problem. It's premised, rather, on the notion that Iraq, at best, will remain divided and messy for years, and the most the United States can achieve is to keep open the possibility of normalcy until such a time most Shias and Sunnis in Iraq are willing to embrace such a notion and take steps to bring it about.

In that context, let me make clear that it's not at all apparent to me that widening the war to Syria or Iran would accomplish more than it would cost. Any attack on either Syria or Iran would run the risk of leading either, or both, countries to intensify their unhelpful actions in Iraq, including the risk to United States personnel. And there's no reason to assume that their responses would necessarily be limited to Iraq.

More important, it's not clear to me why the administration continues to resist the suggestion, put forward by the Iraq Study Group and others, that it support the creation of a regional forum. What makes the most sense is a standing mechanism akin to the so-called "Six Plus Two" forum used to help manage events in Afghanistan. In such a forum, the United States and others could challenge Syria to do more to make it difficult for terrorists to cross into Iraq. And we obviously could challenge Iran, as well.

Why should we involve Iran and Syria? Let me suggest three reasons. Neither Iran nor Syria has an interest in an Iraq that fails or falls apart. The cohesion of both is potentially vulnerable to Kurdish nationalism. The economies of both would be burdened by refugees. But also, neither would benefit from conflicts with neighbors that could easily evolve out of an intensified civil war in Iraq.

With Syria, in particular, there is an opportunity. Syria might be open to persuasion and compromise if the scope of talks were expanded. One could imagine Israel returning the Golan Heights to Syria in return for a peace treaty, diplomatic relations, and a major reduction in Syria's support for both Hamas and Hezbollah. The United States, in that context, would reduce Syrian sanctions. And, as part of that, Syria, then, in turn, would have to do a better job of policing its border with Iraq. And I would simply suggest that the United States should give Israel its blessing to explore this possibility.

Iran is more difficult, though, again, I can imagine a broad package that would place an extremely low ceiling on uranium enrichment activity that Iran could take in exchange for accepting the most stringent of inspections. Iran would gain access to, but not physical control of, nuclear fuel for purposes of electricity generation. Sanctions could be reduced, depending upon Iranian willingness to curtail its support for terror and its opposition to Israel. If we take such an approach with Iran, which I think we should, we should make our position public.

The Iranian public needs to know how it would benefit from normal ties. And the Iranian public needs to know how they pay a price for the foreign policy of their government. The Achilles heel of the Government in Iran is their mismanagement of the Iranian economy, and, on a regular basis, we, as outsiders, should make clear to the Iranian people the price they pay, the better standard of living they could enjoy. That, I believe, is the best way to put pressure on the clerics running the country.

Implicit in all this is two things. One is, the United States should let go of its regime-change ambitions, in the short run, toward Iran and Syria. Regime change is not going to come about in either country soon enough to affect U.S. interests. I could be wrong in this, but no one can count that I am wrong. We cannot conduct for-

eign policy on the hope that regime change will come soon enough to solve our problems for us.

The United States should also jettison preconditions to sitting down and talking with either country. The fact that both are acting in ways we find objectionable is not a reason not to negotiate, it's a reason to negotiate. What matters is not where you begin a negotiation, it's where you come out.

And I say all this, acknowledging that there's no guarantee that diplomacy would work. That said, it's not clear to me how the United States is worse off for having tried. The failure of diplomatic initiative, one that's perceived as fair and reasonable, would actually make it less difficult for the United States to rally domestic and international support for harsher policies toward either Syria or Iran.

Let me just quickly talk about the Palestinian issue. I would simply say that history suggests that negotiations tend to succeed only when leaders on all sides are both willing and able to compromise, and it's not clear that such leadership now exists. And, in this context, what I would argue for is that the United States should articulate publicly its views of final status. We've done this, in part, vis-a-vis, Israel. The United States should also do this, vis-a-vis the Palestinians. For example, we should say that any peace would be based on the 1967 lines, that the Palestinians would receive territorial and other forms of compensation whenever there were deviations, and that they would also receive economic compensation.

Let me just make clear that I'm not suggesting that negotiations be started now. The situation is not ripe for that. But the United States can begin to alter the debate within Palestinian society. Hamas needs to be pressed to explain why it's resisting negotiating with Israel and why it persists in violence, when an attractive diplomatic settlement is available. The goal should be either to strengthen Abu Mazen or to create conditions in which Hamas evolves away from violence.

Let me echo the words of Dennis Ross and others, that progress in the Palestinian issue will not affect the situation in Iraq. Iraqis, we all know, are killing themselves for any number of reasons, but promoting a Palestinian state is simply not one of them.

Beyond the Middle East, there's an entire foreign policy agenda that could benefit from greater attention, from North Korea to climate change to trade negotiations, to Darfur, to Afghanistan—where the situation is deteriorating—to homeland security to energy policy. I would simply say that Iraq gets in the way of much of this.

The military commitment we are making in Iraq leaves the United States with little leverage and little capacity to use elsewhere. Iraq is also absorbing economic resources. It contributes to anti-Americanism and makes it more difficult for the United States to drum up support. It requires a great deal of time and political capital that could be better spent on other policies. An emphasis on Iraq also carries with it a long-term risk. If things continue to go badly, it will be more likely that we will suffer an "Iraq syndrome" that will constrain our ability to be active everywhere.

In short—and I will end with this, Mr. Chairman—I would suggest the time has come for the post-Iraq era of American foreign

policy. This remains an era of extraordinary opportunity for the United States. We're free to devote the bulk of our resources to dealing with the global challenges of our era. What's more, we have the potential to enlist the support of the other major powers in tackling these challenges. But, so long as Iraq drains American resources, distracts its attention, and distances others from us, we will not be able to translate this opportunity into reality. Worse yet, this opportunity will soon fade. As others have pointed out, it will be Iraqis who will largely determine their own fate, but only by reducing our own investment in Iraq and by refocusing our energies elsewhere will we place ourselves in a position to improve our own fate.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Haass follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD N. HAASS, PRESIDENT, COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS, NEW YORK, NY

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on the situation in Iraq and, in particular, on regional and global aspects of current U.S. policy in Iraq. I will not rehearse here today how we got to where we are—other than to say that the United States and the American people are paying a substantial price for the decision to attack Iraq and for subsequent decisions made in the aftermath of Iraq's liberation. The decision to attack Iraq in 2003—a classic war of choice—was followed by numerous bad choices.

The result is an early end to the era of American primacy in the Middle East and the emergence of a region far more likely to do damage to itself, the United States, and the world. To be sure, we now have an Iraq that is no longer ruled by a dictator and one in which the population has had an opportunity to vote on several occasions for either candidates or a constitution. But the more significant result is an Iraq that is violent, divided, and dangerous. The debate over whether what is taking place there constitutes a civil war is not productive. The reality is that Iraq is an unattractive hybrid: Part civil war, part failed state, and part regional conflict.

The Iraqi Government is weak internally and challenged from without by terrorists, Sunni insurgents, and Shia militias. Shia domination of the south is near complete and growing in the center given ethnic cleansing and emigration. The Kurds are living a separate life in the country's north. The Sunni minority sees itself as discriminated against; one consequence is that the bulk of the instability centers on the capital area and the west.

The recent execution of Saddam Hussein is at once a reflection of the reality that has come to be Iraq and a development that exacerbated sectarianism. It reveals a lack of discipline and professionalism on the part of Iraqi authorities. What we saw represented more the politics of retribution than the rule of law.

All of this has important consequences for the United States. Foreign policy must always be about achieving the best possible outcome. At times this can translate into lofty goals. This is not one of those times. It would be wiser to emphasize not what the United States can accomplish in Iraq but what it might avoid. Iraq is not going to be a model society or functioning democracy any time soon. We should expunge such words as "success" and "victory" from our vocabulary. Ambitious goals are beyond reach given the nature of Iraqi society and the number of people there prepared to kill rather than compromise to bring about their vision of the country's future. We can let historians argue over whether ambitious goals were ever achievable; they are not achievable now.

ASSESSING THE SURGE

This is the context in which President Bush chose to articulate a new policy, one with an increase or surge in U.S. forces at its core. There are two reasons to support a surge in U.S. forces. One argument in its favor is the possibility it may work, that it might provide time and space for Iraqi authorities to introduce needed power and revenue sharing and to increase the quantity and, more important, improve the quality of Iraq's military and police forces. To do this, a surge would have to be implemented in a manner that was nonsectarian and open-ended.

The second argument in favor of a surge is that if it fails to turn things around and if Iraq descends further into violence and chaos, it will help to make clear that

the onus for Iraq's failure falls not on the United States (and not on any lack of U.S. commitment) but on the Iraqis themselves. At least in principle, such a perception would be less costly for the reputation of the United States than the judgment that Iraq was lost because of a lack of American staying power or reliability.

There are, however, several downsides to the decision to increase the number of U.S. forces in Iraq, including the basic problem that it may not achieve a meaningful improvement in stability and security for Iraqis. A surge is not a strategy; it is a tactic, a component of a larger policy. The premise behind the new policy seems to be that all the Iraqi Government requires is a few months to get its house in order, to introduce much-needed political and economic reforms that will assuage most Sunnis and military and police reforms that will make the country safer. But if the Iraqis were prepared to do what was needed, a surge would not be necessary. And if they are not willing and able to do what is called for, a surge will not be enough.

More broadly, the United States requires an Iraqi Government that is willing and able to take advantage of the opportunity a surge is designed to provide—and by "take advantage" I do not mean exploit it so as to strengthen Shia control. This may, in fact, be the fundamental flaw of the surge decision and U.S. policy. The U.S. goal is to work with Iraqis to establish a functioning democracy in which the interests and rights of minorities are protected. The goal of the Iraqi Government appears to be to establish a country in which the rights and interests of the Shia majority are protected above all else.

A second drawback of a surge is that it will entail real economic, military, and above all, human costs. It is important to keep in mind that a surge is not an abstraction. It will change the lives of tens of thousands of families and individuals in this country—and bring to a premature end the lives of an unknown number of American men and women.

A third drawback to a surge in U.S. forces is that if (as seems likely) it cannot alter the fundamental dynamics of Iraq, calls will mount here at home for a U.S. military withdrawal based on the judgment that the United States had done all it could and that doing more would be futile and costly. Ironically, doing more in the short run will make it more difficult to sustain a U.S. presence for the long run.

There are, thus, good reasons to question the new U.S. approach to Iraq. But we should be no less clear about the drawbacks to the principal alternative. Opposition to a surge does not constitute a desirable strategy. A rapid withdrawal of U.S. forces would almost certainly intensify the civil conflict, produce a humanitarian disaster, provide a sanctuary and a school for terrorists, and draw in many of Iraq's neighbors, turning Iraq and, potentially, much of the Middle East into a battleground.

A rapid withdrawal of U.S. forces would also increase the costs to U.S. foreign policy more generally, as it would raise questions in the minds of friends and foes alike about U.S. predictability and reliability. Even some of the most vocal critics around the world of U.S. policy would be critical of a sudden end to U.S. involvement. And for good reason, as terrorists would be emboldened, countries such as Iran, North Korea, and Venezuela would be more prone to act assertively, and friends would be more likely to decrease their dependence upon the United States, something that could lead them either to reach new accommodations with others or to build up their own military might, including possibly reconsidering the utility of developing or acquiring nuclear weapons.

There is, however, an alternative to both a surge as defined by the administration and near-term withdrawal. It would entail gradual reductions in U.S. force levels, less participation in Iraq's civil fighting, more emphasis on training and advising of military and police units, continuing work with local political leaders to forge compromise, and diplomacy designed to influence the behavior of Iraq's neighbors. Call it "Iragification" with a diplomatic dimension.

Such an approach would not attempt to "solve" the Iraq problem. To the contrary, it is premised on the view that there is no major breakthrough to be produced by a surge or any other change in U.S. policy. It is similarly premised on the notion that Iraq will remain a messy and divided country for years, and the best and most the United States can hope to achieve is to keep open the possibility of something approaching normalcy until such a time most Shias and Sunnis are willing to embrace such a notion and take steps that would bring it about. In short, this third approach would buy time and give the Iraqis a chance to improve their lot—and in the process reduce the direct and indirect costs to the United States and to U.S. foreign policy.

In considering the alternatives it pays to keep in mind that outsiders have three options when it comes to civil wars. One is to smother them. Alas, this has proven not to be achievable in Iraq. A second is to help or simply allow the stronger party—in this case Iraq's Shia majority—to prevail. This would be a terrible conclusion to

the U.S. intervention. It would strengthen Iranian influence, cause a humanitarian tragedy, and likely lead to a regional conflict given concerns throughout the Arab world for their Sunni brothers and opposition to Iranian hegemony. A third option would be to accept that civil fighting will continue until it burns itself out, either from exhaustion or from a realization by most Iraqis and their external benefactors that no victory is possible and that peace and stability are preferable to continued conflict. Such an outcome will likely take many years to evolve. The best thing that can be said about it is that it is preferable to the scenario of a one-sided victory.

THE REGIONAL AND GLOBAL DIMENSIONS OF U.S. POLICY

As the above makes clear, Iraq cannot be viewed in isolation. The President was right to recognize the regional component of Iraqi security. He was also right to claim that both Iran and Syria have acted in ways that have contributed to the challenges confronted by Iraq's Government and its people.

But it is not at all apparent that widening the war to either or both countries would accomplish more than it would cost. Any attack on Iran or Syria runs the risk of leading either or both countries to intensify their actions in Iraq, including increasing the risk to U.S. personnel. And there is no reason they would be limited to reacting within Iraq. Iran in particular has the ability to act throughout the region and beyond given its ties to groups such as Hezbollah and Hamas.

More important, it is not clear why the administration continues to resist the suggestion put forward by the Iraq Study Group and others that it support the creation of a regional forum that would have as its mission to stabilize the situation in Iraq. What makes the most sense is a standing mechanism akin to the so-called "Six Plus Two" forum used to help manage events in Afghanistan. An Iraq forum—consisting of Iraq, its six immediate neighbors (Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Turkey), and selected outsiders (possibly the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council)—would provide a forum in which outside involvement in Iraq could be addressed. In particular, the United States and others could challenge Syria to do more to make it difficult for terrorists to enter into Iraq and Iran to curtail its support for terrorism.

Why should the United States involve Iran and Syria, two countries that have more often then not exacerbated matters in Iraq? To begin with, neither has an interest in an Iraq that fails. The cohesion of both is vulnerable to Kurdish nationalism; the economies of both would be burdened by floods of refugees. Neither would benefit from conflicts with neighbors that could all too easily evolve out of an intensified civil war in Iraq that left the Sunnis vulnerable.

Syria might be even more open to persuasion and compromise if the scope of talks were expanded to address concerns beyond Iraq. One can imagine a negotiation in which Israel would return the Golan Heights to Syria in return for a peace treaty, diplomatic relations, and a major reduction in Syrian support of both Hezbollah and Hamas. The United States would reduce or end economic and political sanctions in a context that included Syrian-Israeli normalization and enhanced Syrian efforts to police its border. The United States and Israel would also benefit from the cooling in Syrian-Iranian ties that would result. The United States should give Israel its blessing to explore this possibility with Damascus.

Iran is a more difficult challenge, although here, too, one can imagine a broader package that would place an extremely low ceiling on any uranium enrichment activity Iran could undertake in exchange for the most stringent inspections. In exchange for such restraint, Iran would gain access to (but not physical control of) nuclear fuel for purposes of electricity generation. Other economic and diplomatic sanctions could be reduced depending on whether Iran was willing to curtail its support for terror and its opposition to Israel. Making such offers public—making it clear to the Iranian public how they would benefit from normal ties and how much they pay for Iran's radical foreign policy—would place pressure on the government and increase the odds it will compromise.

Implicit in all this is that the United States is willing to let go of its "regime change" ambitions toward Iran and Syria. This makes sense, because regime change is not going to come about soon enough to affect U.S. interests in Iraq or beyond. The United States should also jettison preconditions to sitting down and talking with either Syria or Iran. The fact that they are acting in ways the United States finds objectionable is reason to negotiate. What matters is not where you begin a negotiation but where you come out.

There is, of course, no guarantee that these or similar diplomatic initiatives would bear fruit. Obviously, it would have been wiser to have approached both countries several years ago when the price of oil was lower and when the U.S. position in Iraq was stronger. Still, it is not clear how the United States would find itself worse off

for having tried now. To the contrary, the failure of a diplomatic initiative widely perceived as fair and reasonable would make it less difficult for the United States to build domestic and international support for other, harsher policies toward Syria and Iran.

The other regional matter that is garnering a great deal of attention of late is the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Obviously, progress here would be welcome and applauded. No one—Palestinians, Israelis, or Americans—benefits from the current impasse. History, though, strongly suggests that negotiations tend to succeed only when certain critical elements are in place. In addition to a process and a formula that parties must be prepared to accept, there needs to be leaders on all sides who are both willing and able to compromise. It is not clear that such leadership currently exists on either side of this divide. The Olmert government is weak as a result of the widely judged failure of last year's Lebanon incursion. The leadership of the Palestinian Authority appears willing to compromise but it is not clear it is strong enough to do so given the political and armed opposition of Hamas. Hamas, by contrast, might well be able to make peace if it so chose; the problem is that there is no evidence it is so disposed.

In this circumstance, the most valuable thing the United States could do is to begin to articulate publicly its views of final status. This could be done either as part of phase 3 of the roadmap or apart from it. The United States has already done some of this, making clear in a letter to then-Prime Minister Sharon that the territorial dimension of any peace agreement would have to reflect Israeli security concerns and demographic realities, and that any Palestinian "right of return" would be limited to Palestine. It would be proper to state publicly as well that any peace would be based on the 1967 lines, that Palestinians would receive territorial compensation whenever there were deviations, and that they would receive economic compensation (and assistance more generally) to help deal with the refugee problem and more broadly the challenge of establishing a viable state. The United States could indicate its own readiness to be generous and gain pledges from Japan, the European Union, and Arab governments to more than match American largesse.

In suggesting this I want to be clear about two things. First, I am not recommending that negotiations be started now. Again, the situation is not ripe for that. But by articulating such commitments, the United States can alter the debate within the Palestinian society. Hamas needs to be pressed to explain why it resists negotiating with Israel and persists in violence when an attractive diplomatic settlement is available. The goal should be to strengthen the hand of Abu Mazen—or to create conditions in which Hamas evolves and moves away from violence. If and when such changes occur, prospects will improve for diplomacy between Israelis and Palestinians.

Second, progress in the Palestinian issue will not affect the situation on the ground in Iraq. Iraqis are killing one another for many reasons, but promoting a Palestinian state is not one of them. Still, investing more in this issue makes sense on its merits and as one way of giving America's Sunni friends a positive development to point to, something that will bolster their domestic standing and make it less difficult for them to be seen to be cooperating with the United States.

It is also important to look beyond the immediate region of the Middle East. The United States could enter into bilateral talks with North Korea and present it with a comprehensive proposal that would attempt to induce it (as well as pressure it) to give up its nuclear program. The United States could introduce ideas about how to slow climate change. Trade negotiations are stalled and could be jump-started. There is a genocide in Darfur that needs to be stopped. Afghanistan is deteriorating; economic, military, and diplomatic resources are needed urgently if that country is not going to resemble Iraq in several years time. Much more can and should be done to enhance the security of the American homeland. And there is the crying need for an energy policy that will reduce American use of oil and gas and reduce our dependence on imports (U.S. vulnerability to both price hikes and supply interruptions) and slow the flow of dollars to governments that in many cases are carrying out policies inimical to U.S. interests.

Iraq gets in the way of much of this. It is simply absorbing too many, resources. The military commitment there leaves the United States with little leverage to apply elsewhere and little capacity to use if situations warrant. Iraq is also absorbing economic resources, resources that could and should be used for everything from military modernization to other pressing domestic and international needs. Iraq contributes to anti-Americanism and makes it more difficult for the United States to drum up support for its policies. It also requires a great deal of time and political capital, time and effort that could better be spent on building support at home and abroad for other policies. And an emphasis on Iraq also carries with it a longer term risk: If things continue to go badly, it becomes more likely that we will suffer a col-

lective allergy (an "Iraq syndrome") that will constrain the ability of this country to be as active in the world as it needs to be.

In short, the time has come for the post-Iraq era of American foreign policy to get under way. Such a transition is long overdue. I have written at length on the proposition that this moment of history is one of unprecedented opportunity. Not having to worry about the prospect of major power conflict, the United States is free to devote the bulk of its resources to dealing with the local, regional, and global challenges of our era. What is more, it has the potential to enlist the active support of the other major powers—China, Europe, India, Japan, Russia, and others—in tackling these challenges. But so long as Iraq drains American resources, distracts its attention, and distances others from us, we will not be able to translate this opportunity into reality. Worse yet, the opportunity will fade. We should keep in mind that it will be Iraqis who will largely determine their own fate. Only by reducing the American stake in Iraq and by refocusing our energies elsewhere will we place ourselves in a position to improve our own.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Professor.

STATEMENT OF DR. VALI R. NASR, PROFESSOR OF NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS, NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL, MONTEREY, CA

Dr. NASR. Good morning. Let me begin by thanking Mr. Chairman and the committee for inviting me to testify here.

I've submitted my full statement for the record, so I will——

The CHAIRMAN. It will be placed in the record.

Dr. NASR [continuing]. Raise some of the issues here—in particular, focus on the implications of the sectarian violence in Iraq, for that country and for the region.

There's no doubt that the year 2006 has marked the emergence of sectarianism as a major divide in Middle East politics. It's now the single-most important factor in deciding Iraq's future, but it's no longer just limited to Iraq. In Lebanon, last summer, we saw that war between Israel and Hezbollah very quickly opened a sectarian rift in that country between the Shias and the other communities, which has only been deepening as Hezbollah has been trying to overthrow the government in Beirut. The competition over Lebanon and in Iraq has intensified tensions between Saudi Arabia and Iran, which has, in recent months, taken increasingly sectarian tone.

In the coming years, one, we can expect that sectarianism is going to play a much more important role in deciding regional alliances and how our allies and adversaries are likely to array themselves in various arenas of conflict in the region. At a popular level, we should also expect that sectarianism is going to be a radicalizing force in the Middle East. At a time where we're still involved in the global war on terror. Shias and Sunnis, on both sides, as they gravitate toward militias, are likely to resort to more and more radical ideas to demonize one another and also to compete in the anti-American/anti-Israeli arena for the support of the Arab street.

I think there is, at this moment in time, also a very serious threat that sectarianism may become endemic, much more embedded to the conflicts in the region, and, more importantly, that it will also entangle the United States Middle East policy in this problem. The potential is increasing, partly because in Iraq the United States is now poised to become far more directly immersed in that country's sectarian conflict, and also because it is contem-

plating a much more confrontational approach with Iran at a time—in alliance with Sunni Arab regimes who are defining the rivalry with Iran, at this point in time, in, very clearly, Shia, Sunni, and sectarian terms. Embarking and embracing the posture of the Arab governments at this point in time as a mantra for American policy in the region will only confirm and perpetuate what I see to be the most violent and divisive trend that has emerged in that region, and it potentially will be a source of problem for the United States.

And, in Iraq, two things in 2006 happened. One is that we saw sectarianism grow. The second trend was that we had a distancing of relations between Americans and the Shias, who initially welcomed and supported the American involvement in Iraq. This had, in the first place, to do with the bombing in Samarra, but it also had to do with an American decision in 2006 to shift its focus from fighting the insurgency to policing the sectarian politics in Iraq. For better or for worse, the Shia saw these shifts as a threat to their sense of security, and also, the bombing put to question whether reconciliation with Sunnis is at all possible. And in this environment, their politics turned to radicalism, following militias and people like Muqtada al-Sadr. I think, given the mood and—on the Shia street, it is clear that the United States is not going to get cooperation from the Maliki government unless it first make progress on the insurgency issue, and others address security concerns on the other side. And in this context, a surge that could potentially take on Shia militias directly can actually open a completely new front; namely, a direct confrontation between the United States and the Shias, and potentially a Shia insurgency in Iraq, something that we have, so far, not seen in that country.

Now, Iran is also connected to this discussion—2006 also saw the dramatic turn for the worst in Iran's relations with its neighbors and the United States. The hard-line President adopted a much more unbending position on the nuclear issue and escalated tensions with the United States and Israel deliberately. This confident and provocative attitude is reflective of a change in the environment of the region. Iran feels a lot more bullish and confident after the fall of the Taliban and Saddam Hussein, and the disruption of the Arab—of the Iraqi Army, which means that there is no military bulwark in the region in Iran's immediate neighborhood to contain Iranian military power. Iran today very clearly has hegemonic ambitions and would like its influence to—all the way from Central Asia to Persian Gulf to Lebanon to be recognized, essentially to view these areas as its "near abroad," to use a term from the Russian vocabulary.

Now, Iranian hegemony is a concern to countries around Iran, and to Saudi Arabia, in particular. And intensification of rivalry between the two of them will threaten regional stability. And, more so, I think, it will also fuel radical pro-al-Qaeda jihadi activism.

When the last time—mainly because Sunni governments view and use extremism and sectarianism in order to confront Hezbollah and Iran's popularity on their own streets, these two countries had the rivalry similar to, today, in the 1980s and 1990s. The consequence of that was al-Qaeda, Taliban, and 9/11. So, that threat

once again is looming as we're seeing the specter of sectarianism rise.

And I think, for the United States, containment of that rivalry rather than taking part in it should, of a singular more important objective, in bringing stability to the region and confronting the issue of terrorism and extremism.

Now, the question before Washington for a long time has been how to deal with an ascendant bullish aggressive Iran, to engage it in order to influence its behavior or to confront it. There's no doubt, in the past 3 years Iranian involvement in Iraq has been an irritant, in many regards, to the United States. Many in this country have suggested that securing Iranian cooperation would be important to stabilizing Iraq, and success in that arena may translate into success in other arenas, such as the nuclear issue.

Iraq presented a particularly opportune opening, mainly because, even as we speak, U.S. interests and Iranian interests still, on many issues in Iraq, seem to be converging. Iranian influence and assets in Iraq are very important to the stability of that country because of the depth and breadth of cultural, political, social, and economic relations between Iran and the majority of Iraq's population to the south, which are the Shia. So, whether or not it is possible to leverage that influence to U.S.'s—to serving the U.S.'s interest is something that should be explored.

Second, as Ambassador Haass mentioned, Iran does not want Iraq to fail or to break up, mainly because it doesn't want a Kurdish state in their north. Iran does not want a costly civil war next door to it. And Iran also wants the Shia government in Baghdad to succeed, and the Shias to consolidate the powers that they have gained since 2003. In fact, for that reason it has supported the political process in Iraq—elections, governments, et cetera—since then, although it must be said that the environment of distrust and tensions with the United States has led Iranians to follow a policy of controlled chaos in Iraq; namely, keep it on a sufficient boiler so that the United States will be preoccupied and the American people will lose appetite for any kind of military engagement in Iran.

Now, despite the potential for having an opening over Iraq, it hasn't materialized. And, in fact, it seems that the policy is likely to be that rolling back Iranian influence in Iraq and the rest of the region is seen as a solution to the myriad Middle East problems we're facing from Lebanon to the Palestinian issue, all the way to Afghanistan. Now, the—a policy that's focused on Iran rather than Iraq, and is built on the Arab Iranian Sunni-Shia divide in the region, will only escalate conflict in Iraq by making Iraq into a battleground between Iran and the United States, and, ultimately, Saudi Arabia and Iran. This is not something for the future. In fact, an attempt to exclude Iran from Iraq will likely provoke this rather than the departure of the United States from Iraq. And it also will not remain in Iraq, it will spread to the rest of the Middle East. It will entrench sectarianism and deepen American involvement in the Middle East.

Now, this is somewhat reminiscent to a policy that was followed in the 1980s and 1990s to contain the Iranian revolution, at which time the United States supported an Arab-Sunni alliance to contain Iran in the region. However, there are some important differences

to be noticed. One is that Iran was far weaker than it is today, particularly on the nuclear issue. Second, containment of Iran in the 1980s and 1990s rested on Iraq's military capability. And third, success of this strategy of containment of Iran during those decades owed a good deal to the presence and importance of Taliban, jihadi activists, and all of those who were ultimately responsible for 9/11.

Today, there is no Iraqi military bulwark. The task of militarily confronting and containing Iran will fall on the United States shoulders in a long-term situation. Moreover, we saw the cost, in 2001, of a policy of the region, trying to mobilize radical Sunni ideology in order to confront Shia influence. If we are to revert to that containment strategy one more time, given the array of forces in the region, given the weakness—military weakness of countries around Iran—we ought to contemplate that we're going to be in the Persian Gulf, as well as the rest of the Middle East, for a very long time, and this is a long-term commitment that would require us to deploy in various arenas of conflict.

Now, it also would place the United States squarely in the middle of regional conflicts, and at a time when we're going to be seeing ideological extremism and terrorism to be escalating. The consequences on open conflict and attack, as was also mentioned by Ambassador Haass, are, I think, very great. First of all, today I think the Iranian regime, despite all of its negative behavior, sees stability in the Persian Gulf to be in its interests. It abandoned the goal of exporting revolution about a decade ago, and has, so far, sought to increase its influence within the existing regional power structure. It improved its relations with its neighbors. It normalized relations with Saudi Arabia. It supported stabilization of Afghanistan in 2001, and that of Iraq, at least in the initial phase, by supporting elections and the government.

Now, an open conflict with Iran will reverse this. It will entrench and strengthen the Iranian regime. It will rally the Iranian population to the flag. It will weaken the drive in Iran for democracy, and will divert attention of the Iranian people from economic and social problems. It will also radicalize the Iranian regime and make it far more dangerous to its neighbors. It will, without a doubt, become far more dependent—determined to acquire weapons of mass destruction and to destabilize the Middle East and try to spread the United States and its Arab allies in as many arenas of conflict as it can—it is possible.

Now, confronting Iran directly, particularly if it ends up in a military situation, I think, will also worsen the situation in Iraq, and it also will spread to other arenas of conflict—in Afghanistan, in particular, the Persian Gulf, Palestinian territories, and Lebanon. It will also inflame, I think, anti-Americanism across the Muslim world.

There are serious disagreements between the United States and Iran, most notably over the nuclear issue, and it is very important for the United States to address that. However, for so long as Iran sees benefit in stability in the Persian Gulf and accepts the governments in Afghanistan and Iraq, engagement could provide a path to influencing its behavior for the better. Although, as was mentioned, engagement is not likely to quickly or cheaply yield results, it has the benefit of continuing to deepen Iranian involvement in

its own region rather than give it an incentive to stabilize that region.

I think, at this point in time, no two countries matter more to the future of the Middle East than the United States and Iran. In many ways, the future of that region will be decided in the crucible of competition, cooperation, engagement, or confrontation between these two countries. And I think a policy that will bring stability to that relationship will both—will most effectively serve our purposes in conflict in Iraq, in stabilizing the Persian Gulf, as well as preventing a further escalation of tensions in Afghanistan, Lebanon, and the Palestinian territories. And I think, talking about linkages, it is not so much that—as was mentioned, that the Palestinian issue is a solution to Iraq and to the problem with Iran, it's the other way around, that Iran and Iraq, and stability there, is more important, in terms of also having achievements in the Palestinian arena.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Nasr follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. VALI NASR, PROFESSOR OF NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS, NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL, AND ADJUNCT SENIOR FELLOW, COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS, MONTEREY, CA

Since 2003 Shia-Sunni conflict has emerged as a major divide in Middle East politics, and radically changed the regional context for U.S. policy. Sectarian violence is no longer just limited to Iraq, but has expanded in scope to influence regional development from the Persian Gulf to Lebanon, adding new complexity to the conflicts in the region and presenting a serious foreign policy challenge to the United States. Taking stock of the risks and visible dangers that this change presents is a significant challenge facing U.S. policy in the Middle East.

In Iraq sectarian violence has derailed the effort to build a viable state, and is today the single most important threat to the future of that country. In Lebanon following the summer war between Israel and Hezbollah a sectarian rift opened between Shias on the one hand, and Sunnis and Christians on the other. That rift is deepening as Hezbollah pushes to unseat the Sunni-led government in Beirut. Lebanon and Iraq have in turn escalated tensions between Saudi Arabia and Iran. The competition between the two regional rivals has in recent months taken an increasingly sectarian tone. The sectarian competition even extends to extremist jihadi organizations associated with al-Qaeda. These groups have supported al-Qaeda elements in Iraq, and have intensified their anti-Shia rhetoric and attacks in the Middle East and South Asia.

All this suggests that Iraq has introduced sectarianism to conflicts and rivalries in the Middle East. The Shia-Sunni rivalry in religious, as well as secular arenas, will likely be an important factor in the near future. This trend was clearly evident during the war in Lebanon last summer when Hezbollah's growing influence elicited a sectarian reaction from Arab capitals as well as a number of extremist jihadi Web sites. The condemnation of Hezbollah as a Shia organization indicated that although the conflict itself was not new, the response to it was not decided by the Arab-Israeli issue alone but sectarian posturing.

For the United States the rising sectarian tensions present a number of challenges:

1. Sectarian violence will determine the fate of Iraq and what that will mean for U.S. standing and interests in the Middle East.

2. Sectarianism will play an important role in deciding regional alliances in the Middle East and how various states and substate actors will act. Sectarianism will compete with, as well as interact with, other concerns such as the Arab-Israeli issue: Political and economic reform, and support for U.S. policies, most notably the global war on terror. This will complicate the management of U.S. interests.

3. Sectarian conflict will color relations of Middle East states, but conflicts where they occur are likely to be waged by nonstate actors—militias and political organizations. This will contribute to regional instability and increases the likelihood of violence.

4. Sectarian conflict is a radicalizing force. Shia and Sunni militias will inevitably gravitate toward more radical ideas to justify their actions. In Iraq, the greatest vio-

lence against Shias was perpetuated by the Jordanian terrorist Abu Musab al-Zarqawi and his al-Qaeda forces. In the Arab world and Pakistan violent anti-Shiism is the domain of radical pro-al-Qaeda clerics, Web sites, and armed groups. Sectarianism—especially among Sunnis—is a driver for radical jihadi ideology. Among the Shias in Iraq sectarian violence has had a similar effect. It has shifted power within that community to the radical forces of Muqtada al-Sadr and his Mahdi Army. The specter of U.S. confrontation with Shia militias and Iran will likely accelerate this trend.

5. The sectarian dimension of regional politics is of direct relevance to the growing tensions in United States-Iran relations. Conflict between the United States—in alliance with Sunni Arab regimes who view the Iranian challenge in sectarian terms—and Iran will exacerbate sectarian tensions, and further embed them in regional conflicts.

ROOTS OF THE PROBLEM

Shias and Sunnis represent the oldest and most important sectarian divide in Islam, the origins of which go back to the seventh century to a disagreement about who the Prophet Muhammad's legitimate successors were. Over time, the two sects developed their own distinct conception of Islamic teachings and practice which has given each sect its identity and outlook on society and politics. Shias are a minority of 10–15 percent of the Muslim world, but constitute a sizable portion of those in the arc from Lebanon to Pakistan—some 150 million people in all. They account for about 90 percent of Iranians, 70 percent of Bahrainis, 65 percent of Iraqis, 40 percent of Lebanese, and a sizable portion of the people living in the Persian Gulf region. Despite their demographic weight outside Iran the Shias had never enjoyed power.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF DEVELOPMENTS IN IRAQ

No where was the plight of the Shia more evident than in Iraq. Under Saddam Iraq was a sectarian state that had routinely brutalized Shias. After the first Iraq war in 1991 the Kurdish areas of Iraq were removed from Saddam's control. In the Arab south that he ruled, the Shia portion of the population is even larger, approximating 80 percent. After that war the Shias in the south rose in a rebellion which was brutally suppressed with as many as 300,000 Shias dying and many more escaping to Iran. Between 1991 and 2003 Saddam's rule was sustained by suppression of Shias. The sectarianism that we see in Iraq has its roots in the sectarianism that was practiced by Saddam's regime.

The U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq in 2003 was of symbolic importance to the Middle East. The war ended minority Sunni rule in Iraq and empowered Shias, and this has in turn led to a Shia revival across the Middle East that as a cultural and political force will shape regional politics. Iraq has encouraged the region's Shias to demand greater rights and representation, but also to identify themselves as members of a regionwide community that extends beyond state borders. The Shia revival has also raised Iran's status as the region's largest Shia actor. It was for this reason that Shias initially welcomed America's role in Iraq—the most important Shia spiritual leader, the Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani encouraged the Shia to embrace the political process introduced to Iraq by the United States by voting and joining the newly established security forces.

However, the shift in the sectarian balance of power met with Sunni resistance, first in Iraq but increasingly in Arab capitals. The fall from power of Sunnis in Iraq has ended their hegemonic domination of regional politics and diminished the power of Sunni regimes and ruling communities. This has led to a Sunni backlash that is reflected in the ferocity of insurgent attacks in Iraq since 2003, criticism of U.S. policy in Iraq in friendly Arab capitals and unwillingness to help the new Shia-led Iraqi Government, and growing anti-Shia and anti-Iranian tenor of radical jihadi propaganda.

The insurgency that the United States confronted during the first two years of the occupation was largely Sunni in character. It drew on the Sunni belief in manifest destiny to rule, anger at loss of power in Baghdad, and the resources of Sunni tribes, foreign fighters, radical ideologies, and Baath Party and former Sunni officer corps to wage a campaign of violence against the U.S. occupation and also to prevent the Shia consolidation of power in the belief that a hasty U.S. departure will lead to a collapse of the current government and restoration of Sunni rule.

For the first 2 years of the occupation the Shia showed great restraint in the face of insurgent attacks on Shia targets, heeding the call of Ayatollah Sistani not to "fall into the trap of a sectarian war," but also trusting that the United States would defeat the insurgency. All that changed in 2006 as Shias abandoned restraint

favoring retaliation. Radical voices of the like of Muqtada al-Sadr drowned Sistani's call for restraint and moderation. Two developments were instrumental in changing Shia attitude:

1. The bombing of the Shia holy shrine in Samarrah in February 2006. The Samarrah bombing was a psychological turning point for Iraqi Shias. It gravely threatened the Shia's sense of security and put to question the feasibility of reconciliation with Sunnis. It also raised doubts in Shia minds about the United States ability and willingness to defeat the insurgency—whose violent capabilities and ferocious anti-Shiism was undeniable. Many also questioned the wisdom of exercising restraint, arguing that it had only emboldened the insurgency. The doubt provided an opening for Shia militias to step into the breach to provide security to Shia communities, but also to establish a "balance of terror" by attacking Sunni civilians. Iraq never recovered from the impact of Samarrah and fell victim to the vicious cycle of sectarian violence. The political process failed to focus the country back on reconciliation.

2. The Shia anger and reaction to the Samarrah bombing was aggravated by a shift in U.S. strategy in Iraq that would alienate the Shia and deepen their distrust of the United States. This would in turn reduce American influence over Shia politics—now at its lowest point—and raise the stock of anti-American forces of Muqtada al-Sadr, and his Mahdi Army, which would escalate attacks on Sunnis as it spread its control over Baghdad and the Shia south.

The United States had hoped that the December 2005 elections would turn Iraq around. The United States had persuaded Sunnis to participate in the elections and join a national unity government, hoping to, thereby, end or at least damp down the insurgency, but that did not come to pass. Hoping to win the support of Sunni politicians Washington began to distance itself from the Shia. It pressured the Shia on the issue of their militias, as well as the unpopular notion of amnesty for former Baathists. Shias resisted. Especially after Samarrah they saw the insurgency rather than their own militias as the problem—Shia militias, they pointed out, were often the only forces effectively defending Shia neighborhoods against car bombs. Shias also saw the overt U.S. push for a national-unity government as coddling the Sunnis and, worse yet, rewarding the insurgency. With the insurgency in full swing, Shias worried that American resolve was weakening. This convinced them more than before that they needed their armed militias—reflected in their cool reception to the surge of 20,000 troops announced by the administration.

2006 proved to be a turning point in U.S.-Shia relations. U.S. strategy during that year became one of shifting the focus of its military operations from fighting the insurgency to contain Shia militias in the sectarian fight in Baghdad. The Shia saw this as a tilt away from them toward the Sunnis—addressing their security demands rather than those of Shias. That this happened at a time of great anxiety in the Shia community following the Samarrah bombing did not help the U.S. position. In particular, that a year on the U.S. strategy of working more closely with Sunnis had not weakened the insurgency—which still by some estimates accounts for 80 percent of U.S. casualties in Iraq—nor had it reduced the rate of attacks on Shia targets. What it achieved was to create doubts as to whether the United States was a reliable ally. Those doubts benefited Muqtada al-Sadr and weakened moderate Shia voices.

It is now clear that Shias are not willing to give up on their militias—which they believe is the only credible bulwark against sectarian attacks by the insurgency without security guarantees from the United States. That means that the United States will get cooperation from Shias on the issue of militias only after it has shown gains in containing the insurgency. Shias will resist disarming so long as the insurgency is a threat.

The radicalization of Shia politics is likely to worsen if the U.S. military directly targets Shias forces in Baghdad. That could provoke a Shia insurgency in Baghdad and the Iraqi south—among the largest population group in Iraq—which would present the United States with a vastly broader security challenge, one that can overwhelm U.S. forces. The United States today is hard-pressed to defeat the insurgency that it is facing, but runs the danger of provoking a potentially larger one.

BROADER REGIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The radicalization of Shia politics in Iraq has coincided with developments elsewhere in the region to make 2006 the fateful year during which the sectarianism that began in Iraq turned into a regional dynamic. That the United States was slow to understand the convergence of sectarianism and regional politics accounts for its limited ability to coherently manage the cascading conflicts in Lebanon, Iraq, and over Iran's nuclear program.

In summer 2006 the war with Israel emboldened Hezbollah just as it divided Lebanon along sectarian lines. The Lebanon war marked the regionalization of sectarian tensions that were manifest in Iraq. The reaction of Arab governments and a number of pro-al-Qaeda jihadi leaders and Web sites to Hezbollah's campaign was unexpectedly sectarian, departing from the customary unity against Israel. Since the war Lebanese politics has taken an increasingly sectarian tone as Hezbollah's drive to topple the Lebanese Government has viewed as a Shia power play by Lebanon's other communities; and since the regional reaction to developments in Lebanon has pitted Iran against the traditional Sunni power brokers in the region: Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia.

What is evident in the aftermath of the Lebanon war is that the sectarian rivalries that first surfaced in Iraq now compete with the Arab-Israeli conflict to determine regional alliances and political attitudes of ordinary people. Hezbollah and Iran would prefer to focus the region on the Arab-Israeli issue and to gain support as champions of the Palestinian cause. However, they have faced resistance in pursuing this agenda from regimes and radical Sunni groups who see Iran and the sectarian issue as more important. In this environment the intensification of sectarian conflict in Iraq and its growing regional dimension has led Hezbollah and Iran to intensify their campaign against Israel in the hope of diverting attention from the divisive role that Iraq is playing in the region.

2006 also witnessed a dramatic turn in U.S.-Iran relations. In 2005 Iran elected a hard-line President, who invigorated Iran's determination to pursue its nuclear program just as he escalated tensions with the United States and Israel. This confident and provocative attitude is reflective of change in the strategic environment in the region, and Iran's belief that it enjoys a stronger position than it did in 2003. Iran benefited from regime changes in Afghanistan and Iraq. The fall of the Taliban and the Saddam regime provided Iran with greater space to assert its influence in the region, and the destruction of the Iraqi Army removed a significant bulwark against Iranian ambition and influence in the Persian Gulf. The occupation of Iraq has depleted American power and prestige making it harder to contain Iran, which has seized the opportunity to spread its wings. Rising Iranian clout has fed, and been fed, by the Shia revival that swept across the Middle East in the wake of the Iraq war. Iran today has hegemonic ambitions in the Persian Gulf and sees itself as a great power, and it views nuclear capability as the means to attain that goal. What Iran seeks is for the United States to accept Central Asia, Afghanistan, and the Persian Gulf as Iran's "near abroad"—a zone of influence in which Iran's interests would determine ebbs and flows of politics—and to recognize Iranian presence in Syria and Lebanon.

The specter of Iranian hegemony has been a source of concern for Iran's neighbors. Saudi Arabia, in particular, has viewed Iran's gains in Iraq and its growing influence in Lebanon and over the Palestinian issue with alarm. Intensification of the rivalry between the two threatens regional stability, and more importantly can fuel pro-al-Qaeda jihadi activism. The rivalry between the two in Afghanistan and South Asia in the 1980s and 1990s served as the context for radicalization that ultimately led to 9/11.

There is no doubt that managing Iran poses an important challenge to U.S. foreign policy, one that extends beyond the nuclear issue and the threat to Israel. The question before Washington has been whether to engage Iran to influence the course of its development or to contain it. In the past 3 years, Iranian involvement in Iraq has been an irritant to Washington. Many, including the Iraq Study Group, have suggested that securing Iranian cooperation is important to stabilizing Iraq—and success in that arena may translate into success in dealing with the nuclear issue. Iraq presented an opening in part because U.S. and Iranian interests in Iraq, even today, appear to converge on key issues: Iran does not want Iraq to fail or break up (fearing an independent Kurdish state), and a civil war in Iraq is worrisome to Tehran. Iran wants the Shia government in Baghdad to succeed, and for Shias to consolidate the gains that they have made since 2003. In fact, since 2003 Iran has supported the political process—elections, constitution, and governments—that the United States introduced to Iraq. The possibility of engagement, despite the potential for positive benefits for Iraq, has so far remained remote, and now seems to be disappearing altogether.

It now appears that U.S. policy is gravitating toward confrontation with Iran, not only in Iraq but across the region. Washington appears to see rolling back Iranian influence as the key to resolving various regional problems. A policy that is focused on Iran rather than Iraq will escalate conflict in Iraq and across the Middle East, thereby deepening American involvement in the region with the potential for adversely impacting U.S. interests.

This policy is reminiscent of the containment strategy of the 1980s and early 1990s when the United States rallied Iran's neighbors to contain the spread of the Iranian revolution. However at that time, Iran was weaker, and containment of Iran was anchored in Iraq's military capability, and Taliban and radical Sunni ideology's ability to counter Shia Iran's influence. But today the Iraqi military bulwark is no longer there. The task of militarily confronting and containing Iran will fall on U.S. shoulders. Moreover, in 2001 it became evident that the cost of Sunni containment of Shia Iran was the rise of radical Sunni jihadi ideology, al-Qaeda, and 9/11.

Reverting to the old containment strategy today, given the current capability of Iran's neighbors in the Middle East and the balance of power in the region, would mean a long-time American commitment to staying in the Persian Gulf and deploying to other arenas of conflict in an environment of growing radicalism. It would place the United States at the heart of the region's conflicts and vulnerable to ideological extremism and terrorism, all of which will likely only escalate as a consequence.

The consequences of conflict with Iran will be grave for the region and U.S. interests. Conflict will radicalize the Iranian regime, and, more important, the Iranian public. Conflict will adversely impact political developments in Iran, entrenching and strengthening the Iranian regime, which will rally the population to the flag. Anti-Americanism and ideological radicalism has not been a staple of popular politics in Iran for some time now. It has been the quest for democracy that has dominated Iranian imagination—sharply contrasting with the popular mood in the rest of the Middle East. That trend will likely be reversed in the advent of conflict.

The Iranian regime today sees regional stability in its interest. Iran abandoned the goal of exporting its revolution to its Persian Gulf neighbors at the end of 1980s, and has since acted as a status-quo power. It seeks influence within the existing regional power structure. It improved its relations with its Persian Gulf neighbors throughout the 1990s, and in particular normalized relations with Saudi Arabia. Iran supported stabilization of Afghanistan in 2001 and that of Iraq during the early phase of the occupation. Conflict will change the direction that Iranian foreign policy has been following. The process of greater engagement of Iran with the region, and its inclusion in its political and economic structures that has characterized the past decade will be reversed. Iran will likely become more dangerous to its neighbors, a trend which the United States will be hard-pressed to control or reverse without escalating conflict even further and committing itself to greater presence in the region.

Confrontation with Iran will likely worsen the situation in Iraq, but its impact will not remain limited to Iraq. It will unfold in different arenas across a large expanse of territory from Afghanistan to the Persian Gulf, the Palestinian territories and Lebanon, as well as in various forms outside of the Middle East. It will inflame anti-Americanism in the Muslim world. The costs of such a conflict will far exceed what the United States confronts in the region today, in particular if the conflict leads to a war with Iran—a country that is vastly larger and more populous than Iraq. Conflict will also make Iran more determined to acquire WMD and to destabilize the Middle East. That will expand the scope and intensity of conflicts that impact U.S. interests, as well as reverse gains made so far in the war on terror.

There are serious areas of disagreement between the United States and Iran over the nuclear issue, and Iran's role in Lebanon, the Palestinian conflict, and Iraq. U.S. concerns with Iranian ambition and policies must be addressed. However, for so long as Iran sees benefit in stability in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Persian Gulf, engagement could provide a path to influencing its behavior to serve U.S. interests and those of its neighbors. Although engagement is not likely to quickly or cheaply yield what the United States wants from Iran, it still has the benefit of deepening Iranian involvement in, and commitment to, the regional order that the United States is seeking to bolster.

CONTENDING WITH THE CHALLENGE

U.S. interests would be best served by a policy approach that is premised on the following:

1. In Iraq, it is imperative to work for a political settlement that would limit the scope of sectarian violence. The chaos in Iraq is a consequence of the absence of a credible political process and roadmap to sectarian peace and state-building. The violence cannot be brought under control through military means. Only a political plan of action, which can credibly move the fighting parties toward compromise will remove the incentive for violence and change the dynamic on the ground.

The national unity plan that was conceived at the end of 2005 was put before Iraqis at a different time when violence had not deepened animosities on both sides

and when the United States had much more leverage with Shia leaders as well as their followers. The time for that plan has passed, and pressuring the Iraqi Government by placing benchmarks before it will not change that fact. If national unity is still attainable it will have to come through a new plan.

There exists a danger that in the coming months the "surge strategy" will extend the scope of the conflict by provoking a Shia insurgency. Shia militias have so far not been fighting U.S. troops; but direct confrontation can transform their sectarian war into a Shia insurgency—something Iraq has so far not faced. The majority of Iraq's population, especially in the critical Arab regions, is Shia. An anti-American Shia insurgency, at a time when the Sunni insurgency continues, will significantly increase the burden on the U.S. military in Iraq. It will also further radicalize Shias in the region. Radicalization of Shias—will mark a significant expansion in the scope and intensity of threat to U.S. security and interests, and will adversely impact the global effort to contain radicalism and terrorism. Shia militias are a problem for Iraq, but an escalation of the conflict by turning them into an anti-American force will benefit neither Iraq not the United States.

2. Anchoring United States Middle East policy in containing Iran will expand the scope of the conflict in the region rather than reduce it. It will also increase the scope of the terrorist threat to the United States rather than reduce it. Such a policy will also require a long-term U.S. presence in the Middle East. The United States should rather seek to deescalate tensions in the region by promoting political solutions to crises in the Palestinian territories, Lebanon, Iraq, and the nuclear standoff with Iran. The United States should not tie all these conflicts to the challenge of Iranian hegemony, and not view a broader conflict with Iran as a solution to challenges facing the Palestinian issue, Lebanon and Iraq. No two countries matter more to the future of the Middle East than the United States and Iran. The importance of stability in U.S.-Iranian relations for the future of the Middle East cannot be overemphasized. Engagement rather than conflict presents the most realistic chance for achieving that goal.

3. The United States must take steps to discourage regional actors from using sectarianism as a foreign policy tool. Investment in sectarian voices and especially radical Sunni organizations of the al-Qaeda type most closely tied to sectarian ideology and violence will not only intensify the conflict but promote extremism to the detriment of the broader U.S. interests in the region. As great a challenge as Shia ascendancy and Iranian aggressiveness is to the United States and its allies strengthening the ideological and organizational bases of Sunni extremism will only further threaten U.S. interests.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

I'm going to yield for a moment to Chairman Lugar.

Senator LUGAR. Mr. Chairman, let me indicate that a number of Republican Senators, including some members of this committee, have been invited by Steve Hadley, our National Security Director, to meet with him immediately in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. I'm among those that have been invited, and feel that I need to accept that invitation. And so, I apologize for the absence of some members from the committee, at this point, but we——

Senator KERRY. We should bring Hadley up here to listen to these guys.

Senator LUGAR. Well, we have had some remarkable testimony, and I appreciate your yielding to me.

The CHAIRMAN. If you would like to—I'd yield to you, if you want to ask a couple of questions——

Senator LUGAR. No; I think I——

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Before you leave.

Senator LUGAR [continuing]. I will depart, at this point——

The CHAIRMAN. OK.

Senator LUGAR [continuing]. To make this engagement. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you, Senator. I fully understand it, and I think it's important you all do go down and see Mr. Hadley.

And let me begin by thanking you all for your testimony. And I'd like to focus, at the outset here, on when the Secretary of State was before us—and I'll address this to all three of you; if you can give me a short answer, I'd appreciate it—she indicated that direct negotiations with Syria and Iran would be—her words were, "puts us in a role of supplicant"; it would be, "extortion," not diplomacy. You've spoken to this. Can you tell me why there are those—and because these are very bright, respected people—why they would view it as extortion and/or us being a supplicant? You've all indicated we should engage, in some form or another. So, I mean, what's the motivation—I'm not being a wiseguy—I mean, what's happening on the other side of the divide here that views this as extortion—a pretty strong word—and as us being a supplicant? That seems to me to set the bar pretty high to get to the point where you now say, "Well, yeah, we can now move to discussion." Is it a negotiating gambit or—what do you think?

Richard. Mr. Secretary.

Ambassador HAASS. I don't think it's a negotiating gambit. I think it comes from an assessment of the relative standing or position of us vis-a-vis them, or, to use an old Soviet concept, Senator, I think the concern in the administration—it's odd for me to talk for them now, I'm not sure I could talk for them when I worked for them, but let me try—I think the concern in the administration is that the so-called "correlation of forces" has moved against the United States. Because of the situation in Iraq, because of the price of energy, because of what happened this summer in Lebanon, there's a concern that a negotiation involving Iran and Syria would give us precious few cards to play, and, again, finds them in the driver's seat. Needless to say, I disagree with that. It ignores some tremendous strengths that we have. It also ignores the possibility that if we don't like what we can negotiate, we can just walk. And, as I said before, I always think negotiations have two real purposes. One is to potentially reach an agreement. The other is to clarify. If they don't succeed, and if it turns out that Iran and Syria are being outrageous in their demands, then that can be quite useful to the Secretary of State and others as they go about trying to build regional and global support for some sort of a sanction.

So, I don't understand, I don't agree with the reluctance to negotiate, but I do believe it largely stems from an assessment that our relative position has worsened.

Let me say one other thing very quickly. There's an irony here, because when our relative position was quite strong several years ago, we also refused to negotiate.

The CHAIRMAN. Yeah.

Ambassador HAASS. And the——

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I was about to point that out, but I——

Ambassador HAASS. There was a reluctance to negotiate, then, because people felt it was not necessary and regime change was going to come.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, look, the reason I ask it is—the purpose of these hearings is to try to enlighten us, as well as the American public. I start with the premise that there are some very bright people in this administration, so it's not just pique that it's suggesting, and I think it's an important explanation.

Dennis, you wanted to comment on that?

Ambassador ROSS. I do, because I've had some exchanges, because I wrote an article in which I made a case for why we should be talking to the Syrians, although I do believe dealing with the Syrians and dealing with the Iranians requires what I call a stick-and-carrot approach, not necessarily a carrot-and-stick approach. They have to know what they lose to concentrate the mind, but then they have to know, if they're prepared to change their behavior, what they get for it. So, it has to be both dimensions.

What I've heard from the administration is, I think, three points. First is that, basically, the Syrians have made their choice; they feel that they have made their strategic choice with the Iranians, and there is—you're not going to be able to affect them, No. 1. No. 2 is their fear that the only thing the Syrians want is Lebanon, so you'll go in there, and immediately what you're doing is you're talking about Lebanon, and we don't want to be—we don't want to look like we're talking about Lebanon. And, No. 3—and they're certainly hearing it from the Saudis, especially in the aftermath of Bashar Asad's speech in which he referred to "half-men," and the Saudis interpreted that as being, shall we say, more than a slur against them. They've heard, from the Saudis, that the worst thing in the world that we could be doing right now is sending the signal that we're prepared to go talk to them at a time when they think they're riding high.

The CHAIRMAN. Gotcha.

Ambassador ROSS. Those are the—I think, the factors that influence them.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Let me go to—only a few minutes left here—Dennis. You indicated—and I happen to agree with you—that the only thing that's going to change the behavior of the Iraqis internally and work out—or attempt to work out some of the real risks each of the parties would have to take to deal with this sectarian violence—would be a real change. And I was asked, some time ago, when the President was whispering literally in the ear of Maliki, you know, "Do you think it's a good thing?" And I said, "It depends on what he's whispering in his ear." If he's saying, "Hey, Jack, if you don't straighten things out, we're leaving," that might get his attention. If it's, "We're with you, don't worry. We'll send in reinforcements," then we're probably in trouble.

I think everybody agrees, here, there needs to be a change, that there has to be, that old expression, there's nothing like a hanging to focus one's attention. This conundrum here, we, basically, it seems to me, have to send a message that we ain't hanging around for a long time. I assume that's why Richard and you and others, and the Iraq Study Group, and I all said we have to start to drawdown to send that message.

Does the mere fact that we have sent in a surge, even though, quite frankly, he could have moved these troops around without going through all this—does that have—does that delay the inevitable, forcing the Iraqis to have to look at what they have to do in order to be able to deal with this issue?

Ambassador ROSS. It does, unless somehow you would condition the surge. In other words, we've got the first tranche of it begin-

ning. If it became very clear that, "Nothing else happens unless we now see you begin to fulfill all the commitments you've now said you're prepared to make, whether it's the sharing of oil revenues or it's the de-Baathification"——

The CHAIRMAN. I asked that question. They made it clear that, no, there was no absolute conditioning. Now, I understand if an administration wouldn't say that publicly, but I don't understand an administration not saying that privately.

Let me conclude. I don't want to run over my time; it may be, with the reduced number, we may be able to have a second round—but, Professor, as I said, I read your book with great interest. I thought your testimony was enlightening. I find one irony here, though. At the very moment the administration is getting involved in a "surge," the argument I'm hearing from my contacts within Iraq that my staff and I keep after our seven trips over there—is that it's viewed as—by the Sunnis, at the moment—as a pro-Shia effort, that we are going after the Sunnis and leaving the Shia alone, and we are taking sides. The irony is, outside of Iraq the argument is we're siding with the Sunni states against the Shia. How does that play in the neighborhood?

Dr. NASR. Well, even within Iraq, many Shias have the same complaint; namely, that the troops should not have come to Baghdad at all, they should have been—the surge should have been at Al Anbar. And, in fact, I think Prime Minister Maliki tried to have his own security plan ahead of the announcement of the new strategy in order to avoid having—sending the troops in. That's exactly that—the dilemma, Senator. We're in an environment in the region, where, increasingly, there is a divide, in terms of opinion on a host of issues, and we're seeing that public opinion is following, in many of these issues, along sectarian lines. Part of the problem with the surge is that there is a military solution here, with no political plan to back it up. It would have been possible to——

The CHAIRMAN. Exactly.

Dr. NASR [continuing]. Assuage the fears of both sides if there was a new political plan that would have shown a roadmap to peace with, I think, a step-by-step about how the United States can actually get the two sides to make the compromises, rather than just putting benchmarks at it. So, as a result, I think nobody believes that there is a political solution here. They see the—they see that this is essentially an effort to decommission their military assets at a time in which—where there's political uncertainty for them, and they're sort of circling the wagons.

The CHAIRMAN. A cynical view expressed by some editorial boards, and, I must admit, by me and others, is, it could also be just to hand this off, just keep this going. But I'm not sure.

My time is up. I'll come back, Professor; I want to ask you about specific Shia leaders and the degree to which they support, or don't support, this new effort.

But, with that, let me yield to Senator Hagel.

Senator HAGEL. Mr. Chairman, thank you. And, to each of you, thank you for your continued contributions to helping, not just the Congress, but the American people, understand the depth of this issue.

Mr. Ross, you ended your testimony almost like a book, chapter one. And it just kind of fell off the table with a not particularly optimistic view of not only Iraq, but the Middle East. So, my question to each of you is: Where do we go from here? We have heard, this morning, an inventory of consequences of bad decisions made over the last 4 years. And I thought the three of you presented not only the past issues, but the current dilemmas and challenges rather clearly. But I'm interested now in asking the three of you: In your opinions, where do we go from here, addressing such issues as the resources that we now have in Iraq, the investment that we have made in Iraq? Where best can we maximize those resources to have some influence over the outcome in Iraq and the scope of the Middle East? Recognizing, as the three of you have said, that we don't have many good options, if we have any options at all. We are dealing with many uncontrollables, many dynamics that are well beyond what we can influence.

So, Mr. Ross, begin with you. Thank you.

Ambassador ROSS. Well, I guess with regard to Iraq, I would offer two suggestions. The first is, in a sense, what I was implying with the chairman before, at least the first part of the surge is already done, because forces are en route or already there. I would condition any further implementation of the surge on whether or not the Iraqi Government is living up to the promises they've made. There's a whole—in a sense, the President's now laid out a series of measures by which you can evaluate whether they're doing what they said they were going to do or not. If they're not prepared to do what they say, you know, we could be providing a lot—much larger numbers of forces and it wouldn't make a difference. I completely identify with what Vali was saying about the issue of, if you don't have a political plan, it doesn't matter what you're doing in the security area. So, that's point one. I would condition further implementation of the surge on whether or not, in fact, the—Prime Minister Maliki is living up to what he said he would do.

No. 2, if, in fact, he's unlikely to do—which is fulfill those promises, which is my fear, not my—certainly not what I want to see, but what I'm afraid of—then I think we should also take—we should take—we should be aware of what's happening on the ground in Iraq that is already beginning to move toward a kind of fragmentation, or at least changing the realities on the ground. About 100,000 Iraqis a month are being displaced, which means that the whole nature of the mixed areas, that previously was the reality on the ground, is being changed. So, maybe we're moving toward what could be a Bosnian kind of outcome, in which case, forces should be there to facilitate that, you should develop it in stages. You might find it easier to internationalize the presence in a circumstance where you were dealing with a Bosnia kind of outcome. That strikes me as being a better way to try to manage what will happen in Iraq.

Look, I think having Iraq devolve into some kind of convulsive state is hardly in our interest. I don't know how much capability we're going to have to prevent that over the long haul. I don't think you justify staying in Iraq just because the situation gets worse. That becomes a trap forever. So, one alternative way of managing

a transition, it seems to me, is, recognize what's already taking place on the ground, try to make it safer by approaching it more in terms of a Bosnia approach, try to internationalize the presence in light of that, because the objective is suddenly changing.

Third, you know, obviously, I've identified a major part of my life's work as being involved with trying to resolve or deal with the Israeli-Palestinian issue. I would do it, as I said, not because it's going to have the slightest impact on Iraq. It's not going to have the slightest impact on Iraq. But one of the mistakes the administration made is, it sent a message of indifference on this issue. Here was an issue that, from the standpoint of the Arab and the Muslim world, they considered to be a core grievance. The last thing in the world we ought to be doing is sending a message that what they consider to be very important, we consider to be unimportant.

So, I would make an effort, like what Richard said earlier; I don't think this is a time you're going to be able to resolve the issue. We have a divided Palestinian leadership. We have an Israeli Government that does not have a great deal of public support. To think that those leaderships, at this point, are going to take on the core issues of the conflict that go to the heart of self-definition and identity, issues like Jerusalem and refugees and borders, I think, is just unrealistic. But, you know, that doesn't mean you sit on the sidelines. The consequence of sitting on the sidelines for the last 6 years is that the situation has gotten dramatically worse.

I think there's a great deal that can be done right now, even in the context of what's happening among Palestinians. There's a competition right now for what is going to be the future identity of the Palestinians, and it's between Fatah independence and Hamas. And, at this juncture, I think, I've seen—having just come back from the area, I can tell you I've seen, for the first time, a lot of the Palestinians in Fatah and around—and, I would say, the independents are determined now to compete, because they realize what Hamas has in mind is an Islamic State. Now, I think the more they compete, the more you may also end up splitting Hamas.

So, I think the more that we could orchestrate—and the very active effort to try to affect that competition, which involves Arab States, which involves the Israelis, which involves the Europeans and ourselves, that's one thing that's very important. Clearly, the Israelis also have a stake in what that competition is, so you have to try to promote much greater coordination between, I think, the Israelis and Abu Mazen, and the people around Abu Mazen. I think that gives you a chance to begin to affect this. It doesn't mean, by the way that you don't at least talk about a political horizon, because, again, if you want those in the Palestinian world who believe in coexistence to succeed, they also have to be able to point to the fact that there is a possibility and a sense of hope that's out there. So, I'd work at two different levels. But don't focus on a political horizon to the exclusion of what's happening day to day on the ground, especially from an American standpoint. After 6 years of having disengaged, we will not have credibility on a political horizon if the day-to-day realities aren't changing, because we don't have a whole lot of credibility right now.

I'll just close. In terms of Iran, I, too, believe that it's important to engage Iran, but it's important to think about how best to do it. When I said, before, that the combination of sticks and carrots is an important combination, I put it in that order deliberately. We have a very interesting debate going on in Iran right now. If you take a look at what's happening, in terms of what's happening on the state radio, if you look at, in the past week, within the media within Iran, criticisms of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, in terms of what he's saying publicly and how it's isolating Iran and putting them at risk, it suggests to me that there is a potential to change the balance of forces within Iran. It's very important that, in fact, Ahmadinejad not look like his way of confrontation works. It's very important that, in a sense, there's an unmistakable cost to pursuing the pathway that he's on. But it's also very clear that they have to see that they can gain something if they change their behavior.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Dr. Haass.

Ambassador HAASS. Three things. On the diplomatic side, I would support a regional forum modeled on the Afghan experience; American support, rather than resistance, to an Israeli-Syrian dialog; and, third, I would favor unconditional bilateral talks with Iran.

But, beyond the diplomatic, let's talk about Iraq for a second, Senator.

There are three potential goals for U.S. policy now. One is to try to stop the civil war, or reduce the civil war. That's been the dominant one. The second is to try to prevent a regional war. The third is to protect the United States reputation for reliability around the world, despite Iraq.

I believe that stopping, or significantly affecting, the civil war is probably beyond our capacity. With this surge, we're going to face a terrible dilemma. Either we essentially have an anti-Sunni bias which runs the risk of strengthening the Iranian and Shia hold on things, and turning things into a regional war, because, ultimately, regional states will not stand by while their Sunni kith and kin get hammered; or we end up going after, much more, the Shia militias, which is taking on a much larger mission, and we would not have the Iraqi Government as a partner anymore—and, again, it would put United States forces in the middle of something much larger.

Again, my principal problem with the surge is that it reinforces the interaction between American forces and the Iraqi civil war. I'm not sure that's a smart place for us to be. To the contrary, I am increasingly persuaded it is where we don't want to be. So, we need to think about how we have a presence in Iraq and avoid some of the risks of what a withdrawal would bring about. But we need to design a presence for Iraq that plays for the long haul, that does not get us in the middle of a civil war. This means less troops; it means pulling back from Baghdad, thinking more about the borders, thinking more about training, essentially playing for time. Civil wars take time. Either one side wins or they burn out. At the moment, the only side that could conceivably win is the Shia. That's not an outcome we would want. And so, this may simply take time. I don't like sitting here saying this. The idea that the

best we can help manage is an Iraq in which civil conflict goes on for several years or longer is not a very attractive thing to say before this or any other committee. That said, it is my analysis that that's probably, now, the best outcome—or the least bad outcome, let's be honest about it—the least bad outcome that we can realistically hope for. So, what I'm trying to do is design a United States presence that reduces the direct and indirect cost to the United States of a civil war in Iraq, which, again, means trying to limit the scale of the civil war, but, again, more than anything else, preventing the civil war from going truly regional, and trying to avoid a situation where Iraq undermines United States foreign policy worldwide.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Professor.

Dr. NASR. Yes, thank you, Senator.

First of all, I don't think we should expect much in terms of cooperation from the current Iraqi Government, from the Maliki government, for the reason that I think that pressure below from his community on him is not in the direction of—to making the necessary compromises on oil revenue, on power-sharing, on an amnesty law, and the like. I mean, he's caught between pressure from Washington, pressure from below, and in a very fractious alliance that he has to maintain just to survive in office, so I think he's trying—he will do just sufficient amount to keep Washington backed off, but we shouldn't really expect much movement at all.

And, second, he is being pushed to work off of a plan that was conceived a year ago, at December 2005, for national unity and reconciliation, in a very different environment in Iraq. And the environment's changed, the plan hasn't changed, and this current government probably will not be able to operate on the back of that. And, as Ambassador Ross mentioned, there's no other plan on the table that he would move forward. So, we essentially should come to terms with the fact that, no, we shouldn't invest our hopes in a political solution by this government in Baghdad, if it survives. And if it doesn't survive and collapses, it actually will compound the problem.

Second, I would say that a war that has changed the region—and we all attest to that; everybody in the region would say that this war has changed everything—their perception of one another, the calculus—how could that war be resolved without that region having the buy-in? I mean, we almost want to recreate Iraq and put the Humpty Dumpty back, without having anybody's buy-in. I think we—our focus has not been on a final solution that the region, all of Iraq's neighbors, will be willing to accept. We constantly say, "Well, stability's in their interest." Yes; it is. But they're—that, they all agree on. Nobody wants chaos in Iraq. What they don't agree on is: What is the final shape of Iraq? And we have had no conversation, and they have had no conversation—other than Iranians and the Turks, I don't know of any other real, you know, adversaries that actually are talking about: What is the final shape? And I think when—back to Senator Biden's question, when we say: Are we going to be supplicants with the Iranians and Syrians, and is this extortion?—that's really at the level of when we want spe-

cifics from them. So, what do we barter, for specifics, like stopping arming of the Mahdi Army?

But I think the larger issue of, would Iran or Syria or Saudi Arabia be able to arrive at an agreement, in terms of power-sharing—how much would the Sunnis get, how much the Shiites would get, how much the Kurds would get—I think—I don't think that would put us in a supplicant position, or the Iranians and the Syrians will be in a position not extort anything for that. And the region is familiar with that kind of a thing. They did it in Lebanon over the tariff agreement. They continuously have these kinds of discussions about other conflicts.

So, I think, for us, we should, sort of, accept that we're not going to—we're not going to get a political solution for Iraq out of the current plan on the table. There is no incentive on the ground for this Iraqi Government to support us, given the pressure it's feeling from below. And I should say the same for the Sunnis. You could say the insurgency has been winning, it's been bending the U.S. will, it's been changing our strategy. Why would they change course, at this point in time?

And I think, at the regional level, I do agree with both my copanelists, that it's extremely important, but I think our focus should not be on bartering over specific issues, it should be on getting a regional buy-in for a final shape of Iraq.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Senator DODD [presiding]. Thank you. Thank you, Senator.

Senator Biden had to step out for a few minutes, and so, I have become the acting chairman of this committee, and I yield myself an hour and a half. [Laughter.]

Rare moments you get, here, to be—take a few minutes.

Well, thank you all very, very much for your testimony.

I want to commend Dick Lugar, as well. I know he made his opening statement this morning, but he had some comments in there that are really worth repeating again, and he emphasized the points that were made by our panelists here: "The purpose of talks is not to change our posture toward these countries," talking about Iran and Syria, principally, "nor would we compromise vital interests or strike the ethereal bargains that cannot be verified, but if we lack the flexibility to communicate with unfriendly regimes, we increase the chances of miscalculation, undercut our ability to take advantage of any favorable situations, and potentially limit the regional leverage with which we can control Iran and Syria." And I—there are other statements in there, but—I think that was a very thoughtful comment by Senator Lugar, and—and it makes the point that all of you have made this morning, as well, and I just want to thank you for it.

There are several comments in here, and I thought the comment, Richard, that you made in here, in just—"What matters is not where you begin a negotiation, but where it ends in that process."

Just for the sake of conversation, Senator Kerry and I were in the region, back in the middle part of December, and spent—here he is now—we spent some time with President Assad, along with the United States Embassy personnel in the room, so this has been reported back to the State Department, as well as our own conversations, and asking President Assad what he wanted to come

out of Iraq. And my colleague from Massachusetts can share some thoughts on this, as well. And, as I heard him talking about, he—now, again, it was said in English—as Tom Friedman likes to point out, if they don't say it in public and in Arabic, it may mean less, but, nonetheless, I'll tell you what he said in English. He wanted a pluralist Arab State on his border. He had no interest seeing a Shia, Iranian-dominated fundamentalist state. And that didn't come as any shock to me. That would seem to be sort of a rational conclusion by President Assad. But it seems to me it's worthy, then, of exploring that question.

I don't know how widely it's been reported, but, for the first time in a quarter of a century, Baghdad and Damascus are—exchanged Ambassadors. President Talibani, I think, was in Damascus the other day. Prime Minister Maliki spent a good part of his exile in Damascus, as President Talibani spent a good part of his time in the Kurdish areas or in Iran. I mean, there's a lot of history here that goes back over a long time. The world didn't begin on the day that we went into Iraq, and unraveling this situation requires a good understanding of the history of the background.

I would hope, by the way—and I just raise this here, because we've talked about it—that we would have a debate like this, ourselves, rather quickly, as we discuss this new proposal on the surge. And I agree with you, Richard, it's a tactic, not a strategy here, but it's an important issue, and the rationale for it is completely different than the rationale we were offered back several years ago, when the original authorizing resolution came up here, and it dealt with the issue of weapons of mass destruction, it dealt with Saddam Hussein and terrorism. There's a whole new set of circumstances that we ought to be considering as we go forward with this. And so, whether or not you agree or disagree with it, the fact of the matter is, the Senate of the United States ought to take some time out to do exactly what this committee is doing here, to talk about these very issues that I think are critically important to us. And my hope is we'll get beyond, sort of, the nonbinding resolution, which is a way to express something up here, but, rather, have a good debate, require a new authorization and a discussion of exactly what the implications are.

Let me ask a couple of quick questions, if I can. I, again, thank you for your testimony. It's very, very good. And you may have implied this, as I went through the comments. And I'll begin with you, Dr. Nasr. Tell me about—the quick question—we have no problem—I have no problem seeing President Assad—I think we should have been talking—I'd have a real problem in sitting down with Ahmadinejad, frankly. The idea that I'd sit down with someone who has said the things he has—my father was a prosecutor at Nuremberg, and—and wrote my mother, every day, these letters, talking about what went on—400 letters during that year and a half in 1945 through the end of 1946. The idea that you'd have a head of state denying the existence of the Holocaust was stunning to me. And the idea I'd be sitting in a room with this individual is abhorrent to me. Who should we be dealing with in Iran? There are many different levels, it seems to me, in Iran, that we could be talking or at least opening some doors with. Where would you suggest we begin a process? If you're not going to necessarily

want to sit down with the President of the country, but you wanted to access some other centers of influence, of power centers, where would you suggest we begin that conversation?

Dr. NASR. Well, a lot of the conversation in the West that actually has been with the head of Iran's National Security Council, Ali Larijani, who's also been the main negotiator with Javier Solana over the nuclear issue. He was the one, actually, Iran appointed when there was a potential for a conversation over Iraq, to travel to Iraq, to meet with Ambassador Khalilzad, at that point.

Ultimately, our interest in Iran is to influence the top decision-making in the country. Ahmadinejad is only one component of that.

Senator DODD. Right.

Dr. NASR. But the real levers of power in Iran are held by the Supreme Leader, as well as major power centers within the military and the political establishment.

Senator DODD. So, your point is, there are other places we could—opening up those doors, without necessarily focusing exactly on the—Ahmadinejad.

Dr. NASR. I think, actually, focusing Ahmadinejad has been a mistake by American media and the American administration. It's actually empowered him. About a decade ago, when Iran had a reformist President, the attitude in Washington was, "There is no point talking to the Iranian President, because he's not—doesn't really hold any power." And ever since Ahmadinejad's become President, we have seen him as everything in Iran. And that's a mistake, as well. In fact, the elections in Iran, the dissent in Iran, which Ambassador Ross was pointing to, suggests that this is not our typical dictatorship, where, like in Syria, there's one man ruling. He is vulnerable. He has staked his ground. And the more we focus on him, actually, the more important we make him and his position within Iran itself. We ought to—we ought to have an approach that we have a policy toward Iran, not toward the Iranian President.

Senator DODD. Good point.

Dennis or Richard, do you want to comment on that?

Ambassador ROSS. Yes, I would—I would echo a lot of that. I would simply add that the easiest way for us to begin an engagement would be through a regional conference on Iraq——

Senator DODD. Yes.

Ambassador ROSS [continuing]. Where you'd have a built-in multilateral forum, where you wouldn't be dealing with Ahmadinejad, and where you have an area where there could be a convergence of interest, if they have enough fear about what may be happening in Iraq. I don't think they have it right now, but I think, in fact, it could, in fact, be something that begins to emerge. That would be how I would suggest it.

I would add one qualifier in what Vali said. I don't think you can let what Ahmadinejad says go without response. I don't think, you know, these kinds of statements can somehow be dismissed because of, "Well, the Iranian President isn't important." The Iranian—because there is a kind of interesting elite, and there is a difference of opinion in that elite, it's important that they understand the consequences of that kind of behavior.

Senator DODD. Yes.

Ambassador ROSS. And you're seeing it, as I said—as Vali knows, if you look, in the last week, at the commentary in different Iranian newspapers, he's being attacked precisely because of what he says. So, I would say it's important that we find ways to do that, as well.

Senator DODD. Yes. And the economic issues—I think, Richard, you point out—are very important, as well, to highlight the failure there. But——

Ambassador HAASS. Too often, diplomats think of diplomacy as something which is done in secret and in private. I actually think, with the Iranians, we would be far wiser to put it out there—again, to put pressure on the government. And also, given that there are competing centers of political authority——

Senator DODD. Yes.

Ambassador HAASS [continuing]. We ought to contribute to that competition.

I'd just say one other thing, Senator. There's a time urgency here—partially related to Iraq, even more related to Iran's nuclear program. Our options will get narrowed, given that Iran is gradually accumulating the capacity to enrich. And time, in that sense, does not work in our favor. So, sooner rather than later, we need to decide what it is we are prepared to do, in terms of a diplomatic outcome, because otherwise the alternatives tend to be either living with an Iran that accumulates a nuclear capability or having to use military force. I would suggest that neither is a terribly attractive option. So, again, to me, it highlights the need for us to get squared away on a diplomatic approach.

Senator DODD. I couldn't agree with you more—in fact, I intended to open my remarks by saying: In the 25 years I've been a member of this committee and a Member of this body, having traveled to the region on a number of occasions, not anywhere near the numbers that our panelists have, but I have never seen it as bad, nor have I ever seen it with as many opportunities. I think some—one of you made that point in your prepared remarks. But what I sensed, more than anything else, was the absence of our engagement. I must have heard that a thousand times; the sort of benign participation in what's going on. And that concerns me. And I'm glad the Secretary is there now, but I'd often hoped that we might have done something a little bit more, given the complexity of the issues and the importance of the moment, to have someone on the ground on more of a permanent basis there that would be able to really help us manage these events and be around to take advantage of these opportunities as they come up.

Let me ask one or two quick questions, because I want my colleagues to get to—I was very impressed with—Fareed Zakaria wrote a piece the other day in the Times about the surge issue, and he said one of the—if I paraphrase him correctly, he said, "It's not so much that you may be opposed to the surge, what we ought to be worried about is, it may succeed." And I think one or both of you made this point, and that is that if it succeeds, in the sense it contributes to a further alienation of the very people we're trying to get together, the designation of 17,000 troops in the streets of a city of 6 million people, with 23 militias and a variety of other factions operating there, well, we're invariably going to be having

to take on—in fact, we've been urging taking on the Mahdi Militia, and Sadr—his point being, that this—if it succeeds, it actually moves us further away from exactly the point I think most are arguing here, and that is a political solution. I wonder if you wanted to comment on his conclusions in that.

Ambassador HAASS. Well, it's one of several dilemmas we face. And let me suggest some others, though, in addition to what Fareed is writing about. And, by the way, a lot of them come down to the fact that at the end of the day, we and the Iraqi Government don't share the same end state. And I would simply suggest that's one of the reasons we don't have as much leverage as we thought. The idea of withholding a surge may not necessarily be something they would be that upset over. If you think that the goal of the government is to consolidate Shia primacy, then a surge doesn't necessarily help their short-term objectives. So, I'm not sure we have that much influence, in terms of regulating our presence there, because, again, they've got a set of objectives that is fundamentally different than ours in terms of the end state they envision for their own country.

Senator DODD. Yes.

Ambassador ROSS. I would just say, I—on the issue of withholding the surge, it's—that has to be part of a larger strategy. You don't just withhold the surge; you withhold the surge, and then I basically think you send the message, "OK, we're going to change course now, fundamentally."

Senator DODD. Yes.

Ambassador ROSS. And I have favored the idea of not simply imposing a deadline and pulling out, but saying to them, "All right, we're now going to—we're going to negotiate a withdrawal with you." You concentrate their mind. You know the reality's going to change.

I don't think that, you know, the—it's true, I think, what Richard said, they have a different end state in mind. I don't see any indication of this government, regardless of its commitment, is serious about national reconciliation. I think the message they sent with the execution of Saddam Hussein was just the opposite. Here was an opportunity for them to say to the Sunnis, in particular, "You know, we're going to put that chapter in our history behind us. We were all brutalized by him. We all suffered from him. Now we're going to write a common history—we're going to write a common future together." They didn't do that. They sent the message, "We're in control." And so, I think, you know, if they feel that somehow being in control is put at risk, that might change their behavior.

Senator DODD. Yes. Well——

The CHAIRMAN [presiding]. I know that having you in control means you're 4 minutes over. [Laughter.]

Senator DODD. No; I apologize. I was actually going to take an hour. [Laughter.]

But I think the point is really worthwhile, but my sense of it is—to just end up on this point, is that—quite the opposite. I think the surge really does exacerbate and delay the decisionmaking process, for various reasons. My view is, I think, you know, the Shias have a reason why they want us there without a clear mission, in that

we can consolidate power for them. The Sunnis think we might be able to protect them or get them back in the door. And as long as we're failing to start to talk about an endgame and how this works, then I think the political realities haven't set in. And the sooner they set in, the more likely, I think, you're going to get the kind of—at least the progress that we're talking about here. And I think you've both—all three of you have articulated that well, that—don't expect a conversion here to happen overnight; but to move it on a road, it seems to me that we've got to—we've got to change the paradigm here, the dynamic, pretty considerably, and we're not doing that at all, it seems to me; we're just perpetuating a strategy here that is not producing, in any likelihood, the results that we'd all like to see.

But, great testimony, and I wish there were more time, myself, to talk with you here.

But I thank you immensely for your contributions, not just today, but over the years. You've all been tremendously helpful to us, and I thank you.

I thought, Richard, your piece in Time magazine was excellent, by the way.

Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Will the conversion take place on the Road to Damascus? That's the question here. But—

Senator, welcome, again, and——

Senator CORKER. Mr. Chairman——

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. The floor is yours.

Senator CORKER [continuing]. Thank you, sir.

I do wonder, in light of the testimony today and just the tremendous focus that you've caused this committee to have on Iraq, rightfully, does it make any sense for us to consider asking General Petraeus—I know he has a war to fight, I know that taking him away from that could be frowned upon, but he does have to be—he does have to come before the Senate, at some point, anyway, and I'm wondering if it makes any sense, especially with Dr. Nasr's presentation regarding the Shia situation in Iraq and its relationship to Iran, to possibly have testimony? I just ask that question.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, we are—that's a very good question, Senator. I haven't been the mayor of a big city. You're—you had the great good fortune to be able to set policy. There's jurisdictional webs up here. I have talked to Senator Levin, the chairman of the Armed Services Committee. I think it would be good to have some cross-pollenization here, to have General Petraeus, and, for that matter, to have the Secretary of Defense here, as well, and to have State Department officials testify there. That's not been worked out yet, but I think your suggestion is a very good one. And I have found, in my many meetings and exchanges with General Petraeus, he's a forthcoming guy, he's a straightforward guy, and he really is one of the best we have, in my view, and it would benefit us all if he were able to be here. I will follow up on that.

I'd ask to put a little bit more time back on the clock for the Senator, since that was a question directed to the Chair.

Senator CORKER. Mr. Chairman, again, I want to thank you for these excellent hearings. And I want to thank this outstanding panel. I think you all have all done an excellent job.

And, you know, because I've asked my questions in these panels in a sort of civil way, I think some people think I have a leaning as to which direction I think we ought to go. I really don't. Fortunately, I was—unfortunately or fortunately—I was a mayor of a city when these decisions were being made. I have no personal feelings, and truly think that the type of testimony that you've given, and others have given, allow us, in public, to discuss our policies and really calls the American public, themselves, to think about what ought to be done. And so, Mr. Chairman, again, I thank you for that. And, Richard, I thank you for taking the time, while I was a lowly candidate, to meet with me. I did read your book, and I appreciate that.

And I just—I want to ask three questions, one to each of you. There's no question that the civil war that is taking place in Iraq today is one that we, in essence, by virtue of our involvement, created. And I know there's been a lot—a school of thought that says that we should—that maybe what we're doing is allowing a muted civil war to take place, not an all-out civil war. I don't think that there's been enough discussion publicly about what allowing an unmuted civil war might mean. And the Americans are used to going out and solving problems; that's what the American way of life and psyche is. And I just wonder if you could address—and I know you all are here to talk about relations surrounding Iraq—if you could address, you know, how you think it might be, if you will—you're someone that's been highly in foreign policy for Americans, based on what you presented a minute ago—to watch, sort of, passively, if you will, an all-out civil war take place, as opposed to us going in and trying to be involved proactively, as now has been put forth by the administration.

Dr. Nasr, I appreciated very much—I really was interested in what you were saying as it relates to us getting involved in Baghdad, in essence, and getting involved in—more fully in this sectarian violence, and how that might, in essence, tie us more closely to confrontation with Iran. And you mentioned something about seeing a change in behavior by Maliki and the Iraqi Government. And I really am having a hard time—and in no way criticize that comment—but I don't—I'm having a hard time understanding how we caused that change of behavior to truly take place.

And then, Mr. Ross, just the whole issue of causing them to live up to their promises. There's a timeframe—I, too, question their ability to live up to the promises. I think that's the weakest part of what has been discussed over this last 10 days. I'd love to hear, you know, more discussion about that.

Ambassador HAASS. Well, thank you, Senator. I like your phrase, "muted civil war." And what you say about the penchant for solving foreign policy may be American, but it also may be beyond reach in this situation. And management is not a very sexy idea, but sometimes it's the best you can do. And I actually suggest, in this case, we'll be fortunate if we can manage, at all, the course of events. But my own analysis is that we will consider ourselves fortunate, moving forward, if we can help limit the civil war to what you call a muted situation. If it becomes all-out, you would have not simply a humanitarian tragedy on a scale greater than we are seeing, but the odds grow exponentially for it becoming a signifi-

cant regional war. Sunni governments around the region, and Sunni nongovernmental organizations and individuals around the region, are going to sit back and see a degree of Shia domination in Iraq that many of the Shia in Iraq seem to want. So, unless we can keep the civil war, in some ways muted, we could see competition between Iraq's neighbors in Iraq, but also growing conflict between and among Iraq's neighbors beyond Iraq. I can imagine a scenario where there would be Sunni-Shia outbreaks of violence in many other countries, in which there would be terrorist attacks, perhaps fomented or supported, one way or another, by various governments. You know people always like to say that things have to get worse before they get better. One of the two pieces of wisdom I have in the Middle East is that things often get worse before they get even worse. And that possibility, I would suggest, can't be dismissed.

So, we need to, in some ways, recalibrate our policy toward muting, to use your word again, the violence, which, again, to me, raises questions about the logic of a surge and putting us in the middle of things. It does put an emphasis on regional diplomacy, meant to adjust inflows of arms and money and volunteers. It puts an emphasis on dealing with Syria to try to close down the Syrian-Iraqi border more than it has been. And it means, again, playing for time, because only when Iraqis come to the conclusion that this game is not worth the candle, only when Iraqis basically get exhausted or decide that they'd actually rather have a degree of normalcy, will this begin to fade significantly.

The United States needs to avoid extreme foreign policies until that happens. And, to me, the two extremes are either trying to totally smother the civil war, working with the government to try to eliminate it, which is not realistic, or pulling the plug, which would exacerbate things in Iraq and raise all sorts of questions about the United States worldwide.

So, I'm trying to see if there's a needle to thread here, where we can find some middle course. I'm not comfortable with it. It's not pretty. But my hunch is, we need to find the strategy, one at lower costs and a lower level of involvement, that we can sustain for years, until this begins to play itself out. And, coming back to what you said, that's not a solution, but that's probably the best available option.

Dr. NASR. Thank you, Senator.

The issue of the behavior of the Maliki government, or its perception of the U.S. position, you're correct, I mean, it's—in many ways, is counterintuitive for many Americans. I think the issue to—is key—as Ambassador Haass said, is the demand or desire for Shia domination, which is really the prevalent, I think, political attitude in the Shia community. I think many of them—we, maybe, were slow to take stock of this after the February bombing of Samarra—concluded there's not going to be reconciliation in this country, and they began to sort of think of a different endgame, which was to maximize control of territory, particularly Baghdad, and assert Shia domination.

And I think part of our dilemma is where we don't see the same endgame as the Iraqi Government, is that we're still operating on the assumption that, (a) reconciliation is possible, (b) that the

Shias want it, and (c) that this government somehow can even rise above its own community and constituency to follow a policy course that may not be—may not be popular.

Nothing I have seen from the Maliki government in the past several months suggests that it can act independent of its core constituency, or that it's willing to do so. I think it's more driven by survival within that coalition, and it's more driven by the public opinion, which, unfortunately, is not, right now, in a conciliatory mood. And I think if we listen to, say, the statements of Maliki's partners in his own coalition, in his government, in the Parliament, not to say the mood in the street, it's far more sectarian and hardline than what we hear from him. And I think that his value right now is for the UIA government to manage Washington's expectation without giving the house away. But I don't see the kind of shift in attitude that is necessary for this government to wholeheartedly back a unity plan. And I don't think it's a function of, necessarily, his personal caliber or opinion. It's a matter of the political mood in a country that has become deeply divided because of the—because of the violence, and also, I think, indicative, at some of the diplomatic discussion we had, that we cannot do it alone. We take two steps in the direction of the Sunnis, as Senator Biden mentioned, about the issue of the surge, the Shias get angry; we move two steps in the direction of the Shias, the Sunnis accuse us of bias. And we're, sort of, caught in a situation that—you know our endgames are not those of these communities, and they will likely pursue their own agendas, despite what we will be saying.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Senator Menendez.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me thank the panelists for their exceptional and insightful testimony. I really appreciate it.

I want to start with Ambassador Ross. And I think it's worthy of quoting from some of your written testimony, because it's the preface to the question I want to ask you.

You say, "The only circumstance in which I see Iran and Saudi Arabia behaving differently is if they both become fearful that a precipitous U.S. withdrawal might trigger a real convulsion in Iraq, and then the consequences of that would create, possibly, a convergence of interests in Iraq to lead the two to explore a possible deal." And then you go on to say, "There is an irony here. Only if the reality in Iraq threatens to be far more costly to both the Saudis and Iranians are they likely to contemplate some limited understanding in Iraq." And then you say, "By keeping the lid on with our forces and preventing a real collapse, we make it safe enough for everyone next to and within Iraq to avoid taking what they regard as excruciating decisions." And finally, "In my experience"—this is, again, your testimony—"leaders don't cross threshold in historic conflicts because they are induced into doing so. They may approach the thresholds, given certain promises about the future, but they don't cross them unless they see the costs, as they measure them, if they fail to act." And that's where I want to start.

You know, when we had Secretary Rice here, I asked her questions about benchmarks, consequences, and deadlines. It seems to

me—and, of course, she rejected all of those propositions—it seems to me that, if we are going to hope for the Iraqis to love their children more than they hate their neighbors, that this actually is not about military action, but a whole host of other issues—reconciliation, diplomatic, power-sharing, and revenue-sharing issues. So, isn't the question really—if we're going to change the direction here, isn't it about having benchmarks with consequences and deadlines? I've heard, I think, all of you say the Maliki government has shown nothing that leads us to believe they're truly going to change the course. So, aren't those some of the things that we should be doing? And what accelerant can we add to the equation to get others, outside of Iraq, to come to that conclusion that you said will be necessary for them to find some convergence of interest?

Ambassador ROSS. Look, I think the key—and it—we've—you hear, in the skepticism on all of us—is: How do you create a sense of consequence for nonperformance? Up until now, there's been no consequence for nonperformance. In fact, your question was about the promises and my skepticism about the promises. People tend to forget that Prime Minister Maliki, when he came in—what was his first big initiative, immediately? It was security for Baghdad. That was his first big initiative. Now, we're on, I think, by my count, his third national reconciliation plan. Each time we see these commitments are adopted, and there's never a consequence for not fulfilling the behavior or changing the course.

So, everyone has become conditioned to a certain reality that we will keep the lid on. And, as bad as the situation is, it's not intolerable for them, on the inside, because the choice—and this is why I used the word very consciously, "excruciating decisions," and I do have some experience negotiating with people who have to make what are excruciating decisions, as they measure them, because they have to take on history and mythology. In Maliki's case, what makes it so difficult for him is partly the reasons that Vali was talking about: The structure of the situation, who his allies are, his own instinct. But I would even say it goes beyond that. The Shia, today, in Iraq are a majority, but they act as if they're a minority. They act as if they're completely vulnerable, because they have a history that tells them they are vulnerable. They've been oppressed. So, they're not going to change their mindset unless, in fact, they see there's a consequence out there that threatens what they want.

Our current position today, in a sense, allows everybody to live with a situation that isn't good, but it's certainly better than having to take these excruciating decisions. So, if there isn't—in my mind, if there isn't consequence, if we aren't, at this point, going to say, "All right, believe it or not, we're not going to be here to allow you to pursue what you want,"—that's why I say, I don't want to leave in a—leave them in a lurch where you impose a deadline, because then everybody simply invests in their own militia, anticipating what's coming, which is the kind of scenario that Richard was talking about. And everybody on the outside, then, sort of positions themselves, as well.

The trick for us is to convince them the lid is going to come off, and be very clear when it's going to happen, but in a way where

they have the potential to affect it, they have the capacity to affect it, so then they have to make a choice. Up until now, we have freed them of having to make a choice. Until they have to make a choice, they won't.

Senator MENENDEZ. So, that means benchmarks with consequences.

Ambassador ROSS. Absolutely.

Senator MENENDEZ. How do you get the world to look at—you suggested, in the Bosnian-type situation—how do you get the rest of the world to buy into that?

Ambassador ROSS. I think, actually, if we—and this gets, I think, again, to something all three of us have been—at least been implying, if not stating explicitly. We have to be much clearer on what it is we're trying to achieve. As long as we say we're going to succeed, but we don't define, really, what "success" is in anything but in a level of abstraction, no one is going to sign on. We have to look at what are the choices. Richard suggested maybe the best choice, to borrow the Senator's term, is a kind of muted civil war, where you contain it. I outlined the—a kind of, Bosnia situation, because it's not as bad as that, and it is—it could be a situation where you have a transition to that. I think if we were to spell it out and say, "This is what we're going for," and have quiet conversations in advance, which is the essence of diplomacy—the essence of diplomacy is, you don't spring big initiatives out in public unless you've done your work in advance with everybody to condition them to what you're trying to do. You have enough private conversations to talk about how you refine the concepts that you're laying out. I would at least try this, at this point. It may be too late. But the fact that you've got, as I said, 100,000 Iraqis a month being displaced says that you're already having population transfers take place—unfortunately, in the worst circumstances.

So, maybe you try to make a virtue of necessity. I think all of us are in a position where—and I use this language also in my written testimony; Richard used it, as well—I don't think we can look for a good outcome in Iraq; we're looking for the least bad outcome.

Senator MENENDEZ. Ambassador Haass, let me ask you—I see a sense you want to comment on that, as well, but let me ask you one thing. One—you said, in a recent article, "One thing is certain: The American era in the Middle East is over." And then you went on to talk about, "The Iraq war, more than anything else, has caused this fall." Could you expound upon that for us on what that means?

Ambassador HAASS. The reason I'm not comfortable with the Bosnian solution is that while it may reflect the changing demographic realities—ethnic cleansing, call it what you will, is going on, on a daily, hourly basis now—I don't believe that creates the basis for an enduring political and economic framework. The Sunni minority is not going to be content. It's not simply a physical question, it's a question over control—sharing of resources, sharing of political power, and so forth. And so, unless there's a major political conversion by the majority, there can't simply be a narrow territorial or demographic solution, which is where the Bosnian parallel, I believe, doesn't work.

The reason I've suggested that, "The United States era in the region is over, more than anything else, because of Iraq," is a reflection on how history has evolved in this part of the world. The modern history in the Middle East goes back about 200 years, since, essentially, Napoleon entered Egypt at the end of the 18th century. Since, there have been a number of eras, beginning with the Ottomans, a Colonial era or European era, the cold war, and then an American era. And the height of the American era was the end of the cold war and the previous Iraq war, where you had this degree of American dominance that was quite extraordinary, including an ability to put together coalitions, deal with Iraqi aggression, promote a peace process in ways that were historically unprecedented, and so forth.

What concerns me now is we have put a disproportionate share of our resources, broadly defined, in Iraq, which leaves us with less resources to do other things. We've lost the principal counter to Iran, which was Iraq. So, we've lost the local geopolitical balance. Iran, meanwhile, is feeling that it's "riding high," thanks to relatively high energy costs, their strategic accomplishment, this summer with Hezbollah, the loss of the Taliban, and what's happened in Iraq. So, they're feeling strategically advantaged. And you add all this up, and it seems to me that we're entering an era where the United States has less resources that are discretionary and available to make things happen, that Iran has dramatically improved its position, and that many of the things that the United States would want to bring about in the Middle East we're simply unable to. And what this means to me is, it's not simply an era where America's influence has gone down, but rather than we need to think of the Middle East as a qualitatively different foreign policy challenge.

Indeed, if I were going to paint with broad strokes, the U.S. Government faces two great strategic challenges as it looks forward. One is dealing with Asia—its economic success; the translation of economic success into political and military power; all these great powers, regional and global, in the absence of regional mechanisms for managing them; old-fashioned disputes in many cases going back to World War II. So, we've got this challenge of dealing with Asian dynamism. The Middle East could not be a more different challenge. It's the challenge of negative energy, it's the challenge of proliferation, it's the challenge of terrorism, it's the challenge of failing states, it's the challenge of Iranian imperialism, it's the challenge of leftover, unresolved issues like the Israeli-Palestinian crisis. Virtually no government has come up with a concept of legitimacy. It hasn't figured out its relationship with its own people. There's no regional mechanisms worthy of the name. All this takes place where we have to deal not simply with the terrorism of the region, but also with the region's energy. So, when you think about American foreign policy, you've got these two tremendous strategic challenges. The one in the Middle East is a negative challenge. Our capacity to cope with it is dramatically down. We don't have the partners on the outside. The Europeans, the Chinese, the Russians don't see it the same way. We certainly don't have the partners on the inside. And there's simply more sources of instability than I've ever seen emerge at once.

So, all this adds up to be an extraordinarily difficult and dangerous and worrisome era for the United States. It is no surprise that we're having this kind of a conversation today. And my prediction and fear is that we'll continue to have conversations like this for many years to come. We're in for an extraordinarily difficult period. I don't know whether it's 3 years, 5 years, 10 years, or longer, but I honestly believe, Senator, that the potential for American foreign policy to be weakened and distorted by the Middle East has never been greater.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Senator Isakson.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you for these hearings.

Mr. Ross, you were cut off before you could answer Senator Corker's question, and you had that look of anticipation in your eyes. Would you like to say what you were going to say?

Ambassador ROSS. No, I actually did answer it with Senator Menendez, because I—the real issue was: Why do I have skepticism about why Maliki will now live up to the commitments that he's made? And it's because none of them are new. We've heard all of them before, whether it's security for Baghdad or it's national reconciliation or it's de-Baathification law or it's the amnesty issue. Every single one of these, we've heard, in one form or the other, before, and the only thing that would make it different now would be if, in fact—and this gets back to what Senator Biden was saying—if the President has whispered in his ear and said, "You know, I'm not going to say this publicly, but I'm telling you, you've got 6 months. And, at the end of those 6 months, let me tell you what's going to happen. We will no longer be in a position to basically keep the lid on and protect what you want"—if he's doing that in private, then maybe—maybe there'll be a "Conversion on the Road to Damascus."

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you.

I am new to this committee, and appreciate very much these hearings, because I'm learning a lot, at a rapid rate. But I've got a lot to learn.

I didn't get to hear your testimony, but I read all of the statements last night, and your editorial in the Washington Post, which seemed to be something that you all found some agreement in. If I remember correctly, basically, all three of you, in one way or another, were saying that we need to get all the people in the region together, because we have an interesting situation. All of them don't like us being there, because of what they perceive our vision of victory is, but none of them want us to leave, because they won't—don't want the regional civil war. Is that a fair statement, without speaking for all of you?

Ambassador ROSS. It is for me, yes.

Senator ISAKSON. OK. My question is this, on the diplomacy side and on the regional forum, I think, that you referred to. If it is—if the worst outcome, for both those who like us and those who don't, is an all-out regional civil war, and if that is the most likely outcome—and I think Mr. Haass said the least bad outcome is to avoid having a regional civil war, is that correct?

Ambassador HAASS. Avoid having a regional conflict.

Senator ISAKSON. And none of them want that—if some forum was created where all the players, who are contiguous to Iraq and in the region, were invited to a forum, is it almost not somewhat incumbent upon them to both come and try to participate in some meaningful way? Yes. And you can all three respond to that.

Ambassador ROSS. Yes; I think it could be put together, but, again, having some experience doing diplomacy, I don't think you launch this kind of initiative unless you do your homework first, and that means you go around and you—you have to develop an agenda in advance. You don't go there not knowing how this thing is going to evolve once you get there. So, you develop an agenda in advance, with some specific, I think, criteria and items on that agenda. I think you have to also create the impression that, again—it's not enough for us to say, "Our patience has limits." We're going to have to—we are going to have to make it clear that there comes a point at which this stops, because the only way you're going to concentrate everybody's mind and realize that what we're talking about is no longer a set of abstractions is for them to realize how soon the danger that they're afraid of could begin to emerge.

The problem we have right now is that—and I said it in the written testimony—we've created a circumstance—not by design, but by consequence—where no one is sufficiently uncomfortable with the current situation. And until they become sufficiently uncomfortable with the current situation, they won't change their behavior. And if you want a regional forum to work, you're also going to have to not just prepare it, you're going to have to create a context where they understand there's a danger out there that they understand, in their own terms; we don't have to explain it to them.

Ambassador HAASS. Could I just disagree slightly? Not on the regional forum; obviously, I'd like to see that. As I hear Dennis talk, there's a certain train of events that could be set in motion if the Iraqi Government doesn't meet these benchmarks or conditions. The United States would then do dramatically less. I'm not sure that would necessarily disappoint the Iraqi Government that much, given their agenda of possibly consolidating Shia primacy. But, also, I worry about the chain of events it could set in motion. Dennis has what you might call—the word "optimism" is rarely used in Iraq—a potentially optimistic prediction that if we give Iraqis a glimpse into this dark future, they will then begin to act more responsibly. I wish that were so. I'm not so optimistic. It's quite possible that if we give them a glimpse into a dark future, they will take it. And by that, I mean we will move toward a regional conflict, where Sunni governments and other groups around the region will go and help the Sunni minority in Iraq, and essentially we will regionalize what's now a largely if not entirely an internal conflict. So, if you're asking me, "Are you prepared to run that risk?"—I would say "probably not." And that's why, again, coming back to what Senator Corker was saying, a more realistic and in some ways a safer goal for U.S. foreign policy is to try to prevent the worst from happening rather than adopting a more ambitious diplomacy, which while it could succeed, has a high downside. The potential exists of leading to a chain of events that could regionalize this far more. So, I, for one, would be quite wary of going

down that path, unless I had understandings, understandings that are probably not obtainable, that the other actors would act in a far more responsible way than, shall we say, history suggests they are prepared to act.

Senator ISAKSON. I think—well, maybe I missed this—I think what—I wasn't thinking about whether Maliki actually would go along, but whether all the others—regional players——

Ambassador ROSS. Yes.

Senator ISAKSON [continuing]. Have they—they probably would go along.

Ambassador ROSS. Yes. Look, I don't have high expectations. My point is, I can see the path we're on, and I can see where that's headed. So, I would try to create different categories of outcomes. One outcome is one that has the potential of changing behavior on the inside of Iraq. The other outcome is changing the behavior outside Iraq. You change the behavior on the outside of Iraq, you produce your containment model, Richard. You change the behavior inside Iraq, and you actually have a chance to change the realities there. I'm not hopeful, but I'm—I want to exhaust every possibility before we go to the least bad of all the outcomes.

Senator ISAKSON. You believe containment is more likely than internal stability?

Ambassador ROSS. That's my fear, yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you all agree on that?

Dr. NASR. Yes.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Obama.

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

Thank you, to the panelists. I'm sorry that I arrived late, although I've been following some of the conversation over C–SPAN.

Obviously, we're at a critical juncture in Iraq; nobody denies that. I've expressed very strong skepticism for the President's approach he articulated several weeks ago. I have indicated that taking up the Iraq Study Group's recommendation of reaching out to the Iraqis and the Syrians makes some sense, understanding that the prospects for success are going to be limited. And I'm just curious as to your assessments of if we were to pursue that—although it doesn't appear that the Bush administration is willing to at this point, but this is something that may be coming up in the future. This issue may arise if, as I anticipate, the surge strategy does not prove to be one that changes that dynamic significantly. I am interested what conditions or what framework or what approach you would use to structure these conversations, in very practical terms? And maybe I can start with you, Ambassador Ross. You know, how would we frame these conversations so that it was most likely to succeed, understanding that there's a possibility that Iran and Syria both decide it's not worth it to them to pursue a constructive strategy, as it is better off to just let the United States flounder in the situation that it's in right now?

Ambassador ROSS. I would say—I'd make a couple of points—first is to understand that both Syria and Iran are more capable of being spoilers within Iraq than fixers. Second, don't single them out; treat them as a part of a collective. They should be there in a regional forum. The fact of the matter is, all the neighbors are

going to be able to make certain kinds of contributions. Probably the two most important neighbors, I would say, in this regard, are probably Saudi Arabia and Iran. So, the question is: In a regional context, a regional forum, is it possible, for their own reasons, to help to facilitate what could be some understandings between the two of them so that they would use their influence—the Iranians on the Shia militias, the Saudis on the Sunni tribes? So, I'd try to put it more in a regional context.

There can be other reasons to be talking to the Syrians and to the Iranians on other questions. I wouldn't put that in the regional forum. But if we're focused on Iraq and we're trying to get them to change their approach to Iraq, we need to be realistic about what they can do and what they can't do. We need to put it in this larger context. We don't want to exaggerate their significance, but we also don't want to ignore the kind of role that they can play.

Senator OBAMA. And, in terms of what's on the table and what's not on the table for discussion, would you lay out some very clear parameters? Are there some things that you would try to cordon off that—we're just going to talk about Iraq here, and we're not going to add a whole bunch of other issues to the agenda.

Ambassador ROSS. I would, yes; and I think, in the—at least—again, if you're going to put together a regional forum, if you don't have a very precise agenda, it will suddenly become completely unmanageable, and you're going to have a lot of issues where, necessarily, we're not going to be real thrilled to be talking about them in that kind of a setting. You create a regional forum in that circumstance, and the Iranians could basically decide, "All right, we're not going to do anything in Iraq until we're satisfied on what's going to happen for the Palestinians." Suddenly, you've created a forum where you can't focus on what you need to focus on, and it's their agenda rather than yours. So, I would try to—I would certainly focus it that way.

Again, if you're going to deal with them, you're going to engage them on a bilateral basis—by definition, that's in a different setting, and you have a very different kind of basis on which to proceed.

Dr. NASR. I have—just quickly—I think, actually, it—at least in terms of having this scenario succeed, it's not productive for the United States to show up at the regional setting as part of one team—namely, part of Saudi Arabia's team. I think, particularly in Iraq, it's important that, because everybody has a vested interest and you want to arrive at a solution where everybody can live with, that this be a genuinely regional forum. I think probably the direction that we're going right now has made it more difficult for the Iranians to come to a regional environment, because the perception is that the United States is going to be doing what Saudi Arabia wants, which I think, going to Ambassador Ross's point, is actually remove the kind of fear that would have made the Saudis really be cooperative.

And I also think that even though, in the back of our minds, there are larger issues, like the nuclear issue, like the issue of Iran's regional power, if the Iraq forum is going to succeed, those issues, including the Palestinian and the Lebanese issue, should not be on the table. The purpose of an Iraq forum should not be

containment of Iran. Iranians would have absolutely no incentive participating in a forum and in a foreign policy agenda that is not directed at stabilizing Iraq, but as—directed as—at downsizing them.

Senator OBAMA. Good.

Richard.

Ambassador HAASS. I'd say a few things. The United States should not be the one calling for the diplomatic forum. I would suggest something like the United Nations. We'd need to have a powerful endorsement from the Iraqi Government. You could not have this be, if you will, a reluctant exercise. You'd include the six neighboring countries of Iraq, possibly the permanent members of the Security Council or the Europeans could be represented by the European Union. What you'd want to do on the agenda is have such things as border security, and the responsibility of every neighbor to police its borders. You'd want to have certain rules and standards about things coming across the border—arms, money, so-called volunteers of any sort. You'd want to have a coordination and pooling of economic resources. Again, we've had a pretty good model, which is the Afghan "six plus two." I was involved in it, for a time, as the U.S. Representative, and it worked at my mid-level and at the level of the Secretary of State. And we actually were able to cooperate with Iran and others at trying to regulate some of these issues, vis-a-vis Afghanistan, to bolster the Government here.

Now, I'll be honest with you, it will be more difficult now, given that 3 or 4 years have elapsed. I'm sorry we didn't set this up before the liberation of Iraq. This is the sort of thing that could usefully have been in place as part of getting ready to manage——

Senator OBAMA. Right.

Ambassador HAASS [continuing]. An aftermath. So, as usual, we're playing catchup. And, again, not everyone's going to come to the table, needless to say, with the same agenda. But I do think we have some experience with this kind of a standing group. The agenda is not beyond the wit of man to work out. And what I like about it is is that it sets up clear standards that we can measure, and it gets it out from under the United States and Iran. Coming back to Vali's point, we want this to be an international undertaking that actually puts the focus or the spotlight on Iraq's neighbors and is designed to help a government that needs help.

Senator OBAMA. Yes.

Mr. Chairman, how am I doing on time? I wasn't clear.

The CHAIRMAN. You've got 8 seconds. [Laughter.]

Senator OBAMA. I have 8 seconds? That's enough to get one question in. This question may have already been addressed, in which case, let's skip over it.

The CHAIRMAN. You're out of time, but go ahead. [Laughter.]

Senator OBAMA. But—that was a quick 8 seconds. What risks exist in a well-structured, well-designed forum of the sort that you are describing? And, again, if this has already been answered, I apologize. But if it hasn't I've been curious as to the resistance to taking this approach. Part of it apparently is the administration's belief that not talking to a country is punishment and somehow gives us additional leverage. I think that's absolutely wrongheaded.

The CHAIRMAN. In the interest of time, gentlemen, would one of you—you have answered that question already, but——

Senator OBAMA. OK.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. But would one of you answer it, very briefly so other Senators can get questions in before the caucuses begin?

Ambassador HAASS. The consensus here, Senator, is that there's not great risk. At worst, you would try it and it wouldn't succeed; at best, you would try it and it would be stabilizing for the situation. And I think there's a consensus here that you want to keep it narrow, if you will, Iraq-specific, and that, under those circumstances, it's worth trying, though, people's expectations are modest.

Senator OBAMA. Good.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. I'd point out that, a year ago, not just I, but Secretary Kissinger and Secretary Schultz and others, all suggested this. It's interesting to hear you all say that it really should be something coming out of, in my case, I think, the Permanent Five of the United Nations, but, if it doesn't come from above, that ends up with a contact group, in effect, being left behind, it's not going to go very far.

Senator Vitter. Thank you——

Senator VITTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. For your patience.

Senator VITTER. Thanks to all of our witnesses.

I want to pick up on two things you've been discussing recently. One is this regional forum focused very specifically on Iraq, not every grievance everybody has in the region, and the second is the idea of clearer benchmarks for our continued involvement.

It seems to me that both of these ideas could be possibly useful additions to the sort of things the President has announced, and they aren't directly in conflict with it. Without asking you to endorse anything the President has announced, does that strike you as the case, that they aren't diametrically opposed, but they can be part of the same general approach? All three of you, quickly.

Ambassador ROSS. Yes; I don't see it as being in competition. You might find it more difficult to put together a regional forum, on the part of some, if they feel that they're somehow endorsing what we're doing. But I think the fact is, it's not in competition.

Dr. NASR. I would say that it actually can be beneficial if such a forum would actually provide the missing piece of this strategy, which is a political plan that then can actually bring some stability.

Ambassador HAASS. Setting up a regional forum should not preclude the United States from also introducing bilateral dialogs with both Syria and Iran. There are things that could be introduced in a bilateral framework that could have consequences that conceivably could also help Iraq in ways that a regional dialog wouldn't. And on benchmarks we need to think about our reaction if and when benchmarks aren't met. We don't want to get into the situation where we aim the gun at our own head. And so, we need to think through: What's the sanction? Because, again, doing less, be-

yond a certain point, might be the sort of threat we may not want to follow through on because of the consequences.

Senator VITTER. On benchmarks, because I wanted to hit that, too——

Ambassador HAASS. I'm sorry.

Senator VITTER. Strikes me that benchmarks are probably a very good idea. It also strikes me that they should probably be very clear, but private and not public. Can all three of you, very quickly, react to the idea of private versus publicly announced benchmarks?

Ambassador ROSS. On that one, I would prefer to see them in public, because I think we've had plenty of private benchmarks. And, again, my experience in the Middle East—and I've done a lot of negotiating out there—whatever is done in private, unless the—who you're dealing with knows there's a public consequence, it never changes their behavior.

Senator VITTER. Let me just follow up on that. Isn't there a danger that public benchmarks give the enemy, whose clear focus is to outlast us, a clear indication of what they have to do to beat us, to outlast us?

Ambassador ROSS. Well, yes, that's true, but we're now 3¾ years into this. If we were at the beginning of this, if we were having this discussion 3¾ years ago, I would say I agree with you. At this point, though, we're 3¾ years into it, No. 1; No. 2, the President, in his own—in his speech, when he laid out the—his explanation for the surge, he's identified a serious of benchmarks, which are now in public. So, I think, in a sense, we've already passed that point.

Dr. NASR. I would say public benchmarks are important, because the Iraqi Government's very different from any other Middle East government we're dealing with. It actually is functioning in a coalition that the Prime Minister has to be able to move with him if it's going to make any steps. And I personally think this is not just about Maliki. It's much more about, you know, the will of the entire Iraqi ruling coalition, and I think they ought to know where the United States position is. And if—and, therefore, they would be more supportive of the Prime Minister in making that——

Ambassador HAASS. Senator, let me give you a slightly different answer, though. I agree that any benchmark made in private would become public in around 30 minutes. You have to ask yourself: What's the purpose? Are these benchmarks designed to help the Iraqi Government succeed, or are these benchmarks to set them up for failure? They will likely fail, in which case it gives you a rationale for doing less, possibly nothing at all. That's one rationale for benchmarks, which would then place the onus of collapse and failure on the Iraqis. A different approach to benchmarks might be, "We think that by setting these, we're more likely to get them to actually meet these benchmarks, possibly in the context of a regional conference." But that's a far more ambitious foreign policy.

Senator VITTER. Yes. I also want to touch on the difference that we've sort of talked about between multilateral regional talks, very narrowly focused on Iraq, and maybe bilateral talks with Iran or Syria, whomever. It seems to be a big difference between the two. I can understand the usefulness—potential usefulness of the former. I see some clear dangers of the latter. And I specifically

want to go to, Mr. Ross, one of your comments, looking at the situation in Iran now, noting some real debate. Isn't that—some of that debate at least partially the result of our attempt to isolate the government, and sort of somewhat of a validation of avoiding those direct bilateral talks that are going to go straight to their nuclear program, or whatever?

Ambassador ROSS. Yes; I think it is. And my view on the negotiations is, I start with the regional context, and that also becomes an interesting way of measuring whether or not you see a value, in terms of moving to a bilateral forum with each.

You know, in each case you also have different kinds of options. I'll give you an example. Let's say that we wanted to begin to start a discussion with the Syrians. Well, maybe we would start it through the Europeans, right now. The Europeans have forces on the ground in Lebanon. I believe that there is a flashpoint coming. I think that we could see a reemergence of the war in Lebanon in about a year's time, because Hezbollah's being resupplied, nothing is being done to stop that. Now, the Europeans, having forces on the ground in Lebanon, have a huge stake in ensuring there isn't a flashpoint. We could coordinate an approach with the Europeans on how we would deal with the Syrians, and it could involve our coming and joining it, at a certain point. You can be creative, in terms of how you approach it. I wouldn't start with us rushing to bilateral negotiations with either the Syrians or the Iranians right now, but I think it's a mistake to think that talking, itself, is a sign of weakness. Talking, itself, is not a surrender. It's only a surrender if you choose to surrender when you talk. So, we should pick the time when it's most advantageous and when you're also not sending a message to them, either the Syrians or the Iranians, that current postures that we think are the wrongheaded postures are not, in fact, working.

Senator VITTER. Final question, Mr. Chairman. Go back to benchmarks. Again, I can see the usefulness of benchmarks, but another part of me reacts as follows. As an American citizen, I don't begin to understand the notion that it isn't patently obvious to the entire world that this is it. I mean, we're debating whether there's going to be a final chance, and it seems beyond debate that there's not going to be a chance beyond this possible final chance. Am I missing something? I mean, aren't we making a little bit much of these benchmarks? Isn't that obvious to everybody?

The CHAIRMAN. Good question.

Ambassador ROSS. I don't know, there's a lot of things about Iraq that I would have thought were—would have been obvious a long time ago, so I'm not so sure.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator, thank you. Thank you very much.

The Senator from Florida.

Senator BILL NELSON. OK. Was the Senator from Massachusetts——

The CHAIRMAN. He's already asked his questions.

Senator KERRY. I haven't——

The CHAIRMAN. Oh, you—I'm sorry. I beg your pardon. I beg your pardon. [Laughter.]

Senator BILL NELSON. Is there——

The CHAIRMAN. I beg your pardon.

Senator BILL NELSON [continuing]. Is there something rare at this table among competition?

The CHAIRMAN. No, what's rare is, I got up to make two phone calls, and I'm sorry, I thought you already had gone, John.

Senator KERRY. It's fine. I——

The CHAIRMAN. I apologize. I apologize.

Senator KERRY. No problem. No problem. Is that OK? Are you comfortable—thank you.

I apologize, because I've been in and out of the hearing, and I apologize for that to our witnesses, because we've had a competing Finance Committee markup right across the hall, so—on the minimum wage tax bill.

Let me just confirm, if I can, quickly—first of all, thank you, all of you, for being here. Thank you for your experience that you bring to the table. And if I can just confirm what Ambassador Ross said, I just came back a few weeks ago from the Middle East and from Lebanon, among other places, and it was really shocking to me, and an eye opener to me, the degree to which we're missing the boat there, too. For all of the talk of democracy and democracy-building, there you have this struggling democracy and Hezbollah is, indeed, not just being rearmed from Syria and Iran, but is receiving some extraordinary $500-million-plus, equivalent, coming in to rebuild it. So, Hezbollah is doing a better job of rebuilding Lebanon than we are, and yet, we profess to care about the democracy and those struggling for it. The Seniora government stood up remarkably, by many people's judgment, to this press by Hezbollah and Nasrallah and company, to throw them out, and we're not doing half enough to do this. So, I mean, you compare the billions of dollars going into Iraq, and the first line, I think, of confrontation is in Lebanon; the second line is going to be Hamas and what's happening on the West Bank; and the third, indeed, is Iraq. So, we are missing the boat in every regard, as far as I'm concerned.

Dr. Nasr, I want to congratulate you on your book. I read your book before I went over. I wish I'd done it a long time ago. I wish that book had been written some time ago. It's a superb, superb presentation of the foundation of this confrontation. And everybody here ought to understand it in that context. I want to ask you a few things about that, and all of you, about that.

As we think about, you know—I mean, I was listening to this conversation about benchmarks and where we are and where we find ourselves. You know, this thing is obviously—the clock is more than ticking, this is running out, big time. And I think you would agree with that. And if—the first question is: Are the consequences of whatever chaos flows out of here as serious as they are being described, or is there some sort of fallback position, where you have troops in the desert, you have troops in Kuwait, you sort of make it clear to Iran there's no big move here, but you allow these forces that have been released, that Dr. Nasr so aptly described in the Shia revival, to sort of play out what they're going to play out that we can't necessarily stop? So, there are several questions there. Are the stakes as high as everybody says? And is there a fallback position that reduces the consequences? And is this a civil war that may have to be fought?

Dr. NASR. Thank you, Senator.

I think, you know, we can—without a doubt, I think the ripple effects of Iraq are going to be with us. And I think the worse the endgame in Iraq is, the more likely we're going to be dealing with a lot of fallout across the region. And I think we won't be able to deal with that without having some kind of a regional framework or understanding that would help us. And I think Iraq is the place, other than the stability of Iraq, that there is certain understanding between the main players in the region, in terms of where their interests lie. And——

Senator KERRY. But let me just ask you about that. When you say that—the main players in the region are Sunni.

Dr. NASR. Well, also including Iran. You know, I think, in some ways, in terms of at least current military assets, size of population, geography, in many ways, Iran is the big asset. So, the question for us is that, you know, in managing this region, do we do so in continuous confrontation and containment with the largest force there, or we will try to establish some kind of stable environment in dealing with it?

The second issue that I think we often don't note is that, you know, the physical outcome of Iraq, in terms of wars, civil wars, some of which Ambassador Haass pointed out, to—it comes to the question of what kind of assets we have. How thin can we get spread and still handle it? And how long are we really willing to have large numbers of troops deployed in the Persian Gulf? But there is also a—an ideological fallout coming out of Iraq, which we are only beginning to see; namely, the kind of, you know, extremism that is now brewing both on the Sunni and on the Shia side. It ultimately is—if Iraq ends up escalating further, is not likely to remain contained over there, and is likely to spread out of the region. And that's something that, you know, has been——

Senator KERRY. But the only way to not have it spread—and I want to get—I mean, the only way to not have it spread, it seems to me, is, you've got to resolve the fundamental stakes between the parties. Now, what you described in your book so aptly is centuries of a force that has been released by giving the Shia, at the ballot box, what they've never been able to achieve otherwise, and they're not about to give it up. I mean, I met with Mr. Hakim; he wants no changes to the Constitution. Muqtada al-Sadr has his ambitions. What are—how do you resolve those stakes in a way that then addresses the Sunni presumption of right to rule and of restoration?

Dr. NASR. We will not be able to do that, Senator. It's—looking at it the other way around is probably more appropriate. How can we prevent it from becoming worse than it is? And I think American foreign policy not falling into the trap of sectarianism itself is a beginning. I mean, not taking sides, not playing the sectarian card, not sort of—and actually, I think it's in our interest for the main protagonists here at the regional level—Saudi Arabia and Iran—that don't go down the path of an intensified competition in the Persian Gulf. We're not going to be able to build this thing from bottom up, as you said.

Senator KERRY. But do you believe that—any of—again, I want to get the rest of you into this—are oil revenues and federalism going to resolve that difference? It seems to me they're not.

Dr. NASR. No; they're not.

Senator KERRY. So, if they're not, aren't you left with two parties for whom the presence of our forces is now empowering them to basically play out their power struggle under the cover of our security blanket?

Ambassador HAASS. I wouldn't put it quite that way, because if we were to leave, it's quite possible that they would play out their power struggle on a more intense level.

Senator KERRY. Well, we're not talking about leaving. We talked about——

Ambassador HAASS. OK, reducing, right.

Senator KERRY [continuing]. Ways of——

Ambassador HAASS. Sure.

Senator KERRY [continuing]. Redeploying that prevent that from happening and still protect our interests. But if you can't resolve them to stop them from killing the way they are today, my question is: Can you stop them?

Ambassador HAASS. No. I won't speak for my two colleagues, I'll just speak for myself, Senator, but that's where I think we are and where we're heading. I simply can't see the ingredients here of solving the political dispute that's at the basis of things. I don't think you can come up with a political choreography that—how would I put it?—is enough for the Sunnis and is not too much for the Shia. I simply don't believe that you can thread the needle that way.

Senator KERRY. Well, that's a recipe for a long struggle between them, isn't it?

Ambassador HAASS. Yes, sir. And I believe that there will inevitably be a long struggle. And, coming back to Senator Corker's point before, what we may need to think about, then, is a long-term strategy, where we try to keep a lid on events in Iraq, at the lowest possible human, military, and economic cost for ourselves. I was involved for years with Northern Ireland, and one of the things you realize in looking at these disputes that go for years or decades, is they have a certain life cycle. And at some point you need a large percentage of people on the various sides of the dispute to essentially get up one morning and say, "Hey, this isn't worth it. We've got to start compromising. I am tired of this being my life." And in Northern Ireland, thanks to a decade and a half or two decades of British, Irish, and American diplomacy, we are right on the cusp of that point. It may take years—indeed, it will take years—for Iraq, and for the Shia and Sunni and the Kurds in Iraq, to reach that political point where they're prepared to compromise in order to move away from a reality that's become awful. But it will take years to get to that point.

Ambassador ROSS. I would just echo that, I guess. Part of what you—the question you're asking, Senator: Is there a way to contain this, and contain all the worst consequences of what could be a real convulsion? If you don't contain it, I do think that it's a disaster. I mean, there's no question, you'll have every neighbor intervening in Iraq to carve out their own niche or to promote their own ally. So, somehow you have to see if you—through a regional forum, you can reach some baselines of understanding to contain it. You reposition our own forces in a way designed to contain it. And you probably realize, even though—I mean, I'm a little—I'm pessi-

mistic, but I'm a—I haven't—Richard knows it's my nature not to give up, so I still think there is a—there may be a possibility, if you can sharpen the consequences on the inside, at a time when I think we do keep the lid on in a way that makes it safe enough for everybody to avoid the hard decisions, maybe you can yet produce something politically. If you don't produce something politically, nothing's going to change. The alternative may well be—which is what I've also feared—we're going to see a 15-year civil war—a 15-year civil war, and, at the end of that time, there may be a level of exhaustion, where everybody wakes up and says, "All right," you know, "now we'll agree to work out some basis of sharing the oil revenues. We'll have some kind of extensive autonomy within the provinces. We'll have a central government with limited powers." You know, the hope was to try to create a transition—this is basically what you were talking about—create a transition to that that is much more peaceful, much less costly. The reality may be, we're headed toward this long, painful, brutal internal civil war, and the question is: Given the danger of not containing it, what do you have to do to be able to contain it?

Senator KERRY. My time is up, but, if I could just close out by saying that the frustration for a lot of us here is that what seems obvious has been ignored and simply shunted aside for years now by the administration, which is why none of us have any confidence about these steps that are being taken. Senator Biden and I, and a few others, not many, have been advocating for almost 3 years for this contact group, slash, forum, slash, summit, whatever you want to call it, that only reluctantly are they even, you know, still talking about it, let alone embracing it. It's kind of shocking to see your own Secretary of State of an administration go to the Middle East and discover—and—that the Middle East peace process needs to be accelerated and put on the table. It's a little shocking to have your new Secretary of Defense go to Afghanistan and find what we've been saying for almost a year or more: We need more troops there. I mean, it—it's just stunning to me that commonsense step after commonsense step has not crossed the threshold of this administration, and we're paying a stunning price for it. And it's tragic for those kids who are over there.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator.

Are you ready, Senator? I was trying to get you prepped there earlier by calling you first. [Laughter.]

Go to it, it's yours.

Senator BILL NELSON. There is frustration coming out of this, Senator, over concern about the troops. A bipartisan commission comes forth and says what we ought to do, and they do this in a very methodical, substantive, bipartisan way, and the administration ignores this, and, as a result, puts our troops in greater harm's way in the middle of a religious war, while, at the same time, for the long run, depleting our ability to replenish our Reserves, our National Guard, and our equipment. It is quite frustrating. And you all, all three of you, have testified that you don't see the need for this troop increase.

Let me ask you this. Ambassador Ross, you had previously said that you don't see any change happening, unless the United States were to say privately to Maliki, "You've got 6 months. We can't

keep the lid on any longer without results." So, if the administration is not saying this privately—and comment on that, if they are saying it privately—but if they're not saying it privately, what then can we, as representatives of the people say publicly to push the Iraqis to deliver in a timely fashion?

Ambassador ROSS. Well, I would—I am hoping the administration is saying that privately. My own preference has been that we would announce that we were prepared to negotiate a timetable for our withdrawal, which gives them a chance to have an input into it, which gives them a chance to perform and have us change how we approach the timing. But the administration hasn't done that. I don't have high expectations that they're saying privately what I would wish they were saying. So, I think the most important things for you to be saying are that, since the President has now established that he has these commitments from Prime Minister Maliki, that if—and we're in a position now to judge whether these commitments are going to be upheld or not—and if they're not, you make it clear there has to be a consequence, you make it clear that our policy's going to change.

You've heard a slight difference in opinion between us about whether that can be used to get them to take political steps that they haven't been willing to take up until now, which is the key to changing Iraq. And if they can't, then you move toward more of a containment strategy to try to contain what is, I think, the sort of disaster that all of us would see taking place if there is an all-out civil war because we simply withdrew. Or what I would also say is—something as bad—I think it's a mistake for us to stay in the midst of a civil war. And we can't—I said it earlier, we can't simply stay there because it's going to get worse if we don't. That's a prescription for being stuck there forever and being thrust into the middle of a civil war, where our forces become the target of both.

I would add just one last point and then turn it over to my colleagues. One of the concerns I've had about the surge from the beginning is that we run the risk that each side is going to see us putting forces in to protect the other. And when each side sees us putting forces in to protect the other, what that means, we'd become a target for both.

Ambassador HAASS. Senator, could I just say one thing?

Senator BILL NELSON. Mr. Secretary.

Ambassador HAASS. What's often important, as you know, is not simply what happens, but how it happens and how it's perceived to have happened. And you asked what Congress should do in this circumstance. I understand the frustration, but my concern would be that Congress not do things that would change the widespread perception of causality away from Iraqis toward Americans. I think that would be——

Senator BILL NELSON. Such as cutting off funding for the troops.

Ambassador HAASS. Yes, sir. I think that would be wrong, because it would make us the issue, and it would increase, dramatically, the repercussions of Iraq for American foreign policy around the world.

Senator BILL NELSON. I agree with you. I want to stand up for the troops, and I want to stand up against the President's wrong-headed policy.

Let me go back to this question of containment. What about Chairman Biden's idea of a tripartite arrangement?

Ambassador HAASS. I've long admired the chairman's idea. It is also put forward by my predecessor. The problem is not the idea. The idea is a reasonable idea. It is a good idea. The problem facing the idea is that it's a reasonable idea that's been introduced into an unreasonable political environment. If Iraqis were willing to sign on to this idea of distribution of political and economic power and federalism, all Iraqis would be better off, and a large part of the problem would fade. The problem is that we can't get Iraqis to sign onto a set of arrangements that would leave the bulk of them better off. We can't force them to be reasonable. And, at the moment, they have embarked on a path that is, in some ways, self-destructive. The flaw is not inherent in the idea; it's just the very reasonableness that's at the heart of the chairman's idea is rejected virtually across the board by Shia and Sunnis, because they can't agree on the precise balance of political and economic power within their society. At the moment, there is no federal scheme they would sign onto.

Ambassador ROSS. The only thing I would say, though, as I've noted before, with 100,000 Iraqis being displaced a month, you're beginning to create the outlines of that on the ground. So, I was actually in favor of the idea before, and I think it may have more of a potential now, because of that reality.

Senator BILL NELSON. When does the pain between the Sunnis and the Shiites get so bad that they finally say, "It's time for us to reconcile"? Can we even answer that question?

Dr. NASR. It's clear, at least, Senator, it's not now. And I think both sides have a perception that they can win militarily on the ground. And I think, you know, that's one point Ambassador Ross and Ambassador Haass raised, that unless, you know, they actually see a limit to their strategy that there's not going to be a victor, they're not likely to look at the consequence. In fact, one of the problems being every measure, every benchmark that we've put on the table has actually accelerated the attempt for an endgame and more ethnic cleansing, more capture of territory.

Senator BILL NELSON. And, all the time, our boys and girls are getting killed.

What do you think about the Iraq Study Group's recommendation that we go and embed advisors? Last week, I asked Secretary Gates, sitting right at that table, "How are we going to protect the embedded advisors?" And so, we have to have troops in there to protect the embeds. But what do you all think about that recommendation.

Ambassador HAASS. My own emphasis would be far more on training than advising. I'm just worried that advisors are going to get caught in extraordinarily messy situations. And I just don't know, then, how we can look after the physical security of advisors. If we really talk about distributing them among every conceivable Iraqi unit, my concern would be a lot of American advisors are going to become casualties. So, again, I would put far greater em-

phasis on training because training need not happen right in the center. Regarding advising—and I'm not enough of an expert, and I see several people up here, like Senator Hagel and Senator Kerry who would be—we need to consider ways of structuring advising so that individuals are not put in highly vulnerable positions. We may have to cluster them in certain ways or have certain rules of engagement or operations, so our advisors are not put in such an extraordinarily vulnerable position. It may be one of those ideas that sounds better than it is actually possible and easy to implement.

Senator BILL NELSON. Mr. Chairman, I would note, in closing, that at that very table, last week, the Secretary of Defense answered the question: "When are we going to know if these troops are working in Baghdad—not Al Anbar, but Baghdad?" And he said, "We should know, within 2 months, if the Maliki government is getting its act together." Last night on the news—I don't remember who the official was, it may have been Secretary Rice—now has changed that to 6 to 8 months. And this is more of the rope-a-dope that is already emerging. It's this Senator's intention to hold the Department of Defense and Secretary Gates to that 2-month time limit.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator. I think the whole Nation's going to do that, as well, but——

Senator Casey, you guys are probably wondering why I talked you into coming on this committee, after this long, but I'm delighted you did. I hope we haven't caused you to second-guess your judgment about joining this committee.

Senator Casey.

Senator CASEY. Not for a minute, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

And I'm going to be real focused, on my time, because Senator Webb wants to get questions in, as well. But I'm grateful for this opportunity, and I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for assembling yet another great panel. We appreciate your expertise and your patriotism by the work that you do.

And, at the risk of violating one of the ground rules for this series of hearings that Chairman Biden laid out, where he told us very directly—and I'm glad he did—to focus as much, or more, on the future as the past. I'm going to violate that, temporarily. And he will gavel me down if I do this the wrong way, but I don't think he will. Because I want to take a little bit of a look back, but also to look forward.

And I represent a State, Pennsylvania, which is now third on the list of the death toll—third highest death toll—and it has a traumatic effect, as I said to Secretary Rice before questioning her—it has a traumatic, and almost cataclysmic, effect on very small towns and small communities in our State, as everyone here knows. But it—despite that horror and despite the heartache that these communities and these families feel, I think they know in their gut that this is as much about diplomacy and politics and—as it is about military strategy. So, I'm not going to ask questions about the surge today—the "escalation," as I think it's more aptly called—but to focus on a broad question for each of you, and then to have a couple more specific questions.

The first broad question, which I address to each for you is: Looking back at just two calendar years, 2005 and 2006, how would

you—and I'll let you choose this, because sometimes these can be too simplistic—but how would you rate or grade or assess this administration's diplomatic strategy, just for those 2 years? And then, the second part of the question is: In calendar year 2007, coming up, what would you recommend as a strategy, as specifically as you can? And I realize that giving letter grades to past performance can sometimes be misleading, but I'd like to hear each of you, on 2005 and 2006, and then what you'd recommend as a strategy for 2007.

Ambassador HAASS. Gee, thanks, guys.

Let me push back slightly. It's surprising that you chose 2005 and 2006, because I would have said that by then, a lot of the die was cast. If there were moments to do things, it was 2003, sir. And it ought to have been put in place before the battlefield phase of the Iraq war or immediately afterward. That would have been the time, for example, to have set up a regional forum, and I believe it could have played a much larger role.

Or consider Iran, when oil was far cheaper than it is today, when you had a leadership that was more moderate than the current leadership is, before the United States got as bogged down, as it has, in Iraq. We had far more leverage then. So, whatever diplomatic initiatives we would have launched, I believe, would have fared much better.

We have paid a price in 2005 and 2006, as well as both before and since, for our policy of isolation, particularly with the Iranians and the Syrians. Diplomacy or dealing with problem states is not like laying down a good bottle of French wine that tends to get better with the passage of time. I don't see where either of these problems have evolved in ways where we find ourselves with more options. To the contrary, Iran is 5 or 6 years farther along on its path toward developing a nuclear capability. We've now seen coming into power in Iran a far more radical individual. Syria and Iran have both exacerbated the problems in Iraq. There was an argument for dealing with them, both bilaterally and collectively, then, before 2005–06, during 2005–06, and in 2007. We are denying ourselves one of our tools of national security, and it just seems to me it tends to be a strategic error to place so much emphasis on the military tool and not to place a greater emphasis on the diplomatic tool. You never know if it will work or it would have worked. All I'm saying is, it might have, and, if it hadn't worked, that would have clarified things, that would have been useful, because then we would have understood, then, more clearly than we now do, what our options were.

Senator CASEY. Thank you.

Dr. NASR. I would, very briefly, say that when you talk to people in the region, they would characterize this period of one of nonengagement by the United States, and also a perception that the region has no solutions or no participation in the events that are unfolding. Many of them think that this marks a time period where they had very little influence in Washington. That's among allies themselves.

I also think it's a period where the Middle East itself changed very dramatically, in terms of Iranian power, in terms of the situation in Iraq, but our foreign policy, because of its nonengagement, was still tailored to an earlier timeframe. And I think, looking for-

ward, right now we're entering a phase where we're trying to play catchup. In other words, we'll deal with the consequence of having followed the foreign policy that was at odds with the reality on the ground and a consequence of nonengagement.

Ambassador ROSS. I'd make a few points. One, picking up on what Vali said, I am in the region a lot, and I would tell you, the perception of nonengagement is overwhelming, and it comes from everybody, those who would like—who, in fact, identify themselves as our friends. So, it's pretty hard to give a passing grade, when, in a sense, there's a perception of complete nonengagement.

I would say one of the basic problems would be that we never identified objectives that were very realistic. We did an assessment that didn't seem to fit what was going on in the area. We didn't frame issues in a way that others could identify with and decide that the purposes that we were pursuing were the right ones, which makes it easier, therefore, to persuade them to join with us.

When you look at specifics—take a country like Syria—I think our policy toward Syria has been "speak loudly and carry a small stick." We've been very tough rhetorically and very soft practically. I would like to reverse that order. I think our bigger problem has—continues to be one that we're not seen as working on the issues in the region that matter to most of the people within the region. So, one of the reasons—I mean, I'm obviously someone who believes we should have been much more active on the Israeli-Palestinian issue, as I said earlier, not because of Iraq, because it's not relevant to Iraq, but because here is an issue that many, certainly throughout the Arab and Muslim world, identify as being a kind of core grievance. And for 6 years, we've sent the message that we're indifferent to it. So, on something that matters fundamentally to them, what they see from us is a kind of indifference, and that's going to cost you. And I'm afraid it has.

Senator CASEY. And I'm almost out of time. Real quickly, based upon what you know already and what you've seen transpire just in the last couple of days with regard to Secretary Rice's trip, what's your evaluation of what you know about her intentions there, and her schedule, and what you're seeing, in terms of positively impacting this? Do you think she's on the right track? Do you think she's on the wrong track? I know we're out of time, but just quickly.

Ambassador ROSS. Well, I think it's good that she is—she has said publicly, "I've heard people say we need to be much more engaged, and I've heard them." So, that's a good sign. Again, the question is going to be, when you become engaged, be sure that it's based upon a realistic set of assumptions, be sure you've done the kind of analysis and you understand what's possible and isn't possible, and be sure you begin to prepare the ground behind the scenes with people to get them conditioned to what you're going to do and put the focus on what it is they can do. I mean, one of the problems we face in the area is, too often, I think, over the past several years, we kind of lecture to people about what they should do, but we don't listen nearly as much as we ought to.

Senator CASEY. I know we're out of time. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Finally, Senator Webb——

Senator WEBB. We have again——

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. The floor is yours.

Senator WEBB [continuing]. Reached the—we have again reached the end of the road, Mr. Chairman. [Laughter.]

And I want you to know it's a privilege to be on this committee. And one of the advantages of having to wait so long is to able—being able to listen to the superb testimony of people like these immensely qualified witnesses, and it certainly helps my understanding of the issues and the approaches.

In an ideal world, I will be able to ask two questions here. I would like to, first, state my agreement with the notion that we do need to move toward some sort of a regional forum on these issues. And it is true, on the one hand, as Ambassador Ross pointed out, that salvation in Iraq will take place only inside Iraq, but, at the same time, because of so many things that have happened, the instruments for that salvation are unavoidably regional, at this point—a weak central together, very similar, in my mind, to the Lebanese situation there. And the reality that the centrifugal forces from this chaos have expanded into the region indicate that we have to move toward some sort of a regional conference in order to resolve this.

The first question that I have was just alluded to a bit by you, Ambassador Ross, when you talked about this need for an approach on the Israeli-Palestinian situation. I'm very concerned about some of the perceptions of why that's important in our debate—the perceptions in our debate about why that's so important. At the beginning of this process, there were three different issues on the table, as we know. There was the Israeli-Palestinian situation, there was the issue of international terrorism, and there was the issue of Iraq. And, in many ways, we sort of conflated them at the same time, to use your words in response to Senator Hagel, by sending out a message of indifference. And it just seems to me that a vigorous approach in that area, not in the sense that it would apply directly to a solution in Iraq, but because it would apply generally and very importantly in terms of the perception of the United States as being evenhanded, would affect the region because of its impact on issues such as recruitment for terrorism and that sort of thing. And I'm just not—I'm not quite sure why this isn't happening in a way that it happened in past administrations where you were taking such a strong position, in terms of leadership. Do you have any idea of why this isn't on the table?

Ambassador ROSS. Well, my feeling is that when the administration came in, it looked at what had been done in the Clinton administration by the President, by me, as something that was noble, but futile, and that if you were really going to change the region, it made much more sense to deal with the rogue states. They would affect other moderates, or at least moderate states, if they saw that the rogue states were going to be either changed, in terms of their behavior, or, more likely, the regimes were changed, you would have much more of a geopolitical effect, you'd establish a kind of strength, and that—the presumption was that with Prime Minister Sharon in, with who Arafat was, diplomacy would—couldn't lead anyplace, so why put more good money after bad? And the problem with that assessment was that it tended to view the problem in,

what I would say, completely polarized terms, that either you have war or you have peace. And the problem is, when you set up the equation that way, since you're not going to produce peace, then you're going to guarantee war. I said, at the time, when I was briefing, as—before I left—I said, "Look, our challenge now is not to make peace, it's to be sure that we engage in a kind of management of the situation so it doesn't get much worse, because," I said, "I promise you, it'll get much worse." One thing I've—the analogy I always used, in terms of the Israelis and the Palestinians, is, with a peace process, it's like riding a bicycle, as long as you're pedaling, at least you preserve something; as soon as you stop, you crash. And you see what happens when you crash. The perception of us as being indifferent has taken root. The—both sides have come to believe that the other has no interest in peace and isn't a partner for it. So, now, trying to dig out of the hole is vastly more difficult than if we had contained this and created an environment where peacemaking was going to be possible later on. I think it was a mistaken assessment that was made. I think that's what accounts for it.

Senator WEBB. Thank you.

The second question is—would be asked generally to all of you—when I watched, from the third row in the bleachers last year, the Israeli incursion against Hezbollah, I noticed that, at the beginning of it, it—there was a moment—there was a moment there that we may have lost, in terms of regional realignment, where there were early condemnations from the Saudis and others against Hezbollah. And we did not take advantage of this moment, as—the administration did not take advantage of this moment. And there is a potential there, I believe, if those types of moments are taken advantage of, that you could see different realignments in the region. Would you have any comment on that?

Dr. NASR. I would say, you know, that had to do somewhat with, also, this—both the sectarian divide and the Saudi-Iranian rivalry.

Senator WEBB. Right.

Dr. NASR. I think that moment, sort of, passed, because the war ended up popularizing Hezbollah on the Arab street. But it also points to another dynamic we're likely to see, is that the more the Shias and Sunnis begin to fight, the more they're going to escalate the heat on the issue of Israel in their competition for popularity and support on the Arab street. And in that sense, it's not going to be very easy for the moderate Arab governments to now come out and support, sort of, a realignment without having to guard their flank against Hezbollah and Iran.

Ambassador HAASS. I think, Senator, there also may have been something else. As you point out, in the initial phases of the summer's conflict, there was Arab condemnation of Hezbollah—in part, because of the terrorism, in part, because of the Iranian backing. Israel, and also the United States, rather than grasping that opportunity and translating that into something political, essentially got more ambitious at that moment. The two governments were hoping that over the next days and weeks, that you would actually have a strategic weakening of Hezbollah, which would produce a bigger political opportunity. One lesson that came through is that when one goes up against the sort of organization that Hezbollah is,

some of the classic calculations of what can be accomplished militarily and how that translates into political gain simply don't work. That opportunity just came and went.

Senator WEBB. Not dissimilar in concept to your remarks about the failure to engage Iran when we were in a position that was more powerful, rather than to having to face that in a position when we've become weakened.

Ambassador HAASS. Timing counts for a lot in life. And in diplomacy, just to give one other example, going back to Senator Casey's question about 2005–06, and I said 2003 was more important, there were moments in the initial aftermath of the battlefield victory, when the initial looting took place, when I believe that, had the United States acted with more forces in a more assertive way, we may have changed the course of political and physical behavior in Iraq from that point on. That said, you can't go back. You can't recreate those moments. And, you know, it's always less difficult to identify critical moments in retrospect. Your rearview mirror tends to be clearer than your windshield; I understand that. But, still, we've got to understand what we are getting into and think ahead, what are likely to be the turning points. Because this is not the first time we have faced these sorts of situations.

Ambassador ROSS. I would just add to what Richard was saying. I think that timing in diplomacy is like location in real estate: It's everything. If you don't seize the moment—and in the Middle East, I will tell you, every time you miss an opportunity, you're always worse off. If you hadn't had the opportunity at all, you'd be better off than to have missed one that's come along. And we missed one. In the first week of the fighting between Hezbollah and Israel, all of the—almost all of the Arab leaderships, with the exception of Syria, came out against Hezbollah. It was absolutely unprecedented. We needed, in that week—and, by the way, this is not a rearview mirror view; there were many of us who were saying, "You have an opening. Go mediate between the Saudis and the Israelis. Go to the Saudis and basically say to the Saudis, 'You want to get us to produce a cease-fire there? You produce a plan, an Arab plan, and you have the Prime Minister of Lebanon, who's calling for an Arab plan.'" And Hezbollah, in the first week, was completely on the defensive within Lebanon.

Senator WEBB. For the record, I was saying the same thing on the campaign trail. Well, thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Gentlemen, your testimony has been remarkable, in the sense that all the testimony we've had, with the single exception—and I'm not being facetious—of the Secretary of State, has agreed on certain basic fundamental premises as it relates to Iraq and the region. I mean, it is amazing, because we've had testimony, as you know, from men and women who have specific plans. And we're going to hear more from others who are going to come forward with specific plans, proposals of how to proceed from here. And it's remarkable that everyone agrees that there is—at a minimum, there's no good solution. The idea of a liberal democracy in Iraq is not going to happen within our lifetime, and we should get on with

understanding what a more realistic, optimal solution would be, and it's far less than that.

Second, Iraq occupies and consumes all of our attention, the bulk of our military, the significant portion of our resources, and our diplomatic flexibility, at this point. Today I met with a very bright woman who was down in Nicaragua, coincidentally, at the time Ortega was being sworn in, and she said to me, "None of you are talking at all about anything happening in Latin America," and she's right. And Secretary Haass talked about, you know, there are really some big issues out there, like places like Asia, you know, there are a few things going on there; the subcontinent, Africa. And so, everybody agrees that it's sapping our emotion, our intellect, our resources, our military.

But the third thing everybody agrees on—it seemed to me, and I ask my colleagues if they have a different view—is that the solution lies within Iraq, that the Iraqis have to come to the point where their sense of vengeance and paranoia and desire has to somehow expire so they get to the point where they're willing to make some real, genuine compromises. And nobody thinks any of these compromises any of the parties have to make are easy. I mean, these are really hard. And unlike compromises we make, these men and women are going to have to put their lives on the line to make the compromises. It's not like: Make a compromise, and if it doesn't work, I get a pension. Make a compromise, if it doesn't work, I get killed. But everyone agrees on that.

Everyone seems to agree that precipitous withdrawal would be a serious mistake. It would make bad things even worse, although everyone also acknowledges that we can't sustain this in a midst of a civil war. As I've said a thousand times, my colleagues are tiring of hearing it, no foreign policy can be sustained without the informed consent of the—the important word, "consent"—of the American people. It's just not gonna happen. A year from now, I promise you, this ain't gonna be where it is today. It may be much worse, it may be better, but I promise you, the President will not have 10 votes in this place to continue "stringing this out," whatever that means.

And the other thing everyone agrees with is that, regardless of whether or not it can affect internal Iraqi machinations, there is a need for a regional—if not agreement, a regional consensus on containing what may spiral out of control beyond what it is within Iraq, because everyone fears, in the region, the total disintegration of Iraq. But what that leads me to is this—and, by the way I'm repeating, but the conclusion that, sort of, reemerges—is that you can't stay in the midst of a civil war, and there's a need for us to stay in the region.

So, what I have observed, hanging around here as long as some people—I got here when I was 29, and trying to absorb what—and I mean this literally and sincerely—what experts like you have been saying off and on over the years, is that we used to have a—I used to have a nun in grade school—this is going to sound colloquial, but I think it makes the point. Every time you'd get engaged in someone else's problem and you end up disrupting the class, you'd stay behind after school—and those of you who have gone to Catholic school remember, nuns used to make you write on the

board, you know, when you stayed after school, in detention, a certain saying. And one of the ones that they would say we had to write—I'd have to write a lot—is that, "Everyone can solve a problem except he who has it." And I've not seen any circumstance, Mr. Ambassador, where parties in the midst of a life-and-death struggle—coming out of environments where there have not been, for decades upon decades, any stable government representing a democratic instinct—I've not seen where they've been able to come up with what is even in their own interest. And there's always a need for some catalyst.

And the last thing you all agree on is, we can't be the sole catalyst, at this point; we've, sort of, eaten our seed corn here. And so, we've got to get some portion of the international community to be that catalyst.

Which leads me to what seems to me to be sort of a reality that everybody seems to ignore. I mean, everybody. And that is that we're pretty far down the road here in Iraq. We embraced, we promoted, we helped put together, and we pushed a constitution that the Iraqis, in a vote—for sectarian reasons, I would argue, but overwhelmingly endorsed. So we have a constitution that's in place there. There's two truisms that everyone except you, Dennis, recently—and maybe just you, me, and Gelb think this is possible—but seem to ignore; one is that there's already overwhelming ethnic cleansing taking place in Iraq. We've got millions now displaced. How many fit the absolute definition of being "cleansed" is another question, No. 1. No. 2, the Iraqi Constitution lays out, specifically, certain benchmarks. When it's defining what a "region" is, it says, in article 115, "The federal system in the Republic of Iraq is made up of a decentralized capital, regions, and governates, and local administration." And it says—the next article says—by the way, first—of the article 116, first clause, says, "We're agreeing ahead of time that Kurdistan is already a region. That's not negotiable." And then it says, second, "The Constitution shall also allow for new regions to be set up." And the Iraqi Parliament went ahead and voted. It set up the mechanism to provide for those new regions.

And so, at the end of the day—and I'll conclude with this—at the end of the day, if we all agree that surging and embedding and—inside placement of troops outside Baghdad, inside, are all tactics, not a strategy, not a plan. I don't know how we get from where we are to the prospect of avoiding the worst case. And that is a civil war that metastasizes, spreads beyond its borders, that becomes a regional war, that imperils a whole lot of our interests, and the world's interests—unless you get more than us to agree to an outcome within Iraq that is preferable, and use as much collective pressure as we can on those parties to accommodate the inevitable. Because it seems to me, it is inevitable, without the Sunnis having a guaranteed share of revenue and without the Shia being able to have some part of the region become a "region," there's no way to stop this spiral, and the American people aren't going to hang around.

So, I am not married to "the Biden/Gelb plan." And I admit, Richard, a year ago it made more sense, in terms of its possibilities, than it did 6 months ago and a month ago, but the irony is, I think it may be becoming so obvious that something along those

lines has to happen. When we had the experts and historians in here, from Phebe Marr to others who were on that panel, they all said, "You know, gosh, no one in the region likes it." I agree with that.

But I think part of the reason no one likes it is because no deal works if one party really likes it. But there seems to me to be enough of the Sunni leadership that might see their way to swallowing a regional system, as called for in the Constitution, if they were guaranteed they got a piece of the action. And, conversely, there's enough of the Shia population and leadership that is beginning to look down this very narrowing hole and conclude that giving up a little more of the revenue gets them a whole lot more, at the end of the day, in revenue, as well as stability.

So, I guess—those of you who have negotiated before and those of us who serve in public life, I think that optimism is an occupational requirement. I think if we don't think it is possible, then we're in real trouble. But I am hopeful that the President's plan will run its course, very rapidly—and I think it will, by the way. I think we're going to know something pretty soon. I agree that one thing that kind of confused—that I suspect that if Maliki is able to restrain the Mahdi Militia—and he doesn't control it, I realize—that this may look like progress for a while. That is possible. But I would hope that the administration is thinking about a plan B. I know they can't say it publicly, but I pray to God they're listening. I hope they are trying to reach some kind of consensus, because the one thing, understandably, in the interest of time, no one mentioned today, imagine what happens in France, in Germany, just those two European countries, if this is a full-blown civil war—14 percent of your population, or 10, depending upon which you pick—Arab, not satisfied; Kurds, looking if they're going to have to flee—it's going to be Germany—I mean, you talk about attracting the interest of the region.

And I'll end with one little story. Our harshest critic has been Chirac. Most of my trips—I can't remember which of the seven trips—to Iraq, I try to stop by and see Chirac on the way back, with others. And I can say this now, a year and a half ago or 2 years ago, Chirac said, "The worst thing America could do is leave." And I said, "Mr. President, I think until you're aware we're going to leave, you're not going to act very responsibly."

So, I guess what I'm saying is that you all have laid out—and I welcome any comment anybody would wish to make about my closing comments here—but there seems to me to be certain inevitable things. Leaving right away is a disaster. Limiting the number of troops makes it difficult; even, practically, How do you do that? Staying in the midst of a civil war is not tolerable. I don't ever remember when we've asked the American people to stay and accept casualties to prevent something worse from happening. Not a victory, just—we're doing this to prevent—I don't know that that's ever happened, and I know it can't be sustained. And so, we'd better coalesce around something pretty quickly, and that is why I'm working very, very hard, at the front end of this, to try to generate some bipartisan—and I mean this sincerely; this is not the usual, "Let's love and embrace each other and be bipartisan." The only thing that's going to change this President's mind is if he realizes

folks on this side of the table are as dissatisfied with his initiative as the folks on this side of the table, because then prices begin to be paid beyond Iraq policy for them.

So, again, I can't tell you how much I appreciate your testimony. The public should know that your service to the country is not merely you showing up here. Probably every one of us has called on your time, hours and hours of your time, over the last months and years. So, it has been helpful. Let me end with that and invite any closing comment any of you would like to make. And you need not make one, but I would invite it, if you wish.

Ambassador HAASS. Let me just make one brief one, Senator. And thank you for having us today. You are right in highlighting the debate that has to happen here about what it is we do. But I do think there has also got to be a major debate in Iraq. And in order to maintain good relations, not simply with you, but with my predecessor, let me quote that famous strategist, Shakespeare, "Ripeness is all." And the real question is whether Iraq is reaching a point of ripeness or not, when the sort of compromise you and others are suggesting has a chance of taking root. We would all love it to be the case.

The CHAIRMAN. To make it clear, I'm not sure it is the case.

Ambassador HAASS. And we would like it to be the case. The question is: Are there things we can say and do to slightly increase the odds? And a lot of the benchmarks conversation is about that.

Iraq, though, is a society of 20-odd-million people, and it doesn't take a very high percentage there of spoilers to make it very, very rough. And I simply don't think that enough Iraqis are psychologically and politically ready to make the sort of compromises that are in their own self-interest. An awful lot of history is about individuals and groups pursuing policies that are diametrically opposed to their self-interest. That's why history is as messy as it is. And my concern is that Iraqis are not yet there.

And so, it comes back to the American debate. If they are not there, and it may take them some painful time to get there, it raises extraordinarily difficult questions for how we nurture that process to both get them there sooner than they would otherwise get there by themselves, and how we limit the fallout in that process. That is the next phase of our foreign policy debate.

The CHAIRMAN. I couldn't agree with you more. There's no straight line here. Who knows what actions we take will impact on actions they take or don't take, and impact on actions the rest of the world looks at. This is a very complicated process. The only conclusion I would come to at this point is—that as the debate takes place here, it is better to start, if possible, from a bipartisan perspective on the things we can agree on.

Ambassador ROSS. I agree. I just would add that I think the key is: How do we sharpen choices both within Iraq and outside Iraq? And how do we do that in a way that still preserves containment as an option? Those are the two measures, I think, that you have to establish and try to orchestrate.

The CHAIRMAN. And I hope that—I think you will see there is an overwhelming consensus on this committee to begin some version of engaging the region. I think it has to come from, essentially, the United Nations or from the Permanent Five or the major powers,

but, whatever reason, to do that. And it's dawning on people, I think, Dennis, that it's not so much because it may be able to affect, directly, the events within Iraq, but will be able to deal with the failure in Iraq, if that is what—so, there are two reasons for it.

Dr. NASR. If I may add, Senator, in closing, that I agree with Ambassador Haass that people in Iraq are not there. But partly it is, I think, because both the Shiites and Sunnis have an exaggerated sense of their own regional capabilities. And I think partly the regional engagement or the international engagement's benefit would be to bring them down to Earth, that this is as good as it gets. And if we're going to go down the course of the plan that you mention, I think there has to be a deflation of expectations on both Shiites and Sunnis, in terms of how much the region will help them.

The CHAIRMAN. I couldn't agree with you more. And, by the way, I want to make it clear, if anybody's got a better plan that is more likely to be accepted, now, next week, next month, next year, or 5 years from now, I am wide open to the plan. But it seems to me the only real value remaining in our plan is that it's mirrored in reality, it's mirrored in what's happening.

Again, I thank you all very, very much. I thank my colleagues, particularly the new colleagues. And, I might add, I think we have, on this committee, picked up some really, really, really serious Senators who seriously engage this, know about it, care about it. And so, I'm looking for this committee to be a very productive vehicle for, at a minimum, this kind of discussion, because, again—I will end where I began—you all know better than I do that this is not a great legislative committee. We can't legislate foreign policy. But it seems to me our minimum responsibility is to expose our colleagues to the best alternatives available and to give the American people a better look. Not that everybody is watching this. This is a process, and a lot of people are going to find this boring. But I'm going to continue this, continue this through the next 2 years or as long as I'm the chairman, because I think it is a process, and we owe it to the American people to conduct it.

Anyway, thank you, gentlemen, you've been very generous with your time.

The hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:55 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

MILITARY AND SECURITY STRATEGY

THURSDAY, JANUARY 18, 2007

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:35 a.m. in room SH–216, Hart Senate Office Building, Hon. Joseph R. Biden, Jr. (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Biden, Feingold, Boxer, Nelson, Menendez, Casey, Webb, Lugar, Hagel, Coleman, Corker, Sununu, Voinovich, DeMint, and Isakson.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR., U.S. SENATOR FROM DELAWARE

The CHAIRMAN. The hearing will come to order.

Hey, General, how are you?

General ODOM. Good morning.

The CHAIRMAN. Yesterday, Mr. Chairman, I introduced a sense-of-the-Senate resolution, along with Senators Hagel, Levin, and Snowe, expressing opposition to the President's plan to, from our perspective, deepen the military involvement in Iraq. And that resolution, Senate Concurrent Resolution 2, was referred to this committee. As you and I have discussed, it was my intention to schedule a committee action on that resolution today, but you have asked me, totally appropriately, to hold this matter over until next week. And unless something has changed—which is totally consistent with the practices of this committee—we'll honor that request and it will be held over until next week, if that's appropriate.

Senator LUGAR. Yes; until next Wednesday——

The CHAIRMAN. Until next Wednesday.

Senator LUGAR [continuing]. On the schedule, I think.

The CHAIRMAN. And last night, I say to our colleagues, we issued a notice of a business meeting for next Wednesday at 9 a.m. to consider this resolution.

Gentlemen, welcome. What a distinguished panel.

Our focus today is on the military strategy that must complement a political and diplomatic strategy in Iraq. We have a profound appreciation for the sacrifices and courage of the men and women you led, and that are being led by others now, have made for this country, in Iraq, in Afghanistan, and elsewhere, but particularly focusing today on Iraq. They have done everything—in my seven trips over there I've seen it with my own eyes—they've done everything that's been asked of them, they have done it incredibly well, and they've done it without question.

But their efforts do not take place in a vacuum. Were Iraq purely a military conflict, we would have prevailed a long time ago. But, as we all know, the situation is far more complex. It combines elements of classic insurgency, fundamentalist terrorism, criminality, and, increasingly, an intensifying sectarian civil war.

All of this occurs against the backdrop of a fragmenting country and a failing state. I, quite frankly, think I worry more about the fragmentation of the country than the civil war. I realize it is hard to make these clear distinctions in what constitutes what. But it's clear to me that—well, let me put it this way—I'm not at all certain we have a clear and coherent mission for the U.S. Armed Forces in such an environment, and I'm not sure I've heard one yet.

What's the proper sequencing of military and political efforts? Is security a prerequisite for political settlement, or is a political settlement a prerequisite for military success? What stresses are multiple rotations in Iraq placing upon our Armed Forces? And what are the implications for our ability to respond to future crises?

To help us answer these and other questions, we are joined by four witnesses with formidable records in leading our Armed Forces.

GEN Barry McCaffrey served as the director of the National Office of Drug Control Policy from 1996 to 2001. The poor guy had to deal with me almost every day when I was chair or ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, but it was a great pleasure for me. Prior to that, he served as the commander in chief of the Southern Command. The recommendations he has presented after his trips to Iraq over the last couple of years have been valuable and, in my view, farsighted.

GEN Jack Keane served, until 2003, as the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army. He has contributed to a recent report, which I have read in whole, which lays out a plan to increase United States troop levels in Iraq in order to stabilize Baghdad.

GEN Joseph Hoar, who has always made himself available to this committee and the Congress, and me in particular, is a very familiar face. He retired from the Marine Corps after a distinguished career in 1994. In his last 3 years of active service, he was commander in chief of the U.S. Central Command.

And GEN William Odom, who we've called on many times and received the benefit of his wisdom, retired as Director of the National Security Agency in 1988. He is a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute and teaches at Yale University. Perhaps most relevant for our discussion today, was his role in planning and assessing the "National Pacification Plan" during the Vietnam war.

We look forward to the testimony of all our highly distinguished witnesses. And I will turn to my colleague Senator Lugar.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD G. LUGAR, U.S. SENATOR FROM INDIANA

Senator LUGAR. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for this hearing and for the ongoing series of hearings in which we're trying to come to grips with our situation in Iraq.

As this committee continues inquiries, Congress is contemplating nonbinding resolutions disapproving of the President's strategy. It appears, however, to me, that such resolutions are unlikely to have

an impact on what the President does. Even as Congress begins to stake out political turf on the Iraq issue, the President is moving forward with his troop surge. In recent days, both the President and Vice President have asserted that, irrespective of congressional reaction to the President's, the administration will proceed with additional deployment of United States troops in Iraq.

Although many Members have genuine and heartfelt opposition to troop increase, it is unclear at this stage that any specific strategy commands a majority of informed opinion inside or outside of the Congress. One can find advocates for the President's plan for troop increases larger than the President's plan, for partition of Iraq, for an immediate withdrawal of American forces, for a phased withdrawal, for recommendations of the Iraq Study Group, and for other plans.

In such a political environment, we risk having reasoned debate descend into simplistic sloganeering. Notions of, "protecting democracy" or, "achieving victory" mean little at this point in our Iraq interventions. Nonbinding resolutions may be appropriate, but, in the face of a determined Commander in Chief, their utility for American policy is likely to end with their passage. If Congress is going to provide constructive oversight, we must get into the weeds of the President's current policy in ways that do more than confirm political opposition against it. And regardless of how we vote in a given resolution, we will still be confronted with a situation in Iraq that requires our attention and our participation.

Yesterday, we tapped diplomatic experts to discuss the regional context of our efforts in Iraq, and next week we'll explore the necessary economic elements. Today, we have the benefit of an outstanding panel of former military commanders who have given much thought to Iraq. They bring with them many decades of combined experience in our Army and Marine Corps.

The discussion that will unfold today may have some familiar rings. On February 11, 2003, this committee, the Foreign Relations Committee, assembled a panel of military experts, including one former CENTCOM commander, to analyze the military situation in Iraq. I stated, on that day, "Success in Iraq requires that the administration, the Congress, and the American people think beyond current military preparations and move toward the enunciation of a clear post-conflict plan for Iraq and the region. We must articulate a plan that commences with a sober analysis of the costs and squarely addresses how Iraq will be secured and governed, and precisely what commitment the United States must undertake."

These statements, which Chairman Biden and others echoed, still hold true today. The President has presented his plan to the American people, and it has been further articulated in hearings by Secretary Rice, Secretary Gates, and General Pace. But I don't believe that we have, yet, an adequate understanding of what is intended militarily, how this military strategy translates into Iraq political reconciliation, and how the plan will be adjusted when it encounters obstacles.

As veteran military planners and strategists, our panel's opinions will be helpful as we analyze the President's proposal and attempt to provide responsible oversight. And we're grateful for this oppor-

tunity to pose fundamental questions about our capabilities and our tactics on the ground in Iraq.

To begin with, I would ask our experts to give us their views of the military significance of the President's planned deployment. Can 21,500 additional American troops make a discernible difference in Iraq? Can this boost in our capability stabilize Baghdad? Quite apart from political constraints, how long can the United States sustain this deployment militarily? Have we accounted for the likely obstacles to military success?

Now, the President intends to embed troops with the Iraqi units, a recommendation of the Iraq Study Group. In this—is this strategy likely to succeed? And to what extent are Iraqi units infiltrated by officers and by enlisted personnel whose primary loyalty is to a militia, a tribe, or an ethnic group? What risk do these competing loyalties pose for U.S. troops embedded with those units? Any long-term stabilization strategy, other than, perhaps, the deliberate partition of Iraq, depends on the training of Iraqi forces. This has been true for several years now, and members of this committee have focused much effort on getting accurate answers to questions related to Iraqi troop training? But are we making progress in training the Iraqi Army? And do Iraqi units have the capability to undertake difficult missions on their own? Perhaps more importantly, what rational evidence exists that an Iraqi Army will be cohesive and will operate under the limitations imposed by the central government? Dr. Michael O'Hanlon, of the Brookings Institution, testified, in our first hearing of this series, that there are only about 10,000—10,000 politically reliable forces in the Iraqi Army. Do Iraqi units have sufficient equipment and logistics capability to operate effectively? And, if not, can we safely remedy those deficiencies? How much U.S.-provided equipment is being transferred to militias now?

Congress has a duty not just to express its views, but also to ensure that the Commander in Chief's course is scrutinized in anticipation of funding requests and other policy decisions. Our committee is committed to this course, and I remain hopeful that the President and his team will engage us in a meaningful way. And we thank our witnesses today for helping our understanding.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Gentlemen, let me begin by making two points before I call on the witnesses.

One, there have been some positive comments made about the quality of the witnesses that we've had before the committee. I want to make it clear that this has been a total joint exercise, that Senator Lugar's staff and mine, and Senator Lugar and I, have been cooperating I mean, either one of us could have been chairing this and we would get to the same place. I think it's important for people out there to know that.

And No. 2, Senator, I wish more than the few people on this committee had paid heed to your opening salvo back when we were contemplating going into Iraq. We might not be where we are.

I know I have four high-ranking military guys before me, and I want to make sure that I go according to protocol here. I'm just an Irish kid who's not real big on protocol. I've never learned it very well. But I understand, General Keane, that you technically out-

rank McCaffrey, but McCaffrey was in the Cabinet, so we're going to start with McCaffrey first.

General McCaffrey, General Keane, General Hoar, and General Odom, I invite your testimony in that order. I know we're always telling you to hurry. I don't care whether you hurry. I think what you have to say is very, very, very important to us. We'll put your entire statements in the record, but I don't want you to feel too constrained to try to spit it all out in a few minutes here. We're really anxious to hear what each of you has to say.

So, General McCaffrey.

STATEMENT OF GEN BARRY MCCAFFREY, USA (RET.), PRESIDENT, BR MCCAFFREY ASSOCIATES LLC AND ADJUNCT PROFESSOR OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, U.S. MILITARY ACADEMY, ARLINGTON, VA

General MCCAFFREY. Well, Senator Biden, Senator Lugar, and the other committee members, it's really an honor to be here. I will briefly try and make seven points, and I'll look forward to responding to your own questions.

As you know, I am in and out of Iraq and Afghanistan and Pakistan and Kuwait, and I've tried to follow this issue closely, partially from a position as a faculty member at West Point, so I've been using that position to try and stay engaged and objective and nonpartisan on both home security and national security—international security issues.

Seven comments.

The first is, it seems to me that the situation in Iraq is clearly desperate, but is not terminal. I see no reason why this beleaguered nation of 27 million people, with all of its problems, couldn't be turned around by sensible strategy and the sensible application of resources.

Now, having said that, if you take a snapshot on what's going on in Iraq today, which is well known to all of us in the room, there is, you know, looking at the situation, 26,000 killed and wounded, maybe $400 billion expended, probably 3,000 Iraqi civilians murdered per month, hundreds of thousands of internal and external refugees, a brain-drain flight of the middle class and professional classes of Iraq out of the country. Our allies are leaving us—make no mistake about that—and will be largely gone by the coming summer. And when you look at Iraq's six neighbors, none of them, with the exception of the Saudis and the Kuwaitis, perhaps, have positively engaged in support of the ongoing situation; and, indeed, are unlikely to do so.

How would you characterize the ongoing struggle? And there has been what some term a semantics distinction on: Is it a civil war? What's the nature of the struggle? Are they dead-enders? Are they Baathists? Is it only the Saddamites trying to come back into power?

I'd say there's four struggles going on, only two of which are crucially important to U.S. national interests. There's no question there's massive criminality and a dysfunctional police force, meaning urban neighborhood police forces. And if you're an Iraqi mother, that may, indeed, be the most significant challenge you have:

Fearing abduction of your children, extortion, robbery, the lawlessness of the streets. It's not a strategic interest to the United States.

A second comment, which I may be a lone voice in, although there is a foreign-fighter jihadist element in Iraq. As a general statement, I do not believe we are generating international terrorism inside Iraq that remains a direct threat to the United States or our Western allies. And, indeed, when you look at the operations of the tier-one special forces units, in particular, we have been devastating in our effectiveness against these foreign fighters. By and large, 70 to 100 a month come into the country, and they're dead within 2 weeks. So, I would argue that is not a strategic concern of the United States.

Third, there is, no question, a Sunni insurgency against what—in sort of a legal fiction—is an established government, to regain power. So, there's an element of insurgency there, and I would assume that, a decade from now, Anbar province will still be in a state of lawless insurgency.

Finally, fourth, regardless of how we parse the phrases, in my judgment Iraq has been in a civil war darn near from the time we went in there. It's a struggle not just for political power, but for survival in the world that will exist after the expected U.S. withdrawal. In my judgment, the Iraqis and I have come to a similar conclusion that we're going to be out of there, by and large, in 36 months. And so, they're watching the backfield in motion. I apologize for the sports metaphor. They're saying, "How do I live through the next phase of Iraq's existence?" And it's difficult for them to sort that out.

Second observation: The Iraqi Army. Michael O'Hanlon, who, along with Tony Cordesman, may be two of the most astute people watching this issue—I'm disturbed by the notion of "10,000 politically reliable troops." I've been in a lot of Iraqi Army battalions that I think are patriots, they're courageous, they're mixed Shia and Sunni, largely Sunni officers, in many cases, with Republican Guard backgrounds. They do lack training, they do lack a political legitimacy for the government that they allegedly are supposed to fight for. But I would also underscore, they are grossly inadequately equipped and resourced. And so, if somebody wanted to talk about a surge of United States support for Iraq, I would question why our Iraqi infantry battalions have 30 Toyota trucks, a collection of junk Soviet small arms, no artillery, no helicopters, no tactical airlift, and the numbers, which I've been banging away at for the last 3 years, are 5,000 light-armored vehicles, a couple of hundred United States helicopters, 24 C–130s, all-United States small arms, at least a battery of artillery per Iraqi division, and the pushback will be—and some of it's legitimate—"Wait a minute, we're concerned about the ensuing large-scale civil war." The other pushback is, "Look, we're not talking about fighting maneuver warfare against our neighbors, this is internal counterinsurgency." Can you imagine the commander of the 1st Cavalry Division being told to hand over his light-armored vehicles, "Don't operate with counterbattery fire at the FOBs that are under nightly rocket and mortar attack." We've got to equip the Iraqis. If we're going to spend $8 billion a month fighting these people, why wouldn't we

consider a shot, over the coming 3 years, of equipping them so they can replace us as we withdraw? And we will withdraw.

Point No. 3: Economic reconstruction. There is a good argument you can't do economic reconstruction effectively unless you have security. I understand that linkage. I cannot imagine—you—the Congress provided 18-billion-dollars-plus in economic reconstruction aid. Much of it was badly spent, badly supervised. And, by the way, much of it was implemented by 85,000 contractors. Maybe that's a right number, maybe 600 were killed, maybe 4,000 were wounded. Without that contractor effort, this war would have ground to a halt 2 years ago. But when you look at it, the President's current proposal says $1 billion in CERP money, which is well received by our battalion and company commanders who want to do small projects and engage local Iraqi political authorities, but, I would argue, if we're not willing to put a 10-billion-dollars-a-year pledge for 5 years into Iraq—we've said the only option we're moving forward with is the U.S. Armed Forces. So, again, I would say we must stand with the Iraqis. And the answer you're getting out of the administration is, "Our allies have pledged $13 billion; they've got to come through." That's silly, they're not going to come through. And a lot of it's loans, not pledges, anyway.

Bullet No. 4, there's much discussion on the hopelessness of a political dialog with Syria and Iran, the hopelessness of really negotiating with Sunni insurgents who see their survival at stake. I respect and understand that. Many of us in this room have been involved in hopeless negotiations that went on for a decade or longer and eventually bore fruit. So, I would argue, there must be an Iraqi lead and an internal political dialog; I say "internally"——

The CHAIRMAN. I beg your pardon. You said "Iraqi lead?"

General MCCAFFREY. Iraqi lead, not United States. The Iraqi Government needs to be compelled, shaped, encouraged to open a dialog, perhaps in a safe place, like Saudi Arabia, and talk to their internal factions, as well as their neighbors.

Bullet No. 5: I'm privileged to teach, at West Point, policy classes, American Government. I always remind the cadets, Article 1 of the Constitution—and I don't mean to sound like I'm lecturing—says the Congress of the United States has a responsibility to raise and equip an Army and Navy. That is not the responsibility of either of the other two coequal branches of Government. Your Army, somewhat the Marine Corps, are broken, our equipment is broken. Hundreds of our armored vehicles are lined up at depots. It has been grossly underresourced. We are in a position of strategic peril. In my judgment, our manpower is inadequate. I've been saying 80,000 troops short in the Army, 25,000 in the Marine Corps. Our recruiting is faltering. There is unquestionably, on the bottom end, a decrease in the quality of the kids coming into the U.S. Army now. We're encountering all sorts of problems we didn't see some years ago. You must fix the Army and the Marine Corps, or we will be incapable of responding to the next crisis.

Bullet No. 6: Our Air Force and Navy play a vital, but modest, role in the ground combat in Afghanistan and Iraq. They are the primary, in my view, deterrent force to greet the Chinese as they emerge into the global arena as a major economic, political, and military power. Fifty-five billion dollars, minimum, have been

drained out of Air Force and Navy budgets and gone into small arms ammunition to shoot at Iraqi insurgents and Afghans. We must fix the Air Force and the Navy, or, a decade from now, we will rue it.

A final notion. I personally think the surge of five U.S. Army brigades and two Marine battalions, dribbled out over 5 months, where, potentially, they might start drawing down in November, and where their mission allegedly would be to get down to detailed granularity to fight a counterinsurgency battle in a city of 6 million Arabs who are murdering each other with 120 mortars, drills, and car bombs, is a fool's errand. However, I don't think it's the most significant part of going forward, which, I would argue, is equipping an Iraqi force and economic reconstruction and political dialog.

I would argue very strongly, though, that this guy, Secretary Bob Gates, who comes in with modesty, international connections, experience; GEN Dave Petraeus, who may be the most talented person I ever met in my life—he is one terrific soldier; and Ambassador Ryan Crocker, who I've observed in the U.S. Embassy Pakistan—he may be the best ambassador I ever saw—that the three of them ought to be allowed to get in there and exercise discretion. Sort of, the response is: I would urge the Senate to be cautious in giving steering instructions to our wartime commanders, and to allow them to assess the situation and tell the administration and the Congress what tools they need. I don't mean political sense, but I mean steering instruction in which we try and modify the tactics or the operational guidance.

On that note, Mr. Chairman, I thank you for the opportunity to share these ideas, and I look forward to responding to your own questions.

[The prepared statement of General McCaffrey follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF GEN BARRY MCCAFFREY, USA (RET.), PRESIDENT, BR MCCAFFREY ASSOCIATES LLC AND ADJUNCT PROFESSOR OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, U.S. MILITARY ACCADEMY, ARLINGTON, VA

A collapse of the Iraqi State would be catastrophic—for the people of Iraq, for the Middle East, and for America's strategic interests. We need a new political and military approach to head off this impending disaster—one crafted with bipartisan congressional support. But Baker-Hamilton isn't it.

Our objective should be a large-scale U.S. military withdrawal within the next 36 months, leaving in place an Iraqi Government in a stable and mostly peaceful country that does not threaten its six neighboring states and does not intend to possess weapons of mass destruction.

The courage and skill of the U.S. Armed Forces have been awe inspiring. Our soldiers, Marines and Special Operations forces have suffered 25,000 wounded and killed, with many thousands permanently maimed, while fighting this $400 billion war.

But the situation in Iraq is perilous and growing worse. Thousands of Iraqis are killed each month; hundreds of thousands are refugees. The government of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki is largely dysfunctional. Our allies, including the brave and competent British, are nearly gone. Baghdad has become the central battlefield in this struggle, which involves not just politically inspired civil war but also rampant criminality and violence carried out by foreign jihadists. Shiite and Sunni Arabs overwhelmingly anticipate and endorse a U.S. strategic withdrawal and defeat.

We could immediately and totally withdraw. In less than 6 months, our 150,000 troops could fight their way along strategic withdrawal corridors back to the sea and the safety provided by the Navy. Several million terrified refugees would follow, the route of our columns marked by the burning pyres of abandoned military supplies demolished by our rear guard. The resulting civil warfare would probably turn Iraq

into a humanitarian disaster and might well draw in the Iranians and Syrians. It would also deeply threaten the safety and stability of our allies in neighboring countries.

There is a better option. First, we must commit publicly to provide $10 billion a year in economic support to the Iraqis over the next 5 years. In the military arena, it would be feasible to equip and increase the Iraqi Armed Forces on a crash basis over the next 24 months (but not the police or the Facilities Protection Service). The goal would be 250,000 troops, provided with the material and training necessary to maintain internal order.

Within the first 12 months we should drawdown the U.S. military presence from 15 Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs), of 5,000 troops each, to 10. Within the next 12 months, Centcom forces should further drawdown to seven BCTs and withdraw from urban areas to isolated U.S. operating bases—where we could continue to provide oversight and intervention when required to rescue our embedded U.S. training teams, protect the population from violence, or save the legal government.

Finally, we have to design and empower a regional diplomatic peace dialog in which the Iraqis can take the lead, engaging their regional neighbors as well as their own alienated and fractured internal population.

We are in a very difficult position created by a micromanaged Rumsfeld war team that has been incompetent, arrogant, and in denial. The departing Defense Secretary, in a recent farewell Pentagon townhall meeting, criticized the alleged distortions of the U.S. media, saying that they chose to report a few bombs going off in Baghdad rather than the peaceful scene he witnessed from his helicopter flying over the city. This was a perfect, and incredible, continuation of Donald Rumsfeld's willful blindness in his approach to the war. From the safety of his helicopter, he apparently could not hear the nearly constant rattle of small-arms fire, did not know of the hundreds of marines and soldiers being killed or wounded each month, or see the chaos, murder, and desperation of daily life for Iraqi families.

Let me add a note of caution regarding a deceptive and unwise option that springs from the work of the Iraq Study Group. We must not entertain the shallow, partisan notion of rapidly withdrawing most organized Marine and Army fighting units by early 2008 and substituting for them a much larger number of U.S. advisers—a 400-percent increase—as a way to avoid a difficult debate for both parties in the New Hampshire primaries.

This would leave some 40,000 U.S. logistics and adviser troops spread out and vulnerable, all over Iraq. It would decrease our leverage with Iraq's neighbors. It would not get at the problem of a continuing civil war. In fact, significantly increasing the number of U.S. advisers in each company and battalion of the Iraqi Army and police—to act as role models—is itself a bad idea. We are foreigners. They want us gone.

Lack of combat experience is not the central issue Iraqis face. Their problems are corrupt and incompetent ministries, poor equipment, an untrained and unreliable sectarian officer corps (a result of Rumsfeld's disbanding the Iraqi Army), and a lack of political will caused by the failure of a legitimate Iraqi Government to emerge.

We need fewer advisers, not more—selected from elite, active military units and with, at least, 90 days of immersion training in Arabic. Iraqi troops will not fight because of iron discipline enforced by U.S. sergeants and officers. That is a self-serving domestic political concept that would put us at risk of a national military humiliation.

All of this may not work. We have very few options left. In my judgment, taking down the Saddam Hussein regime was a huge gift to the Iraqi people. Done right, it might have left the region and the United States safer for years to come. But the American people have withdrawn their support for the war, although they remain intensely committed to, and protective of, our Armed Forces. We have run out of time. Our troops and their families will remain bitter for a generation if we abandon the Iraqis, just as another generation did after we abandoned the South Vietnamese for whom Americans had fought and died. We owe them and our own national interest this one last effort. If we cannot generate the political will to take this action, it is time to pull out and search for those we will hold responsible in Congress and the administration.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Jack.

STATEMENT OF GEN JACK KEANE, USA (RET.), FORMER VICE CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE U.S. ARMY, WASHINGTON, DC

General KEANE. Thank you, Senator Biden, Senator Lugar, and members of the committee, for inviting me.

My judgments today are informed by multiple trips to Iraq, and also—a member of Secretary Rumsfeld, when he was the Secretary of Defense Policy Board, and received continuous and update briefings on Iraq and very aware of what the intelligence situation there is for the last 3-plus years.

I want to start by making some assumptions; and some of these are obvious, but they still need to be made. One is that obviously we're facing a crisis here in Iraq. You know, time is running out. This government, as imperfect as it is, is on its way to being fractured, an all-out civil war—we don't have to debate whether there is one or not; it will be obvious to everyone, and also leading to a failed state. With that, it requires a relook at what we are doing.

And it—the second assumption is that security is the issue that subsumes all other issues in Iraq. It is a necessary precondition, now, to be able to make political progress, economic progress, and social progress. That's the harsh reality of it. Look at the political strategy we had—has failed. And that's the truth of it. We underestimated the political culture in Iraq. The fact is that the Iraqis do not compromise. When you lose, you lose forever. For an educated society that they are, the level of violence that they choose to resolve their problems is staggering. And we underestimated, I think, the psychological impact of what 35 years of repression meant to the Shias, for the most part; to the Kurds, to a lesser degree. And we—while we all know about the Shia-Sunni schism that existed for hundreds of years, certainly truly understanding what that meant, in political terms, is another reality.

So, this country is not ready for what we tried to achieve politically. That's the truth of it. And that political strategy has failed. And, with that failure, we have to accept the recognition that the Sunni insurgents who are the main issue here—and by that, I mean is—they decided to not accept the occupation, they decided to not accept a new form of government, and they are enabled by the al-Qaeda. I agree with my esteemed colleague, Barry McCaffrey, that the al-Qaeda is not as much a threat as we make it out to be, and we have done considerable damage to it. But, nonetheless, what it could become, in terms of an al-Qaeda sanctuary, is something we all have to be concerned about.

This Sunni insurgency, since the winter of 2004—I'm talking November–December—the Sunni insurgents believed that they were winning in Iraq. And then they raised the level of violence in 2005, and then, in 2006, when they saw the government coming, after the constitutional referendum in October and the general election in December, they, enabled by the al-Qaeda, provoked the Shias, getting the—what is predictable, an overreaction on their part, to the level of violence that they introduced by the mosque bombings we're all aware of, and the assassination squads that they inflicted on the Shia. It was predictable what they got, and they welcome that, because they want to fracture this government.

So, when we say, "You"—as part of our political strategy, "We have to reconcile the Sunnis, bring them to the reconciliation table,

throw amnesty on the table in front of them, put oil in front of them," they want none of that, because they believe they want all the oil, and they believe they're going to get it. They want—they believe they're going to get back control of this country.

Now, whether we think that's realistic or not is sort of irrelevant. The fact is, they believe it. And we see that by reading the documents that they're exchanging with each other, listening to their conversations with each other, and we know where they're going.

So, Maliki has no leverage with this Sunni insurgency. That is the harsh reality of it. So, the political strategy has failed.

The military strategy has failed, because we put our emphasis primarily on training the Iraqi security forces. We made a conscious decision, in the summer of 2004, when we changed from Sanchez to Casey and we developed our first campaign plan—the truth be known, for 2003 and part of 2004, we were, by and large, conducting conventional operations against an insurgency. And then we brought a new commander in, and he developed a new strategy, and it had a number of components to it.

The military component, and central to the strategy, was: Train the Iraqi security forces so they could defeat the insurgency. It was never, ever our mission to defeat the insurgency. This was full of risk, but it was achievable. It overrelies on a political strategy to work; that is, attempt to bring the Sunnis into the government and they will not seek their objectives through armed violence.

But the fact is, what? The enemy never bought it. They didn't agree with it. And we have always underestimated this enemy. If there is one constant we have here, it is we have underestimated this enemy from the beginning. In 2005, they raised that level of violence over what it was in 2004. And they believe they're well on their way to doing what they want as a fractured state. And that put at risk our strategy. Why did it put at risk our strategy? Because it raised the level of violence way beyond the capacity of the Iraqi security forces to cope with it. In my judgment, even if they were fully trained and fully equipped, they will not have the capacity to deal with this level of violence. And so, we keep chasing this thing, and we can't get there. And we should have adjusted that strategy sometime in 2005. I think there was enough evidence. I was still supporting it in 2005, so I'm not hiding behind, you know, some continuous criticism here. I did not start to make a change in my thinking—while I had concern in 2005, when I started publicly talking about it, and privately with leaders, was in the summer of 2006. So, I'm part of the problem, as well, in terms of not adjusting to a—to the strategy. But when you look at it harshly, the fact is, we should have made some accommodation in 2005, knowing that the Iraqi security forces will never be able to reach this ever-increasing level of violence.

Now, all the things we want to do with the Iraqi security forces make sense—fully equip them, give them better trained advisors, give them more advisors, and make that force a lot larger than what it is, and embed U.S. forces in it. All of that makes sense. Problem is, we can't solve that Iraqi security-force problem in time, dealing with this crisis that's in front us. The government will fracture before we get the Iraqi security forces to a high enough capacity level to cope with the problem.

And those two points I'm making are essential to understanding, you know, my perspective on this.

As part of the strategy, the military strategy, if we made the decision not to defeat the insurgency, we made a conscious decision not to protect the population, and that was a conscious decision. So, our emphasis has been on training the Iraqi security forces, not securing the population. We left that to the Iraqis. And what has happened in 2006, and very clear to us, is that the Iraqis cannot protect the population. We have never chosen to protect the population ourselves. So, we have a problem, because the Shias are running wild, and they waited 2½ years. And I think there's something to work with, given the fact that they did wait 2½ years. Other than some selected death squads that came out in 2004 and a couple of other incidents, for the most part since the inception the Shias held their fire, thinking that the Iraqis and us would protect that population. After the mosque bombing in February and the level of violence that the Sunnis and the al-Qaeda inflicted on the Shia, they were provoked.

Maliki has no instrument to deal with the Shias. And that's the truth of it. When we say we've got to put pressure on Maliki to get the Shias to heel, what can he use? He has a conversation with a Shia leader, al-Hakim or Muqtada al-Sadr. We know who these people are. We know they're seeking political advantage. We know what they're doing is horrific. And I'm not dismissing any of that. But what is Maliki's political leverage over these people? They look at him right in the face and say, "What are you talking about? You can't protect us, and the Americans choose not to. What are we going to do? We have to protect ourselves." So, not only are they protecting themselves, they've gone on the offense. We have got to give Maliki some leverage to be able to use with those leaders. That is an assumption that we have to consider.

And the other one is: Hard is not hopeless. This thing is complex, to be sure. I mean, the Sunni insurgency is not a monolithic. The Shias are not a monolithic. They fight among themselves. You have the al-Qaeda in there, and we have huge amounts of criminality. So, it is a complex human problem, but it is a human problem. And when you break it down into its components, I believe it's also resolvable by humans. We do not have to wring our hands and say, "This is hopeless. This is too hard, and we can't resolve it." I believe this can be resolved, and it certainly is worth trying.

So, it begs the question: What can we do? Well, while the purpose of this discussion here is military, and I will focus on that, clearly a comprehensive strategy to deal with the political, economic, and diplomatic is very important, the other elements of national power. Iraq should be looked at as a regional problem with global implications, and using the resources in the region to help it. I'm not going to spend time discussing that, because I think your interests are other here, and I'd be more than happy to take that in Q&As.

But, in terms of the military strategy itself—so, can we do something, or is it just too late? And do we have enough forces to do it? When I look at that problem and analyze it, the answer is yes. The Iraqis—the insurgents and the Shias chose the—Baghdad as the center of gravity, driven mainly by the Sunni insurgency. Al

Anbar would have been a place to start to change the mission and the strategy, but Baghdad is the center of gravity; we have no choice, we have to start there.

And the mission and the change is: Secure the population. Why? Because that will bring down the level of violence. And it helps you to focus on truly what is really important, which is driving the problem in Iraq—the Sunni mainstream insurgency is driving this problem. That is why the al-Qaeda is there, to help enable it, and they provoked the Shia violence that we're dealing with today. And I'm not saying you just focus on them. Far from it. But you have to stay focused on what is really the issue so you can get to the Sunnis eventually and solve the problem.

The military problem is one—and the mission is: Secure the population in Baghdad. And when you look at Baghdad, it's 6 million, for sure. But where do you start? In my judgment, there is key terrain in Baghdad, and the key terrain is the Shia-Sunni mixed neighborhoods. Before they redistricted, just recently—those are 23 districts, east and west of the Tigris River where the Sunnis and Shias lived, and there are—as you know, there's some cleansing going on in there today, horrific as it is. But that is a good place to start. The population is 1.8 million—1.8 million. And you look—go into those neighborhoods, and your operation on the ground is different. Now, we're going to get a little tactical here so you can understand it, the operation itself. And I think you want to understand it.

The—what we have done in the past—we have been in Baghdad before, so the reference is, "Well, we have done this in the past. Why are we doing it again?" It looks like more of the same, and that's a reasonable point. The place and the location is the same, but what we're going to do is very different.

We were never able to secure the population in Baghdad. Why? We never had enough resources to do it. We never had enough United States resources to do it, and we never had sufficient Iraqi resources even to get close to it.

So, what we have—what we did in Baghdad in those two other operations, and what we have done, similarly, in Fallujah, Samarra, Ramadi, is, we went in there, as you know, and we cleared out the insurgents or the Shia death squads from the neighborhoods. That was step one. We never had the resources to stay there and protect the people. We took the resources we used to clear out that neighborhood, and we would go to another neighborhood. And then what happened is predictable, as it has happened in the major cities we've done this, in the neighborhoods in Baghdad the same thing happened. The death squads, the insurgents, and the al-Qaeda came back, as well as criminals, to terrorize and intimidate, and also to assassinate those who had been cooperating with our forces or with the Iraqi security forces.

This mission, we would clear out of that neighborhood, but we would fold in the neighborhood Iraqis and United States combined, and they would stay in the neighborhood 24/7 and not go back to their bases. Their mission would be to protect and secure the population.

Now, why is protecting and securing the population so important? Why are we so focused on this? Because the—the simple re-

ality is, when you protect that population, it is the population themselves, then, that begin to isolate the thugs and the killers that have been preying on them. They begin to give it up. It takes time to do this. This is not done in a few weeks. You have to bring in an economic package, as well. And I thought an economic package would be basic services, and then a tier-two package, which would have an incentive with it, only based on cooperation, for enhanced quality of life. And that connection you make with that population through local officials starts to begin to isolate the insurgents in that neighborhood. We're there to protect them, and they begin the isolation of them because they want no part of them. They start to have some connection to their local government and also to their direct—to the central government, indirectly. And I don't want to be Pollyannaish about it, certainly the central government is very problematic.

But that's the basic nature of the issue. So, you begin with 1.8 million. You're not dealing with 6 million. And the force ratios—we've done the analysis—are right to deal with that. Five brigades there, four brigades that are already there, United States. Now, where I part with this plan a little bit is, I—why we would put the Iraqis in the lead here makes no sense to me. I don't understand that. The—I know the Iraqis want to do that. Why we would do that, when we're trying to conduct the most decisive operation we've done yet——

The CHAIRMAN. General, do you think they mean that? I'm not being facetious.

General KEANE. That's a good——

The CHAIRMAN. Put the Iraqis in——

General KEANE [continuing]. Question. I think they do mean it. I think it—it's fraught with problems, and I—it just makes it that much more difficult for Petraeus and Odierno to work out something militarily.

Here's what we—when we say "Iraqi in the lead," that means the Iraqis have a chain of command on the same streets that the United States has a chain of command on, and we do not have unity of command; therefore, you don't have unity of effort. And every time we do something like that—and all these guys sitting at the table could cite examples of it—we have military problems. So, Petraeus, Fallon, and Odierno, have got to resolve that.

But the fact is, is that we—the force ratios are right to be able to deal with that problem, and it relies on the United States, principally, to solve this problem. Make no mistake about it. It may not be—that's not being said politically, but the reality is, it relies on United States forces to help solve this problem, assisted by Iraqis, to be sure.

The—that's the basic nature of the military application of this strategy.

Now, what about Sadr City? And what about the rest of Iraq? Well, the rest of Iraq—the Sunni enclaves to the west, when you analyze it, there's not a lot of violence there. We need to put minimum force there and provide economic packages to them to assist to raise up their quality of life.

To the east is the problem with the Shia militias and Sadr City. And it is a problem. I would think this. If we can resolve that prob-

lem politically, and not militarily, let's try it. And by that, I mean, if we go in and secure the 1.8 million people who are Shias and Sunnis in the mixed neighborhoods, and we have demonstrated an evenhanded approach to doing this, and we're—al-Hakim and Sadr and the vigilante groups will know whether we're successful protecting their people in a number of weeks. At some point, in the spring or summer, if we're effective here, Maliki, for the first time, has leverage with Sadr and al-Hakim, in the sense that now he's protecting his people. And it would seem to me he has leverage over them, at a minimum, to get them to pull back from offensive operations. It would be too ambitious to think he could begin to disarm them at that point, because they're not going to buy that, but at least to stop offensive operations, pull back behind his barricades. He gets political leverage to do that. That is worth a try.

If that doesn't work, then we have to deal with that, militarily. I mean, it's feasible to deal with it, it's not desirable to deal with it. What you will do is, you will unite the Shia militias. They're not united now. If we go in to densely populated Sadr City with a military force to do what we're doing in the mixed neighborhoods, they will unite, and it will be a much larger problem that we have to deal with. I think it's avoidable, and we should certainly try to avoid it if we can.

So, that is the basis of what we're talking about. There's a supporting operation in Al Anbar, mainly because that's the sanctuary for the al-Qaeda, that's the Sunni mainstream insurgency's base. And it occurs to you, when you look at this, you need a supporting operation, not to secure the population in Al Anbar—we don't have enough resources for that, but to conduct aggressive offensive operations to disrupt, to interdict, and to challenge that insurgency that's in Al Anbar so that they cannot undermine the operation in Baghdad. That's the basis for it. And you need additional resources to do that so that you can have more aggressive military operations than what we have right now.

I need to emphasize the importance of the economic package to the success of this operation, and also to the use of the other elements of national power. The military leaders' frustration, when you hear them speak about it, they—and many of you who have visited to the region know this—they have—believe that their activities, while central in Iraq, in terms of military operation—they realize that—but it's disproportionate, in terms of effectiveness, from the other elements of national power, in terms of the political, economic, and diplomatic. And the interagency effort in Iraq has been a failure. And that's the truth of it. We've got to be honest about it. So, there's still a concern now as to how effective are we going to be, at this point, with the things other than the military. And that is a concern that many of us have. And it remains to be seen. There is a plan, but that doesn't mean that we're going to have the kind of execution that we need, because, in the past, the execution hasn't been what it should be.

So, in wrapping that up, the—that is essentially the military outline of what we would do in Iraq. The leaders to do that—and General Odierno, who is the operational commander, has been in command about a month—wants to do this, knows how to do this, and is working on detailed plans to do it, assisted by the Iraqis.

Second, General Petraeus—and I agree with General McCaffrey's comments about him; he's extraordinarily well-qualified to do this, very thoughtful, and wants to do this, and agrees with the plan, and he can speak for himself. And I think Fox Fallon, ADM Bill Fallon, who is, hands down, the best combatant commander we have right now—and I applaud the administration for taking their best guy and putting him in the most difficult neighborhood, even though he's working with a challenging neighborhood, himself, with China and North Korea and radical Islam in Indonesia, et cetera—but clearly, taking the best we have and putting them in this command, and also with the new Ambassador—I think this new team that's going in there is as important as the strategy is, itself. And I truly believe they're going to make a difference. And I know you're going to enjoy working with them.

I thank you for the opportunity to make some comments, and I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, General.

General Hoar.

STATEMENT OF GEN JOSEPH P. HOAR, USMC (RET.), FORMER COMMANDER IN CHIEF, U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND, DEL MAR, CA

General HOAR. Mr. Chairman, Senator Lugar, distinguished members of the committee, I thank you for this opportunity to appear before you for the third time to discuss the war in Iraq.

This administration's handling of the war has been characterized by deceit, mismanagement, and a shocking failure to understand the social and political forces that influence events in the Middle East.

In August 2002, I cautioned this committee about the lack of war termination planning. There was no phase-four planning, and we saw the results of that. At the time, I used the metaphor, "What happens when the dog catches the car?" An axiom to take home is, "Wars don't end until the losers decide that they end." And we are very much in that category today.

During my last testimony, I indicated we were looking into the abyss. Sadly, the new strategy, deeply flawed solution to our current situation, reflects the chronic inability of this administration to get it right.

The courageous men and women of our Armed Forces have been superb. They have met all the challenges of this difficult war. Unfortunately, they have not been well-served by the civilian leadership.

I returned from the Middle East 2 days ago; I've also had the opportunity, before the holidays, to speak with several senior active duty members of our Armed Forces. In virtually every case, knowledgeable people—military, political, academic. The solution to solve this civil war in Iraq is political, not military. There is an acknowledgment in Washington that it is, after all, political.

Having said that, the proposed solution is to send more troops. And it won't work. The addition of 21,000 troops is too little and too late. This is still not enough to quell the violence, and, without major changes in command and control of forces within Baghdad, the current setup for shared control is unsatisfactory.

The centerpiece of a change of direction should be to demand that the Iraqi Government make significant changes in policy: To constrain Muqtada al-Sadr; to disarm militias; to purge the police; and to move rapidly on a host of other pressing issues. If Mr. Maliki's government can show progress by stepping up to meet these political changes, then the issues of more troops would merit some consideration.

Insurgencies are resolved by attacking root causes. Today, among the root causes is the presence of American forces. The Economist magazine, this week, quoting a survey, indicates that 61 percent of the Iraqis approve of attacking coalition forces.

Recently, the Secretary of State, in response to a question of this committee, indicated there was no alternative plan to the President's current strategy. I urge this committee to insist that an alternative plan be developed and briefed to the relevant committees of Congress. It should include diplomatic engagement with Syria and Iran. It should also include a significant role for the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, plus Egypt and Jordan. These countries reluctantly supported the invasion of Iraq. If we fail, the consequences for Iraqis' neighbors are dire.

President Mubarak said, "The invasion of Iraq was a catastrophe. Early departure will be even a greater catastrophe."

Hamad bin Jassim, the Foreign Minister of Qatar, said, recently, that, "The GCC was not consulted in the surge strategy. It's time we took our friends in the region into our confidence."

The goal of the plan should be to prevent the Middle East from falling into chaos, should Iraq become a failed state. Victory, in the conventional sense, is no longer possible. Our goal today in Iraq should be to achieve a paradigm shift that will give the people of Iraq an assured degree of stability and justice.

A final thought. T.E. Lawrence, better known as Lawrence of Arabia, was an advisor to Winston Churchill when he was the Secretary of Colonial Affairs and presiding over the British debacle in Iraq in the 20th century. Lawrence told Lord Curzon and other members of the British Cabinet the following, "You people don't understand yet the hole you have put us all into."

Gentlemen, lady, we are in a hole. In the Marines, we say, "When you're in a hole, stop digging."

I'd be happy to answer your questions.

[The prepared statement of General Hoar follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF GEN JOSEPH P. HOAR, USMC (RET.), FORMER COMMANDER IN CHIEF, U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND, DEL MAR, CA

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During my last testimony, I indicated we were looking into the abyss. Sadly, the new strategy, a deeply flawed solution to our current situation, reflects the continuing and chronic inability of the administration to get it right. The courageous men and women of our Armed Forces have been superb. They have met all the chal-

lenges of this difficult war. Unfortunately, they have not been well served by the civilian leadership.

I returned from the Middle East 2 days ago. I've also had the opportunity before the holidays to speak with several senior active duty members of our armed forces. In virtually every case, knowledgeable people—military, political, and academic—state that the solution to solving this civil war in Iraq is political; not military. There is an acknowledgement in Washington that it is, after all, political. Having said that, the proposed solution is: Send more troops, and it won't work .

The addition of 20,000 troops is too little too late. This is still not enough to quell the violence and without major changes in the command and control of forces within Baghdad, the current setup of shared control is unsatisfactory.

The centerpiece of a change of direction should be to demand that the Iraqi Government make significant changes in policy, to constrain Muqtada al-Sadr, to disarm militias, purge the police, and move rapidly on a host of other pressing issues.

If Mr. Maliki's government can show progress by stepping up to meet these political changes, then the issue of more troops would merit serious discussion.

Insurgencies are solved by attacking root causes. Today, among root causes is the presence of American forces. The Economist indicates that 61 percent of Iraqis approved of attacking coalition forces.

Recently the Secretary of State, in response to a question before this committee, indicated that there was no alternative plan to the President's current strategy. I urge this committee to insist that an alternative plan be developed and briefed to the relevant committees in the Congress. It should include diplomatic engagement with Syria and Iran. It should also include a significant role for the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, plus Egypt and Jordan. These countries reluctantly supported the invasion of Iraq. If we fail, the consequences for Iraq's neighbors are dire. President Mubarek said, "The invasion of Iraq was a catastrophe. Early departure will be a worse catastrophe." Hamad bin Jassim, the Foreign Minister of Qatar, says the GCC was not consulted about the surge strategy. It's time we took our friends in the region into our confidence.

The goal of the plan should be to prevent the Middle East from falling into chaos should Iraq become a failed state.

Victory in the conventional sense is no longer possible. Our goal today in Iraq should be to achieve a paradigm shift that will enable political changes sufficient to give the people of Iraq an assured degree of stability and justice.

A final thought. T.E. Lawrence, better known as Lawrence of Arabia, was an advisor to Winston Churchill, then the Secretary for Colonial Affairs who presided over the British debacle in Iraq. Lawrence told Lord Curzon and other members of the British Cabinet the following: "You people don't understand yet the hole you have put us all into."

In the Marines, we say, "If you're in a hole, stop digging."

I'd be happy to answer your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

General Odom.

STATEMENT OF LTG WILLIAM E. ODOM, USA (RET.), SENIOR FELLOW, HUDSON INSTITUTE; FORMER DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY, WASHINGTON, DC

General ODOM. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for this opportunity. It's a grave responsibility to testify before you today, because the issue, the Iraq war, is of monumental importance.

You have my written statement, and——

The CHAIRMAN. It will be placed in the record.

General ODOM [continuing]. It deals with a lot of the questions that the—particularly, Senator Lugar raised. And I want to direct mine more to some that you raised and try to create a strategic framework against which you test any of these ideas that are being advanced. And I think you can test some you've heard here. Some I think you will find persuasive in that regard; and others, not so.

Four points seem to me to define the realities we have to deal with and to make us realize that we are creating contradictions in the way we look at this by saying things like, "It will be a catas-

trophe beyond all belief if we withdraw," et cetera. It is a catastrophe because we're there. But let me go further and explain why this is the case and why unraveling this paradox involves doing some things we might otherwise think would not bring that outcome.

The first is the contradiction in war aims and what we're trying to achieve politically in the region. The war aims, if you recall, that the President stated were: Destroy WMD, overthrow Saddam's regime——

Senator BOXER. Could he bring the mike closer?

General ODOM [continuing]. And create a liberal democracy——

The CHAIRMAN. General, can you pull that mike closer to you——

General ODOM. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. If you don't mind?

General ODOM. The three——

The CHAIRMAN. That's great, thank you.

General ODOM. Yeah.

Senator BOXER. Thank you.

General ODOM. The three war aims the President set were to overthrow Saddam, find WMD, and create a liberal democracy, pro-American state there. The first two—one of the first two is irrelevant, because there was no WMD. The second one has been achieved. And the third one is creating a disaster.

Why is it creating a disaster? That takes us to the second point. If these war aims don't serve U.S. interests, and we're committing forces to pursue goals that don't serve our interests, who's interests are served? The interests that are primarily being served by our invasion are, first, Iran's. No one could have been more pleased to see us overthrow Saddam, and no one has been more supportive of our program to create a democracy there; in fact, the Iranians were advising the Shiites all along, "Do what the Americans tell you"—that's why the Shiites initially didn't enter this insurgency fight—"because the Americans are putting you in power." And now, that is becoming obvious to everybody, and if you want to understand why we're not going very far with any kind of troop increases out there, I think that's sort of the crux of it.

The other party whose interest is being served is al-Qaeda. Osama bin Laden's list of people to destroy did not have the United States, or at least for a long time did not have the United States up very high. All secular Arab leaders were ahead of us. So, we have knocked one over for him and opened up a country and given him a training ground for cadres that did not exist before.

Now, I've gone back and been reading my Clausewitz on this, and I could cite numerous passages to make the point, but instead, let me sum up and say the following: There is no way to win a war that's not in your interest. And that's what we're trying to do. And once you understand that, then a lot of other things become clear.

The third thing is to understand that the war is not confined to Iraq. We, in the military, try to do order of battle, figure out how many enemy are against us. One of the great problems in Vietnam, one of the great problems in Central America and other places where we had client states dealing with these insurgencies, was a failure to look at the order of battle beyond the boundaries of those countries.

We face, at a maximum, 26 million Iraqis. They're not all against us, but, as you heard, General Hoar said 61 percent are for attacking us, others are not happy to have us there. So, the potential order of battle on the other side is several millions against our 156,000 or 160,000 after the surge.

We should also include a large portion of the Iranians. They may not be directly involved, but the Iranian state can provide an enormous amount of resources and influence on this area. They're not in there, big time, now. They could get in. So, when you start adding Iranians to the order of battle, many other sides are also involved here, and their capacity to change the order of battle in the region is next.

You can be sure that the so-called "moderate Arab States" are not benignly sitting aside and watching this. I cannot believe that resources are not flowing from some of them into the Sunni coffers, and supplies are not coming their way, certainly from Syria, but probably other ways as well.

So, when you start beginning to add up who we could be facing, we could be facing several states—populations in states where the regime may be on our side, but the public is not—of scores of millions against us. That's just not a good situation to be in.

Now, let me move to my third point. My third point is that the United States does need to have other countries involved in solving this. That's the only way you'll change the order of battle significantly in our favor. I don't think we will have very effective cooperation from the states around Iraq until we withdraw. To me, that is a precondition to getting any kind of cooperation. Why should they—why should Iran cooperate with us while we're suffering so? Why should some of these other people cooperate with us while we're suffering so? I mean, they're wallowing in Schadenfreude over this. But when we start pulling out, their view of the world will experience a polar shift. Iran doesn't want a highly unstable Iraq, nor do most other countries want an unstable Iraq. If we provided a forum, after we left, I have a feeling that diplomats from these countries might show up if you invited them. None of them could hold a conference and get the others to participate. They may not like us, but they might find us, pragmatically, a useful host.

I would say this is also true in Europe. The Europeans have been delighted to see us suffer in Iraq. Not all of them, but some. Why should they change? They've been proven right. We got ourselves into a hole they warned us not to get into.

I think if we get out, they will soon realize that they are going to suffer the aftermath of this fiasco earlier and probably even more severely than we do. Therefore, a withdrawal is not the road to defeat; it's the precondition for reframing our strategy for interests that are truly ours—for a campaign that is in our interest. And I want to say that we can overcome the political, strategic, and military, and diplomatic paralysis by beginning to withdraw. As long as we're in, we don't have much room to maneuver.

Now, let me suggest a new strategy. And it's not a new one; it's a return to an old one. I was the planner in the Carter administration for the so-called Persian Gulf security framework, and I had to look at that region and think about what it meant when the

Shah fell. After the Shah's collapse we began to try to figure out what to do next. Well, as I looked back, I could see that, clearly, since the 1950s, we had, if not an explicit, at least an implicit American strategy of keeping a foot in three camps: The Arab camp, the Israeli camp, and the Persian/Iranian camp. As long as we had a foot in all three camps, the military requirements for maintaining a balance in the region were not high. When we lost our footing in the Iranian camp, they became very high, and that's why the Persian Gulf's security framework's key component was the Central Command. There were many other aspects to this. President Carter understood clearly that we needed it. He also understood something else: That need for greater military power should be temporary, because it was costing us more to stabilize by having Iran as an opponent. We saw that reestablishing some sort of cooperative relationship with Iran was very much in our interest. And there were also many objective interests for Iran to restore a relationship. Every administration since then, until this one, I think, has realized this fact. The Reagan administration made some very clumsy and feckless efforts to engage with Iran, but the strategic aim was right, even if the operational tactics and diplomacy were wrong.

I think the first Bush administration didn't pay a lot of attention to it until the gulf war, and then they knew they had to do something about it then. The Clinton administration also tried. Maybe not enough. But when the present administration found itself fighting the Taliban, it found Iran highly cooperative.

So, I could add additional objective reasons why Iran should come around to cooperate with us.

There's another factor that argues for having Iran back in the game on our side: It would remove Russia's negative influence. Iran is being used by Russia now in a most unnatural alliance. It's very unnatural for Russians and Iranians to ally. There's no precedent for that in their history, and I think the Iranians pay a large price for that. It gives the Russians a spoiling lever in the region.

So, a new strategy has to have as its aim not winning a victory in Iraq, per se, but reachieving regional stability. And any strategy that doesn't set regional stability as its goal and then begin to allocate diplomatic efforts and military efforts to reachieve that strikes me as seriously wanting. The problem with the administration's strategy in Iraq is that the means they have used to pursue regional stability has undercut regional stability. Both spreading democracy and the techniques of nonproliferation have accelerated proliferation and added to instability. Therefore, I don't think you can get yourself out of that muddle militarily, diplomatically, any other ways, by parsing these things into particular military, political, economic components. You have to come back to the tough reality and understand that withdrawal from Iraq now on some responsible phased schedule, but a serious and irreversible schedule, is the only thing that will change the polarity of the situation to give this President an opportunity to design a strategy that has some prospect of victory.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of General Odom follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT LTG WILLIAM E. ODOM, USA (RET.), SENIOR FELLOW, HUDSON INSTITUTE; FORMER DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY, WASHINGTON, DC

Good afternoon, Senator Biden and members of the committee. It is a grave responsibility to testify before you today because the issue, the war in Iraq, is of such monumental importance.

You have asked me to address primarily the military aspects of the war. Although I shall comply, I must emphasize that it makes no sense to separate them from the political aspects. Military actions are merely the most extreme form of politics. If politics is the business of deciding "who gets what, when, how," as Boss Tweed of Tammany Hall in New York City once said, then the military aspects of war are the most extreme form of politics. The war in Iraq will answer that question there.

STRATEGIC OVERVIEW

The role that U.S. military forces can play in that conflict is seriously limited by all the political decisions the U.S. Government has already taken. The most fundamental decision was setting, as its larger strategic purpose, the stabilization of the region by building a democracy in Iraq and encouraging its spread. This, of course, was to risk destabilizing the region by starting a war.

Military operations must be judged by whether and how they contribute to accomplishing war aims. No clear view is possible of where we are today and where we are headed without constant focus on war aims and how they affect U.S. interests. The interaction of interests, war aims, and military operations defines the strategic context in which we find ourselves. We cannot have the slightest understanding of the likely consequences of proposed changes in our war policy without relating them to the strategic context. Here are the four major realities that define that context:

1. Confusion about war aims and U.S. interests. The President stated three war aims clearly and repeatedly:

- The destruction of Iraqi WMD;
- The overthrow of Saddam Hussein;
- The creation of a liberal democratic Iraq.

The first war aim is moot because Iraq had no WMD. The second was achieved by late spring 2003. Today people are waking up to what was obvious before the war—the third aim has no real prospects of being achieved even in 10 or 20 years, much less in the short time anticipated by the war planners. Implicit in that aim was the belief that a pro-American post-Saddam regime could be established. This too, it should now be clear, is mostly unlikely. Finally, is it in the U.S. interest to have launched a war in pursuit of any of these aims? And is it in the U.S. interest to continue pursuing the third? Or is it time to redefine our aims? And, concomitantly, to redefine what constitutes victory?

2. The war has served primarily the interests of Iran and al-Qaeda, not American interests.

We cannot reverse this outcome by more use of military force in Iraq. To try to do so would require siding with Sunni leaders and the Baathist insurgents against pro-Iranian Shiite groups. The Baathist insurgents constitute the forces most strongly opposed to Iraqi cooperation with Iran. At the same time, our democratization policy has installed Shiite majorities and pro-Iranians groups in power in Baghdad, especially in the Ministries of Interior and Defense. Moreover, our counterinsurgency operations are, as unintended (but easily foreseeable) consequences; first, greater Shiite openness to Iranian influence and, second, al-Qaeda's entry into Iraq and rooting itself in some elements of Iraqi society.

3. On the international level, the war has effectively paralyzed the United States militarily and strategically, denying it any prospect of revising its strategy toward an attainable goal.

As long as U.S. forces remained engaged in Iraq, not only will the military costs go up, but also the incentives will decline for other states to cooperate with Washington to find a constructive outcome. This includes not only countries contiguous to Iraq but also Russia and key American allies in Europe. In their view, we deserve the pain we are suffering for our arrogance and unilateralism.

4. Overthrowing the Iraqi regime in 2003 insured that the, country would fragment into at least three groups: Sunnis, Shiites, and Kurds. In other words, the invasion made it inevitable that a civil war would be required to create a new central government able to control all of Iraq. Yet a civil war does not insure it. No faction may win the struggle. A lengthy stalemate, or a permanent breakup of the country is possible. The invasion also insured that outside countries and groups would be-

come involved. Al-Qaeda and Iran are the most conspicuous participants so far, Turkey and Syria less so. If some of the wealthy oil-producing countries on the Arabian Peninsula are not already involved, they are most likely to support with resources, any force in Iraq that opposes Iranian influence.

Many critics argue that, had the invasion been done "right," such as sending in much larger forces for reestablishing security and government services, the war would have been a success. This argument is not convincing. Such actions might have delayed a civil war but could not have prevented it. Therefore, any military programs or operations having the aim of trying to reverse this reality, insisting that we can now "do it right," need to be treated with the deepest of suspicion. That includes the proposal to sponsor the breakup by creating three successor states. To do so would be to preside over the massive ethnic cleansing operations required for the successor states to be reasonably stable. Ethnic cleansing is happening in spite of the U.S. military in Iraq, but I see no political or moral advantage for the United States to become its advocate. We are already being blamed as its facilitator.

Let me not turn to key aspects of the President's revised approach to the war as well as several other proposals.

In addition to the President, a number of people and groups have supported increased U.S. force levels. As GEN Colin Powell has said, before we consider sending additional U.S. troops, we must examine what missions they will have. I would add that we ask precisely what those troops must do to reverse any of these four present realities created by the invasion. I cannot conceive of any achievable missions they could be given to cause a reversal.

Just for purposes of analysis, let us suppose we had unlimited numbers of U.S. troops to deploy in Iraq. Would that change my assessment? In principle, if 2 or 3 million troops were deployed there with the latitude to annihilate all resistance without much attention to collateral civilian casualties and human rights, order might well be temporarily reestablished under a reign of U.S. terror. The problem we would then face is that we would be opposed not only by 26 million Iraqis but also by millions of Arabs and Iranians surrounding Iraq; peoples angered by our treatment of Muslims and Arabs. These outsiders are already involved to some degree in the internal war in Iraq, and any increase of U.S. forces is likely to be exceeded by additional outside support for insurgents.

I never cease to be amazed at our military commanders' apparent belief that the "order of battle" of the opposition forces they face are limited to Iraq. I say "apparent" because those commanders may be constrained by the administration's policies from correcting this mistaken view. Once the invasion began, Muslims in general and Arabs in particular could be expected to take sides against the United States. In other words, we went to war not just against the Iraqi forces and insurgent groups but also against a large part of the Arab world, scores and scores of millions. Most Arab governments, of course, are neutral or somewhat supportive, but their publics in growing numbers are against us.

It is a strategic error of monumental proportions to view the war as confined to Iraq. Yet this is the implicit assumption on which the President's new strategy is based. We have turned it into two wars that vastly exceed the borders of Iraq. First, there is the war against the U.S. occupation that draws both sympathy and material support from other Arab countries. Second, there is the Shiite-Sunni war, a sectarian conflict, heretofore, sublimated within the Arab world but that now has opened the door to Iranian influence in Iraq. In turn, it foreordains an expanding Iranian-Arab regional conflict.

Any military proposals today that do not account for both larger wars, as well as the Iranian threat to the Arab States on the Persian Gulf, must be judged wholly inadequate if not counterproductive. Let me now turn to some specific proposals, those advocated by independent voices and the Iraq Study Group as well as the administration.

SPECIFIC PROPOSALS

Standing up Iraqi security forces to replace U.S. forces. Training the Iraqi military and police force has been proposed repeatedly as a way to bring stability to Iraq and allow U.S. forces to withdraw. Recently new variants, such as embedding U.S. troops within Iraqi units, are offered. The Iraq Study Group made much of this technique.

I know of no historical precedent to suggest that any of them will succeed. The problem is not the competency of Iraqi forces. It is political consolidation and gaining the troops' loyalties to the government and their commanders as opposed to their loyalties to sectarian leaders, clans, families, and relatives. For what political authority are Iraqi soldiers and police willing to risk their lives? To the American

command? What if American forces depart? Won't they be called traitors for supporting the invaders and occupiers? Will they trust in a Shiite-dominated government and Ministry of Interior, which is engaged in assassinations of Sunnis? Sunni Arabs and Kurds would be foolish to do so, although financial desperation has driven many to risk it. What about to the leaders of independent militias? Here, soldiers can find strong reasons for loyal service: To defend their fellow sectarians, families, and relatives. And that is why the government cannot disband them. It has insufficient loyal troops to do so.

As a military planner working on the pacification programs in 1970–71 in Vietnam, I had the chance to judge the results of training both regular South Vietnamese forces and so-called "regional" and "popular" forces. Some were technically proficient, but that did not ensure that they would always fight for the government in Saigon. Nor were they always loyal to their commanders. And they occasionally fought each other when bribed by Viet Cong agents to do so. The "popular forces" at the village level often failed to protect their villages. The reasons varied but in several cases it was the result of how their salaries were funded. Local tax money was not the source of their pay; rather it was U.S.-supplied funds. Thus these troops, as well as "regional forces," had little sense of obligation to protect villagers in their areas of responsibility. For anyone who doubts that the Vietnam case is instructive for understanding the Iraqi case, recommend Ahmed S. Hashim's recent book, "Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Iraq." A fluent Arab linguist and a Reserve U.S. Army colonel, who has served a year in Iraq and visited it several other times, Hashim offers a textured study that struck me again and again as a rerun of an old movie, especially where it concerned U.S. training of Iraqi forces.

U.S. military assistance training in El Salvador is often cited as a successful case. In fact, this effort amounted to letting the old elites, who used death squads to impose order, come back to power in different guises. And death squads are again active there. The real cause of the defeat of the Salvadoran insurgency was Gorbachev's decision to cut off supplies to it, as he promised President George H. Bush at the Malta summit meeting. Thus denied their resource base, and having failed to create a self-supporting tax regime in the countryside as the Viet Cong did in Vietnam, they could not survive for long. Does the administration's new plan for Iraq promise to eliminate all outside support to the warring factions? Is it even remotely possible? Hardly.

The oft-cited British success in Malaysia is only superficially relevant to the Iraq case. British officials actually ruled the country. Thus they had decades of firsthand knowledge of the local politics. They made such a mess of it, however, that an insurgency emerged in opposition. A new military commander and a cleanup of the colonial administration provided political consolidation and the isolation of the Communist insurgents, mostly members of an ethnic minority group. This pattern would be impossible to duplicate in Iraq.

An infusion of new funds for reconstruction. A shortage of funds has not been the cause of failed reconstruction efforts in Iraq. Administrative capacity to use funds effectively was and remains the primary obstacle. Even support programs carried out by American contractors for U.S. forces have yielded mixed results. Insurgent attacks on the projects have provoked transfers of construction funds to security measures, which have also failed.

A weak or nonexistent government administrative capacity allows most of the money to be squandered. Putting another billion or so dollars into public works in Iraq today—before a government is in place with an effective administrative capacity to penetrate to the neighborhood and village level—is like trying to build a roof on a house before its walls have been erected. Moreover, a large part of that money will find its way into the hands of insurgents and sectarian militias. That is exactly what happened in Vietnam, and it has been happening in Iraq.

New and innovative counterinsurgency tactics. The cottage industry of counterinsurgency tactics is old and deceptive. When the U.S. military has been periodically tasked to reinvent them—the last great surge in that industry was at the JFK School in Fort Bragg in the 1960s—it has no choice but to pretend that counterinsurgency tactics can succeed where no political consolidation in the government has yet been achieved. New counterinsurgency tactics cannot save Iraq today because they are designed without account for the essence of any "internal war," whether an insurgency or a civil war.

Such wars are about "who will rule," and who will rule depends on "who can tax" and build an effective state apparatus down to the village level.

The taxation issue is not even on the agenda of U.S. programs for Iraq. Nor was it a central focus in Vietnam, El Salvador, the Philippines, and most other cases of U.S.-backed governments embroiled in internal wars. Where U.S. funding has been amply provided to those governments, the recipient regime has treated those

moneys as its tax base while failing to create an indigenous tax base. In my own study of three counterinsurgency cases, and from my experience in Vietnam, I discovered that the regimes that received the least U.S. direct fiscal support had the most success against the insurgents. Providing funding and forces to give an embattled regime more "time" to gain adequate strength is like asking a drunk to drink more whiskey in order to sober up.

Saddam's regime lived mostly on revenues from oil exports. Thus it never had to create an effective apparatus to collect direct taxes. Were U.S. forces and counterinsurgency efforts to succeed in imposing order for a time, the issue of who will control the oil in Iraq would become the focus of conflict for competing factions. The time would not be spent creating the administrative capacity to keep order and to collect sufficient taxes to administer the country. At best, the war over who will eventually rule the country would only be postponed.

This is the crux of the dilemma facing all such internal wars. I make this assertion not only based on my own study but also in light of considerable literature that demonstrates that the single best index of the strength of any state is its ability to collect direct taxes, not export-import tax or indirect taxes. The latter two are relatively easy to collect by comparison, requiring much weaker state institutions.

The Iraq Study Group. The report of this group should not be taken as offering a new or promising strategy for dealing with Iraq. Its virtue lies in its candid assessment of the realities in Iraq. Its great service has been to undercut the misleading assessments, claims, and judgment by the administration. It allows the several skeptical Republican Members of the Congress to speak out more candidly on the war, and it makes it less easy for those Democrats who were, heretofore, supporters of the administration's war to refuse to reconsider.

If one reads the ISG report in light of the four points in the strategic overview above, one sees the key weakness of its proposals. It does not concede that the war, as it was conceived and continues to be fought, is not "winnable." It rejects the rapid withdrawal of U.S. forces as unacceptable. No doubt a withdrawal will leave a terrible aftermath in Iraq, but we cannot avoid that. We can only make it worse by waiting until we are forced to withdraw. In the meantime, we prevent ourselves from escaping the paralysis imposed on us by the war, unable to redefine our war aims, which have served Iranian and al-Qaeda interests instead of our own.

I do not criticize the report for this failure. As constructed, the group could not advance a fundamental revision of our strategy. Its Republican and Democrat members could not be said to represent all members of their own parties. Thus the most it could do was to make it politically easier for the administration to begin a fundamental revision of its strategy instead of offering a list of tactical changes for the same old war aim of creating a liberal democracy with a pro-American orientation in Iraq.

WHAT WOULD A REVISED STRATEGY LOOK LIKE?

How can the United States recover from this strategic blunder? It cannot as long as it fails to revise its war aims. Wise leaders in war have many times admitted that their war aims are misguided and then revised them to deal with realities beyond their control. Such leaders make tactical withdrawals, regroup, and revise their aims, and design new strategies to pursue them. Those who cannot make such adjustments eventually face defeat.

What war aim today is genuinely in the U.S. interest and offers realistic prospects of success? And not just in Iraq but in the larger region?

Since the 1950s, the U.S. aim in this region has been "regional stability" above all others. The strategy for achieving this aim of every administration until the present one has been maintaining a regional balance of power among three regional forces—Arabs, Israelis, and Iranians. The Arab-Persian conflict is older than the Arab-Israeli conflict. The United States kept a diplomatic foothold in all three camps until the fall of the Shah's regime in Iran. Losing its footing in Tehran, it began under President Carter's leadership to compensate by building what he called the Persian Gulf Security Framework. The U.S. Central Command with enhanced military power was born as one of the main means for this purpose, but the long-term goal was a rapprochement. Until that time, the military costs for maintaining the regional power balance would be much higher.

The Reagan administration, although it condemned Carter's Persian Gulf Security Framework, the so-called "Carter Doctrine," continued Carter's policies, even to the point of supporting Iraq when Iran was close to overrunning it. Some of its efforts to improve relations with Iran were feckless and counterproductive, but it maintained the proper strategic aim—regional stability.

The Bush administration has broken with this strategy by invading Iraq and also by threatening the existence of the regime in Iran. It presumed that establishing a liberal democracy in Iraq would lead to regional stability. In fact, the policy of spreading democracy by forces of arms has become the main source of regional instability.

This not only postponed any near-term chance of better relations with Iran but also has moved the United States closer to losing its footing in the Arab camp as well. That, of course, increases greatly the threats to Israel's security, the very thing it was supposed to improve, not to mention that it makes the military costs rise dramatically, exceeding what we can prudently bear, especially without the support of our European allies and others.

Several critics of the administration show an appreciation of the requirement to regain our allies' and others' support, but they do not recognize that withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq is the sine qua non for achieving their cooperation. It will be forthcoming once that withdrawal begins and looks irreversible. They will then realize that they can no longer sit on the sidelines. The aftermath will be worse for them than for the United States, and they know that without U.S. participation and leadership, they alone cannot restore regional stability. Until we understand this critical point, we cannot design a strategy that can achieve what we can legitimately call a victory.

Any new strategy that does realistically promise to achieve regional stability at a cost we can prudently bear, and does not regain the confidence and support of our allies, is doomed to failure. To date, I have seen no awareness that any political leader in this country has gone beyond tactical proposals to offer a different strategic approach to limiting the damage in a war that is turning out to be the greatest strategic disaster in our history.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, General.

Impressive testimonies. Thank you very, very much.

We'll do 8-minute rounds, if that's OK. And if our colleagues have an opportunity to stay, maybe we can have a second round. I know everyone's not here, but—is that all right with you, Mr. Chairman?

What I've tried to do with these talented panels that we've had is, as you've spoken, and as I've read your statements, I've tried to discern where there are points of agreement and points of departure. So, we can sort of start from there. At least it helps my mind order things a little better.

There's universal judgment here that the mission—the strategy and the mission—and they're separable—have, thus far, been a failure, that there's a need for a new strategy and a more clearly defined mission for the region. You all say the region is important, so you can't just view Iraq as a stand-alone proposition. And, second, that the mission inside Iraq has to be more clearly defined. And the third thing you all agree on, I think—correct me if I'm wrong—is, the allies are leaving; this is a wholly owned American subsidiary here. I mean, there's—there really isn't anybody else in the deal, as a practical matter, and no one's coming. If anything, people are going, correct?

Another thing that you all seem to agree on is that somewhere between "if we surge, we really have to do it and stick around," and "we shouldn't even be surging, we should be using a different method, announcing or, in fact, beginning to withdraw"—we need a real plan, from General Odom's standpoint, to begin to shift the burden more clearly, or to enable Iraqi forces, as General McCaffrey says. General, I've been there seven times, and, talking to our men and women on the ground, they say they wouldn't do what we ask the Iraqis to do. They wouldn't get in a Toyota pickup truck and—you know, and arrive at such-and-such a place or go to such-and-such a deal.

General Odom, your strategic vision here is, I think, not only fascinating, but I think I agree with it. The irony of all ironies is, the underlying rationale, not just for Iraq, but for the region, has been a mistake. The way we were going to have our interests solidified and sustained and increased was to deal with the word you didn't use, "regime change." The way to deal with the Iranian situation, we no longer have a foot in the Persian camp, so get rid of the foot—get rid of the present Persian camp.

General ODOM. I would even go so far as to say—I'd pay the price of saying I'm not going to oppose, all that strongly, the Iranian nuclear weapons program if Iran becomes our ally.

The CHAIRMAN. Yeah. And——

General ODOM. I'd pay that price, I would buy that deal, it's so important.

The CHAIRMAN. So that—so, let me ask some specific questions that we get asked a lot—I get asked a lot.

General Keane, I've read what you've written—in the past, as well. This is not—I'm not going to be Tim Russert and flip up the chart and say, "This is what you said last time." But the essence of what you said here today, if I read your testimony correctly, is that you do think that pacification of the population, which has not been a mission—by the way, I agreed. The irony is, 2 years ago in this committee, and 2 years ago on the ground with General Chiarelli and General Casey and General Abizaid—and, before that, with their predecessors, and O'Donovan, a marine—my argument was: Why aren't we protecting the populations? Because I'd get in a Humvee, and we'd fly through a neighborhood at 35 miles an hour, and the Iraqis looked at us as a distraction or as a problem, not as if anyone who's flying through the neighborhood is going to have a cop on the corner to protect them. It wasn't going to enable their kid to go, as I used to say, from their home to the equivalent of the corner store to bring back the milk. But General, I think that we have passed that point.

And so, my question for you, General Keane, is that we're told, surging 21,000 troops, 17,000 of which would go into Baghdad into those 23 neighborhoods—although they're saying they're limited to the 23 neighborhoods; I know politically, they're saying that—and they're saying that it'll be Iraqi-led. The Secretary of State was very precise about, "There's not going to be any American knocking on the door; it's going to be an Iraqi, and we're going to be in a background situation. And this is a short duration."

Can a surge plan work with those parameters—Iraqis in the lead—if that's true—Iraqis in the lead, a short duration? As one of you said, 5 months to ramp it up to that peak of an additional 17,000, and then start to draw it down in November. Is that workable, or should we tell the American people that, from your perspective, the only way it can work is if we make a significant commitment here for a significant amount of time, meaning at least the next year or so?

General KEANE. No. No; that's not workable. The—when you analyze this, it—it'll take you 3 to 4 months to clear the neighborhoods, to get them—to bring the level of violence down. And then you bring in a protect force that will stay in those neighborhoods, both Iraqi and United States. And then, that'll take months, as

well, to be able to change the attitude of those people in there to—where their quality-of-life experience starts to change rather dramatically and they're getting back to some sense of normalcy. So, you're—now you're into the fall and winter of the year, in Baghdad alone——

The CHAIRMAN. Yeah.

General KEANE [continuing]. To be able to do this. Now, will there be some progress where people will see it, and—some near-term progress? I would think yes.

The CHAIRMAN. But that only——

General KEANE. But——

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Works if——

General KEANE. But——

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. If they stay, if you all stay.

General KEANE. Only if you stay. And then——

The CHAIRMAN. You've got to stay around.

General KEANE [continuing]. The economic packages have to come in. And Baghdad is a beginning, not an end.

The CHAIRMAN. Yeah. Well——

General KEANE. So, you have to go to Al Anbar and secure that population. And I think you're doing that in 2008.

The CHAIRMAN. Yeah. Well, I think my colleagues are tired of hearing me say this, but no foreign policy can be sustained without the informed consent of the American people. You just can't sustain it. And so, if we're going to do this thing, this surge, we should just tell the American people what is the only possibility of it working. In my humble opinion, in listening to you and some of your colleagues in and out of uniform, you've got to do more of it if you're going to do it. If it has any shot, you've got do more of it, and you've got to do it for a longer period of time. You've got to sustain it, and you've got to expand it beyond Baghdad. I——

General ODOM. I don't agree.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Happen to be in your——

General ODOM. I don't——

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Camp, General Odom. I think the only way you get any movement is, you've got to be moving the other direction to change the dynamic here. But——

General ODOM. Well, I'm a dissenter on increasing anything now.

The CHAIRMAN. No, no; I understand that. All I'm——

General ODOM. OK. I just——

The CHAIRMAN. No, no; what I'm——

General ODOM [continuing]. You said I had agreed to that.

The CHAIRMAN. I understand that——

General ODOM. All right.

The CHAIRMAN. Those whom I've spoken to who say increase, say: If you're going to increase, you better have a plan to increase that has multiple pieces to it. One, that it is sustainable for an extended period of time, because you've got to go, clear, hold, maintain, build up, and so on, and that takes time. And two, you're then going to have to move from those 23 neighborhoods to Anbar province, and God only knows what we may or may not have to do relative to Sadr City, depending on how they accept or don't accept this as confirmation that we're good guys, and we're not going to hurt them, and we're helping their cause.

The other side of the equation is whether or not you drawdown. And the perils of drawing down create this catastrophe where we have a regional war that spreads across the borders as a consequence.

General McCaffrey, why do you think that—well, let me just say it, and then I'll ask you to respond. In my trips to Iraq—I haven't been there since the Fourth of July—speaking off the record, because a lot of you guys in uniform at the time are in a difficult spot with a guy like me and others coming over there. You have a mission stated by the Pentagon. You may or may not agree with it, so you're in a tough spot. When I ask, General, several folks with more than one star on their shoulder, why we weren't equipping the Iraqis more, they gave me the answer that we may just be equipping death squads and equipping competing factions of the civil war, and we may come to regret it. Do you think that's the reason we haven't equipped? Or do think there's another reason, or other reasons?

General McCAFFREY. Well, I think, first of all, it's a silly response, because it implies, "I believe we're going to lose, and, therefore, I won't start a program that's a prerequisite to success, because I don't think it's going to work," which, again, would argue for beginning withdrawal and, "Let's give up on this thing."

I'm not sure that equipping the Iraqi Army is going to work, providing 3,000 to 5,000 light-armored vehicles and 150 U.S. helicopters and decent small arms, but I do know that we're not going to pull the 1st Cavalry Division out of Baghdad until there's an Iraqi Army that can go—they took 12,000 killed last year, for God's sakes. We're asking them to take on a mission for which they are inadequately resourced.

I think the—you know, the second argument that you've—that I've heard is, "Come on, these are simple people, they don't understand how to do U.S. small arms," which is ridiculous. These people had the fourth largest air force on the face of the Earth. They're flying MIG–29 fighter aircraft. They're pretty clever people. Of course they can operate this equipment.

I think there was another argument that said, "You'd be—you don't understand the nature of the struggle. It's really—they're not here to threaten the Syrians and the Iranians, they're here to conduct counterinsurgency." But, again, you know, the tools that we're using—we're pretty good at this, actually. You know, counterinsurgency operations in urban areas up in Tal Afar, where the—this very bright colonel, we did a classic job, but we did it trying to minimize U.S. casualties.

And then, the final argument, that I actually think is the major argument—and I don't pretend to be an economist, but if we've got giant United States internal domestic budget problems with decreasing taxes and increasing expenses, and you're shooting up $8 billion a month in Iraq and a billion or more in Afghanistan, when I—the first time I came back, 3 years ago, and argued for equipping the Iraqis, a Wall Street Journal reporter—in fact, I came down to see you, sir, if you——

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

General McCAFFREY [continuing]. Remember.

The CHAIRMAN. Oh, I remember.

General MCCAFFREY. He added up all the numbers——

The CHAIRMAN. Got me in trouble. I argued for equipping them, too.

General MCCAFFREY. Well, they added up all——

The CHAIRMAN. I happen to think we should.

General MCCAFFREY [continuing]. The numbers, and they said, "That's silly. It's something like $5 billion to do what he's suggesting." But the illogic of shooting $8 billion a month at them and not being capable of equipping people so you could get out just escapes me.

So, I think the generals who are over there are in a box, and if you ask them the question, "Have you got enough equipment?" they'll say yes. The real question is, to the distinguished OMB Director Rob Portman, "Why haven't we paid for this program, and why hasn't the Congress authorized it?"

The CHAIRMAN. Well, my time is up. Matter of fact, it's the first time I've gone over here. I apologize. I agree with you about Petraeus and Crocker. I spent 5 days with Crocker in that—I think 3 or 5 days after which he opened up the Afghanistan Embassy that had been closed in Kabul. He is really a serious, serious guy, and I don't know anybody better than Petraeus. That's the only thing that gives me pause about this, that he supports it. But I still don't get it.

I yield to Senator Lugar.

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

As I've listened to you, I'm not certain that any of the four of you—and you can correct me if I'm wrong—believes that the so-called "benchmarks" that are being suggested by our new policy can be met; certainly not within a period of a year, or maybe 2 years. By the "benchmarks," I mean coming to resolution on the oil law, including revenue distribution and the manner in which new fields will be developed; the autonomy and federalism issues—that is, which provinces are going to join together to form regional governments, and, therefore, what will the role of the central government be, vis-a-vis these autonomous regions. And perhaps a third point, and that is, can there be recognition, of the roles and responsibilities of national army, that would be maintained by the central governmenttoward these autonomous regions? And, of course the others: De-Baathification and amnesty agreements, constitutional amending process and a subsequent referendum, the capabilities of the Iraqi security forces, and what have you.

Now, as we have heard rhetoric with regard to our plan, the thought is that Maliki and/or the government that he heads, must meet certain benchmarks, and it must do so fairly promptly, the implication being that, if the benchmarks are not met, that we will withdraw.

Now, maybe so, maybe not. The question, really, I have of you is: Politically, is it conceivable that President Maliki and his government could meet any of these benchmarks within a year or two? And, second, is it conceivable, picking up General Keane's point, that there is a citizenry that, in the event that we get rid of the malefactors for a period of time, and hold the territory, that citizens will, in fact, discourage the insurgents, discourage people from arming themselves? From what I'm listening to from the others, I

would gather that you feel there are inclined to be many people who are going to continue to arm themselves, because they see this as a terminal problem, that either somebody prevails or does not, and that there is not a good government ethic, for the moment, in trying to pull together, to somehow back a central government or Maliki or somebody else. If that is the case, then, perpetually people will be arming themselves and will be shooting at each other. Now, in—whether it's Baghdad or wherever else they try to resolve their situations.

The third question I want to ask, and then I'll retire for your responses, is: In the event that we get into a withdrawal strategy, should the withdrawal be complete or should we, in fact, retain some forces in Iraq, as opposed to the general region, on the basis that we would still like to try to help the training or equipping of an Iraqi Army and some forces for the future, and/or that we offer a sense of stability to the surrounding countries that they would not need to intervene immediately, whoever they may be and for whatever purposes, because we are still there? Furthermore, our presence, even diminished in terms of numbers, allows an opportunity, if not to engage the neighborhood in diplomacy, at least to have a better basis on which to conduct diplomacy, vis-a-vis Iraq or the Middle East. Or should the withdrawal be complete—staged, orderly, but out of there altogether? In essence, troops and/or ships of the fleet or air units or what have you in the region, but not in Iraq?

Do any of you want to try on any of those for size? Yes, General McCaffrey.

General MCCAFFREY. Senator Lugar, the last point, withdrawal, was one of the things that really got me energized out of that Baker-Hamilton report. It scared me half to death. The notion that—we've got a domestic political problem. It's hard to—going to be difficult to ask either political party to explain, in 2008, what they did about this mess. So, we will pull out our combat forces, except for some unspecified over-the-horizon, modest, rescue cavalry presence, we'll put 30,000, 40,000, 50,000 Americans scattered about Iraq, we'll embed them in squad-sized units at Iraqi company level, not speaking Arabic, not having a support structure, and, therefore, our casualties, our political vulnerability will disappear, and we'll be out of there. That, it seems to me, is a recipe for disaster on the order of what happened in Mogadishu, except, instead of 150 casualties, it'll be 5,000 to 15,000. So, I have urged the President, personally, and others, that, as you drawdown—I arbitrarily picked a floor—you've got 15 brigades there now, you think you're going up to 20—that our lowest floor should be 7 brigades in Iraq—a couple of Army divisions and a Marine regiment. If you decide to go below that level—you can pull them out of the urban areas and get them in concentrations—get out of Iraq—I think it will—we are inviting a major disaster, you know, and I feel very strongly about it.

So, again, the withdrawal, in the short run, I think, precipitous withdrawal, would probably be a terrible blow to our interests in the region.

Senator LUGAR. Well, just following up that, if the benchmarks are not met—if you can't meet these markers, then, is the President's logic that we withdraw, as you understand his plan?

General MCCAFFREY. I don't think there's—we have—the current administration, I don't think, has any intention of withdrawing from Iraq. They're going to——

Senator LUGAR. Benchmarks or not.

General MCCAFFREY. They're going to try and muscle this thing out in the next 24 months with an urban counterinsurgency plan that I personally believe, with all due respect, is a fool's errand. So, I'm looking for the economic component, the peace negotiation component, and the army—the Iraqi, component, as a way to cover our withdrawal from Iraq.

Senator HAGEL. Senator Lugar, may I intervene to ask you a question, and our panel? Because I don't think you answered the question, General. We're threatening consequences? What are the consequences?

General MCCAFFREY. There are none.

Senator HAGEL. No, what——

General MCCAFFREY. Nor are there any——

Senator HAGEL [continuing]. What are the consequences, in your opinion? I know he has not, I suspect, asked you that, but what Senator Lugar's asking, then, he's—this rhetoric, "You either do this, or else." We heard Secretary Rice say this. So, in your opinion, what are those consequences? Do we pull out?

General MCCAFFREY. Well, if you don't have an economic incentive, you can't withdraw it. If you're not equipping their military forces, you can't stop equipping them. If there's no peace dialog to be enforced or encouraged with our good offices, you're left with 15 Army and Marine combat teams fighting among 27 million angry Arabs. So, I personally think, in the short run, the current strategy is nonsensical.

Senator LUGAR. General Hoar.

General HOAR. Yes, sir. I'd like to, first of all, say that I agree with General McCaffrey. But there is a larger issue, and that's the regional issue. The countries in that region that have supported us are scared to death of the possibility of a failed state that is aligned politically with Iran. And while Bill Odom, I think, makes some very good points, there may be an interim step in there, where you have an Iraqi Government that is responsive to the Iranian Government. And so, we must stay in the region. The possibilities of destabilizing Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, are quite large——

Senator LUGAR. By "region," you don't necessarily mean Iraq, right?

General HOAR. That's right. This is quite different from Iraq.

Senator LUGAR. We might still get out of Iraq, but stay in the region.

General HOAR. My crystal ball would say that in 2008, the Presidential candidates are all going to favor getting out.

Senator LUGAR. General Odom.

General ODOM. Yeah. The benchmark business, I think, you've pretty well unraveled. It's a charge or a demand that you can't implement. And it reminds me of Vietnam. When you start these metrics, what it tells you is, you don't have the indigenous political

apparatus to run the country, and you're trying to run it by ventriloquy. And I——

[Laughter.]

General ODOM [continuing]. In a book I wrote, "On Internal Wars," that was what I called most U.S. cases of supporting client states against insurgencies. You know, we can't own them like the British owned Malaysia, because we don't have colonies, so we pay them to say and do what we think that they should do. And, of course, we eventually lose, or we've pasted over, in some way, so that it looks like a success. I've heard some people say that El Salvador is an example of a success. I've looked around for a case that you could say is a precedent for having any optimism about Iraq. Well, if you look more closely at El Salvador, you discover that the real reason the insurgency dried up there was that President Bush, the first Bush, got a deal with Gorbachev to cut off the outside support. And we allowed was elections in which the old death-squad parties changed their label and won the elections; the insurgents weren't running their own tax structure as the Vietcong did in Vietnam, so they dried up, and the death-squad people are back in power today.

No; you know, if you want to side with the Sunnis and their organizational capability and—in this war—you might have some success in Iraq. But that makes you say, "Well, where's Saddam when we need him?" Saddam was stabilizing. You know, getting rid of Saddam ensured that domestic order would come unglued.

Now, will the population stop fighting if we give them security? And if we give them an economic package? Look, politics is about who gets what, when, and how. Military action, or war is merely the most extreme form of politics, when the military will determine who gets what, when, how in Iraq. And what is there to be got? Huge oil revenues. And we can't offer an economic package that's going to match that. So, the idea that we're going to have some economic package that's going to get us out of this strikes me as just not looking at what's at stake. The order of battle is just not properly developed here, what you're against. And the leaders who get the oil will have to run the country with an iron-hand regime. They can't have a democracy or a pro-U.S. Government. That's another thing we ought to understand now. Nobody can rule Iraq, and keep it from fragmenting, who's pro-American. So, you know that a priori. It's like as if we were in the middle of our civil war and somebody parachuted in from Britain and said, "Well, we're going to resolve this. You people must negotiate," et cetera. We would think they were crazy.

And, finally—I want to make this point on withdrawal, complete or partial withdrawal. I agree with General McCaffrey: If you start getting out, then get out all the way. You can stay in the region. You can stay in Kuwait. We can stay on carriers or—we can keep a force that can be airlifted in. Force projection back into the region was a central element of the CENTCOM from its very beginning, and has been, on up until today. So, the notion that you'll get out of Iraq does not mean you're leaving the region. We should never leave any mistake about that.

Senator LUGAR. General Keane.

General KEANE. Yes. In reference to the benchmarks, I think it's within Maliki's capability to certainly offer reconciliation and amnesty to adjust the de-Baathification program, to some of the mistakes that have been made with it, and certainly to do something about the oil law. The problem with all of that is, is that the Sunnis aren't coming to that table. That's the reality of it, and we have to face that reality. The Sunnis absolutely believe that they are winning. And these measures, though prudent from our perspective, are not going to be persuasive to them, when they believe that they can fracture this government and they can begin to have their way. It's unclear, you know, how you go from fractured government to civil war to failed state and return to Sunni power. I mean, they don't describe that. But, clearly, they want to leverage that. So, I don't think that benchmarks are going to have any impact on the Sunnis, is my point.

Security on the streets. Establishing security on the street is an achievable issue. I mean, the fact that we just throw up our hands and say, "People are always going to kill each other, and a population in a given city, in that place, in that world will always be at risk." I don't accept that. We can provide security. We provide it for our own people. We can provide security in Baghdad, despite some of the horrors of the conflicts that are taken. It is a definable problem that can be achieved. It has to do with resources, obviously, to be able to do it.

The withdrawal strategy, certainly the—what would happen to us during a withdrawal is—one is, we're going to be—we will be shot at going out as that country begins to fracture around us. That—that's the issue. And Brookings has done a thoughtful analysis, and it may be someone you should consider bringing over here, if you haven't done it already—Ken Pollack did an historical analysis of, When you do have a civil war, what is the spillover effect, and what are some of the conditions that drive a spillover effect that lead to a regional war? And is Iraq one of those that could lead to a regional war? He admits, when they started this process, they thought maybe not, but, when they finished the historical analysis, he and his colleagues agreed that Iraq, in all likelihood, would spill over into a regional civil war because of the conditions in the countries around them and their interests in—and the stakes that are there.

And then we have a much larger problem. And this is where I part company with General Odom. If we have a regional civil war raging there, we brought that on by our precipitous withdrawal, and what are our challenges then, and what are our options, in terms of dealing with that? Do we have a stake and an interest in it? We are sitting on top of the second largest oil reserve in the region, and it puts the other oil reserves in the region also at risk. These are realities that we have to deal with, in terms of our own economic interest.

So, those are huge problems, I think. Again, the benchmarks—in the end, it's not going to work. Strategy is achievable on the streets. And withdrawal, in my mind, does lead to a fractured state, civil war, with the likelihood that we will have a regional conflict then.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

General ODOM. May I make a brief comment? We already have a regional civil war. We've got one right now.

The CHAIRMAN. As I understand your position, General, you're saying that if, in fact, we start to withdraw, that will wake up the surrounding nations to their interest and avoid that war.

General ODOM. Yes. I said, we don't have enough military power in the region to prevent the war, and, to get enough power, we have to start getting out in order to gain allies.

The CHAIRMAN. I realize we've done it a little bit differently here, folks. I've let people go over, and even the questions of mine. I will do that for each of you, as well. I mean, we try to end your questions by 8 minutes, but I find this, and I hope you all find it equally as enlightening, hearing them disagree.

General Keane, there's a famous expression attributed to G.K. Chesterton. He said, "It's not that Christianity has been tried and found wanting. It's been found difficult and left untried." That, to me, is the dilemma I have about Iraq, whether we've actually tried.

But, Senator Boxer—Chairman Boxer.

Senator BOXER. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman, for what you're doing—and Senator Lugar—in allowing us to take our time and listen to these wise people.

Each of us may have different opinions as to who is responsible for this horrific situation in Iraq, but I know all of us agree that our military troops have done every single thing they've been asked to do. Their work made three elections possible—actually, two elections and one referendum possible—in an amazing show of strength, I think. And now, there's an Iraqi Government that's been freely elected. And so, the question before us today is how much more our brave men and women in uniform should be asked to sacrifice in order to support the Iraqi Government, when 70 percent of the Iraqi people want us to leave within a year and 60 percent—61 percent of the Iraqis say it's OK to shoot an American soldier.

And, General Odom, I really thank you for mentioning that statistic, because it amazes me how many people just ignore it. They say, "Oh, the Iraqi Government wants us here and there." What about the Iraqi people? Over 60 percent of them say it's OK to shoot an American soldier. And now, our President wants to send more of our own into that circumstance. I believe, personally, our military personnel have sacrificed enough. I'm staunchly opposed to the President's plan for the surge, because, to me, it's time, as the Iraqi Study Group said, for a major conference—and this is also something my chairman has called for, for a very long time—to find a political solution to a civil war.

Now, instead, this new policy that we thought was coming turns out to be, really, a military surge. That does not a new policy make. So, it seems to me we're asking our troops—or the President is, and I'm hoping that a majority of Senators will not agree with it—the President is asking them to do the impossible, to rectify the gross failures of political leaders, in both the United States and in Iraq, and to turn Iraq around using military means, when almost everyone I know agrees we need a political solution. This is far more than unfair, it's an enormous risk.

And we should listen to General Schoomaker, the Army's Chief of Staff, who recently told Congress that the burden on the Army is simply too great, and that, at the current pace of deployments, "We will break the active component." I mean, that's stunning. And the strain on our servicemembers is intensifying.

During a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, I asked a pretty simple question, that got a lot of notoriety, which is, "Who pays the price?" And so, I'm going to continue asking that at today's hearing, and offer up some facts.

Clearly, servicemembers suffer horrific injuries, lose their buddies in combat. It's the military families who have to learn to adapt to a severely wounded servicemember or the fact that their loved one is never coming home. It's the soldiers who are being sent on multiple tours—two, three, four—and are spending years away from their families. Marines are making similar sacrifices. And it's the servicemembers who are facing problems as a result of their experiences, their combat experiences.

One area I've been focusing on, Mr. Chairman, has been mental illness, including post-traumatic stress. Both are skyrocketing. And I won't go into all the stats, except to say the rate of suicide for the Army nearly doubled between 2004 and 2005. I became so concerned about mental health problems among our men and women in uniform, that, with the support of Senators Warner and Levin, I was able to establish the Defense Task Force on Mental Health. The task force, which is headed by Army Surgeon General Kevin Kiley—if you don't know him—he is quite a wonderful man—is currently in the process of conducting hearings around the Nation.

I mention the task force because I want to briefly tell you about one mother, who testified before the task force, whose son committed suicide after returning from his second tour in Iraq. His mother spoke of conversations she had with her son. And I'm not going to go into the details of this, it's too graphic, but suffice it to say his reaction to seeing dead and blackened bodies in Iraq, and seeing his own commander killed in front of him—I understand that these are the horrors of war. I am not naive about that. Indeed, I know these are the certainties of war. And that is why making mistakes in a war have an immeasurable cost. You cannot put a number to it. It is not like making a mistake in politics, it is not like making a mistake in business, it not like making a mistake on the football field.

And so, this brings me to my first question, and I'd like to ask it to General Odom. I am concerned about the will of many individuals in the current Iraqi Government to truly pursue a policy of national reconciliation. And in this month's Atlantic Monthly, in an article called "Streetwise," the author, a former Assistant Secretary of Defense, details the pervasive security problems that are destroying Iraq and the failures of the Iraqi Government to effectively confront them. In particular, the author details the refusal of Prime Minister al-Maliki to take on the Shiite militias who, we know, are orchestrating horrific sectarian violence against the Sunni population. One lieutenant colonel is even quoted as saying he knows of, "police chiefs who have been relieved of duty by the Maliki government for cracking down on militia members." How

confident are you, General, that Nouri al-Maliki and other Shiites, particularly the hard-liners in the Iraqi Government, are truly committed to national reconciliation with their counterparts?

General ODOM. I don't think they're committed to it at all. And I think, as General Keane said here, the Sunnis certainly are not committed to it. And I don't think the Shiites have ever been committed to it. I was very impressed with Ahmad Hashim's book on the insurgency—counterinsurgency in Iraq, a man who's spent quite a bit of time there and is a Reserve Army colonel, who said that his many discussions throughout Iraq was that the Shiites revealed that they feel it's their turn to own the country and to own the oil. They're not about to give that up.

Senator BOXER. Well, this is very——

General ODOM. I think, also—I'd make one other point about——

Senator BOXER. Please.

General ODOM [continuing]. Mr. Maliki and the government. They live in the Green Zone. If you want to see who owns and runs Iraq, look at the people who do not look to the United States for security and live outside the Green Zone. Otherwise, you don't have any troops, you have a government that has no administrative capacity to implement. So, if you tell them to implement these things, you're asking them to do the impossible. That's why most all of these economic and other programs that we propose have not the least prospect of success.

Senator BOXER. Well, thank you, sir. I have just a little bit of time left, so I will ask one more question, but I wanted to say, this is the point that my chairman has been making over and over and over again. He has said—asked very specifically: Can you ever imagine a situation where a police force that's dominated by the Shia are going to go into a Sunni neighborhood and actually be able to patrol? And not one person, no matter what their views on this, has ever said, "I can imagine it." So, I worry—I fear—we know these things. This is—these are things we know. And yet, we're going to take our young people, already stressed to the point—to a terrible point—and put them in such a circumstance, where they're partnering with a partner who we're really very nervous about.

So, my last question, because of time, I want to ask General Hoar this question. What does it mean when only 35 percent of servicemembers approve of the way that the President is handling the Iraq war?

General HOAR. I've noticed, here in Washington, a change, Senator, among senior military people. I think there is a growing disillusionment among the senior people. I attribute it to the mismanagement of this war, and, more specifically, to the fact that the civilian leadership is tone deaf. The execution of Saddam Hussein on this—the first day of the Sunni feast day, of Eid—these kinds of things should never happen; and yet, you can't expect us to be successful unless we have an understanding of the culture. And I think that our colleagues on active duty have come to the conclusion that we're not up to the task.

There was an editorial last week in the—one of the English-language Egyptian newspapers, that blamed the United States for the execution of Saddam Hussein. And among the Shia population

throughout the Middle East, he has become a hero and a martyr. And that's because, again, of our inability to see the consequences of particular actions in the region.

Senator BOXER. Did you mean among the Sunni?

General HOAR. Yeah.

Senator BOXER. Because you said "Shia."

General HOAR. I'm sorry, I——

Senator BOXER. Among the Sunni, he's become——

General HOAR [continuing]. I mean the Sunni.

Senator BOXER. Well, I just want to thank you for very much. I—after listening to this, I'm just—I'm hopeful that, with a bipartisan surge here in the Senate, maybe we can turn this around.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator, thank you very much.

I want the witnesses to know—and I don't know how much time they have, but—the freshman members—we have a remarkable group of new people on this committee—are required to attend an 11:30 meeting, at least on the Democratic side. They ought to be able to be back within, I'm told, 20 minutes to half an hour. And I think it'll take that much time anyway before we get there, but if you're able to stay til they get back, which will be around 11 o'clock—excuse me, around 12, they have some very good questions. If you're able to do that, I'd appreciate it.

And I just want to explain, as they get up, it's not lack of interest. It's another obligation. Is that correct, General?

Senator WEBB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Yeah.

So, Senator Hagel.

Senator HAGEL. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Gentlemen, as I was sitting listening attentively to each of you—being an old Army sergeant, I always listen attentively to generals and respect generals—I was thinking, Mr. Chairman, this panel before us represents, I suspect, around 150 years of distinguished service to this country. That's pretty remarkable. And you all deserve, certainly, our thanks, but also remarkable is the fact that you are each still engaged on behalf of this country and are willing to come before the people of our Nation, through the appropriate congressional committees, and state your concerns, your thoughts, your solutions. And for that, this country owes you a great deal. So, thank you.

Mr. Chairman, as we all know on this panel, these are not only military leaders, these are some of the best geopolitical thinkers in our country. They have had to be not only very acute geopolitical thinkers, but practitioners of all of these dynamics in the commands that they have held and the successful careers that they have accomplished.

We could spend hours—and I suspect, if that it was up to the chairman, he would—keeping you all here; but we don't have hours, and I have a limited amount of time, and I do have a couple of questions. But I want to go to a point that General McCaffrey made, and I think all three would agree. I believe you said, General, you are concerned that we are putting our generals in a box, in Iraq. I, too, am concerned about that. And, as we sit here and lavish great deserved praise on Crocker and Petraeus and Fallon and others who will be the new team for us, we are putting them

in a box, because if the policy is flawed, it won't make any difference how brilliant and wonderful and dedicated and smart they are. They are doomed for failure if the policy is flawed. I think our policy is flawed.

I appreciate the four of you articulating some very specific areas where that flaw exists. And I wish our country could hear this, because this is not about politics, this is not about theory, this is not about bean-counting, this is about something very real for our short-term and long-term interests in the country. And I—and, to that point, here's a question for each of you.

You noted, I suspect, this morning, in the front page of all the papers, that, in an interview yesterday, the Prime Minister of Iraq was quite critical of the President of the United States, was quite critical of the Secretary of State of the United States. One specific thing he mentioned about Secretary Rice—I believe she made that comment before this committee last week—that the Maliki government was living on borrowed time. Well, if I was the Prime Minister of Iraq—specifically, Prime Minister Maliki—I might have some issue with that, as well. I'm not certain that was a particularly astute thing to say, but Secretary Rice can answer for herself.

Surprisingly enough, we say a sovereign government, sovereign country, so the Prime Minister of this sovereign country, a sovereign Prime Minister, takes some issue with its strongest ally, Secretary of State, saying, "This guy's living on borrowed time."

President Talibani said, a couple of weeks ago—and this goes right back to the number of points that you each have made—in particular, you, General McCaffrey, being quite critical of this administration—in training Iraqi troops, not providing Iraqi troops with equipment, not doing the things that President Talibani believes, at least—and I suspect he speaks for a number of Iraqis—that we should have been doing.

Well, does that not present to all of us some sense of disconnect or contradiction or some dynamic here in—on one hand, we are about to make a commitment of at least 22,000 more troops in the most dangerous parts of Baghdad, where there will be more casualties, and billions of dollars of more money going in, but yet, we have a government that is sovereign saying these things about our leaders. Now, that may not strike you as strange. It strikes me as strange.

So, how can, then, you put these great people that we are putting over there, all our military, asking them to do the things that they are doing, and have done brilliantly, as has been noted here today, with that kind of disconnect with the two governments? How does that possibly work? How can that work? We talk about—poll numbers and confidence of the American people and the Iraqi people has been also noted here this morning. Well, no wonder. Does that not confuse both publics? Does that not confuse the people of the Middle East, when we have these major criticisms of each other publicly? You all have noted, in some detail, some of the other specifics.

So, I would like each of you, in the time I have, to reflect on that. I do not know how this country can execute any kind of a policy when you have two different governments, supposedly sovereign—we say they're a sovereign government, but we're in the shadows

over here, threatening them; we're in the shadows over here, saying, "Well, we will pull out security"—question that Senator Lugar asked, which was a very important question, What are the consequences? Words have consequences. Words have meanings. We should have figured that out 4 years ago, before we got ourselves in the hole, as you all have suggested. We should have thought about that. We did, on this committee. A lot of us asked tough questions, and many of you came before this committee and gave us some pretty good answers. We didn't listen. We are where we are. We're not going to go back and unwind the bad decisions.

We can't, obviously, leave the Middle East, just as all of you say. That's a false choice. That makes no sense, and that's silly, and those who try to make a political dynamic out of this do a great disservice to this country, in both political parties. This isn't a political issue, this is a—the most significant, divisive issue facing this country since Vietnam. Since Vietnam. And we are in a box, just as General McCaffrey said. And we are putting our soldiers and our Marines in even more of a box and asking them to do things that they can't possibly do.

Now, if you would each respond to that observation about the two governments being in conflict and thinking that somehow we're going to be able to move forward and hold hands with the constant bludgeoning and public humiliation of our so-called sovereign allies—how that—will that play out, then, with the new policy that the President announced on Wednesday? Can it work with that kind of a relationship?

I'll just start right at the front end and—General McCaffrey—and go down the line. Thank you.

And thank you, again, each of you, for your service and coming before us today.

General MCCAFFREY. I've listened, Senator Hagel, very closely to General John Abizaid throughout this war. I've admired him for 30 years. You know, I love to introduce the guy. He's bilingual in Arabic, and, you know, a Stanford fellow and an Olmsted Scholar, and on and on. He—plus, you've got the—he's a real fighter, Ranger company commander, airborne battalion commander, in combat. And for—you know, from the start, I think he understood this conflict, tried to be candid in his dealings with the civilian leadership, and then loyally followed his instructions.

Where we are now, looking at a snapshot of the notion of largely withdrawing our combat forces and embedding trainers, minus the equipment, minus the economic piece, minus the peace negotiations, it's almost an out-of-body experience to me to listen to that argument as to why it would work, why you would be putting 10 U.S. Army soldiers, at company level, 40–50 in a battalion, they don't speak Arabic, there's dual chains of command—what—why would you think that's going to work? Why would they operate as police storefront stations in the nine districts of Baghdad? Where is their support base? And, you know, I've listened—out-of-body experience—getting denounced by former Attorney General Meese and Vernon Jordan on CNN, that I obviously didn't understand the nature of combat advisors and why this really was——

The CHAIRMAN. Well, that's obviously clear.

General MCCAFFREY [continuing]. Going to work.

The CHAIRMAN. That's clear. You haven't had much experience.

General MCCAFFREY. Well, you know, I—it struck me——

The CHAIRMAN. By the way, for the record——

General MCCAFFREY [continuing]. As novel——

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. That is an attempt at—a very poor attempt at humor. [Laughter.]

General MCCAFFREY. But it struck me as novel that, you know, I—one of my earlier combat tours, a 1st—2d Vietnamese airborne battalion, they spent 10 months getting us ready to go, to include language training. We clearly weren't there to inspire and take command of those battalions, we were a liaison element to U.S. logistics, intelligence, combat power, et cetera. I think that's the only useful role we will play with well-equipped and reliable Iraqi Army forces. So, the notion that we will take a—it'll be like the Sepoy rebellion of India, we're down there with our guys, sort of, subverting their own chain of command, and they're going to do the right thing. It strikes me as laughable that we would think that would work.

What I think might work—and, again, like you, I'm searching for—given where we are, what's the best outcome? Get them more—more legs to this stool—economic and political and equipment—and start getting out at some measured pace, which, hopefully, we would communicate to the Iraqis and not to our enemies. I don't—since we can't keep a secret, I—I don't see how that would work, but I do think we're coming out.

General Hoar said, next President's pulling the plug on this operation. I don't think there's much doubt about that. So, how can we get it where it looks like it's sort of working in 24 months? And that's Petraeus's challenge.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

General Hoar.

General HOAR. Sir, I've had some experience with advising, as well, in Vietnam, and I agree with Barry's assessment. But, to the specific question that you raised, I think there's two elements of this. One is that Maliki is, in fact, the Prime Minister, and he is feeling his own position as being the senior political person in the country, and certainly would take umbrage when he is criticized by the President and the Secretary of State, which, in my judgment, is unfortunate.

I think the next issue down, though, is to watch Maliki and see what he has to say about what we've asked him to do. I think the first indicator is, he's apparently appointed a lieutenant general from the south, a Shia, a guy that has not got a good reputation with working with U.S. military. I think that's an indication of where this thing is going. And I think day by day we will see the decisions that he makes in order to meet the requirements the President of the United States has put on him. And I don't think we're off to a good start.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

General Odom.

General ODOM. Well, I think you've framed the issue very clearly. And the only thing I could add was, this was eminently foreseeable. Once you crossed the border to invade this country, this kind of outcome was inexorably going to be the case. And we're

just now getting around to it. The issue is not whether that's the case, the issue is whether you're going to face up to it or continue to buy a stock that is falling. I think this is a sunk-cost proposition, to put it in economic terms. If you want to lose more money, keep buying the stock. This place is headed to bankruptcy.

Senator HAGEL. General Keane.

General KEANE. Thank you.

Well, I think that's a great question. And it really is, you know, Who is Maliki and who is the Maliki government? And I don't believe our Government—I don't pretend to speak for them, but I—I don't believe our Government truly knows that answer. I mean, is Maliki genuinely interested in a unified government with the Sunnis participating in it, at some level of consequence for the Sunnis, or is he truly interested in a Shia-dominated government and living on the emotion and psychological energy from 35 years of repression, and appealing to that power base? I don't think we really know that answer, to be honest.

This government's been in power less than a year. His criticism, I think, is flapping his wings. He's got a—probably, a right to make criticism like that. I'm more interested in what he does, what are going to be his political steps here forward. We have an opportunity to strengthen his hand here. And remember this military operation; its only intended purpose is to seek a political solution. That's what this is all about. So, hopefully this will strengthen his hand so that he can move in the right direction, but I don't know, myself, you know, who he really is and what that government really is.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. May I—I'm sorry. No; go ahead.

Senator HAGEL. No; I'm done, thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Would you fellows like a 5-minute break? Why don't we break for 5 minutes, and you can take a break back here, if you'd like, and the staff can show you—if you need the phone or anything else.

[Recess.]

The CHAIRMAN. If we could come back to order.

Senator Feingold, please.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman, again, for all of these hearings and for what you're doing here.

And let me thank all of you, Generals, for testifying in front of the committee today on such an important issue. You are all outstanding citizens, and I sincerely appreciate the service you've given to our country.

Before I get to my questions, let me say that I was struck by your opening statements. While you differ about how we can best address the profound implications of the conflict in Iraq, you have all highlighted, directly or indirectly, how damaging this administration's present course in Iraq is to our national security. Each of you, directly or indirectly, highlighted how important it is for our Government to change course in Iraq, and each of you alluded to the fact that the solutions in Iraq will not come from military efforts or from maintaining such a sizable military presence there indefinitely.

I respect, of course, the opinion you've shared with us, and I'd like to spend a few minutes with you talking about how we can start preparing, strategically, to redeploy our brave troops from Iraq. So, what I want to do is, without debating about when redeployment should occur, I think this is a valuable forum to share your thoughts, as retired senior military officers, on how we should plan and execute a redeployment strategy that will protect the safety of our troops in Iraq and that will help position our forces and our Government for success in other efforts—including counterterrorism efforts—throughout the region and the world. Again, I'm not interested in debating, today, when or why we should redeploy. I'm operating under the assumption that we should at least prepare to do so and that each of you will have valuable insights as to what we should be thinking about and how we can best do that, while protecting our troops and strengthening our national security.

So, let me begin with a general question for all of you. Putting aside the political debate about whether or not the United States troops should remain in Iraq, and for how long, I think we can all assume that the United States will, at some point, begin a redeployment or a drawdown or a phased withdrawal from Iraq. Clearly, this is something we need to plan for. So, I'd like each of you to briefly discuss what you feel would be the important elements of a redeployment plan on how we can redeploy U.S. military personnel safely, while mitigating any negative impact on the Iraqis and our allies in the region.

General Hoar.

General HOAR. Yes; thank you, Senator.

I think that there are several things. First of all, as a preface to your point, I think it's essential that we go ahead and talk to Syria and Iran about the region and what can be done. I think Syria is the easier of the two. I think, while we still have a very serious problem with respect to Lebanon, we have a country that, right after 9/11, when they were helping us, was willing to open up to the peace process, and we rebuffed them. I think that we would help solve some other problems in the Middle East if we could come to some agreement, as we had, early after 9/11, with Syria.

With respect to Iran, we have allowed the Brits, the French, and the Germans to work with Iran. We are the only country that has any traction with respect to—we have their money, we have them embargoed, we have not given them political recognition. We have a lot of things that we could offer.

Beyond that, within the region, we already have a sizable presence in Kuwait, Bahrain, UAE, and Qatar. We need to stay in the area. We need to keep combat troops in the area. We have the capacity for over 10,000 troops in Kuwait, and we could keep them very close to that area if we needed to. But we need to engage the neighbors, all of them. And, of course, that includes the GCC plus the two, Egypt and Jordan, but should also include Turkey, because they have a dog in this fight, as well.

Senator FEINGOLD. So, the notion I'd take would be to safely redeploy troops to some of the places you've mentioned.

General HOAR. To stay engaged in the region.

Senator FEINGOLD. OK.

General HOAR. But we need to engage the other countries in the neighborhood.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you.

General McCaffrey.

General MCCAFFREY. Well, Senator, if—one caution. It seems to me that the idea that—with 150,000 troops in combat in Iraq who are failing to achieve our political and military purpose—that we can actually start thinning out and we can perch on lily pads in the region and maintain influence, I think, is nonsense. The Kuwaitis, the Persian Gulf coast states, the Saudis, and others, if they see is in a determined strategic withdrawal, are not going to be inclined to give us an alternative. They will now find ways to accommodate Iranian influences and others. So, I don't believe, and I've heard people suggest, that—and clearly we ought remain engaged—10,000 troops, Kuwait, maybe a brigade, a Marine battalion afloat, that kind of thing, but if we start coming out, our military power in the region will go down to a percent or so of what it is today, not that today is necessarily useful.

Second, I think that clearly the only part of the redeployment that's easy is get out of the Iraqi cities, get into brigade- and division-protected positions in the south, in Tallil Air Base and—out at Balad and out in the western province of Anbar, and protect yourself and be a force in readiness to protect the Iraqi Government in the event of a coup, intervene, threaten the Syrians and Iranians by our presence. So, getting out of the cities, not taking part in urban warfare, is step one.

And then, finally, I would be—and, again, it's a caution—I'd be very careful as either a retired military officer or a Member of Congress, to get involved in the tactics of disengagement. The political question is the important one for the Congress to answer.

Senator FEINGOLD. That's fair, General.

General MCCAFFREY. And it's——

Senator FEINGOLD. Let me just say——

General MCCAFFREY [continuing]. Not clear to me what that answer is.

Senator FEINGOLD. If I could respond to that, I think that's a fair point. In order for someone to responsibly vote for the policy, we want to know, from people like you, that it can, in fact, be done. And so, that's the spirit of it, not being——

General MCCAFFREY. I think——

Senator FEINGOLD [continuing]. Interested in trying to——

General MCCAFFREY. I think we could——

Senator FEINGOLD [continuing]. Micromanage it, or me making a decision.

General MCCAFFREY. Right.

Senator FEINGOLD. But I want to know, from these hearings—and I think it's one of the reasons it's so good the chairman is doing it——

General MCCAFFREY. I think we could come out——

Senator FEINGOLD [continuing]. That this is something——

General MCCAFFREY [continuing]. And 6 months——

Senator FEINGOLD [continuing]. That can be done.

General MCCAFFREY. I wrote a—I left a Washington Post op-ed I wrote with you, and I think, you know, literally, we could be out

of there in 6 months, close down the whole thing, set fire to our ammunition stockpiles, fight down corridors back to the sea and the U.S. Navy, and withdraw. The consequences of that might be catastrophic, but the withdrawal could clearly——

Senator FEINGOLD. I understand——

General MCCAFFREY [continuing]. Be achieved.

Senator FEINGOLD [continuing]. Your feelings on that, but I do appreciate your practical observations, as well.

General Odom.

General ODOM. There are two levels from which to approach this, and I think, at the level of practical implementation, the issue is which question to ask. You've got to go back and ask the questions that they're raising, and I think you've got to ask how much sea and airlift we have, and the inventory of other places in the region you can keep U.S. troops. Then the issue comes up as to whether our troups still will be welcome when we pull out. And I don't think that's something we can answer today but these are the questions that should be put to the Joint Chiefs and to the CINC on a contingency basis. They should, in my view, have already been put to the Pentagon. The Joint Chiefs need to think about all scenarios, from an uncontested withdrawal down to fighting our way out. And I think the kinds of concerns about whether the Saudis and others—Kuwaitis—will want us to remain open, and that talking about that with them early and what we'll do about the Iranian-Arab conflict that's really going to be serious after this, that's got to be dealt with, and you've got to talk to those people so that they understand what you're willing to do, and they've got to let you know what they're willing to do in order to begin to develop a strategy.

In my earlier remarks, I made that point. That's one of the things that must be developed. Once we start getting out, if other countries in the region are not asking the kinds of questions you are to the American Government, we should be asking them.

Senator FEINGOLD. Well, I really appreciate that comment, because, you know, as I said to some people at the Intelligence Committee hearing, you know, since we didn't have a real plan getting in, we'd darn well better have a plan to get out, and talk about it a little bit. It doesn't mean that everybody agrees, but we ought to have a plan, instead of just being in——

General ODOM. I would add one last point about this. You know, everybody sees this so-called catastrophe—there's just going to be a big bloodbath, all sorts of awful things. Well, I heard that about Vietnam, and it wasn't nearly as bad as a lot of people thought it would be. And I'm prepared, for strategic reasons that I gave earlier, if there is a terrible disaster, we're just going to have to accept that. That's a cost we're going to have to bear. My own guess is that it won't be quite that bad, because it will not be in other countries' interest—the neighbors' interest to have the region destabilized. I don't think they'll want that, and, therefore, they will not immediately launch into the fight and expand it without some other provocations.

Senator FEINGOLD. I think that's a very insightful remark, thank you, General.

General Keane.

General KEANE. Thank you, Senator.

Well, you know, I would—I disagree with the withdrawal policy and the consequences that would take place, but, from a military practitioner's point, certainly that's a military operation, we know how to conduct it. Certainly, the—I would keep nothing in the south. I would go north to Balad, where there's a very good base there. I would pull everything out of the Green Zone in Baghdad. I would pull out of Victory, except for a very small security detachment there to maintain the—keep the airport running. And if we could contract that out, we'd probably contract it out and let them do it, pull us out of there. I'd also pull out of Al Anbar, as well.

So, you would pull back from the major contentious areas. And I agree with General McCaffrey, probably, in 6 to 8 months you could execute a military operation to do that. You'd be concerned about the safety of your forces, certainly, while you're doing this, so it would be preeminent for you. But it is a military operation. We know how to do it. And military had the mission, they would develop the plans to do it and execute it properly.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Generals. I thought your answers were very helpful and responsive, and I appreciate it.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Voinovich.

Senator VOINOVICH. Thank you. I congratulate the chairman for the hearings that he's been having on this issue.

And I thank you very much for being here today.

Mr. Chairman, one of the books that largely affected my decision-making on Iraq, was "The Threatening Storm: The Case for Invading Iraq" by Ken Pollack. I don't know whether you have read it, but I would be really interested to get Mr. Pollack here before the committee to share with us what his opinion was then and what his observations are now that we've been involved in Iraq.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator, I think that's a good idea. I want to make it clear, these aren't going to be the totality of the hearings we're going to have on Iraq. These are the important opening salvo. So I think that's a great idea. I will pursue that.

Senator VOINOVICH. The other influential book that I read—is "The War for Muslim Minds" by Gilles Kepel, which I read that about 2 years ago. After reading it, I concluded that we were completely misreading this area of the world and need to learn a lot more about it. Moqtada al-Sadr and his family have been revolutionaries for a long time. They are populists, and their goal in life is to assume power over Iraq. In his mind, I believe Sadr wants to be the next Ayatollah of Iraq, and, ultimately, wants to create a theocracy there. Because of my concerns, I continue to ask questions in the committee's closed sessions about Sadr. For example: How can there be a unity government with Sadr? He is the dominant figure there. And I really don't know where Sistani is anymore. He seems to have disappeared from the scene.

But, as I analyze the situation, the Shiites were previously out of power, and only the Sunnis ruled—but now the Shiites are in, and I think they will want a Shiite-dominated government. So then the question is: What happens to the Sunnis if the Shiites take over?

The Sunnis are still there, and I think one of you mentioned that Saddam is now their hero. What we failed to realize, at least from what I read, is that this struggle between the Shiites and the Sunnis has transpired for many, many years.

The central question is: If America leaves Iraq and things start to unravel, what's going to happen? Pollack says there could be a regional confrontation that spirals out of Iraq. From what I understand, both Shiites and Sunnis want to dominate the area, from a religious point of view. Saddam Hussein was a Sunni, and the Sunnis are trying to draw even more Sunnis to the region to fight in the conflict.

So will there be a regional conflict? The most important question I want to address is: If the leaders in the region, Shiite and Sunni, understand that utter chaos could very well erupt, what incentives do they have to work together on reaching a political solution in Iraq? Are there enough incentives for them to get involved there? There are currently 700,000 refugees and probably more to come, which creates a refugee problem. There's a lot of disruption going on in these respective countries. And if the Shiites fight the Sunnis, will the Saudis be forced to intervene? Is there any way the Saudis could avoid getting involved if this happens?

How do we leverage incentives to involve regional leaders? When should an effort be made to do so? We're discussing a military surge and some argue that we should engage in regional diplomacy after the military surge. But if it were my decision, I'd work on the regional diplomacy immediately, because I think the real challenges are political. We need to focus on the associated political incentives so we can get the regional parties involved in bringing stability to the region.

General.

General HOAR. May I give a crack at that, Senator?

I would say, first of all, that the countries you mentioned are all—the governments are dominated by the Sunni, they all have substantial Shia minorities, and they're all terribly worried about this. My understanding today is that the Secretary of State is traveling in the region to encourage these governments to put pressure on the Sunni in Iraq to support the central government, which is quite different from the question that you asked, which is the bigger one, What are they going to do when this thing goes to a catastrophe? And I think this is why we need to be talking to them right now. The Saudis' answer to this question is to build a wall, which, in my judgment, will be as—about as successful as our efforts to put a barrier along the DMZ in Vietnam or the current planned one between Mexico and the United States. Barriers don't work.

The point is, we need to be engaged with them and explain to them that they are in serious trouble if Iraq craters, and they need to get involved in taking some steps now to protect their own political arrangements in their own countries.

Senator VOINOVICH. General Odom.

General ODOM. I think you've put your finger on a key issue which I tried to highlight in my opening remarks, that the war was never in our interest, that it actually was undercutting our interest in the region: Regional stability. Because by going in and knocking off Saddam, we ensured that this kind of conflict would eventually

come about. And what we've been trying to do ever since is evade the inevitable. And I tried to explain that the alignment of forces is such that no matter how much we surge in Iraq, other surges from outside, with money or people themselves, can more than counter that. So, I think you're exactly right. And the only option left open to us, if we're going to get back and try to achieve regional stability, is to get out. And it may cost us a lot, it may not cost us as much, but we can't turn our strategy around unless we do. That's the precondition. So, I agree with you, and I think it's really hard—it's the thing that has everybody stopped in this debate. If they once realize that you don't have a choice to stay in there and get what was originally defined as victory—victory would be a liberal, democratic, pro-American Iraqi—if you realize that's a mirage, then maybe you'll wise up and realize that you've got to adjust to those realities. So——

Senator VOINOVICH. That——

General ODOM [continuing]. It seems to me that is the crux of the issue we're facing. The issue just at what point do you say, "That's a mirage and we're not going to pay any more in pursuit of it"?

General KEANE. Well, you have to remember that the Sunnis really do want it to blow. I mean, that—the armed conflict that they are—that they are prosecuting is to fracture this government and create the conditions for all-out civil war in a failed state. That is what they want. So, I mean, the issue is, can we do anything——

Senator VOINOVICH. General, excuse me, how could the Sunnis conclude that they could win, militarily?

General KEANE. It—I agree with that, it makes no sense——

General ODOM. I don't. But go ahead.

General KEANE. It makes no sense, but, nonetheless, that is what they believe. Out of the anarchy of a failed state, they believe it suits their political objectives better than any course they have right now. That's a fact.

So, is there something to work with there? Right now, there's nothing to work with. That's a fact. And you've got the Sunni Arab States that are cheerleading the insurgency, not direct aiding and abetting, like Syria is the insurgency and the Iranians, in terms of the militias, but, nonetheless, cheerleading it. You have to change that. You have to deal with the Sunnis and convince them that their political objectives cannot be achieved by armed violence. And I think we can do that. We can start to change that equation, and then you have something to work with. Right now, there's nothing to work with. They're not monolithic; I'm not suggesting that they are. And there are different groups there, as we all know. And their former regime element, the Saddamists, are clearly different than some of the other more mainstream. But the fact is that they want a fractured government. So, we have to stabilize this situation, bring this level of violence down, convince them that they cannot achieve their political objectives by armed violence. Then Maliki has something to work with. And the question is: Is Maliki willing to work with it?

Senator VOINOVICH. Well, you just said—and I wrote it down—that you're not sure who Maliki is exactly: Does he want a unity government? Does he want a government that's just dominated by

the Shiites? You've indicated that we've got some real reservations about this guy.

General KEANE. We do. And, at the same hand—time, I don't think we just pull the plug and deal with the consequences. What I'm suggesting is, despite those reservations, despite the fact we don't know—and I don't think anybody truly does know—we should strengthen his hand. And——

Senator VOINOVICH. But the question——

General KEANE [continuing]. We had an opportunity to do that.

Senator VOINOVICH. The question I've got is—I was out at Bethesda Naval Hospital 2 days ago and visited a soldier who was in Baghdad. He was responsible for several men in Iraq and he described how he gets up every morning with the goal of keeping them alive. They were in one of the neighborhoods in which houses were unoccupied. So he and his soldiers would go on patrols to check them out. They would get information from people about what they ought to look into. But in doing so, he said they would take several potshots from the enemy, who would never directly engage them. He said that he doesn't know how it happens, but the improvised explosive devices constantly show up on the streets, and they have to just deal with it. Well, he has dealt with one of them, and now he's not sure if he will ever see again, and what will happen with his arm. He told me: "Look, this is my third term over here. I've got two kids out in California. I'm getting out."

General KEANE. Yeah.

Senator VOINOVICH. We also forget, sometimes, what impact these tragedies have on the generals and how they feel about the way things are going. There were times when I saw General Abizaid at the end of the meetings—there weren't tears, but he was emotionally involved in this issue. He was really concerned, and he just felt frustrated. I know he was. He would take a beating from us with these questions. So, how do the tragedies impact these people? And how does it impact the men that we're calling to go into the war, when there are so many——

General KEANE. Well, I——

Senator VOINOVICH [continuing]. Questions about whether or not this whole thing is going to work, and they're putting their lives on the line?

General KEANE. Well, the human dimension of this in—is certainly staggering, and all of us have been around this most of our adult lives, and, you know, we have a sense of what this is. Their sacrifice is—they represent a body of people in the United States that have true honor, in every sense of the word. And it—when you ruck up and become a soldier, a marine, an airman, or a navy guy, I mean, you're always going to get some orders that you don't like, but being a soldier is about following your orders, regardless.

Senator VOINOVICH. Yeah, but the fact——

General KEANE. And——

Senator VOINOVICH. The fact is, we have a civilian control of the military——

General KEANE. Sure.

Senator VOINOVICH [continuing]. In this country. We, as civilians, have something to say about that.

General KEANE. And you do. And all I'm saying is, is that their performance is absolutely extraordinary. What I'm trying to suggest is that we, for the first time, give them some of the conditions so that they can be successful. And I don't believe they've had those conditions. And that's one of my——

Senator VOINOVICH. Let me ask you——

General KEANE [continuing]. Concerns, that——

Senator VOINOVICH [continuing]. This. If you gave our military the conditions to make success possible and you took them in there, but you really believed in your heart that the end result was going to be a Shiite-dominated government, that they're going to take over, and that Sadr and company are going to be in charge and maybe end up with theocracy—if that's what you really believed was going to be the end result, then why would you stick them into a——

General KEANE. We wouldn't.

Senator VOINOVICH [continuing]. Temporary situation that means that a lot of them are not going to not come home?

General KEANE. If we knew that for a fact, then we probably—we'd have no business doing it. It would be absolutely irresponsible to do what I'm suggesting or what the United States is about to do. That would be irresponsible, if that's what we knew.

And by the way, in terms of General Abizaid, there—what a magnificent leader he truly is, and the sacrifice that he's made, and the—and we probably haven't had a smarter guy put his mind on this problem. And certainly, it is a really difficult problem. So, the emotion that you see there is a reflection of that. Every question that you've asked him, he's probably asked himself many, many times, over and over and over again. And that's why I think you see some of that emotion, because he knows what he represents. He represents the honor of all those men and women who serve him so loyally and so dedicated.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator.

Senator VOINOVICH. Is—anyone else want to comment?

General MCCAFFREY. Well, a quick comment.

Senator VOINOVICH. Is that OK?

The CHAIRMAN. Yeah, sure.

General MCCAFFREY. It seems to me that I would define success in Iraq, from where we now are—successful outcome would be that we're there for 10–15 years with 50–75,000 troops, we're out of the urban area, there's a loose federal structure of government in which the Shia and the Kurds mostly have autonomy for internal security in their areas, and that our primary role there is to deter outside active intervention, to guarantee against a countercoup, and to protect the Sunnis from the justifiable rage of the Shia. That, to me, would be a successful outcome. It wouldn't mean $8 billion a month, it wouldn't be 1,000 killed and wounded a month, but it would be an enormous commitment of U.S. resources and power.

If we're not willing to see that as an option, if we don't think it's worth it, then I personally would flip over and start arguing for a measured, but deliberate, withdrawal from this current strategy, because I don't—do not believe we are there to fight a counter-insurgency campaign or to win the hearts and minds of the Iraqi

people. We're trying to stand up a government, get the economy going, get a security force in place, and get out of there.

The CHAIRMAN. General, I want a clarification on the last point you just made. The political incentive you indicated—the political dynamic—that needs to be in place for that outcome to occur is, essentially, that the Constitution let them form regions, like the Kurds have, where they have local control over their local police, their local security, correct?

General MCCAFFREY. Already happened.

The CHAIRMAN. Oh, I know. It's the plan I've been promoting, and everyone, up to now, has been saying——

General MCCAFFREY. Well, I think there's always anxiety about the notion——

The CHAIRMAN. Yeah. I just think it's inevitable. It's already done. I mean——

General MCCAFFREY. Right.

The CHAIRMAN. I'm not suggesting that it works, but I don't know how anything works without those two pieces in it.

Yes, General.

General ODOM. I'd like to comment on both the——

The CHAIRMAN. Oh, I'm sorry, I beg your pardon. I didn't realize you didn't comment.

General ODOM. No; the—I'd like to add something to what's——

The CHAIRMAN. I realize I'm going over it, General. I want you to——

General ODOM [continuing]. Been said about the Sunnis.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Go over it as well.

General ODOM. I think General Keane is quite right about most of what he said about the Sunnis, but I'd like to ask—add another dimension to understanding their behavior as to why they're determined to try to do this, no matter what, and that the odds may not look very good to them.

The alternative for them is to be decimated by Shiites. All U.S. policies are empowering the Shiites. They've done it from the day we came in there. And now we're in this position: Do we side with the Shiites, and win? Well, you don't want that, because you don't want an Islamic government. And why should the Sunnis sign up for that? I would say, don't count the Sunnis out. The Baathist Party is based on Leninist-Stalinist organizational principles. That organizational administrative capacity is lacking on the Shiite side. And a minority could eventually win the struggle. I'm not saying it will. I don't think anybody knows who can win. But we've been too quick to count the Baathists out, and we're too quick to attribute far too much administrative political capacity to the Shiites. I see it in some—in Sadr and some of these limited groups, but not in the aggregate.

I would make one last point, on the partition business. The problem with that is, you end up presiding over ethnic cleansing, which we're doing anyway.

The CHAIRMAN. No; it's not partitioning. If you read the Constitution——

General ODOM. No; but if you start that way, it won't stop with the Constitution.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, General, no, I understand, but my problem is, they voted for a constitution. The Constitution explicitly says——

General ODOM. Well, that——

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Anybody—any governate can decide to be a region, and, when you are, here are the authorities and powers you have. They already wrote into the Constitution that the Kurds have that status. They've already written into the Constitution that, in fact, this is how it would proceed. They've already voted for the enabling law to do that. It's like pushing a rope. I mean, you know, if we want to change something, we'd better change it. But I agree with the overarching principle, the strategic notion you've laid out.

I'm now trespassing on my colleague's time in a way that I won't. I've let everyone go over, so that——

Senator BILL NELSON. Well——

The CHAIRMAN. Let me make one last point, administratively. I want to explain why we don't have an afternoon hearing. We were going to have Congressman Hamilton, and Secretary Baker initially indicated he did not want to participate in these hearings. He subsequently has called and indicated that he would be prepared to do that. And Congressman Hamilton indicated that he would think it best that they appear as the chairpersons of the Iraq Study Group. And we've worked out a common time, which I think is the 30th, where they're going to be here. I want you to know that's the only reason the afternoon schedule has changed. That's bad news for you guys, because if you can, I'd like you to be able to stay—not through the afternoon, but maybe well into the lunch hour, to answer these guys' questions.

But, anyway, my friend from Florida, the clock is yours.

Senator BILL NELSON. Well, before you get to the clock, could General Odom—he was continuing to answer, and I wanted to hear the remainder of that answer, about——

The CHAIRMAN. Well, sure.

Senator BILL NELSON [continuing]. About the partition.

General ODOM. Well, the—constitutions don't necessarily have to be written on paper. And I'm—I've always been impressed with a Russian proverb that Stalin loved, "Paper will put up with anything written on it." [Laughter.]

So, you don't have a constitution until the rules have been agreed on by the elites. Who are the elites? Anybody with enough guns or money to violate the rules with impunity. If the elites agree, the constitution will stick. If they don't, it won't. The elites don't agree in Iraq; therefore, you don't have a constitution, and you will have violence until somebody wins out. That may be a long time, but, until somebody can restore order on part of the terrain or all of it, you won't have an order.

Senator BILL NELSON. Mr. Chairman, I've said this to you privately, and I just want to say publicly, that this an outstanding series of hearings that you are doing, and I am very grateful, particularly because of the candor that we are hearing from different points of view at that table. And that is in marked contrast to the lack of candor that we have had in witness after witness representing the administration over the last 6 years. I erupted, in

this committee last week, with the Secretary of State, saying that time and time again I have not been told the truth.

Now, I want to ask you all a question, because I want to understand this. How can, over and over, the representatives at the highest level of the U.S. military come in here and say what they are saying to us? And I would say that the one exception—and it's not just here, it's also on other committees, including the Armed Services Committee—the one exception is General Abizaid. You all have achieved the highest levels in the U.S. military. We're supposed to be getting the truth from the military. And we haven't. Over and over. Why?

General KEANE. I'd like to take that on. Well, first of all, I think you have got the truth from them. Look, if John Abizaid and George Casey put together a strategy in Iraq, that was principally theirs. And that strategy had a political objective to it, and it had this military objective to it that we've discussed, which was transition to the Iraqi security forces. And they believed in it. There's a thought in this town that this is really Secretary Rumsfeld's strategy and he's forced it on these generals and that's one of the reasons why they never asked for more troops. Well, I think John Abizaid—I find that very insulting to these generals to think that, that they wouldn't have the moral courage to stand up and tell the Secretary, one, the strategy is—needs to be changed, or, two, they need more troops as a manifestation of that change. They believed in the strategy they were executing, and they thought it would work. And I believe that. And I think when John or George talk about they don't need more troops, I think they've been very sincere about that, that that's their belief. I don't think they're shading the truth whatsoever. And I find it insulting to suggest that they are.

Senator BILL NELSON. Well, you didn't hear what I said. I said the one exception is General Abizaid.

General KEANE. Uh-huh. I heard that.

Senator BILL NELSON. And, indeed, he sat at that table last—it was November or December—and said that he did not think that they needed additional troops.

General KEANE. And I believe that's their conviction.

Senator BILL NELSON. Well, I believe it, too. But, for the last 6 years, we haven't been—over and over, we've had generals come up here and say, "The war is going very well. Victory is right around the corner. We have 350–400,000 Iraqi troops that are trained." You all have worn that uniform, you knew that wasn't true. Why are they saying that?

General MCCAFFREY. You know, this is a very difficult subject, certainly for us to address, and there—I might add, there's a good reason why I was never the Chairman of the JCS. But let me, sort of, underscore, there's a bit of unfairness to how you characterize this. First of all, if you pick up the phone or visit a senior military officer in the field, and you say, "Off the record, tell me what you think," you will get 100 percent of what they think. And so, throughout the last 4 years, the Congress has unmistakably heard from field-level officers right through general officers—you know, Senator Biden's been in and out of there, they talk to him explicitly every time he's on the ground, so you knew what was going on, and

you allowed the Secretary of Defense and his senior people to come over here and baldly mischaracterize the situation, that there is no insurgency going on, this is just like Germany in 1945, just like the American Revolution, it's crime rate in D.C. The denial of the evidence in front of their eyes has been preposterous. The broken Army equipment—the country is currently at strategic peril, and it was the Congress's job to raise and equip an Army and Navy, and people were telling you that. So, when you had Dr. Chu come over here and say, "We're not having a problem on recruiting"—we're now taking 42-year-old grandmothers into the Army, and their current health is so good that, unlike 40 years ago, there's no degradation in standards, while we quadruple the number of non-high-school graduates, quadruple the number of people with moral and criminal waivers, and clearly had degraded the input to the Army—so, again, I wouldn't focus on the obedient generals and admirals who made their views known to the Secretary and his people and then came over here and signed up to support the President's budget and his strategy. I think——

Senator BILL NELSON. Is that——

General MCCAFFREY. I think there's been a huge failure in the U.S. Congress, in both parties, to speak up and provide oversight on this disastrously incompetently mismanaged war.

Senator BILL NELSON. I'm asking, because I admire each one of you—going ahead in the future so that we can get correct information in—upon which to make, hopefully, correct judgments: Is it the responsibility of an admiral or a general to sit at that table and be silent when the Secretary of Defense says that the Iraqi Army is well-trained and they have all these thousands of troops that are ready to do the battle? Is it the responsibility of admirals and generals to sit there and be silent when the Secretary of Defense and others in the civilian positions say that we're meeting our recruiting goals and we don't have a problem in the Reserves and in the National Guard? Help educate us——

General ODOM. Can I——

Senator BILL NELSON [continuing]. To understand, so that we'll have a filter with which to sort out truth from nontruth in the future.

General ODOM. May I try and answer that?

Senator BILL NELSON. Please.

General ODOM. I used to discuss this issue with the late General Goodpaster, because, when I was in Vietnam, I understood that we were fighting a war the strategic consequences of which were much more in the Soviet interest than ours, namely the containment of China and of North Vietnam. So, it was very analogous to the present situation, where we've charged off on a war that achieves our enemy's goals, and not ours.

Now, I was really upset in that war. We never heard from senior generals, and I used to think that generals were a menace to the national security because they didn't speak up. One retired general did speak out, Marine General Shoup. And I remember him extraordinarily well for that. He faced—he stood up and then took the heat for it.

And you've had a young officer, a very outstanding young officer, H.R. McMasters who's written a book, "Dereliction of Duty," in

which he lays the blame on the Joint Chiefs for not standing up to McNamara. And when I pressed General Goodpaster as to how to come down on this—and I think this is a real dilemma, particularly ones that senior officers face—do you break with the policy and put out the unvarnished truth, and quit, or do you say, as Goodpaster said, "Isn't it also professional integrity to stay with these political leaders and try to help them in spite of themselves?" In other words, you're really copping out if you don't do the best you can, and try to save the day.

So, I don't think there's a clear-cut answer to this, but in this war it seemed to me, as it was in the Vietnam war, after you'd been there for a while and quite a few things were becoming pretty clear, the argument for abandoning ship and no longer doing the best you can to help our political leaders would be reached, but each individual has to decide what he thinks is professional integrity in that regard.

General HOAR. I'd like to add to the comments that have been made. I think that all of us agree that civilian control of the military is an immutable concept. There's no question that the President and Vice President and the people that they have appointed, with the advice and consent of the Senate, are the people that make these decisions. The difficult question is: How do you break with your boss when you don't agree with him? I would like to think that all of us would stand up and be counted, but I don't think it's that easy.

Because I have written and spoken repeatedly in the last 4 years about my objection to the way this war has been handled, I find that, in some forums, this question comes up. There are a lot of active duty officers that believe they are not responsible for speaking up, that they have to follow the leadership of the civilians that are over them. I don't think that's true, but I think it would be an interesting question in the Senate Armed Services Committee, when a man is—or a woman, for that matter—is nominated for a third or a fourth star, to ask this question.

Eric Shinseki, to the President of the United States, voiced his discontent with the plan to invade Iraq, and he was publicly demeaned for that. I'm not sure, given that kind of behavior, how people respond to this. I would prefer not to go into individual cases and circumstances, but I don't think, in all cases, people have been entirely candid.

Senator BILL NELSON. In the last 6 years, we've had a credibility problem. And what I'm trying to get at is the truth. And I'm asking four generals who have given extraordinarily candid testimony today about how to solve this problem going forward. I'm not talking about those officers lower down in the chain of command, I'm talking about the officers that come here and present testimony to us and sit by as if corroborating the testimony of their civilian bosses.

General HOAR. I think it would help if you could frame the question in a way that you would ask them their personal opinion of the value of a particular course of action. I think that's how General Shinseki first went public, in my recollection. He was asked, in the Senate Armed Services Committee, if there were enough troops, and some other questions, and he gave his honest response.

Senator BILL NELSON. I asked him the question, and the question was: How many will it take, and for how long? And he said several hundred thousand for several years. And for that, he was significantly—well, we know the rest of the story.

General HOAR. I think that's the key, though, Senator. If you have enough understanding of the issues to ask the hard questions directly, I think you have a better chance of getting the answer.

Senator BILL NELSON. Thank you, again, Mr. Chairman, for this extraordinary panel.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Senator Menendez.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank all of the generals for their service, individually and collectively, to our country, and for their insights today. I had another hearing, but I read all of your testimony last night, and I got a synopsis of some of your answers, and I want to pursue some questions.

And I would say, to my distinguished colleague from Florida, that one of the things, I would think, that would make it easier is to put witnesses under oath, in which case they would feel compelled to make sure that they gave an answer that would not put them in violation of the law. And that might be something that the chairmen of the committees, when appropriate, might consider.

You know, General Keane, let me start with you. I understand—and correct me if I'm wrong—based upon press accounts, that you and Dr. Kagan are sort of like the architects of the President's latest plan. Is that a fair characterization?

General KEANE. All I can attest to is that I made a recommendation to the President, and I'll let him speak in terms of what he thought of that. I do know that the plan, as the administration has announced, is remarkably similar to what we had talked about, you know, Fred and I. But I wasn't privy to their, you know, staff deliberations and——

Senator MENENDEZ. You made those recommendations directly to the President, did you not?

General KEANE. I made a recommendation to the President, yes.

Senator MENENDEZ. And were there others? Was the Vice President involved?

General KEANE. Yes.

Senator MENENDEZ. And in the recommendations that you made—in addition to the escalation, did you offer a form of benchmarks that you thought needed to be established, and consequences for benchmarks not achieved?

General KEANE. No. Did not.

Senator MENENDEZ. Now, let me ask you this. I understand that, during your answer to some of the questions, you said that Iraqis should not be in the lead on this mission. Is that correct?

General KEANE. Well, yes; I have problems with it, because one—what that really means, when you say Iraqis are in the lead, is that we're going to have two chain of commands. The—obviously, we're not going to work for the Iraqis, so we'll have our own chain of command, and the Iraqis will have their own chain of command. That has not been the case in the operations that we've been conducting in Iraq to date. The Iraqis have been responding to us

when we're working combined operations together. So, we've made a conscious decision here to make this their operation, and we're in support of it.

My problem with that is, we're talking about a partnership. I think that's a business term, it's not a military term. It doesn't have much application on a street where you have soldiers from the Iraqi military who are responding to orders from a different chain of command than the United States soldiers are responding to. And that doesn't make a lot of sense to me, militarily. Politically, it probably makes lots of sense, but militarily, it does not.

Senator MENENDEZ. Let me ask you this. Does it matter whether the Iraqis show up or not, for our purposes of executing this plan?

General KEANE. It does matter that they show up.

Senator MENENDEZ. Does it matter that they show up in the quantities that we have been told that they need to show up if——

General KEANE. We can afford for them not to show up in some of the quantities that are expected. This plan takes into account that the Iraqis may not be able to meet all of their expectations, as they have in the past failed to meet those expectations, as well.

Senator MENENDEZ. Does it matter about the quality of the troops that will show up on the Iraq side?

General KEANE. Well, certainly it does. Certainly it does. And the Iraqis, as you well know, are a mixed group. Some perform well, and some do not perform well at all.

Senator MENENDEZ. Here is my concern, in addition to my opposition to the war and my vote against it, and my opposition to this escalation—even as I try to understand it, I cannot fathom, for the life of me, how it is that every administration witness that has come here—Secretary of State, most pointedly, but others, as well—have clearly made the case that the administration has tried to sell this, that this is an Iraqi initiative, that Iraqis will be at the forefront, that they will conduct the missions, and we will be in support of them. And I just don't understand, when I hear—and I will give you the title of the "architect of the plan"—how it is possible that we are being told by the administration that the Iraqis will finally be at the forefront of the fight for their own security, and we will be in a supporting role. You have just described your concerns about it, which are exemplified by a New York Times article, this Monday, in which the United States and Iraqis are wrangling over the war plans and exactly who commands what. When there's a dispute, what happens? And then we see today's article, or NPR story, where Kurdish soldiers are being sent as part of this overall effort. And the Kurds don't know the area, they don't speak Arabic, and their deployment is a question of extreme popularism. Even one of the commanders of a team of American military advisors say there have already been desertions and that out of the battalion of 1,600 Kurdish soldiers, he only expects a few hundred to show up.

So, we are being told by the administration that, in fact, this is an Iraqi plan, Iraqis are going to take the lead, they're going to show up en masse, and that we are in support of that. Yet everything that we see unfolding shows that we clearly are in the lead; we clearly are going to be at the greatest risk. And if that's the truth, versus what we are being told—aren't we rolling the dice—

General, when you say—and I think it's a very true comment—when you say that, in fact, we don't know what Maliki is all about, we don't know what his true desires are. Why are we rolling the dice for someone and something that we're putting a lot of capital into, both in lives and money, without knowing where it's headed? And why would the Sunnis—why would the Sunnis, based upon everything that we're doing? Even listening to you, where you suggest that the Sunnis want an all-out civil war, a failed state; it's a better course than anything they have right now—it's a better course than anything they have right now because they're not doing very well under the present political process. So, if that's the case, we sound like we are going to be at the lead—we are going to be at the lead of helping Shias ultimately suppress Sunnis, under the goal that that will put them into submission so that they will ultimately accept whatever deal is granted to them. That, to me, is not a recipe for success. Now, tell me where I'm wrong in this.

General KEANE. No; I agree with you. And, as I said, I think there are real problems there.

What I would ask you to do is, in terms of the operation itself and—is pause a little bit. Let's get General Petraeus into this country—get him confirmed up there, get him into the country, let him be able to analyze this, himself. I mean, obviously, he's doing it from afar here, but it's not the same as the fidelity he will have there. He knows a lot of these Iraqis, himself. And I think he's capable of working out a much better command-and-control relationship than this appears to be right now, and resolving some of those differences so that we do not have problems, you know, on the streets of Baghdad, or in Al Anbar, because of who's in the lead and who's not. I think it's resolvable, and I would ask you to give him an opportunity to resolve it and get on top of this situation.

Senator MENENDEZ. But not resolvable is taking a roll of the dice with the lives of America's sons and daughters and its national treasure on a government that we have no idea whether they are committed to the political reconciliation that's necessary.

General Pace, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said to us—in an answer to a question in a briefing, he said, "We need to get to have the Iraqis love their children more than they hate their neighbors." That's probably a powerful truism, but it doesn't come through military might, achieving that—that they love their children more than they hate their neighbors. And so, it goes beyond military equation and whether or not we have a partner who is truly willing, with the benchmarks and consequences for not meeting those benchmarks, to move in the political process. We are also risking the lives of America's sons and daughters for a venture that has already gone bad and doesn't seem to change.

And I find that to be a problem. And I'd love to hear any of the other generals' views on this, if they have any, as a final question.

General HOAR. I think your questions are well founded, Senator——

Senator MENENDEZ. General, you and I met a while back——

General HOAR [continuing]. About Mr. Maliki.

Senator MENENDEZ [continuing]. And one of the things you said is about standing up—getting Iraqis to ultimately stand up as

Iraqis—it seems to me that a good part of this mission needs Iraqis to come together and stand up as Iraqis. How do we get them to have that national spirit, versus the sectarian spirit they have right now?

General ODOM. Well, that's a—that's an issue that T.E. [sic] Lawrence faced, it's an issue the British faced, it's an issue that Saddam faced, and——

Senator MENENDEZ. And it's an issue we face.

General ODOM [continuing]. What the answer was. Fear, terror, and repressive organizations.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. Do you have any more questions? You have time for another one.

Senator Casey, thank you.

Senator CASEY. Mr. Chairman, thank you. I want to reiterate what was mentioned before about the way these hearings have proceeded and the panels you've put together, in concert with Senator Lugar, and we're grateful for that.

And I know we have much more to do, but in particular today when I look at this panel and listen to what you've said—I've heard most of it, probably 80 percent, in and out of here, for other committee obligations—but it brings to mind something my father said when he was Governor of Pennsylvania, the night before the 1991 gulf war. He was talking about the troops and obviously asking the people of our State to pray for the troops, but he also said something I'll never forget. He said, "We pray for the troops, but we also pray for ourselves, that we may be worthy of their valor." And I think, by your service and your own valor, you have proven yourselves worthy of that on the battlefield, as well as the testimony today and the dedication you bring to these issues, and the scholarship you bring.

And I'd love to talk to each of you about politics and diplomacy, because you bring a lot more to this table than just your military experience and knowledge, but, because of limited time and because of your experience, I want to focus on the military questions, as best I can in the limited time.

I have one question about Iraqi security forces' preparedness, but I guess the underlying premise of my question is in itself a question—is this issue that we've read about in the press over the last couple of years, but it doesn't get much attention—as much attention now as before—level-one, level-two readiness, based upon Pentagon definitions—(a) is that kind of measuring stick operable, still, today, and, (b) if it is, from—based upon your information, your knowledge, how many Iraqi security forces do we have trained at level one, meaning, in my layman's term, that they can take the lead independently, and level two, meaning that they take the lead, with American forces supporting them? So, General Keane, if you could start, and——

General KEANE. I can't get at the number. I've been briefed on it, a number of weeks ago, and, you know, I just can't refine the number, in terms of who's level one and who's level two.

Look at the—the command in Iraq was using these different levels as a measuring stick to measure the capacity of these forces, not just in terms of their performance, but in terms of the number

of people they had in it: Where had they been trained? Did they get through those gates, in terms of officer/NCO training? And how much time did they have in operational units? What is their equipment status? It's a—it's something very similar that United States units go through every single month in assessing their own readiness. So, it was not too surprising that officers who grew up with that system imposed that as a basis for making an evaluation. And I think what it—where it serves a useful purpose is in attempting to allocate resources, and realizing, you know, where you're having your shortfalls. And for that, I think it had some merit. I think we also got too bogged down by it, you know, bureaucratically, in terms of what it meant to us, and made far too much of it, in my judgment.

But the—look, it—the overall issue dealing with the Iraqi security forces is, they still are not at the level where they can cope with this violence, certainly by themselves, and will not be for some time. That's the harsh reality that we have to deal with, and that's the problem I have with just turning it over to them, because they—the level of violence will go up in 2007. It's actually predicted to go up in 2007, unless we do something about it. So, that would mean an even further step toward a fractured state and anarchy.

So, what this is about is bringing it down to a level where they can cope with that reality. And it buys time for their growth and development. They—we need to improve those forces. All the things that have been suggested by the ISG in that make sense to me, in terms of strengthening our advisory program, making certain they're better educated, our advisors, that they have much more cultural awareness than they currently have before they go over there, there's more of them, embed some U.S. forces with them, as well. And I would grow the size of the Iraqi security forces, also. So, I mean, your emphasis is a right one. The Iraqi security forces truly do matter. I mean, they are our exit strategy. We have to turn this over to them at a level where they can perform. But to help them, we must bring the violence down, in my judgment, so they can cope with it.

Senator CASEY. Can you just put two numbers on this, if you can: (a) Do you know any kind of a rough estimate of how many forces you think—or forget level one or level two, just generally—do you think we're prepared to take on this responsibility? And, (b) whatever that number is, what do we need to get to? I mean—because I think—I'm like a lot of Americans, we need to have some kind of standard where we can say, at some point, in terms of troop numbers and readiness, depending on how you define that—we're at a point now where we can have consequences that flow from that, in terms of our own troops. And I know it's not always easy, you can't do a numerical specific or precise numerical determination, but, I mean: How are we doing, in terms of identifying the number of troops they have to take on this responsibility? Are we way off? Are we halfway there? Is there any way you can put a number on that?

General KEANE. Well, I still think—the administration—you know, where we are is 325,000, and that totals every—all of it. Out of that is—about 125,000 would be United—Iraqi military forces; the rest are broken down into police and national police and border

guards, et cetera. In my own mind, the best organization of the Iraqi security forces is their army. They have performed the best. And even they have serious problems. Sixty-five percent of them, on average, show up any single day for duty. Some of them are on leave, and some of them are just not showing up for duty. We call it Absent Without Leave, or deserting. So, that's still an issue, and will continue to be an issue.

I think that you have to grow the size of this force, the military piece of this force, at 125,000. I think it has to go beyond 300,000, itself, and we would need advisors to do that.

The army size of the force, while it is their strongest institution in Iraq, the numbers of that force is inadequate. The quality of the force is improving. It's not satisfactory where it is. That's the truth of it. And I think that strengthening it with our advisory program and some of the other steps we're going to take, certainly with better equipment, and, most importantly, the appropriate equipment, all make sense. But that still will take time to get them to where they need to be.

Senator CASEY. Thank you. And I wanted to leave some time for the others to respond to that——

General MCCAFFREY. Well, I might just add to——

Senator CASEY [continuing]. Series of questions.

General MCCAFFREY [continuing]. That, I—because I basically agree with Jack Keane.

We should never, by the way, run too quickly to conclusion. I've been in Iraqi battalions that I thought were patriots, courageous, convinced that they're going to create a new Iraqi nation. And, so far, not an Iraqi Army battalion has flipped over to the other side, so that at 2 o'clock in the morning, suddenly they seize their advisory group and they declare themselves to be Shia militia. That's good news, and we shouldn't discount it.

I also believe that there has been such deliberate deception on the part of the Secretary of Defense and his senior people over the caliber, the status of these forces, that it boggles the mind. Callous——

Senator CASEY. In terms of the——

General MCCAFFREY [continuing]. Open, disingenuous explanation, putting Iraqi protective security forces as part of total numbers, inventing a force that was growing at 100,000 per 60 days. How could that be true? Where is the equipment? It was utter nonsense.

Senator CASEY. But you mean deception, in terms of numbers——

General MCCAFFREY. Sure, numbers——

Senator CASEY [continuing]. In saying where we are?

General MCCAFFREY [continuing]. Caliber, equipment, reliability. They were making it up.

Now, where are we today? Probably—and I've watched numbers out of Cordesman very closely, because I think he tries to be objective and neutral. I think there's less than 100,000 Iraqi soldiers who show up on a given day to defend the country. There's 27 million of those people. It is a tiny force. It's much smaller than the U.S. military presence in country. Many of the other services are

either inadequate, incompetent, or uniformed terrorists under the control of one faction or another. So, you've got less than 100,000.

Their equipment status is so bad that, were they U.S. units on this mission, they would be declared ineligible for military operations. They have no equipment appropriate for their task. And then, finally, going forward—because I've been saying, "Look, you know, 3 years from now we're going to be gone," and we're going to be gone, make no doubt about it. Who's going to be flying helicopters in Iraq? It's not going to be the U.S. Army. We—I think we've got probably 1,000 aircraft there right now. It probably takes 36 months, on a crash basis——

The CHAIRMAN. Right.

General MCCAFFREY [continuing]. To manufacture a Black Hawk, train the crew, put them in the field, and have them flying. Have we started that process yet? And the answer is no. And, therefore, 3 years from now, there will be no solution, there won't be an Iraqi security force adequate to maintain internal order.

Now, final thought, because I—you know, I think the five-brigade surge is a surge of the wrong stuff, but if I was a three-star commander—General Odierno, a terrific soldier—I'd want five more brigades, because in a Sunni neighborhood in Baghdad today—and I got this directly from General Abizaid, the neighborhood will beg us to not leave. So, having a U.S. Army battalion or a Marine battalion there clearly dampens down the violence. It's a good thing. They're honest kids, they're—you know, they're spending CERP money, they're—lots of good things comes out of it. So, my only question is: How do we create a condition so we can leave? The presence of U.S. forces is a boon to Iraq, is a gift to take that monster out of power and hang him. All that was a good thing. Now we're trying to figure out: How do we stand up a state and get out of there? And the prerequisite is not to just say, "We're going to go in and clear and hold neighborhoods in Baghdad with U.S. privates."

Senator CASEY. Thank you.

General HOAR. I can't add anything to Barry McCaffrey, sir.

Senator CASEY. Yes, General.

General ODOM. I would ask you to ask a prior question. Do you know any examples where you've had weak governments, where foreigners have gone in and stood up their military and it was a success? I don't know of any.

General HOAR. The United States.

General ODOM. When you try to get—well, you—there was political leadership. The Congress was in charge through the whole revolution. You could have said it pulled a coup, but it was Americans standing up, it wasn't other countries coming in and do it—doing it by ventriloquy. So, I think it's a bit like trying to put a roof on a house before it has the walls built up.

Senator CASEY. You mean, the——

General ODOM. Dealing with training up Iraqis.

Senator CASEY [continuing]. The civilian government is the foundation of the house. Yeah.

General ODOM. The way it happens in most places. And very often, the military—I mean, there were so many military regimes in the world, because military power is political power. And if you

stand up the military first, there's a high chance you'll have a practorian, or military, regime take over. That's what we found all through Africa and South America in our 1950s, 1960s, 1970s, with military assistance programs to these areas.

Senator CASEY. I have lots more, but I know I'm over.

Senator Webb.

Senator WEBB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Again, I am the last person between these people and lunch, but I appreciate all of you hanging around. I appreciate your testimony. I've been able to know some of you personally, read articles and editorials that have been written about this issue, written by people at the table over the years. I want to know—I want you to know that I respect the service of everyone at the table, and I certainly respect the integrity of everyone at the table. And the—no matter where their views are on this, that this political/military interface that we've been debating is probably the hardest issue, in terms of how our government works. I've dealt with it every way you can deal with it, I think, in my lifetime.

General Odom, I would like to say to you that I very much appreciate your writings over the past several years. They have been invaluable, I think, in providing a strategic umbrella under which we're able to examine the implications of our policy. This is a challenge that is not simply in Iraq. It's—as you have written and as other people have said, this challenge can only be addressed regionally and beyond. It relates to the stability of the region. It relates to our ability to fight the war against terrorism elsewhere. It relates to strategic challenges that are in other than the region, and we really do need to address this for the well-being of our military and our country, I believe.

And, General Hoar, I'd like to say to you, first of all, General Keane mentioned a phrase, a little while ago, "moral courage." One of my great heroes was GEN Bob Barrow, who was Commandant of the Marine Corps, and used to say, frequently, "There's physical courage and then there's moral courage, and moral courage is quite often harder than physical courage." And the courage that you showed, standing up, speaking out about this early, along with people like Tony Zinni, who also commanded CENTCOM, people like General Shinseki, General Newbold, who I admire greatly, and General Van Riper, and others, I think is going to stand as a mark when history looks at where we have gone and how we, hopefully, will get out of this in a way that retains our national esteem around the world—or regains our national esteem around the world.

General McCaffrey, I want to clarify one thing that you said about the Constitution. You said it twice. And I'm not a—I'm not a constitutional lawyer, I am an attorney. But the language in the Constitution, about armies and navies, is—it comes from two separate phrases in article 1, section 8. And this is important, I think, when we examine what our responsibilities are, in terms of looking at how the military has been used in this war.

The Constitution empowers the Congress to "raise and support armies," but to "provide and maintain a navy." And the distinction was put there for a reason, with the historical experiences in continental Europe, with turning over standing armies to monarchs and

having militaries used for adventurism. And so, when I look, even at the issue right now, of increasing end strength in the Army and the Marine Corps—and I'm very—I had a lot of experience, when I was ASD, in looking at Army force-structure issues, and, as you know, I'm intimately familiar with the force-structure difficulties in the Marine Corps right now. But my cautionary note has been that I don't want to put a vote in place that will ratify what I believe has been the lack of strategy, just through the momentum of the fact that we have troops at risk. I mentioned that to Secretary of Defense Gates last week. He told me that there were off-ramps, as he called them, in case our troop levels in Iraq went down, but that's one question that I'm going to be asking. And I hope my colleagues will be asking, is that the justification for these increases in end strength should take into account, hopefully, what I would see as a reduction in force structure.

I have two questions. The first is, General McCaffrey, on your proposal to—or your suggestion that $10 billion a year be put into development programs, I know that you have a good bit of experience in this, and you're on the boards of—according to your bio, of companies that are more than likely doing business in Iraq. I'm concerned about accountability on the funds that have been spent. I'm also concerned about where this money would come from. Are you suggesting a reprogramming or an addition to the budget?

General MCCAFFREY. By the way, I am on the board of directors of one company, DynCorp, that is very heavily involved in providing 3,000 or 4,000 people in Iraq, and several hundred, I believe, in Afghanistan. And I frequently make a point to underscore, because there's the debate inside the profession on how come contractors are on the battlefield, providing almost all of our long-haul communications, our logistics? For God's sake, it's incredible. I'd prefer to have an active military force that does most of these functions, but the facts of the matter are, they're not there, and, without these contractor operations, we would grind to a halt immediately.

So, I'm inclined to say, let's treat them with respect, because they're getting killed and wounded in huge numbers. And they actually, when you talk to these kids, or older single women, they see themselves doing a patriotic bit—KBR, Halliburton, et cetera. So—but that's an aside.

I think, back to your central question, the notion of "development program," I'm not sure you can spend $10 billion a year successfully in Iraq. The Congress provided $18.6 billion; it's all gone, essentially. The President just said he wants a billion more CERP funds, local employment. I don't know that, given the lack of security, given the nature of the Maliki government, that that would work. I am confident that if our only trick in this game is, "let's put five more brigades in downtown Baghdad and fight neighborhood by neighborhood," this is a loser. So, I told the President, 2 years ago, "When the development money runs out, and when Congress won't provide more, that's the day you lost the war." So, I would have great oversight of $10 billion a year, or $1 billion a year. Is it going to be spent effectively? You've clearly got to look at waste, fraud, and abuse on U.S. or other contractors, but I think it's just a vital aspect of moving forward.

Senator WEBB. Yeah, I obviously am new to this position, but that's one of the concerns that I've had, looking at this—the conduct of the war——

General MCCAFFREY. A legitimate concern.

Senator WEBB [continuing]. Throughout the past several years. It——

General MCCAFFREY. Right.

Senator WEBB [continuing]. Trying to figure out where all this money has gone already.

This is a general question, but I'll go first—General Keane, your comments very heavily involve the Sunni—you know, the need to stand up to the Sunni insurgency. And one of the concerns that I've had on that is, given the divisions—the obvious divisions in the country, that we're almost in what would be called a strategic mousetrap here, where the harder we fight against the Sunni insurgency, the more the Shia population is empowered and the more influence Iran has in Iraq. And so, I'm interested in the views of all of you about the notion of that mousetrap.

General KEANE. Well, I think it's a concern, certainly. I just mention that, because when you try to define the problem, it's—I find it useful to go back and understand how we got here. And it was the Sunnis who were rejecting the—our occupation and rejecting what we believe is a new form of government. And they started this, and the al-Qaeda enabled it, and now we have, obviously, considerable sectarian Shia violence that's provoked by the Sunnis.

You have to—certainly, if we go into these neighborhoods, as I believe we will, we're going to deal with al-Qaeda, we will deal with Shia, and we will deal with Sunnis, to be sure, at the tactical level. And—we'll have the capacity to deal with all of that. Your question is much more of a strategic one, in terms of: Are we picking sides here? And what is the implications of that?

We are where we are. We have a government—and that government is a fledgling government, at best, trying to find itself—that's grown out of a consensus, and it has factions in it. And by anybody's definition, it's weak. What I think we need to do is help it and strengthen it. And by doing so, and working with the Sunni insurgency, we can get the Sunnis to participate in a way that they're not willing to do now.

And I'm absolutely convinced we can push back on the Shia violence by truly protecting the people. We can't be Pollyannaish about this. We know that Sadr and others are using the violence against their people to seek their own political advantage and leverage in the country. That's a given. But the reality is, also, that by bringing that violence down, you start taking their issue away for—from them that justifies what they're doing.

So, I'm hopeful that we can do something that's very constructive here in—and it is a military application of force designed singularly to get a political solution. It's the only reason why we're doing this. You buy time for the growth and development of Iraqi security forces, which helps in our ability to exit the country, and then you strengthen Maliki's hand, both with the Sunnis and with the Shias, so that we can get a better form of government, in terms of representation, and move the Sunnis to that table and take away what

is now their single option and what they believe is their only option, which is: Continue the armed violence.

So, you have to deal with them, but certainly you also have to deal with the Shia violence that's there and the incredible level of it that took place. I recognize the mousetrap, but I still think we have to go ahead and work this, because it's the only thing we can do, I believe, that will strengthen the government that we currently have. The benchmarks, by themselves, to me, don't mean a lot. I don't think you're going to get anything out of it.

Senator WEBB. General Hoar.

General HOAR. Yes, sir. I hesitate to recite history to you, but when the two principal institutions in that country, the armed forces and tribalism, were destroyed or dismembered as a conscious policy of this Government, you automatically reduce the possibility of finding good outcomes. Ninety-five percent of the people in Iraq belong to a tribe. And tribes transcend religion and ethnicity. The armed forces is a no-brainer, that there should have been a de-Baathification at the top end, and retain that—all of that, that went with it. So, we have few institutions to fall back on. And so, as a result, we're trying to build from the bottom up; and, in my judgment, you can't get there from here. It's too late, we're asking too much of what needs to be done.

Senator WEBB. General McCaffrey, you have a thought on that?

General MCCAFFREY. The—I think I'd actually agree with General Odom's characterization, and maybe—perhaps come to a slightly different conclusion. When you step into Iraq, took out a cruel ruling elite, maybe 15 percent of the population that had dominated the military, the intelligence service, business, academics, et cetera, and you said, "We're going to institute democratic reforms," then you gave the government to a Shia-Kurdish overwhelming majority who had been abused for hundreds of years, if not for 30-plus by Saddam and his criminal regime. So, that was the outcome we understood when we set foot in the country.

I'm not sure that's necessarily unacceptable, if we maintained a presence to ensure that there wouldn't be a violent decimation in retribution against the Sunnis, if we kept peace with their neighbors. I'm not quite sure why a Government of Iraq that was more closely aligned, by far, with Iran than Saddam's 7-year war against the Iranians—I'm not quite sure why that doesn't suit our own interests.

I do think that we ought to have a regional focus. Our focus should be peace and some form of stability, and that our—as you have said, though, the current mousetrap, in my view, is, our strategy is failing and our current responses, it seem to me, will not break out of the box.

Senator WEBB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Gentlemen, I just have a few closing questions, if I may. I can't tell you how much I appreciate your perseverance, as well as your answers.

To continue with the conundrum that my friend from Virginia has mentioned, one of the reasons I always have trouble—and I'm not being facetious—with this administration, is understanding their strategic objective. Internally in Iraq, the premise is, as stat-

ed clearly and articulately by General Keane, that if we gain control of the insurgents who are needlessly going after our troops, but also fomenting this sectarian war by going after Shia indiscriminately, that somehow the Shia will feel they can stand down, and the political process can begin. Let's assume that's true.

At the same time, I don't know whether this is true, but it seems clear, overall—the administration and the President clearly stated that he is going to do all he can to deal with Syria and Iran, but particularly Iran.

Now, everything I read—and I've been here 34 years; I've learned to read between the lines. I don't always read it accurately, but there is always a message between the lines. The President didn't have a throwaway phrase about Iran in his speech for nothing. That was the red light that went on for me, beyond the surge. Of the things that concern me about the speech, more than anything else was the emphasis on Iran.

And, again, it seems to me, to raise the conundrum mentioned, or the mousetrap, whatever you want to say, is that at the very time we are taking on the Sunnis, which, I can tell you from my personal discussions, upsets our allies in the region—they are very uneasy about that in Saudi Arabia and in Egypt and other places—at the very time that's happening internally, the Shia, who seem satisfied with that, are very upset that we seem to be focusing on the Shia influence in the region, outside the country. So, I don't know how you square that. I don't understand, strategically, how you can accomplish both objectives. Am I missing something? Or am I overreading? Anyone?

Yes, General.

General HOAR. Right on. That's the short answer, sir. [Laughter.]

The longer answer is, there are people—Seymour Hersh among them—that have been writing, for the last 8 or 10 months, in the New Yorker about the plan to attack Iran. I think that replacing an officer with ground combat experience in CENTCOM with an admiral, by sending a second carrier battle group into the gulf, by sending Patriot batteries into the region, are—I would use a slightly different word than you, but ominous, nonetheless.

I would tell you a story that I believe to be true. Hamad bin Jassim, the Foreign Minister of Qatar, went to Tehran. He told the Iranians that, while his government had supported United States efforts in Iraq, that he would not—their government would not support any adventurism toward Iran. The Iranians told him that he had it all wrong, that they do not have the capability to strike the United States, but, if attacked by the United States, they would attack infrastructure targets up and down the gulf among those countries that have supported the United States.

If I were going to do this, I would assuage the concerns of my friends in the region by bringing Patriot batteries in. I don't know why you have two carrier battle groups in the gulf, when fixed-wing air, while an essential part of any campaign, doesn't require a lot of airplanes on a day-to-day basis, and why you would have an admiral in charge of CENTCOM, when you have two essentially ground combat operations going on in two separate campaigns, would all indicate to me that there's something moving right now toward Iran.

The CHAIRMAN. I happen to agree with that. You would know, much better than I would, what these moves meant. That's how I read it. But I'm trying to get at the more fundamental question. I never can understand—there seems to be no coherence to the strategy of this administration, from the beginning. We seem to have a little of this, a little of that; and the objectives, the stated objectives, the stated missions, seem at odds with one another.

Again, let's assume it made sense to go into Iran. Here, you have the present Shia-dominated government opening up meetings with, trying to establish a diplomatic relationship with, Tehran, trying to extend a relationship to Syria, as well, at the very moment we seem to be trying to satisfy them internally by staying out of Sadr City, focusing on the Sunni. But at the same time at odds with their stated, or at least apparent, foreign policy—regional policy. It seems like we are our own worst enemy, in terms of the strategic notions that we have. They seem inconsistent.

General MCCAFFREY. The—I think you, again, pose another principal strategic challenge we're facing. I personally have been to see the Secretary of State, my travels in the region, listening to our allies in the Persian Gulf—and I used, with General Hoar, a corny story. I started with my first platoon Sergeant in the 82d Airborne. He said, "Sir," he said, "don't you ever threaten people in public, but make sure, if you do threaten them, you can carry out your threat."

The CHAIRMAN. Bingo.

General MCCAFFREY. So, we've had a combination of public threats to the Iranians, which has horrified our allies, which, it seems to me, from a strictly military perspective, are sheer insanity that we would try and end a nuclear capability of the Iranians, take down their air defense in the process of doing it, neutralize their naval threat to the Persian Gulf oil supplies, and to do it while we have 150,000 GIs stuck 400 kilometers up into Iraq, with our lines of communication back to the sea and the safety of the Navy—going through 400 kilometers of Shia population. So, this doesn't make any sense.

I hope it's just a lower-level notion, "Well, you're always supposed to put a carrier out there to empower your ambassador demarche, but if it goes beyond that, this is truly the most significant blunder in strategic thinking we will have seen since World War II.

General ODOM. One——

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, General.

General ODOM [continuing]. One brief comment. I'd like to commend you for bringing up that paradox and putting this light directly on Iran. If I were in your position, or members of this committee, I would be thinking about how I will vote when an apparent Iranian terrorist attack occurs against the United States, not necessarily in the United States, but against some of its interest in the future—and the war cries for bombing Iran go up.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, quite frankly, General, I'm thinking of going farther than this. I haven't discussed this with my colleagues yet. I'm in the process of trying to draft legislation that would make it clear that the authorization for the use of force that was passed, which I think is essentially no longer relevant. It was put

forward to take out Saddam. It was put forward to deal with weapons of mass destruction. If they were there, they ain't there now; they never were, in my view. And he's gone. So, what's the raison d'etat for this? I want to make it clear, I've been around here too long—I take the President seriously when he says things that seem to me to be outrageous. I'm not being a wise guy now, I—I'm not trying to be disrespectful, I give you my word. But I take it seriously, because the first time out, when we gave the President the authority to move forward, Lugar and I had a resolution that was much more restrictive than the one that passed in the authorization of the use of force. And remember, everybody—not you guys, but everybody has sort of a selective memory about the moment. The moment we were voting on that, the issue was: Do we lift sanctions on Saddam, which the rest of the world was pushing, or do we give the President the political clout to demonstrate to the world that we stood with him in insisting they stay on by giving this authority to use force, if need be? And we had assurances, "No, no, no, no, no; we're not going to use the force, we're not going to move forward." And then the writing began to be on the wall, when every time it looked like Powell was making progress diplomatically, there would be a deliberate effort to undercut that, coming from the administration.

And the press now says, "It was obvious to everyone that these guys were going to do that." It wasn't obvious. They acted responsibly on Afghanistan. They did it in the right way. They marshaled authority, they had the bill of particulars, they put forward the indictment, they sent folks out around the world, to the world capitals, including our friends and enemies alike, they dealt with Iran. I mean, it was done logically, and it was done rationally, and it gave some of us hope—and remember what was being written at the time, gentlemen. I know you do remember. I was having scores of interview requests, and some of you were also being asked, "Has the administration become internationalist? Has the President changed his mind? Has he moved from neoisolationism to engaging the rest of the world?" Remember that? And there were all these articles written in December, after we gave him the authority, but before we went to war. And so, the idea that everybody knew they would be, in my view, as incredibly irresponsible as they were is—

Matter of fact, back in the days when I was chairman, again, not a whole lot of difference between Senator Lugar and me on these things—we held a series of hearings, and it was an extensive series—before the authority was given. Not "What happens the day after Saddam?" The title of the series was, "The Decade After."

Now, the reason I bother to state this, gentlemen, is that it seems to me that we still don't quite have a strategy. But let me get into a tactical question, and then, with one other question, let you all go. I really appreciate you doing this.

From a military perspective, again, I spent a lot of time, as I think General McCaffrey knows—a lot of time with General Petraeus—in theater, in e-mails. I mean, I find the guy to be exactly what you all advertise him to be. That's my impression of him, a really smart guy. Well, it's often suggested by my friends who have a different view about "the surge," who think it's a good idea, that, "Look what he was able to do up in the north." And my

instinct is, we're comparing apples and oranges here. And that's what I want to ask you, a tactical question.

Is there a difference between fighting foreign jihadis and domestic insurgents—Baathists, Saddamists, et cetera—and trying to stop a sectarian war? In the north, where Petraeus did so well, in Mosul and in Tal Afar, my recollection was, there was not a civil war. It wasn't predominantly Shia killing Sunni, Kurds killing Shia, et cetera. It was dealing with an insurgency trying to kill American forces and prevent an Iraqi Government from becoming a reality. Now, I may be wrong. You don't all have to comment, but you are welcome to. But tell me: Is there a difference?

General MCCAFFREY. I think you summarized it correctly. I remember going up to see Dave Petraeus in his command post in Mosul, and he had an unbelievable grasp of the—of how you go about—economically, politically, militarily—jump-starting the region. He had incredible interpersonal relationships with the Arab leadership. It was a phenomenal performance. He understood the disastrous judgments of Mr. Bremer, et al., in the central government, standing down the army, firing the officer corps, de-Baathicizing the country. He goes back to a totally different situation.

The CHAIRMAN. Absolutely.

General MCCAFFREY. I'll guarantee you, he understands that.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I have no doubt that he does. Let me put it this way. I've thought there is a fundamentally different circumstance, and, if it is, I'm confident he understands it. I am just perplexed as to what happens.

My prediction, for what it's worth—and I obviously am not a military man, but I do know a fair amount about policing—as you know, General, I've become a student of that for 35 years—what's needed here is, essentially, community policing, and that is a long, long investment. That is gigantic—even in a metropolitan city in America, where there's not a civil war—and I don't know whether we have the stomach for it, or the capacity.

And my guess is, you're going to see Sadr being smart enough to stand down, take his folks out of uniform, put them in civilian clothes, drop the checkpoints, take away the rationale for the U.S. military to move on Sadr City, hopefully we—to use your point, General—go do their work in the Sunni areas, and then step up. Who are we benefiting? But that's neither here nor there.

Last question, and it really is the last question, gentlemen. Underlying—the underlying issue here, for me, is: Assume I buy into the rationale that you need a military solution to create an atmosphere in which a political solution can emerge. I've said, at the outset, in my strong opposition to this surge, that if you somehow convince me there is a connection and a correlation and an agreement between an underlying political objective and the military—I could see the possible rationale for it. But here's my problem. When you talk about "To give the Iraqis some breathing space by bringing order in Baghdad to allow for a political settlement to emerge," is there any evidence anywhere that, even if tomorrow we dropped 500,000 troops into Iraq, completely shut down the civil war temporarily, that that is going to change the conditions that are required

for the Sunni and Shia to make some serious, serious, serious and dangerous political concessions?

What makes us think that that would have SCIRI or Dawa conclude that we're going to give a big chunk of the revenues to the Sunnis? What would make us think that the Sunnis are prepared to sign on to essentially a Sunni constituency equivalent to Kurdistan? What makes us think that these giant dividing issues are going to be resolved? Is there any reason to think that, even if there is not a single Iraqi killed in the next 6 months, there's incentive to make these very difficult political decisions that have to be made to allow this country, once we lift the siege, to live together? I've not seen any. There may be.

That's the question I have, and that's the last question. And, as I said, I've really trespassed on your time, but you're all so darn good, I can't resist.

Senator CASEY. Senator, let me—can I just——

The CHAIRMAN. Sure.

Senator CASEY. I want to make sure I understand what you're asking. Your—and I was thinking about this before, and I ran out of time—your question is basically: Will restoring order automatically trigger political momentum?

The CHAIRMAN. Will restoring it—or not even automatically—will—is there any evidence that restoring order will make the Dawa-SCIRI parties, Sadr's party, the Sunni tribal leaders and the Sunni party more inclined to settle what everyone acknowledges is the underlying problem: Their significant political differences? And, if so, what are those differences that have to be resolved so that, when we do step back and say, "It's yours, fellows," that it's not going to immediately return to the sectarian chaos that exists today?

General ODOM. Can I give a—I'll give you a fairly short answer. I don't think there's any evidence for that. The question, as you've posed it, has been addressed since the fall—the breakup of the Ottoman Empire, and there have been efforts, again and again, to give somebody time to put it together. It always failed.

In Vietnam, I used to address this issue with the—in the Pacification Development Program. The country field submission for more money for Vietnam would come out from the Embassy to the MACV Headquarters for staffing, and they'd say, "Well, they need more time, they're not ready to take over yet, so we can't give them all they want, but let's give most of what they want." So, we—you know, leave an incentive for them to—"We won't give everything, but we won't let them fall."

So, I pulled the files out for the last 6 years, and every year, you had the same argument, and every year, the amount of money they wanted, and we were willing to give them, went up. Well, I caused a little disturbance by suggesting that to do this is like advocating that a drunk man drink more in order to sober up.

And then, I've since seen a lot of literature on other countries, cases that suggest that the worst thing you can do to help a client against an insurgency in an internal war is to give them help. It—an internal war is about who's going to rule, and who's going to rule is the guy who can tax and control the resources. And if you give these guys time, through money and resources, they will use

you as their tax base, and their opponents will take over the domestic tax.

The CHAIRMAN. I love that quote—and I must admit, I thought I was a relatively good student of the Communist revolution, but I love that quote, "Paper will put up with anything written on it." That was Stalin's, I guess you said?

General ODOM. Well, it's an old Russian proverb.

The CHAIRMAN. An old—oh, a Russian proverb. I——

General ODOM. He loved that.

The CHAIRMAN. I must admit, I had not heard it before. But, having said that, there still is a paper with stuff written on it out there called a constitution. And if you look at the Constitution, interesting thing, the central government, as envisioned by the Iraqis, has no taxing power. There is no taxing power.

General ODOM. Then it's a joke.

The CHAIRMAN. I had this little debate with Prime Minister Maliki, who—for the sake of discussion, I'll acknowledge he has this overwhelmingly difficult job, and it may be putting too much on him, et cetera, but we were meeting, and I asked him about what he was going to do about such and such? He said, "That's already taken care of in the Constitution." I said, "Mr. Prime Minister, you and I"—this was in Baghdad, on July 7, 8, 9, 10; I don't recall exactly which day it was—I said, "Mr. Prime Minister, you and I may be the only two people who have read the Constitution." It's fascinating. The strong central government our Government keeps insisting on—under the organizing principle of that government, the Constitution, the central government has no power to tax. Explicitly. Explicitly. And it explicitly states that governates, the 18 of them, have explicit power, if they choose the title "region" rather than "governate," to maintain their security.

And in Kurdistan, if I'm not mistaken, General, you can't even fly the Iraqi flag, and no Iraqi forces are allowed within what is now called Kurdistan. You understand——

General KEANE. Can I have one comment?

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. My frustration.

Yes, please, General.

General KEANE. You know, to accept the premise that you just suggested is—you know, that insurgencies, irregular warfare, internal conflicts, when they're challenging like this, and they're difficult, that it's hopeless, that there's no way to be able to resolve it—and I don't suggest, for a minute, that this is not very difficult, and certainly General Petraeus is fully aware of what his challenges are in front of him, and they are very different than what he faced in Mosul, much more—much more difficult—but the reality is that you can use military force to compel people's wills. You can change their will, using force. You can begin to set some conditions to get some political results.

The question that will remain—I'm convinced we can do that—the question remains, for me, which—I've tried to be as straightforward about it as I can——

The CHAIRMAN. You have been.

General KEANE [continuing]. Is the government itself, where—even if we do that, where will—their political will would be. I would like to think that after we have strengthened his hand, and

then he can bring the Sunnis to the table, and the Shias are back behind their barricades, and the violence has gone down, that those benchmark things then make sense. But that remains an open question. I'm not going to try to put a spin on this; it's not my style. But——

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I'm not suggesting you were, General. I think you've been straightforward——

General KEANE [continuing]. But the fact is, is that I believe you can establish some conditions to get some results. It'll still be Maliki and his government, whether they're committed to those results or not.

The CHAIRMAN. Anyone else?

General HOAR. Sure. I think that many people in this Government—or they don't understand the depth of enmity that exists between Shia and Sunni. This is big-time and real, and it has been for centuries, as we know. And my view, as I indicated to you earlier, is that if you got some political movement on the part of Maliki, then you could perhaps talk about troops, but if he's not committed to make hard choices early on, there is no chance of pulling this thing out, in my judgment.

The CHAIRMAN. Gentlemen, you've been incredibly generous with your time, your knowledge, your wisdom, and your straightforwardness. It is refreshing. It is welcome. It is needed. I thank you all for allowing us to take you through the lunch hour.

We are adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1:33 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ALTERNATIVE PLANS CONTINUED—FEDERALISM, SIDE WITH THE MAJORITY, STRATEGIC REDEPLOYMENT, OR NEGOTIATE?

TUESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2007 [A.M.]

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:20 a.m., in room SD–106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Joseph R. Biden, Jr. (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Biden, Feingold, Boxer, Nelson, Obama, Menendez, Cardin, Casey, Lugar, Hagel, Corker, Voinovich, Murkowski, and Isakson.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR., U.S. SENATOR FROM DELAWARE

The CHAIRMAN. Hearing will please come to order.

This morning, we begin our third week of hearings on the remaining options in Iraq. Today, we'll have two distinguished panels of witnesses presenting alternative proposals of the way forward in Iraq.

I'd like to take a moment to outline, briefly, the schedule over the next 2 weeks, if I may.

Tomorrow, we'll take a break, of sorts, from our hearing schedule to hold a business meeting in which we'll consider a bipartisan resolution on Iraq. We will return to our hearings on Thursday morning with a panel on the administration's new reconstruction strategy, followed by an afternoon panel focusing on Iraq's internal politics.

A week from today, we'll hear from Secretary Baker and Congressman Lee Hamilton, and the following day, we'll be joined by Secretaries of State Kissinger and Albright. We will close this series on Thursday of next week, with three former National Security Advisors: General Scowcroft, Dr. Brzezinski, and Mr. Berger.

And let me return to today's hearings.

We have with us four articulate experts who will present specific recommendations regarding our policy in Iraq.

Les Gelb is a president emeritus and board senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations. He and I have put forward a plan for a political settlement in which the unity of Iraq is preserved by creating three or more regions, as provided by the Iraqi Constitution. The plan would guarantee the Iraqi Sunnis a fair share of oil revenues, and it urges the creation of a contact group to support the

political settlement among the Iraqis. And finally, it calls for the redeployment of most of American troops over the next 18 months.

Edward Luttwak is a friend and a senior advisor to the Center for Strategic International Studies. He argues, and I quote, "Only with United States disengagement can Iraqis find their own equilibrium. Twenty thousand U.S. troops in desert bases suffice to deter foreign intrusion."

And we have Robert Malley, who is the director of the Middle East Program at the International Crisis Group. He advocates, and I quote, "a clean break in the way the United States deals with the Iraqi Government and the region. The United States should seek to enlist broad international support for a new political compact among Iraqis, cease treating the Iraqi Government as a privileged partner and start seeing it as a party to the sectarian war, and engage in real diplomacy with all Iraqis' neighbors, Iran and Syria included."

And Larry Korb, who is a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress and a senior advisor to the Center for Defense Information. Mr. Korb has testified many times before this committee. His plan calls for, and I quote, "a diplomatic surge and the strategic redeployment of our military forces. U.S. troops would redeploy completely from Iraq in the next 18 months, remain in the region, and be increased in Afghanistan."

We look forward to the testimony of all the witnesses. And now I'll turn to Senator Lugar.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD G. LUGAR, U.S. SENATOR FROM INDIANA

Senator LUGAR. Well, I thank you, Mr. Chairman, again, for holding this important hearing.

Today, we will have an opportunity to broaden our focus beyond the President's plan as we explore an array of strategies in Iraq. The variance among the plans offered at this hearing underscores the complexity of the situation in Iraq and the need to provide close oversight of the administration's policies.

Although the President is committed to his approach and has initiated steps to implement it, planning by the administration must continue. We must plan for contingencies, including the failure of the Iraqi Government to reach compromises and the persistence of violence despite United States and Iraqi Government efforts.

Last week, our committee had the opportunity to engage military experts on the President's plan, as well as military conditions in Iraq. Our panel of four distinguished retired generals voiced deep concerns about how we translate our military position in Iraq into political gains. It remains unclear how expanded, continued, or reduced United States military presence can be used to stimulate Iraqi political reconciliation.

Wide, though not unanimous, agreement exists that our military presence in Iraq represents leverage, either because it can be expanded or because it can be withdrawn, but there is little agreement on how to translate this leverage into effective action by the Iraqi Government. Some commentators talk of "creating space" for the Iraqi Government to establish itself, but it is far from clear that the government can or will take advantage of such space.

In a previous hearing, Secretary Richard Haass highlighted a fundamental disconnect that we must overcome for any plan to work, when he observed, "The U.S. goal is to work with Iraqis to establish a functioning democracy in which the interests and rights of minorities are protected. The goal of the Iraqi Government appears to be to establish a country in which the rights and interests of the Shia majority are protected above all else."

In such a situation, even if additional troops have a discernible impact on the violence in Iraq, this progress in the street may be immaterial to achieving political reconciliation. If this is true, all we would gain with a surge is a temporary and partial reduction of violence in Baghdad. That would have some salutary benefits for some Iraqis, but it would not help us achieve our strategic objectives.

If we undertake the tremendous investment that sending more American soldiers to Iraq represents, it should be in support of a clear strategy for achieving a negotiated reconciliation. We should not depend on theories or hopes that something good may happen if we dampen violence in Baghdad.

Thus, as the administration increases troops, it becomes more imperative to develop a backup plan and aggressively seek a framework for a political solution. It is not enough to set benchmarks to measure the progress of the Iraqi Government. If the Iraqi Government has different timetables and objectives than we do, such benchmarks will not be met in a way that transforms the politics of the nation.

Backup plans must be synchronized with a wider strategic vision for the Middle East. The fall of Saddam Hussein and the rise of the Shia majority in Iraq have opened possibilities for broader conflict along sectarian lines. Sunni Arab regimes in the region are deeply concerned about the influence of Iran and its growing aggressiveness. An Iran that is bolstered by an alliance with a Shiite government in Iraq or a separate Shiite state in southern Iraq would pose serious challenges for Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, and other Arab governments. The underlying issue for American foreign policy is how we defend our interests in the Middle East, given the new realities that our 4 years in Iraq have imposed. We need frank policy discussions in this country about our vital interests in the region. The difficulties we have had in Iraq make a strong presence in the Middle East more imperative, not less.

I welcome, along with you, Mr. Chairman, our distinguished guests, and we look forward to a very thoughtful hearing.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

We'll begin in order—starting with Mr. Gelb, Luttwak, Korb, and Malley.

The floor is yours, Les. You have to press that button there to turn this thing on.

Dr. GELB. Oh, there we go.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF HON. LESLIE H. GELB, PRESIDENT EMERITUS AND BOARD SENIOR FELLOW, COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS, NEW YORK, NY

Dr. GELB. Mr. Chairman, Mr. Former Chairman, member of the committee, permit me a moment of reflection.

I know well the bipartisan power of this committee. I worked here over 40 years ago for Senator Jacob Javits, and, in 1966, this committee conducted hearings on Vietnam that really changed the course of the debate in the United States about that war. It illuminated the situation in Vietnam, and our choices. Those hearings were a monument to bipartisanship and to democracy.

I am honored to be here to present the proposal, strategic alternative, developed by the chairman and myself, now almost a year ago. And since we first put it forward, it has been so misrepresented, maligned, and attacked that my wife now calls it "The Biden Plan." [Laughter.]

The essence of the idea, as the chairman just outlined it a moment ago, is that if there is to be a settlement of this war—and we may be beyond that point—it has to be a political settlement based on a power-sharing arrangement. And there are two kinds of power-sharing arrangements. One can strive for a strong central government or one can strive for a decentralized or federal system. The administration has tried for over 3 years now to build a strong central government. It has not worked, it will not work, because there are not sufficient common interests and there's almost total lack of trust. That government is inefficient and corrupt.

Most of the ministers—and I know you've all been there—don't even leave the Green Zone to go to their ministries to run their departments. So, the alternative for the Iraqis is a decentralized system. And I say "for the Iraqis," because they themselves, as the chairman noted, have called what they have a federal system, and in their Constitution, they put forward a federal structure and provide for provinces joining with other provinces to form regional governments. This is not an invention of Chairman Biden and myself; it is in their Constitution. They also passed implementing legislation a few months ago to make this happen, though they deferred it.

Now, what would a government like this look like? Why is there opposition to the idea of actually getting it done, implementing the federal system? And finally, how would you overcome that opposition and resistance?

The government would look like this. The central government would be based on the areas where there are genuine common interests among the different Iraqi parties; that is, foreign affairs, border defense, currency, and, above all, oil and gas production and revenues. I'll come back to that in a moment. But that's where they share real interests.

As for the regions, whether they be three or four or five, whatever it may be—it's up to—all this is up to the Iraqis to decide—would be responsible for legislation, administration, and internal security. Very important. Because they would defend themselves. They have that interest in taking care of their own people.

Now, 80 percent of the Iraqi people approved that constitution and that federal system. Eighty percent of the national assembly

backed the idea of moving forward on the federal system because it's a way of letting the different communities run their own affairs and, at the same time, keeping the country together.

So, why the opposition? The opposition comes principally from the Sunnis and principally because they've been used to running that country for hundreds of years, and they still view themselves as the natural rules of the whole country; they don't want to give it up. And they are backed in that desire by their Sunni Arab neighbors, who like the idea of the Sunnis running Iraq, don't like the idea of the Shiites running it, and don't want to see Iraq broken up in any fashion whatsoever, because it's a bad precedent for them. And they're, in turn, backed by the Bush administration and by most of the Middle East experts in this country, who tend to follow the Sunni way of thinking on this.

There are Shiites opposed to this, too. And those Shiites are opposed to it because they think it's now their turn to run all of Iraq, so they don't want to see it federalized to weaken their power. And they've resisted it on those grounds.

The Kurds are all for it, and, for almost 13 years, they've been running their own regional government, and very successfully.

Now, how do you overcome their resistance? This is a big problem, and it may not be doable, but here is what the chairman and I have put forward.

First and foremost, you try to make the Sunnis an offer they can't refuse. You let them run their own region. And they have to see that that's preferable to their being a permanent minority in a government run by the Shiites and the Kurds. This way, they can run their own affairs, and it's their last chance to do so.

Second, you've got to make it economically viable for the Sunnis to have their own region. And the only way you can do that is by changing the Constitution so that it guarantees the Sunnis 20 percent—based on their proportion of the population—20 percent of the oil revenues, present and future. Right now, they're guaranteed nothing.

How do you convince the Shiites? Basically, you've got to convince them that, if they try to run the whole country, they're going to be faced with endless insurgencies, themselves; they'll have to pick up the civil war, they'll never be able to enjoy the riches of that country of Iraq.

But those arguments, even though they make sense, aren't enough, and we've got to go further. The second element of the plan is how you use United States military withdrawals and redeployments, both within Iraq and within the region, to reinforce the kind of political settlement we would hope the Iraqis could reach. The chairman and I have a little disagreement over what that military plan should look like, because I don't see it in terms of any fixed timetables, I see it more as a process that we ask our military to arrange with the Iraqi military over the course of, say, 2 years, where we can make adjustments according to the situation.

Now, the withdrawal process opens up political doors for us that reinforce this decentralization, or federal idea. In the first place, it allows us to move toward an alliance with many of the Sunnis in the center of that country—with the Baathists, with the sheikhs, and with the secular leaders of that society—because once they see

we're not going to be there and remain their central enemy, they can band with us against the common enemy, the terrorists in their midst, the jihadis, the al-Qaeda people, and they are the common enemy for both of us. Those are the people who are destroying the homes of most of the Sunnis in the center of the country, destroying their lives. And once they see that we're not there as a permanent military factor in the center of that country, we can begin to make that alliance with them. The same goes with the Shias. Once they see that we're in the process of leaving, we can develop common interests with them, as well.

These are, in the last analysis, Iraqi Arab Shias, not Iranian Persian Shiites. And there's an important historical difference there. And we can play on that in order to develop a relationship with the Shia that will help us advance a new government.

There's also a difference in religious tradition, where the Iraqi Shias are much less willing to have their high clergy be involved directly in government than the Iranian Shiites. So, there's area for us to work with once they see we're not going to be a permanent military presence.

The diplomacy is the final factor here. And as we see the diplomacy, it is not something that can create a solution, nor should we try to create or impose one on the Iraqis. The diplomacy can't solve the problem within Iraq, but it can reinforce any kind of arrangement that the Iraqis themselves are moving toward. The Iranians or the Saudis are not going to impose a settlement on their allies within Iraq, but they'll support something they themselves want to achieve.

Now, finally, Mr. Chairman, members, I know it's very fashionable to talk about the United States being in a weak and waning position in the Middle East and the gulf, and that Iran is in the ascendancy. I think this is nonsense. The United States is a great power, the Iranians are a puny power. Their importance in that area is temporary and based on the fact that the people of that area, the leaders, don't see a coherent policy from the United States of America. When we have a coherent policy, those countries will come to us.

After the Vietnam war—and it ended in an awful way—President Nixon and Secretary of State Kissinger had a coherent strategy, and the nations of Asia rallied to the United States, because they did not want to see United States weakened in their part of the world. They understood that they could not do what they wanted economically and protect their security without a strong United States, and they rallied to us. The same will happen in the Middle East and gulf once the leaders and peoples of that area of the world believe we have a sensible strategy and have returned to a commonsense approach to the area.

I thank you very much for your attention.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Gelb follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. LESLIE H. GELB, PRESIDENT EMERITUS AND BOARD SENIOR FELLOW, COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS, NEW YORK, NY

WE'RE FIGHTING NOT TO LOSE

(By Leslie H. Gelb and Richard K. Betts, director of Columbia University's Saltzman Institute of War and Peace Studies—The Washington Post, Jan. 14, 2007)

Iraq is not Vietnam, yet history seems intent on harnessing them together. Three years ago this seemed an unlikely pairing; surely President Bush would not take the United States down the same trail as Lyndon B. Johnson. Yet, even though Iraq's story is far from complete, each day raises the odds that the U.S. fate in Iraq could eventually be the same as it was in Vietnam—defeat.

The differences are clear. The policy consensus over the Vietnam war ran deeper and lasted longer than on the Iraq conflict. While Johnson and his advisers slogged deeper into Vietnam with realistic pessimism, Bush and his colleagues plunged ahead in Iraq with reckless optimism. And in Vietnam, U.S. leaders made most of their mistakes with their eyes wide open, while it is impossible to fathom exactly what the Bush team thought it was doing after the fall of Baghdad.

Twenty-eight years ago, we wrote a book, "The Irony of Vietnam: The System Worked," which argued that although U.S. policy in that war was disastrous, the policymaking process performed just as it was designed to. It seems odd that a good system could produce awful results, but the subsequent declassified documents and the public record showed it to be true. U.S. officials generally had accurate assessments of the difficulties in Vietnam, and they looked hard at the alternatives of winning or getting out.

On Iraq the insider documents are not available, but journalistic accounts suggest that Bush's policy process was much less realistic. The President did not take seriously the obstacles to his goals, did not send a military force adequate to accomplish the tasks, failed to plan for occupation, and took few steps to solve the underlying political conflicts among Iraqis.

Despite these different paths, Bush now faces Johnson's dilemma, that of a war in which defeat is unthinkable but victory unlikely. And Bush's policy shift last week suggests that he has come to the same conclusion as Johnson: Just do what you can not to lose and pass the problem on to your successor.

In both cases, despite talk of "victory," the overriding imperative became simply to avoid defeat.

How did these tragedies begin? Although hindsight makes many forget, the Vietnam war was backed by a consensus of almost all foreign-policy experts and a majority of U.S. voters. Until late in the game, opponents were on the political fringe. The consensus rested on the domino theory—if South Vietnam fell to communism, other governments would topple. Most believed that communism was on the march and a worldwide Soviet-Chinese threat on the upswing.

The consensus on Iraq was shallower and shorter lived. Bush may have been bent on regime change in Baghdad from the start, but in any case a consensus emerged among his advisers that Saddam Hussein was on the verge of securing nuclear weapons capability—and that deterrence and containment would not suffice. That judgment came to be shared by most of the national security community. Congress also saluted early on. The vote to endorse the war was less impressive than the Gulf of Tonkin resolution, which passed almost unanimously, but many Democrats signed on to topple Hussein for fear of looking weak.

As soon as the war soured, the consensus crumbled. Without the vulnerability of middle-class youth to conscription, and with the political left in a state of collapse since Ronald Reagan's Presidency, the antiwar movement on Iraq did not produce sustained mass protests as Vietnam did by the late 1960s. But the sentiment shows up just as clearly in the polls.

Consensus held longer over Vietnam because few in or out of the government had ever expected a quick and easy resolution of the war. Officials knew what they were up against—the force of nationalism embodied by Ho Chi Minh, and a succession of corrupt, inefficient, and illegitimate South Vietnamese governments. Officials usually put on a brave face, but they understood that Washington was in for the long haul. In the Bush administration, by contrast, a gap opened almost immediately between senior political leaders on one side, and most military and diplomatic professionals, as well as the media, on the other. The steady optimism of the former in the face of the reporting of the latter quickly undid public confidence in the Pentagon's and White House's leadership.

By 1968, Johnson understood that victory was not in the cards at any reasonable price, but that defeat would be catastrophic. The war had reached a deteriorating stalemate. If victory were possible, it would require all-out use of military force against North Vietnam, a move that the administration believed ran the risk of war with the Soviet Union and China. If the United States were defeated, however, the dominos would fall, and one of those dominos would be the occupant of the White House. Periodically, top officials concluded that events in Vietnam had taken another turn for the worse, and to prevent defeat they had to dispatch more troops and do more bombing—and so the steady escalation proceeded without lasting effect on the balance of power in Vietnam.

Constrained against achieving victory or accepting defeat, Johnson and his aides chose to do the minimum necessary to get through each crunch in Vietnam and at home, hoping that something would turn up to save them. In the end, Johnson made the ultimate political sacrifice and declined to run for reelection. But as he announced a halt of the bombing and the offer of negotiations with Hanoi, he also increased the number of U.S. troops in Vietnam. Even as he was leaving office, he had no intention of being "the first American President to lose a war."

By contrast, Bush never had to worry that escalation would bring an all-out global war; the United States is the world's sole superpower. Nonetheless, until last week, he never chose to increase the combat commitment significantly; the "surge" announced last week is but the latest experiment with a temporary increase in forces. At the beginning this was probably because he did not believe more troops were needed to win. As the venture went bad, the Volunteer Army was stretched too thin to provide an option for massive escalation. But now it is clear that Bush does not believe he can possibly win with anything close to the number of forces currently committed. The President certainly perceives the risks of losing, and at this moment of truth, he is repeating Johnson's decision pattern—doing the minimum necessary not to lose.

Whatever the similarities in the way Washington dealt with Vietnam and Iraq, there were few similarities between the two wars themselves. Vietnam was both a nationalist war against outside powers—first the French, then the Americans—and a civil war. In Iraq, the lines of conflict are messier. The main contest is the sectarian battle between Arab Shiites and Arab Sunnis. The Kurds, so far, are mostly bystanders, while the Americans struggle to back a weak yet balky government they hope can remain a secular alternative.

Combat in Vietnam was a combination of insurgency and conventional warfare, and the conventional element played to U.S. strengths. By contrast, Washington's massive firepower advantages are nullified in Iraq because the fighting remains at the level of guerrilla warfare and terrorism. Iraq is harder for our military than Vietnam was, yet we eventually had 540,000 troops in Vietnam compared with barely a quarter of that number in Iraq. The current U.S. footprint in Iraq is much smaller—only about one-tenth the density of U.S. and allied forces per square mile in South Vietnam at the height of U.S. involvement, and with an Iraqi population 50 percent larger than South Vietnam's. Consequently, the security situation was never as bad in Vietnam as it is in Iraq today. In Vietnam, Americans could travel most places day and night, while in Iraq it is dangerous to leave the Green Zone. Even Bush's planned 21,500-troop increase will not make a lasting difference if the host government does not become far more effective. As in Vietnam after the Tet Offensive of 1968, the enemy can lie low until we stand down. In both countries, U.S. forces worked hard at training national armies. This job was probably done better in Vietnam, and the United States certainly provided South Vietnamese troops with relatively better equipment than they have given Iraqis so far. South Vietnamese forces were more reliable, more effective, and far more numerous than current Iraqi forces are.

In both cases, however, the governments we were trying to help proved inadequate. Unlike their opponents, neither Saigon nor Baghdad gained the legitimacy to inspire their troops. At bottom, this was always the fundamental problem in both wars. Americans hoped that time would help, but leaders such as South Vietnam's Nguyen Van Thieu and Iraq's Nouri al-Maliki were never up to the job.

Americans have not stopped arguing about Vietnam—about whether the war could have been won if fought differently, or was an impossible task from the outset, or about who was to blame. Hawks claim that the United States could have won in Vietnam if the military had been allowed to fight without restraint. Supporters of the war in Iraq say that the United States could have prevented the resistance if it had been better prepared for occupation after the fall of Baghdad. Doves in both cases say that the objectives were never worth any appreciable price in blood and treasure.

After Vietnam, recriminations over failure became a never-healed wound in American politics. Now Iraq is deepening that wound. With some luck, Washington may yet escape Baghdad more cleanly than it did in the swarms of helicopters fleeing Saigon in 1975. But even if the United States is that fortunate, the story of the parallel paths to disaster should be chiseled in stone—if only to avoid yet another tragedy in a distant land, a few decades down the road.

UNITY THROUGH AUTONOMY IN IRAQ

(By Joseph R. Biden, Jr., and Leslie H. Gelb—The New York Times, May 1, 2006)

A decade ago, Bosnia was torn apart by ethnic cleansing and facing its demise as a single country. After much hesitation, the United States stepped in decisively with the Dayton Accords, which kept the country whole by, paradoxically, dividing it into ethnic federations, even allowing Muslims, Croats, and Serbs to retain separate armies. With the help of American and other forces, Bosnians have lived a decade in relative peace and are now slowly strengthening their common central government, including disbanding those separate armies last year.

Now the Bush administration, despite its profound strategic misjudgments in Iraq, has a similar opportunity. To seize it, however, America must get beyond the present false choice between "staying the course" and "bringing the troops home now" and choose a third way that would wind down our military presence responsibly while preventing chaos and preserving our key security goals.

The idea, as in Bosnia, is to maintain a united Iraq by decentralizing it, giving each ethnoreligious group—Kurd, Sunni Arab, and Shiite Arab—room to run its own affairs, while leaving the central government in charge of common interests. We could drive this in place with irresistible sweeteners for the Sunnis to join in, a plan designed by the military for withdrawing and redeploying American forces, and a regional nonaggression pact.

It is increasingly clear that President Bush does not have a strategy for victory in Iraq. Rather, he hopes to prevent defeat and pass the problem along to his successor. Meanwhile, the frustration of Americans is mounting so fast that Congress might end up mandating a rapid pullout, even at the risk of precipitating chaos and a civil war that becomes a regional war.

As long as American troops are in Iraq in significant numbers, the insurgents can't win and we can't lose. But intercommunal violence has surpassed the insurgency as the main security threat. Militias rule swathes of Iraq and death squads kill dozens daily. Sectarian cleansing has recently forced tens of thousands from their homes. On top of this, President Bush did not request additional reconstruction assistance and is slashing funds for groups promoting democracy.

Iraq's new government of national unity will not stop the deterioration. Iraqis have had three such governments in the last 3 years, each with Sunnis in key posts, without noticeable effect. The alternative path out of this terrible trap has five elements. The first is to establish three largely autonomous regions with a viable central government in Baghdad. The Kurdish, Sunni, and Shiite regions would each be responsible for their own domestic laws, administration, and internal security. The central government would control border defense, foreign affairs, and oil revenues. Baghdad would become a federal zone, while densely populated areas of mixed populations would receive both multisectarian and international police protection.

Decentralization is hardly as radical as it may seem: The Iraqi Constitution, in fact, already provides for a federal structure and a procedure for provinces to combine into regional governments.

Besides, things are already heading toward partition: Increasingly, each community supports federalism, if only as a last resort. The Sunnis, who until recently believed they would retake power in Iraq, are beginning to recognize that they won't and don't want to live in a Shiite-controlled, highly centralized state with laws enforced by sectarian militias. The Shiites know they can dominate the government, but they can't defeat a Sunni insurrection. The Kurds will not give up their 15-year-old autonomy.

Some will say moving toward strong regionalism would ignite sectarian cleansing. But that's exactly what is going on already, in ever-bigger waves. Others will argue that it would lead to partition. But a breakup is already under way. As it was in Bosnia, a strong federal system is a viable means to prevent both perils in Iraq.

The second element would be to entice the Sunnis into joining the federal system with an offer they couldn't refuse. To begin with, running their own region should be far preferable to the alternatives: Being dominated by Kurds and Shiites in a central government or being the main victims of a civil war. But they also have to be given money to make their oil-poor region viable. The constitution must be amended to guarantee Sunni areas 20 percent (approximately their proportion of the population) of all revenues.

The third component would be to ensure the protection of the rights of women and ethnoreligious minorities by increasing American aid to Iraq but tying it to respect for those rights. Such protections will be difficult, especially in the Shiite-controlled south, but Washington has to be clear that widespread violations will stop the cash flow.

Fourth, the President must direct the military to design a plan for withdrawing and redeploying our troops from Iraq by 2008 (while providing for a small but effective residual force to combat terrorists and keep the neighbors honest). We must avoid a precipitous withdrawal that would lead to a national meltdown, but we also

can't have a substantial long-term American military presence. That would do terrible damage to our Armed Forces, break American and Iraqi public support for the mission, and leave Iraqis without any incentive to shape up.

Fifth, under an international or United Nations umbrella, we should convene a regional conference to pledge respect for Iraq's borders and its federal system. For all that Iraq's neighbors might gain by picking at its pieces, each faces the greater danger of a regional war. A "contact group" of major powers would be set up to lean on neighbors to comply with the deal.

Mr. Bush has spent 3 years in a futile effort to establish a strong central government in Baghdad, leaving us without a real political settlement, with a deteriorating security situation—and with nothing but the most difficult policy choices. The five-point alternative plan offers a plausible path to that core political settlement among Iraqis, along with the economic, military, and diplomatic levers to make the political solution work. It is also a plausible way for Democrats and Republicans alike to protect our basic security interests and honor our country's sacrifices.

The Chairman. Thank you. I still want to be associated with the plan.

Dr. Luttwak.

STATEMENT OF DR. EDWARD N. LUTTWAK, SENIOR FELLOW, CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, WASHINGTON, DC

Dr. LUTTWAK. I, of course, am honored to be before you today.

I emphatically agree with Mr. Gelb's closing remarks. The Iranians stride around as if they have won great victories, but this generation of Pasdaran, of Iranians, have only fought one war, with Iraq, which they lost. I'd agree that they are not a great power.

Further, I believe that, inadvertently, what we have done, and what certain Iranians have done, has brought about a fracture in the Middle East. The ancient quarrel between the Shia interpretation and the Sunni interpretation of Islam has been activated and turned into a dynamic conflict. This has had all kinds of unexpected consequences.

I notice that, for the first time in all the years I've followed foreign affairs, the Saudi Government has become a real ally of the United States. Back in 2000, some Saudis supported al-Qaeda, funded it, others let it operate, others winked at al-Qaeda. Today, the Saudis are real allies in Lebanon, where they are helping Prime Minister Siniora to block the Hezbollah.

The Jordanians are very active. They were, in the past, too, but not as much.

The Egyptians were also real allies in the past but are much more active today. Why? Because they're afraid of the so-called Shia "crescent": It starts with Iran, extends to a Shia-dominated Iraq and the Alawite-dominated government of Syria—they are not Twelver Shia and would be persecuted in Iran, but nevertheless cooperates politically with Iran, and then, of course, the Hezbollah of Lebanon. That is the famous Shia "crescent" from Iran to the Mediterranean. The Sunni states are afraid of it, partly because of their own Shia minorities, and the result is an unfriendly equilibrium between Shia and Sunni states, but of course inside Iraq there is Shia-Sunni violence instead of a strategic equipoise. Whether we want it or not, the Bush administration—which certainly never intended it—has brought about a classic situation that critics might describe as "Divide and Rule." It is not what anyone wanted, but this equilibrium means, in my view, that the risks and the costs of whatever we do in Iraq are much less than they seem. Many

people say that the war in Iraq has brought about a tremendous geopolitical disaster in the Middle East. I would simply say that it's brought into existence a new equilibrium, where the Shia of Iraq absolutely need American power, because, as Les Gelb correctly pointed out, the Sunnis, minority as they are, they have always ruled Iraq, for a reason because the Shia are always so divided. So, the Shia of Iraq need the United States, absolutely. And that's why we've had the spectacle of Mr. Abdul Aziz al-Hakim, son of a radical Ayatollah, himself a radical—the same al-Hakim, who spent 23 years in Iran, where many times he declaimed "Death to America"—coming to the White House and sitting with President Bush to ask for American help. So, in Iraq, the Shia need us; outside Iraq, the Sunnis need us. This is called "divide and rule," whether you wish it or not. You don't have to be Machiavellian, you do not have to be a Metternich; it just happens quite naturally. No great cleverness brought it about, no great cleverness is needed to operate it in our interest. It means that the costs and risks of whatever we do are much less than they would have been 5 years ago.

This is the context in which I recommend disengagement. It is a context, which I do not see as tragic and disastrous, because it is an equipoise. Disengagement is not withdrawal, it is not the leap in the dark of abandonment. Disengagement means just that, that is, you don't patrol the villages and towns, you don't outpost, you don't checkpoint the roads but still remain in Iraq with a fraction of the present force.

I should inform you, parenthetically, that primarily I made my living as a tactical consultant all these years, dealing with such things as how to organize patrols and I have field experience. Therefore, I am acutely aware of the difference disengagement would make.

Disengagement is not withdrawal. What does it mean? You don't patrol, you don't outpost, but you don't leave the country; you stay, for example, in "Camp Victory," the Baghdad International Airport. You might stay in the Green Zone, at least transitionally. You would certainly stay in a major logistic base, which already exists in western Iraq which is largely desert. Saddam Hussein, helpfully, built a couple of good bases there that can easily be rehabilitated, they just need some plumbing work done on them.

So, the United States would be there with what? With a force-level that has to be determined, but it should be of the order of one-tenth of the force we now have.

And what would that force do? Well, it would give general political backing to the elected Government of Iraq. It is an elected government, it deserves our general political backing. It would stop any invasions or rather, deter any invasions. And if anybody—let's say that some al-Qaeda-type extreme groups takes over a town and starts going around with flags and making itself visible, a strike force could sally out and hit it.

At the present moment, as you all know, we are not expending a lot of ammunition in Iraq; and, therefore, the enormous costs of the Iraq war have to do with the logistics. A lot of it is contractor-protected logistics, it's moving things around to supply things to all our forces scattered in what is, in fact, a vast country. With disengagement, the remaining bases would be, supplied the way bases

are now supplied, which is primarily by Air Force C–130s from Kuwait, bringing the supplies. And, therefore, there would be no U.S. traffic on the roads. Once in a while, heavy equipment would be moved with road transporters. Once in a while, there would be a rare convoy, unannounced, heavily protected, and so on. This is not—these are not all ways of reducing casualties, although that is, indeed, very important. These are ways to reduce our intrusions in the life of the Iraqis.

Politically, disengagement would end what we are now doing. And what are we doing now? We are interposing ourselves between the peoples in Iraq. We are preventing the Iraqis from having their own history, from doing their own thing. We are protecting the Shia, as a whole, from the Sunnis. We are protecting them so well that some of the Shia, mostly the Jaish al-Mahdi, politically headed by Muqtada al-Sadr, feels free to attack Americans and British troops. Disengagement would stop that—they would be busy defending themselves.

As for the wider context of disengagement, I believe the Iranian strategy has failed. They tried to become the leaders of the Middle East by being more anti-American than anybody else, more anti-Israeli, and, indeed, more anti-Jewish, with the Holocaust provocations of Ahmadinejad. The Sunni arabs have not been persuaded to follow Iran. They call them Persians—Ajamis, which implies by the way, pagan Persians, because when the Arabs first encountered them, they were pagans, and today they are pagans again. Because according to any orthodox interpretation of Sunni Islam—and I don't mean fundamentalist or extremist, just orthodox—today's Twelver Shias of Iran with their Ayatollah-saints and temporary marriages have become apostates, unlike most Shias in the past. So, the entire Iranian strategy has failed. They are not gratefully accepted as leaders by the Arabs. They are feared as enemies.

Given all of this, I respectfully disagree with any plan that would seek to manage, micromanage, macromanage, or minimanage the Iraqi reality. It is very complicated. Even the supposed facts are misleading. For example, some of the Kurds are Shia. Some are Sunni fundamentalists. They're a small minority, but they happen to be the toughest of all the extremists that we have encountered in Iraq—they have accounted for some of the worst attacks. Some of the Kurds are not Muslim at all, they are Yazidis. People talk about Shia and Sunni, meaning Arab Shia Arab Sunni, but, in Kirkuk, the No. 1 problem is the Turkmen, who are supposed to be mostly Shia. The Turks claim they are Turks. They are not, they are Azeris; and they are not Twelver Shia, they are mostly Alevis. So, the fact is that the situation is extremely complicated. And in this complicated situation, to talk in a facile manner, or even in a well-pondered and serious manner, the way the chairman and Dr. Gelb have done, is really risky.

What I see now happening in Iraq is that we have an emerging equilibrium. Civil war is a terrible thing, but it does bring civil peace by burning out the causes and opportunities of civil war. Mosul is mostly quiet. Two and a half million people, the American presence being less than 2,000, and Mosul is relatively quiet. You can actually visit Mosul. You go to Kurdistan, you take a taxi, and you go to Mosul.

The Basrah area has seen relatively little violence, except when the al-Mahdi Militia attacks the British to generate publicity for themselves.

And, of course, as the chairman has pointed out, Kurdistan is mostly quiet. Kurds, with all their divisions—tribal, linguistic, religious—are in equilibrium.

So, what is going on? There is a civil war in the remaining areas where the populations haven't been sorted out yet. Sorting out is what civil wars do, and, when they finish, the civil war ends and there is civil peace. The United States had a civil war. England had a civil war. Even the Swiss Confederation had a civil war before it attained its perfect peace. And I believe that by interfering with the civil war, we are prolonging it. And by trying to direct it and decide how Iraqis should organize their affairs, we are intruding in matters that we cannot manage successfully. Therefore, I believe that disengagement is the right way to go. I believe that disengagement is also sustainable. Surge is not sustainable.

A few final tactical comments. Even if we had 400,000 troops, the canonical number, it would not make a big difference. What actually do soldiers do? They outpost and go on patrol. That is effective insofar as U.S. troops are successfully turned into a Mesopotamian constabulary; that is, that they walk along, people come out and tell them things. If people don't tell them things, the patrol is useless.

As for outposting, that is useful when you know what to look for and you can tell the difference between local and foreign Arabs, between Sunni and Shia, not if you have just arrived and you're sitting there seeing people that you don't recognize and don't know.

So, even if we had 400,000 troops in Iraq it would be hard to use them effectively. Intelligence is to counterinsurgency what firepower is to conventional war. We don't have local intelligence, because our soldiers are not an efficient constabulary. Precisely because they are very good combat soldiers they are not a good constabulary, they don't even speak the languages of Iraq.

So you can send troops to Iraq, but you cannot tactically use them well. When generals say, "We don't need more troops in Iraq," it is not that they were patsies playing along with the administration policy at the time. They did not want more troops because they could not employ them usefully—you cannot patrol without intelligence. And, unfortunately, Central Intelligence doesn't provide it.

We have raiding forces in Iraq which could be tremendously effective. They are hardly ever used, because to make a raid, you need intelligence, and we don't have the intelligence. That is why even if you knew nothing of the politics or the strategy or the theater strategy, purely at the tactical level you would say, "Don't send me more troops. Reduce them."

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Luttwak follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. EDWARD N. LUTTWAK, SENIOR FELLOW, CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, WASHINGTON, DC

Given all that has happened in Iraq to date, the best strategy for the United States is disengagement. This would call for the careful planning and scheduling of the withdrawal of American forces from much of the country—while making due provisions for sharp punitive strikes against any attempts to harass the with-

drawing forces. But it would primarily require an intense diplomatic effort, to prepare and conduct parallel negotiations with several parties inside Iraq and out. All have much to lose or gain depending on exactly how the American withdrawal is carried out, and this gives Washington a great deal of leverage that should be used to advance American interests.

The United States cannot threaten to unleash anarchy in Iraq in order to obtain concessions from others, nor can it make transparently conflicting promises about the country's future to different parties. But once it has declared its firm commitment to withdraw—or perhaps, given the widespread conviction that the United States entered Iraq to exploit its resources, once visible physical preparations for an evacuation have begun—the calculus of other parties must change. In a reversal of the usual sequence, the American hand will be strengthened by withdrawal, and Washington may well be able to lay the groundwork for a reasonably stable Iraq. Nevertheless, if key Iraqi factions or Iraq's neighbors are too short-sighted or blinded by resentment to cooperate in their own best interests, the withdrawal should still proceed, with the United States making such favorable or unfavorable arrangements for each party as will most enhance the future credibility of American diplomacy.

The United States has now abridged its vastly ambitious project of creating a veritable Iraqi democracy to pursue the much more realistic aim of conducting some sort of general election. In the meantime, however, it has persisted in futile combat against factions that should be confronting one another instead. A strategy of disengagement would require bold, risk-taking statecraft of a high order, and much diplomatic competence in its execution. But it would be soundly based on the most fundamental of realities: Geography alone ensures all other parties are far more exposed to the dangers of an anarchical Iraq than the United States itself.

PRECEDENTS

If Iraq could indeed be transformed into a successful democracy by a more prolonged occupation, as Germany and Japan were after 1945, then of course any disengagement would be a great mistake. In both of those countries, however, by the time of the American occupation the populations were already well educated and thoroughly disenthralled from violent ideologies, and so they eagerly collaborated with their occupiers to construct democratic institutions. Unfortunately, because of the hostile sentiments of the Iraqi population, the relevant precedents for Iraq are far different.

The very word "guerilla" acquired its present meaning from the ferocious insurgency of the illiterate Spanish poor against their would-be liberators under the leadership of their traditional oppressors. On July 6, 1808, King Joseph of Spain and the Indies presented a draft constitution that, for the first time in the Spain's history, offered an independent judiciary, freedom of the press, and the abolition of the remaining feudal privileges of the aristocracy and the church. Ecclesiastical overlords still owned 3,148 towns and villages, which were inhabited by some of Europe's most wretched tenants. Yet the Spanish peasantry did not rise to demand the immediate implementation of the new constitution. Instead, they obeyed the priests who summoned them to fight against the ungodly innovations of the foreign invader, for Joseph was the brother of Napoleon Bonaparte, placed on the Spanish throne by French troops. That was all that mattered for most Spaniards—not what was proposed, but by whom.

Actually, by then the French should have known better. In 1799 the same thing had happened in Naples, whose liberals, supported by the French, were massacred by the very peasants and plebeians they wanted to emancipate, mustered into a militia of the "Holy Faith" by Cardinal Fabrizio Ruffo, coincidentally scion of Calabria's largest land-owning family. Ruffo easily persuaded his followers that all promises of merely material betterment were irrelevant, because the real aim of the French and the liberals was to destroy the Catholic religion in the service of Satan. Spain's clergy repeated Ruffo's feat, and their illiterate followers could not know that the very first clause of Joseph's draft constitution had declared the Roman Apostolic Catholic Church the only one allowed in Spain.

The same dynamic is playing itself out in Iraq now, down to the ineffectual enshrinement of Islam in the draft constitution and the emergence of truculent clerical warlords. Since the invasion in 2003, both Shiite and Sunni clerics have been repeating over and over again that the Americans and their mostly "Christian" allies are in Iraq to destroy Islam in its cultural heartland as well as to steal the country's oil. The clerics dismiss all talk of democracy and human rights by the invaders as mere hypocrisy—except for women's rights, which are promoted in ear-

nest, the clerics say, to induce Iraqi daughters and wives to dishonor their families by aping the shameless disobedience of Western women.

The vast majority of Iraqis, assiduous mosque-goers and semiliterate at best, naturally believe their religious leaders. The alternative would be to believe what for them is entirely incomprehensible—that foreigners have been unselfishly expending their own blood and treasure to help them. As opinion polls and countless incidents demonstrate, accordingly, Americans and their allies are widely hated as the worst of invaders, out to rob Muslim Iraqis not only of their territory and oil, but also of their religion and even their family honor.

The most direct and visible effects of these sentiments are the deadly attacks against the occupiers and their Iraqi auxiliaries, the aiding and abetting of such attacks, and their gleeful celebration by impromptu crowds of spectators. When the victims are members of the Iraqi police or National Guard, as is often the case these days, bystanders, family members, and local clerics routinely accuse the Americans of being the attackers—usually by missile strikes that cleverly simulate car bombs. As to why the Americans would want to kill Iraqis they are themselves recruiting, training, and paying, no explanation is offered, because no obligation is felt to unravel each and every subplot of the dark Christian conspiracy against Iraq, the Arab world, and Islam.

But it is the indirect effects of the insurgency that end whatever hopes of genuine democratization may still linger. The mass instruction of Germans and Japanese into the norms and modes of democratic governance, already much facilitated by preexisting if imperfect democratic institutions, was advanced by mass media of all kinds as well as by countless educational efforts. The work was done by local teachers, preachers, journalists, and publicists who adopted as their own the democratic values proclaimed by the occupiers. But the locals were recruited, instructed, motivated, and guided by occupation political officers, whose own cultural understanding was enhanced by much communing with ordinary Germans and Japanese.

In Iraq, none of this has occurred. An already difficult task has been made altogether impossible by the refusal of Iraqi teachers, journalists, and publicists—let alone preachers to be instructed and instruct others in democratic ways. In any case, unlike Germany or Japan after 1945, Iraq after 2003 never became secure enough for occupation personnel to operate effectively, let alone carry out mass political education in every city and town as was done in Germany and Japan.

NO DEMOCRATS, NO DEMOCRACY

Of course, many Iraqis would deny the need for any such instruction, viewing democracy as a simple affair that any child can understand. That is certainly the opinion of the spokesmen of Grand Ayatollah Sistani, for example. They have insistently advocated early elections in Iraq, brushing aside the need for procedural and substantive preparations as basic as the compilation of voter rolls, and seeing no need at all to allow time for the gathering of consensus by structured political parties. However moderate he may ostensibly be, the pronouncements attributed to Sistani reveal a confusion between democracy and the dictatorial rule of the majority, for they imply that whoever wins 50.01 percent of the vote should have all of the government's power. That much became clear when Sistani's spokesmen vehemently rejected Kurdish demands for constitutional guarantees of minority rights. Shiite majority rule could thus end up being as undemocratic as the traditional Sunni-Arab ascendancy.

The plain fact is that there are not enough aspiring democrats in Iraq to sustain democratic institutions. The Shiite majority includes cosmopolitan figures but by far its greater part has expressed in every possible way a strong preference for clerical leadership. The clerics, in turn, reject any elected assembly that would be free to legislate without their supervision, and could thus legalize, for example, the drinking of alcohol or the freedom to change one's religion. The Sunni-Arab minority has dominated Iraq from the time it was formed into a state and its leaders have consistently rejected democracy in principle for they refuse to accept a subordinate status. As for the Kurds, they have administered their separate de facto autonomies with considerable success, but it is significant that they have not even attempted to hold elections for themselves, preferring clan and tribal loyalties to the individualism of representative democracy.

Accordingly, while elections of some kind can still be held on schedule, they are unlikely to be followed by the emergence of a functioning representative assembly, let alone an effective cohesive government of democratic temper. It follows that the United States has been depleting its military strength, diplomatic leverage and treasure in Iraq to pursue a worthy but unrealistic aim.

Yet Iraq cannot simply be evacuated, abandoning its occupation-sponsored government even if legitimized by elections, to face emboldened Baath loyalists and plain Sunni-Arab revanchists with their many armed groups, local and foreign Islamists with their terrorist skills, and whatever Shia militias are left out of the government. In such a contest, the government, with its newly raised security forces of doubtful loyalty, is unlikely to prevail. Nor are the victors likely to peacefully divide the country among themselves, so that civil war of one kind or another would almost certainly follow. An anarchical Iraq would both threaten the stability of neighboring countries and offer opportunities for their interference—which might even escalate to the point of outright invasions by Iran or Turkey or both, initiating new cycles of resistance, repression, and violence.

HOW TO AVOID A ROUT

The probable consequences of an abandonment of Iraq are so bleak that few are willing to contemplate them. That is a mistake, however; it is precisely because unpredictable mayhem is so predictable that the United States might be able to disengage from Iraq at little cost, or even perhaps advantageously.

To see how disengagement from Iraq might be achieved with few adverse effects, or even turned into something of a success, it is useful to approach its undoubted complications by first considering the much simpler case of a plain military retreat. A retreat is notoriously the most difficult of military operations to pull off successfully. At worst, it can degenerate into a disastrous rout. But a well-calculated retreat can not only extricate a force from a difficult situation, but in doing so actually turn the tide of battle by luring the enemy beyond the limits of its strength until it is overstretched, unbalanced, and ripe for defeat. In Iraq the United States faces no single enemy army it can exhaust in this way, but rather a number of different enemies whose mutual hostility now lies dormant but could be catalyzed by a well-crafted disengagement.

Because Iraq is under foreign occupation, nationalist, and pan-Arab sentiments currently prevail over denominational identities, inducing Sunni and Shiite Arabs to unite against the invaders. And so long as Iraqis of all kinds believe that the United States has no intention of withdrawing, they can attack American forces to express their nationalism or Islamism without calculating the consequences for themselves of a post-American Iraq. That is why Muqtada al-Sadr's Shiite militia felt free to attack the U.S. troops that, elsewhere, were fighting Sunnis bent on restoring their ancestral supremacy, and why the action was applauded by the clerics and Shiite population at large. Yet if faced by the prospect of an imminent American withdrawal, Shiite clerics and their followers would have to confront the equally imminent threat of the Baath loyalist and Sunni fighters—the only Iraqis with recent combat experience, and the least likely to accept Shiite clerical rule.

That is why, by moving to withdraw, the United States could secure what the occupation has never had, namely the active support of its greatest beneficiaries, the Shiite clerics and population at large. What Washington needs from them is a total cessation of violence against the coalition throughout Iraq, full cooperation with the interim government in the conduct of elections, and the suspension of all forms of support for other resisters. Given that there is already some acquiescence and even cooperation, this would not require a full reversal in Shiite attitudes.

THE NEIGHBORS

Iran, for its part, has much to fear from anarchy in Iraq, which would offer it more dangers than opportunities. At present, because the Iranians think the United States is determined to remain in Iraq no matter what, the hard-liners in Iran's Government feel free to pursue their anti-American vendetta by political subversion, by arming and training al-Sadr's militia, and by encouraging the Syrians to favor the infiltration of Islamist terrorists into Iraq.

Yet anarchy in Iraq would threaten not merely Iran's stability but also its territorial integrity. Minorities account for more than half the population, yet the Government of Iran is not pluralist at all. It functions as an exclusively Persian empire that suppresses all other ethnic identities and imposes the exclusive use of Farsi in public education, thus condemning all others to illiteracy in their mother tongues. Moreover, not only the Bahai but also more combative heterodox Muslims are now persecuted. Except for some Kurds and Azeris, no minority is actively rebellious as yet, but chaos in Iraq could energize communal loyalties in Iran—certainly of the Kurds and Arabs. An anarchical Iraq would offer bases for Iranian dissidents and exiles, at a time when the theocratic regime is certainly weaker than it once was; its political support has measurably waned, its revolutionary and religious authority

is now a distant memory, and its continued hold on power depends increasingly on naked force—and it knows it.

Once the United States commits to a disengagement from Iraq, therefore, a suitably discreet dialog with Iranian rulers should be quite productive. Washington would not need to demand much from the Iranians: Only the end of subversion, arms trafficking, hostile propaganda, and Hezbollah infiltration in Iraq. Ever since the 1979 revolution, the United States has often wished for restraint from the theocratic rulers of Iran, but has generally lacked the means to obtain it. Even the simultaneous presence of U.S. combat forces on both the eastern and western frontiers of Iran has had little impact on the actual conduct of the regime, which usually diverges from its more moderate declared policies. But what the entry of troops could not achieve, a withdrawal might, for it would expose the inherent vulnerability to dissidents of an increasingly isolated regime.

As an ally of longstanding, Turkey is in a wholly different category. It has helped the occupation in important ways—after hindering the initial invasion—but it has done less than it might have done. The reason is that Turkish policy on Iraq has focused to an inordinate extent on the enhancement of the country's Turkmen minority, driven not by a dubious ethnic solidarity (they are Azeris, not Turks) but by a desire to weaken the Iraqi Kurds. The Iraqi Turkmen are concentrated in and around the city of Kirkuk, possession of which secures control of a good part of Iraq's oil-production capacity. By providing military aid to the Turkmen, the Turkish Government is, therefore, assisting the anti-Kurdish coalition in Kirkuk, which includes Sunnis actively fighting Americans. This amounts to indirect action against the United States at one remove. There is no valid justification for such activities, which have increased communal violence and facilitated the sabotage of oil installations.

Like others, the Turkish Government must have calculated that with the United States committed to the occupation, the added burden placed on Iraq's stability by their support of the Turkmen would make no difference. With disengagement, however, a negotiation could and should begin to see what favors might be exchanged between Ankara and Washington in order to ensure that the American withdrawal benefits Turkish interests while Turks stop making trouble in Iraqi Kurdistan.

WITH FRIENDS LIKE THESE . . .

Even Kuwait, whose very existence depends on American military power, now does very little to help the occupation and the interim Iraqi Government. The Kuwaiti Red Crescent Society has sent the odd truck loads of food into Iraq, and a gift of some $60 million has been announced, though not necessarily delivered it. Given Kuwait's exceptionally high oil revenues, however, not to mention the large revenues of Kuwaiti subcontractors working under Pentagon logistics contracts, this is less than paltry. The serious amounts of aid that Kuwait could well afford would allow the interim government to extend its authority, and help the post-election government to resolve differences and withstand the attacks destined to come against it. In procuring such aid, it would not take much reminding that if the United States cannot effect a satisfactory disengagement, the Kuwaitis will be more than 10,000 miles closer to the ensuing anarchy than the Americans themselves.

As for the Saudi regime, its relentlessly ambiguous attitude is exemplified by its July 2003 offer of a contingent of "Islamic" troops to help garrison Iraq. Made with much fanfare, the offer sounded both generous and courageous. Then it turned out that the troops in question were not to be Saudi at all—in other words, the Saudis were promising to send the troops of other, unspecified Muslim countries—and these imaginary troops were to be sent on condition that an equal number of U.S. troops be withdrawn.

In the realm of action rather than empty words, the Saudis have not actually tried to worsen American difficulties in Iraq, but they have not been especially helpful either. As with Kuwait, their exploding oil revenues could underwrite substantial gifts to the Iraqi Government, both before and after the elections. But Riyadh could do even more. All evidence indicates that Saudi volunteers have been infiltrating into Iraq in greater numbers than any other nationality. They join the other Islamists whose attacks kill many Iraqis and some Americans. The Saudis share a long border with Iraq along which there are few and rather languid patrols, rare control posts, and no aerial surveillance, even though it could be readily provided. And the Saudis could try to limit the flow of money to the Islamists from Saudi Jihad enthusiasts, and do more to discourage the religious decrees that sanction the sanctity killing of Americans in Iraq.

As it is, the Saudi authorities are doing none of this. Yet an anarchical Iraq would endanger the Saudi regime's already fragile security, not least by providing their

opponents all the bases they need and offering Iran a tempting playground for expansion. Here too, therefore, hardheaded negotiations about the modalities of an American withdrawal would seem to hold out possibilities for significant improvements.

The Syrian regime, finally, could also be engaged in a dialog, one in which the United States presents two scenarios. The first is a well-prepared disengagement conducted with much support from inside and outside Iraq, that leaves it with a functioning government.

The second is all of the above reinforced by punitive action against Syria if it sabotages the disengagement—much easier to do once American forces are no longer tied down in Iraq. For all its anti-American bluster, the Syrian regime is unlikely to risk confrontation, especially when so little is asked of it: A closure of the Syrian-Iraqi border to extremists, and the end of Hezbollah activities in Iraq, funded by Iran but authorized by Syria.

Of all Iraq's neighbors only Jordan has been straightforwardly cooperative, incidentally without compromising any of its own sovereign interests.

THE ULTIMATE LOGIC OF DISENGAGEMENT

Even if the negotiations here advocated fail to yield all they might, indeed even if they yield not much at all, the disengagement should still occur—and not only to keep faith with the initial commitment to withdraw—the United States cannot play diplomatic parlor games. Given the bitter Muslim hostility to the presence of American troops—labeled "Christian Crusaders" by the preachers—its continuation can only undermine the legitimacy of any American-supported Iraqi Government. With Iraq more like Spain in 1808 than Germany or Japan after 1945, any democracy left behind is bound to be more veneer than substance in any case. Its chances of survival will be much higher if pan-Arab nationalists, Islamists, and foreign meddlers are neutralized by diplomacy and disengagement. The alternative of a continuing garrison would only evoke continuing hostility to both Americans and any Iraqi democrats. Once American soldiers leave Iraqi cities, towns, and villages, some might remain awhile in remote desert bases to fight off full-scale military attacks against the government but even this might incite opposition, as happened in Saudi Arabia.

A strategy of disengagement would require much skill in conducting parallel negotiations. But its risks are actually lower than the alternative of an indefinite occupation, and its benefits might surprise us. An anarchical Iraq is a far greater danger to those in or near it than to the United States. It is the time to collect on that difference.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Dr. Korb.

STATEMENT OF HON. LAWRENCE J. KORB, SENIOR FELLOW, CENTER FOR AMERICAN PROGRESS, WASHINGTON, DC

Dr. KORB. Mr. Chairman, Senator Lugar, thank you very much for inviting me here today to talk about where we should go in Iraq. And I commend the committee for holding these hearings. I can't think of a more critical issue facing this country and the world.

Let me begin by saying that, given why we went in, the reasons that we were given, which turned out not to be true, and the way in which we've conducted the occupation, there are no good options. No matter what we propose—and my distinguished colleagues here have proposed various things—no one can guarantee that the outcome will be what we want. Therefore, I think it's important to keep in mind that what we have to do is select an option that gives us the best chance of protecting overall American security interests.

And I would argue, as I do in my prepared statement, that surging militarily for the third time in a year is the wrong way to go, we should surge diplomatically. I put myself—I support the comments that were made to you last week about a further—a military

surge, by Generals Hoar and McCaffrey, that it's too little, too late, and a fool's errand, because what it would mean, in my view, is merely repeating a failed strategy.

We've seen that when that, when we've surged twice in the last 6 months, the violence and death of Americans and Iraqis has increased dramatically. An increased surge would only create more targets, put more American lives at risk, increase Iraqi dependence on the United States, further undermine the precarious readiness of our ground forces, and, if we send all the troops that are supposed to go, we will have no Strategic Reserve left in the United States, and this will be contrary, not only to the wishes of our commanders on the scene in Iraq—and to the American people and to the Iraqi people. Keep in mind that more than 70 percent of the Iraqis think we're causing the violence; they want us out within a year, and, more ominously, 60 percent think it's OK to kill Americans. Rather than escalating militarily, the United States should strategically redeploy all American forces from Iraq over the next 18 months, and we should not keep any permanent bases.

I first put forth this proposal in September 2005 with my colleague at the center, Brian Katulis. Since then, it has been completely mischaracterized. People have called it "cut and run," they've talked about that it would undermine U.S. security, they've called it "retreat." When you use military force, it must enhance the security of the United States. And if we do not strategically redeploy our forces from Iraq over the next 18 months, our security is going to be undermined. We need more troops in Afghanistan. If, in fact, you send these 21,500 more to Iraq, you simply cannot put more troops in Afghanistan without really causing unfair burdens on our existing ground forces.

I commend the President for finally agreeing to increase the size of our ground forces, but this is something that should have been done several years ago.

If, in fact, we do redeploy our forces, this will also allow us to bring our National Guard forces home here to focus on homeland defense, which is a critical security mission.

If, by strategically redeploying, we can gain control over our own security interests—in many ways we have put our security in the hands of the Iraqis by saying, "We will stand down when you stand up," and, in my view, it's the only real leverage that the United States has to get the Iraqis to make the painful political compromises necessary to begin the reconciliation process. As has been mentioned here, these compromises involve balancing the roles of the central and provincial governments, distribution of oil revenues, protecting minority rights. Until that process is completed, the United States can put a soldier or a marine on every street corner in Baghdad, and it would not make a real difference.

I would remind the committee that when President Reagan, the President I had the privilege of serving, left from Lebanon, we did not leave the area. We maintained our interest in the Middle East. And our strategic redeployment plan would do the same. We're not going to leave the region. We can keep forces in Kuwait. We can put a Marine expeditionary force in a carrier battle group in the gulf.

Let me explain to you how I think this would work. And it has worked.

When Zarqawi was killed, the intelligence came to the Iraqis, the Iraqis told us, and we sent in combat aircraft to attack them. We could still do that. If, after we leave, Iraq should become a haven for al-Qaeda, or a country like Iran should decide to invade, we would be able to deal with that situation.

Now, the diplomatic surge that we urge would involve appointing an individual with the stature of former Secretary of State Colin Powell or Madeleine Albright as a special envoy. This individual would be charged with getting all six of Iraq's neighbors—Iran, Turkey, Syria, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait—involved more constructively in stabilizing Iraq. It's important to note that all of these countries are already involved, in a bilateral self-interested and disorganized way. And, in addition, this distinguished envoy should convene a Dayton-style conference to get all of the factions in Iraq, as well as all the countries in the region, together.

Now, a lot of people will argue: Why would countries like Iran and Syria, whose interests are not identical to ours, want to get involved in such a conference? Remember that, after we leave, and if we set a date, date certain, they do not want Iraq to become a failed state or a humanitarian catastrophe that would involve sending millions of refugees into their country or a haven for terrorists—remember that if Iraq should become, as some people argue, that—when we leave, a haven for groups like al-Qaeda, this would not be in the interest of a country like Iran. And remember that the Iranians have been very helpful to us in Afghanistan, not because their interests are—they want to help us, but because they do not want to see the Taliban come back to power. The Iranians have given close to $300 million in aid to the Karzai government. They're building roads and highways. They furnished us intelligence when we went in there. They were helpful in Iraq, according to Secretary Gates, until early 2004. So, the idea that somehow they would not be helpful, to me, is simply mistaken.

We—I would expect this high-profile envoy to also address the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the role of Hezbollah in Syria and Lebanon, and Iran's rising influence in the region. Now, this—the aim would not necessarily be to solve all these problems immediately, but prevent them from getting worse, and, most importantly, to show the Arab and the Muslim world that we share their concerns about the problem in the region.

Now, let me be very specific here. I think we have to take, with a grain of salt, the advice of those inside and outside the government arguing for further military escalation, not only because it's the wrong strategy, but because most of those people urging this military surge are the same people who got us into the quagmire in the first place. They told us the war would be a cakewalk, we'd be greeted as liberators, we could rebuild Iraq at a cost of $1.5 billion, and we could reduce our military strength to 30,000 by the end of 2003.

I think we should also take, with a grain of salt, what the administration is saying to us. The President assured us, as recently as October, that we were winning. And if you look at his State of the Union Address a year ago tonight, when he talked about how good

the Iraqi security forces were, how Iraq was close to democracy, how, in fact, our policy would allow us to withdraw, because the Iraqi security forces were getting so well. And this idea that somehow things began to go downhill with the bombing of Samarra last February—simply not true. Things were going downhill in 2005. The Shiite death squads were already exacting revenge on the Sunnis.

Now, let me conclude by saying that this committee and this Congress has a responsibility to the American people to take a greater role in shaping our Iraq policy. And although we all understand that you must provide the funding for the troops already in Iraq, there are things that you can do to assert control over the policy.

For example, you can make it very clear that if the administration wants to mobilize Guard and Reserve units again that have already been, that they must come back to the Congress. The law allows them to mobilize them for up to 2 years, as long as it's not consecutive. But this idea of sending them back for a couple of days and bringing them back seems to me contrary to the desires of the people who wrote the law and also would allow, again, the administration to get around whatever controls you put on the number of active forces.

I think that you should require a new NIE, as you have asked for, that talks about whether Iraq is in a civil war, a recertification by the President that the war in Iraq does not undermine the war on terror. Remember that this was in the authorization that was passed, back in 2002, allowing the President to go to war.

And finally, that you should base funding and assistance on Iraqi performance.

Let me conclude by saying that one more military escalation in Iraq offers little hope for stabilizing the country, risks doing permanent damage to our U.S. ground forces, and could undermine U.S. efforts to defeat what the President called the "global terrorist networks" that were responsible for attacking us on 9/11. The only responsible path forward is a new forceful integrated strategy that marshals the right assets for the challenges the United States faces not only in Iraq, but the Middle East and around the world.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Korb follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. LAWRENCE J. KORB, SENIOR FELLOW, CENTER FOR AMERICAN PROGRESS, SENIOR ADVISOR, CENTER FOR DEFENSE INFORMATION, WASHINGTON, DC

Chairman Biden, Senator Lugar, and members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you to discuss the war in Iraq. I cannot think of a more critical issue facing the Nation at this time.

It is important to note right upfront that, because of numerous mistakes made during the last 46 months, no good options now exist. As the Iraq Study Group (ISG) report noted, the situation in Iraq is "grave and deteriorating," and no one can guarantee that any course of action in Iraq at this point will stop the sectarian warfare, the growing violence, or the ongoing slide toward chaos. Inaction is drift, and sticking with the "current strategy" is not an acceptable option.

In 2003, the Bush administration made a fundamental strategic mistake in diverting resources to an unnecessary war of choice in Iraq and leaving the mission unaccomplished in Afghanistan. This error has allowed the Taliban to reconstitute in Afghanistan, weakened the position of the United States in the world, and undermined the fighting strength of U.S. ground forces. It also diverted critical U.S. re-

sources from effectively addressing the Iranian nuclear threat, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the situation in Lebanon.

Today, the United States once again finds itself at a strategic crossroads. This time, however, there are at least nine key lessons of the past 4 years of failure that make choosing the right path forward abundantly clear. These nine lessons point to the obvious—it is time to strategically redeploy our military forces from Iraq and begin a diplomatic surge not a further military escalation as the President has proposed.

1. The fundamental security challenge in Iraq is a violent struggle for power among empowered Shiites, embittered Sunnis, and secessionist Kurds.

The United States cannot solve Iraq's problems militarily. No matter how long the United States stays or how many troops are sent, Iraq will never become a stable, peaceful state unless the Iraqis themselves make the painful political compromises necessary to create a new Iraq. These compromises are hard because they involve balancing the power of the provincial and central governments, sharing oil revenues, and protecting minority rights. Only when the reconciliation process is complete will the Iraqis be willing to disband their militias and cease their support for the insurgency. Until then, American forces, augmented or not, can no longer stop the civil war.

More than a year after its most recent national election, during which time the United States has lost the equivalent of 13 battalions killed or wounded soldiers and marines, Iraq's leaders remain internally divided over critical issues of political and economic sharing. The national unity government has not achieved sufficient progress on addressing the key questions that drive Iraq's violence. A fundamental challenge in today's Iraq is that too many Iraqi political leaders are hedging their bets: They halfheartedly support the national government while simultaneously maintaining their independent power bases through ties to militias and other groups based on sect or ethnicity.

War is the most extreme form of politics. Since Iraq's current government is neither taking control of the chaos swirling around it, nor settling disputes over key issues that might bring an end to the sectarian bloodbath, more and more Iraqis are turning to violence.

Resolving Iraq's civil war requires a new political strategy, such as a Dayton style peace conference supported by the international community and Iraq's neighbors. In 1995 it would have been impossible for the United States and its allies to bring peace to Bosnia without engaging Serbia and Croatia, the two states responsible for the civil war in that country.

As Generals Abizaid and Casey, the commanders conducting the war, and the majority of Iraq's elected leaders agree, additional military escalation, as proposed by the President, runs a high risk of only inflaming Iraq's violence and increasing American casualties and Iraqi dependence on the United States.

2. The open-ended U.S. combat deployment fosters a culture of dependency in Iraq.

Iraqi leaders will have no incentive to undertake these painful steps unless the United States and the international community apply significant pressure on Iraq's leaders. The best way to press Iraq's leaders is to set a plan that aims to complete the U.S. military mission by a certain date, thereby creating incentives for Iraq's leaders to settle their disputes and assume greater control of the country. Given our moral obligation to the Iraqis and the practical considerations involved in redeploying about 150,000 troops, a reasonable target date for completing the U.S. combat mission should be 18 months from now, or the summer of 2008. If the Iraqis do not make these difficult choices over the next 18 months, they will have to live with the consequences. It would then be their problem, not just ours.

In the weeks before his dismissal, even former Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, a fervent supporter of staying the course and only standing down when the Iraqis stand up, and a key figure responsible for the Iraq quagmire, finally admitted that last October, "The biggest mistake would be not to pass things over to the Iraqis. It's their country. They are going to have to govern it, they're going to have to provide security for it, and they're going to have to do it sooner rather than later."

Further military escalation, or a so-called "surge" or augmentation of additional U.S. troops, would only continue to prevent Iraqis from taking greater responsibility and settling their disputes.

3. Iraq's neighbors are already involved in Iraq and must be part of the solution.

Iraq's six neighbors—Iran, Turkey, Syria, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait are already involved in some fashion in Iraq. This involvement is bilateral, self-interested, disorganized, and not channeled toward a constructive purpose that benefits the common good of all Iraqis, in large part because of the internal divisions among

Iraqis on full display in the daily violence in Iraq's streets. Moreover, the spillover effects of Iraq's civil war on the region have been growing throughout 2006 and into 2007, with Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria receiving about 2 million Iraqis fleeing the violence. Leaders throughout the region, not only on Iraq's borders, fear the ripple effects of the chaos on their immediate horizons.

To end Iraq's civil war, the country's neighbors need to be involved more constructively. These countries have an incentive to participate, and one way to increase those incentives is to send a clear signal that the United States is setting a target date for completing its military mission in Iraq and will not maintain any permanent bases in Iraq. None of the countries in the region including Iran, want to see an Iraq that becomes a failed state or a humanitarian catastrophe that would lead to it becoming a haven for terrorist groups like al-Qaeda or sending millions of more refugees streaming into their countries.

Even U.S. adversaries such as Syria and Iran will have to alter their policies once the United States begins to redeploy its military forces from Iraq. Both countries recognize that, with the United States mired in the Iraq quagmire, it has reduced its ability to confront Damascus and Tehran. These countries will continue to have every incentive to work together to keep U.S. forces bleeding as long as we keep increasing our forces.

Moreover, despite the fact that Syria and Iran do have different agendas than the United States and are contributing to the problems in Iraq, both of these nations have demonstrated a willingness to act in their own self-interest even if the United States is also a beneficiary. For example, in the 1991 Persian Gulf War, the Syrians contributed troops to the American-led coalition that evicted Iraq from Kuwait. In 2001, the Iranians worked with us by providing extensive assistance on intelligence, logistics, diplomacy, and Afghan internal politics that helped to oust the Taliban from Afghanistan. The Iranians also developed roads and power projects and dispersed more than $300 million of the $560 million it pledged to help the Karzai government. Moreover, in 2003, the Iranians sent Washington a detailed proposal for comprehensive negotiations to resolve bilateral differences and according to Secretary Gates were helpful in Iraq as recently as 2004.

The administration's refusal to deal with Syria and Iran, without preconditions, not only harms U.S. strategic interests in the Middle East—it is deadly. To refuse to talk to Syria and Iran, unless they change their foreign policies, means that many Americans will die needlessly. This lack of confidence in the U.S. ability to assert its interests diplomatically only further weakens the U.S. position in the Middle East.

As 2007 begins, the absence of a new diplomatic and political strategy is a missing link in getting Iraq's neighbors to play a more constructive role.

4. The United States must deploy its full diplomatic weight to address the problems in Iraq and the Middle East.

A new political and diplomatic surge is necessary to address Iraq's civil war and the growing instability in the Middle East. So far, the United States has not deployed all of the assets in its arsenal to address the growing strategic challenges in the Middle East. It is still relying too much on its military power rather than integrating its military component with the diplomatic component.

Sporadic trips to the region by Secretary of State Rice are necessary but not sufficient. The Bush administration should send a signal of its seriousness by appointing an individual with the stature such as that of former Secretaries of State Colin Powell or Madeleine Albright as special Middle East envoys. Former Presidents Bill Clinton and George Bush have advanced U.S. interests and improved the U.S. standing in the world by addressing the aftermath of the 2004 Asian tsunami. Individuals like Colin Powell and Madeleine Albright can help the United States address the geostrategic tsunami that has been unfolding in Iraq and the Middle East during the past 4 years.

As special envoys, the former secretaries could spearhead a new, forceful diplomatic offensive aimed at achieving peace in Iraq and making progress on other key fronts in the Middle East, including efforts to address the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the role of Hezbollah and Syria in Lebanon, Iran's rising influence in the region, and the concerns that many traditional allies, such as Jordan and Saudi Arabia, have about the shifting dynamics in the region.

This diplomatic surge must also focus on getting support and assistance from other global powers like European countries to provide more political and economic support in Iraq than they have over the last 4 years. U.S. diplomats must make clear to the world that no nation anywhere in the world can escape the consequences of continued chaos in the Middle East.

5. Further U.S. military escalation in Iraq will not make Iraq more secure.

Doubling down on a bad hand as we have done repeatedly by sending more troops to Iraq will not change the outcome. Statements by President Bush and other top officials that the United States is "not winning but not losing," are misleading. In asymmetrical guerilla warfare, the insurgents win if the occupying power does not. The situation in Iraq has reached a point at which even former Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, a leading advocate of invading and staying the course, has acknowledged that military victory is no longer possible in Iraq.

The additional 21,500 U.S. troops that would be sent in over the next 5 months represent a marginal increase in the U.S. combat presence in Iraq, not a decisive number. Even if the United States had the necessary number of men and women with the technical and language skills available to operate as a true stabilizing force or to embed with the Iraqi units—which it does not—the additional troops would likely be unable to significantly improve Iraq's security situation, certainly not without a major shift in political and diplomatic strategy.

Iraq now has more than 300,000 members in its security forces which do not lack the necessary training to quell the violence. In fact, some of them have more training than the young soldiers and marines the United States has sent to Iraq. Iraq's security forces are not tasked with fighting a major conventional war against a significant military power. Rather, what they need to do is essentially police work, that is, to stop Iraqis from killing other Iraqis.

The central problem with Iraq's security forces is not skill-building or training. It is motivation and allegiance. Most of the 10 divisions in the Iraqi Army are not multiethnic. They are staffed and led by members of their own sect. The problem is that the units are reluctant to take military action against members of their own groups who are perpetrating the violence.

Case in point: Only two of the six Iraqi battalions ordered to Baghdad this fall by the Maliki government actually showed up. What leads us to believe that three brigades now promised will show up or take military action against their own sect? And what will we do if they fail to fulfill their promises? Moreover, many of the security forces have been infiltrated by the insurgents and criminals who tip off the enemy and that are supervised by corrupt and incompetent ministers who purge the most effective commanders. As a result, the units then often employ the weapons and tactics furnished by the United States against their sectarian enemies, not those of the Iraqi State.

During the last 6 months the United States has increased, or "surged," the number of American troops in Baghdad by 12,000, yet the violence and deaths of Americans and Iraqis has climbed alarmingly, averaging 960 a week since the latest troop increase. This "surge," known as Operation Together Forward, failed to stem the violence. This past October, Army MG William Caldwell IV said that the operation "has not met our overall expectations of sustaining a reduction in the levels of violence."

As U.S. military commanders in Iraq have acknowledged, the United States could put a soldier or marine on every street corner in Baghdad and it would not make a difference if the Iraqis have not begun the reconciliation process.

Sending more troops now will only increase the Iraqi dependence on us, deplete our own Strategic Reserve, force the United States to extend the tours of those already deployed, send back soldiers and marines who have not yet spent at least a year at home, and deploy units that are not adequately trained or equipped for the deployments. Colin Powell, the former Secretary of State and former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, summarized the situation on December 19, 2006, when he said that the Active Army was just about broken and he saw nothing to justify an increase in troops.

Powell's comments echo those of LTG Peter Chiarelli, the deputy commander of the Multi-National Corps in Iraq, who said that deploying more U.S. forces will not solve Iraqis problems. A further U.S. military escalation will not tackle these core problems and would likely further exacerbate the situation and make the challenges more difficult to address.

6. The U.S. military escalation in Iraq will undermine the fight against global terrorist networks.

The brave soldiers and marines are not fighting the violent extremists who supported the attacks of September 11. They are essentially refereeing a civil war. It is time to redeploy U.S. military assets where a real military surge is desperately needed, like Afghanistan.

As President Reagan found out in Lebanon in the 1980s, U.S. military forces cannot serve as referees in a civil war. It is a no-win situation militarily. The United States will end up serving as little more than a lightening rod for the blame. According to recent measures of Iraqi public sentiment, more than 70 percent of the Iraqis

believe that American troops are responsible for the violence and 60 percent think it is acceptable to kill Americans. A majority of Iraqis want U.S. troops out of the country within a year.

If Iraqi leaders veto requests by U.S. military commanders to take on Shiite militias as happened this fall, and if Iraqi judges are frequently demanding the release of captured insurgents, U.S. troops will continue to face an impossible situation—no matter how qualified and motivated they are. As Senator Gordon Smith (R–OR) recently noted, a policy that has U.S. soldiers and marines patrolling the same streets in the same way and being blown up by the same bombs day after day is absurd.

The al-Qaeda insurgents are no longer the main problem in Iraq. We are not (if, in fact, we ever were) fighting them over there so we will not have to fight them here. Military intelligence estimates they make up less than 2 to 3 percent of those causing the chaos. Only 5 percent of the Iraqis support the philosophy of al-Qaeda, and once U.S. forces leave, the Iraqis will turn against al-Qaeda as they have in the past. The vast majority of the violence is caused by nearly two dozen Shiite militias and Sunni insurgents who are maiming and killing each other mainly because of religious differences that go back over a thousand years. Meanwhile, the real al-Qaeda problem in places like Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Somalia is not being addressed adequately.

A phased strategic redeployment of U.S. troops from Iraq should include sending 20,000 additional troops to Afghanistan leaving an Army brigade in Kuwait, and a Marine Expeditionary Force and a carrier battle group in the Persian Gulf. This will signal to the countries in the region that we will continue to be involved. Moreover, this force will have sufficient military power to prevent Iraq from becoming a haven for al-Qaeda or being invaded by its neighbors. A good example of how this would work is illustrated by the killing of Zarqawi, the leader of al-Qaeda in Iraq. Iraqi citizens provided the intelligence to Iraqi security forces, who in turn informed us. The United States then sent F–16's to bomb the hideout, something that we could do after we implement a strategic redeployment.

7. Many of the proponents for the proposed U.S. military escalation of 21,500 troops got us into the Iraq quagmire.

The Congress and the American people should ignore the advice of those who got us into this mess in the first place and pay attention to those who cautioned us not to get involved in this misadventure, among them GEN Colin Powell, Vice President Al Gore, and Senator Barack Obama.

Supporters of U.S. military escalation in Iraq in 2007 are among the same pundits and so called experts who assured the country and the American people that the U.S. invasion was necessary; that the war would be a cakewalk; that we would be greeted as liberators; that we could rebuild Iraq at a cost of $1.5 billion a year; that we could reduce our troop strength to 30,000 by the end of 2003. In addition many of these same experts did not speak up for General Shinseki before the invasion; made misleading assertions about mushroom clouds, yellowcake, and ersatz meetings in Prague; and told us as late as 2005 that the situation in Iraq was positive and in 2006 that we needed a surge of as many as 80,000 more troops.

Now many of these same pundits, who apparently seem to have no sense of shame about their previous errors, are telling us to ignore the bipartisan recommendations of the Iraq Study Group to begin to withdraw combat troops, open a regional dialog with Iran and Syria, and take a comprehensive diplomatic approach to the region. Instead, they want to throw more good money after bad, by sending more troops to achieve their version of victory in Iraq; i.e., a stable democratic Iraq that will transform the Middle East.

8. The 110th Congress has a responsibility to the American people.

Any new proposal must have the support of the American people and the international community. It is difficult, if not impossible, for the United States to wage a war of choice, effectively, if it does not have the support of the American people. After all it is they who must send their sons and daughters, husbands and wives into the conflict and spend their hard earned dollars on waging this conflict.

The American people made it clear in the congressional elections and in recent public opinion polls that they do not favor further military escalation but want a diplomatic surge, and want us to begin to withdraw.

Similarly without international support, the ability of the United States to get other nations to share the human and financial burden declines. Even our closest allies, the British, refuse to join us in the latest military escalation and will continue to withdraw. By May the British will reduce the number of their soldiers and marines from 7,000 to 3,000. In 2003, there were more than 20,000 coalition troops

in Iraq. Today there are less than 10,000 and all will be out by this summer. Even when the American people supported the initial invasion they did so on the condition that it be multilateral.

The President may say that he does not have to listen to the American people. The Congress should not let him ignore this most fundamental principle of democracy.

The President will soon submit a supplemental funding request to the defense budget of at least $100 billion to fund the cost of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan through the end of FY 2007. This is in addition to the $70 billion bridge fund Congress has already provided, bringing the total cost of the wars for this fiscal year to $170 billion, more than $14 billion a month, the vast majority of which is for Iraq.

The 110th Congress should heed the American people and fulfill their obligation to protect American security by preventing a military escalation in Iraq. They can fulfill this obligation in several ways, and one vehicle will is the supplemental funding request President Bush will present to Congress for an additional $100–$150 billion to fund military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. As a coequal branch of government, Congress can place conditions for funding additional deployments to Iraq. While Congress should not move to cut off funds for troops already deployed, it can exercise its constitutional powers to halt President Bush's proposed military escalation with amendments to the budget request:

A. Require clarification on the law that allows the President to mobilize Guard and Reserve units for up to 2 years. Congress can condition funding for a military escalation on a measure that makes clear that the total mobilization of Guard and Reserve units beginning on 9/11 cannot exceed 2 years in total, even if they are not consecutive. This will prevent the administration from calling up Guard and Reserve units for a second time without congressional approval.

B. Require a new National Intelligence Estimate on Iraq's internal conflict. Last summer, congressional leaders requested that the Director of National Intelligence prepare a National Intelligence Estimate that includes an assessment on whether Iraq is in a civil war. The 110th Congress can condition funding for a military escalation on receiving this updated estimate and submitting a declassified version to the American public.

C. Require recertification that the war in Iraq does not undermine the war against global terror networks. The joint resolution of 2002, authorizing the use of force in Iraq, required the Bush administration to certify that the Iraq war would not harm the effort against terrorism. Congress can condition funding for a military escalation on a recertification that the Iraq war does not undermine the war in Iraq.

D. Traunche funding and assistance on Iraqi performance. The 110th Congress can require a transparent, verifiable plan that conditions funding for a military escalation on the performance of Iraqi leaders to fulfill their commitments and responsibilities. Congress can mandate that the Bush administration may not obligate or expend funds unless periodic verification and certification is provided on key metrics for progress, including: (1) Steps to disband ethnic and sectarian militias; (2) measures to ensure that Iraqi Government brings to justice Iraqi security personnel who are credibly alleged to have committed gross violations of human rights; and (3) steps toward political and national reconciliation.

9. We must change course now.

The United States cannot wait for the next President to resolve the problems in Iraq. In fact, we have already waited too long. Nor should they heed the dictates of a President who has mislead us about this war for almost 4 years, most recently on October 24, 2006, when he told us we were winning the war, constantly reinvents history, and now has proposed yet another strategy for victory. We now know that the President knew that the situation in Iraq was deteriorating 6 months ago, but waited until after the election to change course. The 110th Congress has a special responsibility to assert its constitutional role and make sure that the Bush administration does not sink the country deeper into Iraq's civil war by escalating failure.

A U.S. military escalation in Iraq as proposed by President Bush holds little hope for stabilizing the country, risks doing permanent damage to U.S. ground forces, and would undermine U.S. efforts to defeat the global terrorist networks that attacked the United States on 9/11. Choosing this course would be, as Senator Smith notes, is absurd and maybe even criminal. The only responsible path forward is a new, forceful strategy that marshals the right assets for the challenges the United States faces in Iraq, in the Middle East, and around the world and redeploys our forces, strategically, over the next 18 months.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Mr. Malley.

STATEMENT OF ROBERT MALLEY, DIRECTOR, MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA PROGRAM, INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP, WASHINGTON, DC

Dr. MALLEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Lugar. Thank you very much for having me here today.

You've heard now, for some time, many descriptions of how calamitous the situation is in Iraq and in the region, and I don't need to expand on that. But I think what's important, given all that, is to cut to the chase and to be blunt and frank.

It's very hard today to imagine a positive outcome to this war. What we do know is that mere tinkering is not going to lead to success. And what we do know is that only a clean break, a dramatic change in our approach to Iraq, to its government, and to the region presents a possible chance of getting out of this in a stable way. So, either we undertake a clean break or we should stop the illusion.

If we're not prepared—if the administration is not prepared to undertake a clean break, of if the—our Iraqi allies are not prepared to undertake a clean break, we should stop pretending that we're in Iraq for a useful purpose, we should stop squandering our resources, we should stop losing the lives of young men and women; we should bring this tragic episode to a close.

Unfortunately, the plan that President Bush put on the table does not meet the test of a clean break. There are some welcome changes, most of them overdue, but, in its underlying assumptions, it basically is stay-the-course-plus-20,000—its underlying assumptions about the Iraqi Government, about our role, and about the region. In other words, it's an inadequate answer to a disastrous situation that, at best, is going to delay what only a radical course correction could prevent.

Three basic flaws that I then want to address, in terms of the plan that the International Crisis Group has put on the table.

The first flaw is that it relies on military tools to resolve a political problem. A lot of people have said that, but I think it's worth emphasizing. This may not be a war of all against all in Iraq, but it certainly is a war of many against many, not just Sunnis, Shiites, and Kurds, but within the Shiite community, within the Sunni community. The government itself, we know, is supporting militias. We know they're part of the conflict. And, therefore, this is not a struggle in which our goal is to strengthen one side to defeat another, it's to see whether all sides can reach a political compact, or else decided this is simply not solvable at this time.

The other problem with using a military tool to resolve a political problem is that it's a short-term answer to a long-term issue. And we know—and we're seeing it already—that the militias may melt away, they may choose other places to go, rather than Baghdad. And so, the administration's strategy of "clear, build, and hold" is no answer to the insurgents' and the militia strategy of "recoil, redeploy, and spoil."

No. 2. To end the sectarian fighting, the President's plan relies on the Iraqi Government and our allies in Iraq, who are party to the sectarian conflict. And that's been evidenced, to us at least, for

at least the last 2 years. It hasn't started only in 2006, as Larry Korb rightly pointed out. There is no government of national unity. We may talk about it; there is no such thing. It's not a partner in our efforts to stabilize Iraq. It hasn't been a partner in our efforts to stem the violence. It's one side in a growing and every-day-dirtier civil war.

We need to be—impose real conditionality, real toughness, including on those who we brought to power—in particular on those that we brought to power—and we need to get them to adhere to a real vision for Iraq, or, again, we should get out of that business.

The third problem with the President's plan is that its regional strategy is at war with its strategy for Iraq. If the priority today is to stabilize Iraq and to get out of there with our vital interests intact, we can't, at the same time, try to destabilize Iran and Syria. We have to choose what our goals for the region are. And right now, unfortunately, the President's plan has us going in two different directions at once. It's not as if the region has played a determining role in leading us to where we are, but it's hard for me to see how we can get out of where we are if we don't enlist the support and cooperation of all countries in the region.

So, what is our proposal? The International Crisis Group, which I have to say is based not on simply my abstract thinking at all, it is—we have analysts and consultants who have been in Iraq nonstop since 2003. Many of them have met with members of your staff. They go there, they meet not only with members of the government, but with insurgents and militia groups. And what I'm saying now reflects, to the best of my ability, what they have said to me. And, again, what they say is that only a radical and dramatic policy shift, which entails a different distribution of power in Iraq, a different vision for the country, and a different set of outside pressures and influences exercised within Iraq, has a possibility of arresting the decline.

Three—the three assumptions that the President's plan has, and which we disagree with, is, No. 1, we think that the Iraqi Government and the parties that we support are one of the actors in the sectarian violence and not partners in fighting extremists. We believe that the entire political structure that has been set up since 2003 has to be overhauled and not strengthened. And we believe that the United States must engage with all parties, rather than isolate those who precisely have the greatest capacity to sabotage what we're trying to do.

And so, what we need is a strategy that does, for the first time, what has not been done since the outset, which is a strategy that puts real pressure on all Iraqi parties to try to do the right thing. It really is the last chance to see if we could salvage Iraq today as a state.

It won't be done simply by dealing with the government, for the reasons I expressed before. And, to expand on it a little bit—and I think you'll hear about it more next week, or tomorrow, when you have testimony on the internal situation in Iraq—though parties, the politicians who are supporting, have turned out to be warlords who are lining their pockets, who are promoting their own interests, who are advancing their own personal party agendas, they've become increasingly indifferent to the country's interests as they

prepare to strengthen their own position within their community, against other communities, and within their own communities. They're preying on state coffers, and they're preying on the reconstruction funds that our taxpayers, in particular, have been paying for.

So far, our strategy has been to provide unconditional support for them, which gives them the best of both worlds. They can act like warlords and they could have the appearance of being statesmen. We have to tell them to choose. It's either warlord or it's statesmen, it can't be both. To achieve that, we propose three interrelated steps, many of which echo what the Iraqi Study Group has—says, many echo what Larry Korb just said.

The first thing is to try, for the first time, to get all Iraqi stakeholders around the table and to see whether we can come—they could come up with a consensus plan. And that means not treating the government as a privileged party, but as one of the actors in this conference. And it means not to support the Iraqi Government, but to support Iraq.

And we know the compromises that need to be made, whether it has to do with the distribution of resources, with federalism, with de-Baathification, with amnesty, with the rollup and integration of militias into the security forces, and, of course, with the timetable for the withdrawal of our own forces. And that has to be done, as I said, not only with the Iraqi Government, but with members of militias, insurgent groups, civil society, political parties, to the exclusion of the jihadist al-Qaeda group, but, other than that, erring on the side of inclusiveness rather than narrowness.

How do we get to do that? The second point we need to emphasize is that we need, as I said earlier, regional and international support. We can't do this alone. And it's not a matter of whether the United States has become a weak party in the Middle East, although I would submit that we've lost a lot of our credibility and a lot of our leverage in the region because of our policies over the last few years, but it has to do with the fact that Iraq today has become such a fragmented country in which there is no central state institution and in which militia groups, insurgent groups, and others build on this—on their ties to outside actors, and outside actors can always, if they want to, destabilize the situation by promoting the agendas of any group within Iraq. So, we need the help of anyone in the region who is prepared to do so. The neighbors didn't instigate the crisis, it's hard for me to imagine that the crisis can be resolved without them today.

The third point, which is essential in order to get a multinational strategy, is to engage with all parties in the region—and that means Iran and Syria, in particular—and to revive the Arab-Israeli peace process. It was a core recommendation of the Iraq Study Group. It was one of the first to be summarily dismissed by the President. But let me explain, again, why I think—and I think Larry Korb made some of those points—why we need to engage with Syria and Iran despite all the skepticism that one may have about it.

Both of them have huge ability to spoil the situation in Iraq. We know that. We know that they have ties to tribal groups. We know that they have ties to Sunni Arabs, in the case of Syria; with Shiite

militias, in the case of Iran; and they could do much worse than they've done already, and they use their leverage to help if they were brought to the table and they had that interest. And, again, if we don't bring them in, we know all the harm they can do.

Why revitalize the Arab-Israeli peace process? And, Mr. Chairman, I know—I've read your remarks about how you don't believe that by resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict, it's going to make any bit of difference between how Sunnis and Shiites——

The CHAIRMAN. No; I—just for clarification, that's not what I said. I said settling it——

Dr. MALLEY. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Does not settle the other.

Dr. MALLEY. No, no.

The CHAIRMAN. It would positively impact, but it does not settle.

Dr. MALLEY. OK. And I agree, I was going to say, I agree with that. Of course, the notion that, because Arabs and Israelis are going to be at peace, Sunnis and Shiites would be at peace, is a fantasy. I do think that if we want to have a strategy that gains credibility in the region, we need to revitalize, as I know you agree. I also think it's very important to revitalize the Syrian-Israeli track, both because Syria plays a critical role in Iraq, vis-a-vis Hamas, vis-a-vis Hezbollah, but because it also is quite ironic that, for the first time, at least in my memory, the United States is standing in the way of an Arab country that wants to negotiate with Israel.

If—and I think this is an important part—I've put on the table the three components that we need. If this is not undertaken by the administration, or if it's undertaken and our Iraqi partners are not prepared to cooperate, then we should bring this adventure to an end. And I say that aware of the moral and political responsibility the United States has. We played a critical role, if not the determining role, in bringing Iraq to the situation in which it finds itself today. And it's a heavy responsibility to say today, "Well, because the Iraqis are not behaving the way we expected them to, even though we're at fault, we're going to get out of this." But there is no possible justification for an open-ended commitment in a failing state, and there certainly is no possible justification to be complicit in the nefarious acts of our allies in Iraq.

A word about troop levels, which has consumed a lot of the attention and the debate here as a result of the President's request for a surge. It's the wrong question at the wrong time, disconnected from realities. A troop surge, independent from a political strategy, won't make any difference. I think everyone today has agreed with that. Maybe it will make a marginal and temporary difference, but, if you don't affect the underlying structural dynamics—at best, the violence will resume the day this troop surge comes to an end; at worst, the violence will simply move to other places.

If, on the other hand, a new compact can be reached, if we find that the Iraqi actors, all of them, are prepared to turn the page, then part of the dialog that they need to have with us is how to negotiate a troop withdrawal. I don't think the United States should stay there a long time, in any event, but we should negotiate it, we should negotiate the timetable, we should talk—use it as leverage to ensure that they hold their commitments. If, on the

other hand the compact is not reached, or it's reached but it's not implemented, then, of course, we should significantly accelerate the withdrawal of our forces, perhaps maintaining some forces to maintain—to protect our vital interests, in terms of border security.

In conclusion, I want to emphasize, again, this is really not only a last opportunity, it's a feeble hope. I think we have to be candid about it. It's a hope that's dependent on the fundamental shift on the part of Iraqi actors who have shown themselves to be mainly preoccupied with short-term gain. It's a hope that's dependent on the radical rupture on the part of an administration that's shown itself reluctant and resistant to pragmatic change. It's a hope that's dependent on a significant change in our relationship with countries in the region—in particular, Syria and Iran—a relationship that's been marked by deep distrust and strategic competition. And, finally, it's a hope that's dependent on involvement by international actors who, so far, have seemed to be more content staying on the sidelines.

But it is the only hope, at this point, that would justify remaining in Iraq in the way we—the administration intends to remain. It's the only possible justification for investing our resources and the lives of our men and women. And it's certainly the only justification for not bringing this misbegotten, tragic adventure to a close. If we cannot do what I've laid out, I think it's time to end this chapter.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Malley follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ROBERT MALLEY, MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA PROGRAM DIRECTOR, INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. Chairman, first, let me express my deep appreciation for the invitation to testify before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. By now, you have had many days of important testimony; virtually all your witnesses have emphasized the gravity of the situation in both Iraq and the region. The United States unmistakably is at a crossroads. If it is poorly managed, our Nation will have to live with the consequences of regional instability, rising extremism and diminished American credibility for a long time to come.

It is difficult, at this late stage, to imagine a positive outcome to this war. But to have any chance of success, mere tinkering will not do. What is needed today is a dramatic change in our approach toward both Iraq and the region, so that we seek to enlist broad international support for a new political compact among Iraqis, cease treating the Iraqi Government as a privileged partner rather than an integral party to the sectarian war; and engage in real diplomacy with all Iraq's neighbours, Iran and Syria included.

To be clear: If the administration is not prepared to undertake such a paradigm shift, then our Nation has no business sending its men and women in harm's way. It has no business squandering its precious resources on a growing civil war. And it will be time to bring this tragic episode to a close through the orderly withdrawal of American troops in a manner that protects vital U.S. interests with some remaining to contain the civil war within Iraq's borders.

Unfortunately, the plan announced by President Bush does not reflect the necessary clean break. It adheres to the same faulty premises that have guided its approach since the onset of the war and, therefore, suffers from the same fatal contradictions. In its essence it amounts to "stay the course plus 20,000"—an inadequate answer to a disastrous situation that at most will delay what only radical course correction can avert. Under the best case scenario, it will postpone what, increasingly, is looking like the most probable scenario: Iraq's collapse into a failed and fragmented state, an intensifying and long-lasting civil war, as well as increased foreign meddling that risks metastasising into a broad proxy war. Such a situation could not be contained within Iraq's borders.

There is abundant reason to question whether the administration is capable of such a dramatic course change. But there is no reason to question why we ought to change direction, and what will happen if we do not.

Mr Chairman, at the outset it is important to begin with an honest assessment of where things stand. My assessment is based on the longstanding field work performed by the International Crisis Group's staff and consultants who have been in Iraq repeatedly, outside of the Green Zone, in contact with militiamen and insurgents, almost without interruption since the war.

Two key factors are critical in understanding the country's current condition. One is the utter collapse of the state apparatus which created both a security and managerial vacuum that 3½ years of reconstruction have failed to overcome. The security vacuum has been filled by autonomous, violent actors—militias linked to the Shiite Islamists (the Badr Corps and Muqtada al-Sadr's Mahdi Army), as well as an array of smaller groups, among them Mahdi Army offshoots, neighbourhood vigilantes, private sector contractors guarding politicians as well as oil, power, and other key facilities and criminal mafias. The armed groups' and militias' most important source of legitimacy and power has become the conflict's very radicalisation: The more they can point to the extreme violence of the other, the more they can justify their own in terms of protection (of one's community) and revenge (against another). In the absence of a state apparatus capable of safeguarding the population, civilians are caught in a vicious cycle in which they must rely on armed groups.

The other factor is the rise of a class of politicians, predominantly former exiles and emigres enjoying little legitimacy among ordinary Iraqis, who have treated the country and its resources as their party or personal entitlement, have encouraged a communal-based political system that has polarised the country and, in some cases, have advanced separatist agendas that are tearing the nation apart. Political actors have accentuated differences through their brand of identity politics and promotion of a political system in which positions are allocated according to communal identities. With few exceptions, the parties and individuals that came to represent these communities—themselves internally divided—carved out private fiefdoms in the ministries and institutions they acquired, preying on state coffers and reconstruction largesse to finance their militias and line their pockets. The absence of politics also raised the stock of both Sunni and Shiite clerics and, over time, the more radical among them, at the expense of secular minded forces.

Not unlike the groups they combat, the forces that dominate the current government thrive on identity politics, communal polarisation, and a cycle of intensifying violence and counterviolence. Increasingly indifferent to the country's interests, its political leaders gradually are becoming local warlords when what Iraq desperately needs are national leaders.

And so, hollowed out and fatally weakened, the Iraqi State today is prey to armed militias, sectarian forces, and a political class that, by putting short-term personal concerns ahead of long-term national interests, is complicit in Iraq's tragic destruction.

The implication is clear and critical: The government—by which I mean the entire institutional apparatus set up since the fall of Saddam—is not and cannot be a partner in an effort to stem the violence, nor will its strengthening contribute to Iraq's stability. The Sunni Arab representatives it includes lack meaningful support within their community and have no sway with the armed opposition groups that are feeding civil war dynamics. Conversely, its most influential Shiite members control the most powerful militias, which also are involved in brutal sectarian violence. Given the depth of polarisation, the United States must come to terms with the fact that the current government is merely one among many parties to the conflict. The manner of Saddam Hussein's execution was only the latest and most vivid illustration: It was Green Zone meets Red Zone, the pulling of the curtain that revealed the government in its rawest, crudest form.

One additional comment: It has been argued that the ongoing sectarian division of the country could be a pathway toward Iraq's eventual stabilisation through a rough division into three entities. There is little doubt that Iraq's territory is being carved up into homogeneous sectarian zones, separated by de facto front lines. What were once mixed neighbourhoods—and whose identity as chiefly Sunni or Shiite areas would have been impossible to presume prior to the war—are in the process of being consolidated according to a single religious identity.

But there remain countless disputed areas, resolution of which would entail far greater and more savage levels of violence than currently is occurring. Even in Baghdad, the mosaic has not disappeared; it has evolved. Sunni and Shiite neighbourhoods are gradually being consolidated, but the process is far from complete, and in any event these neighbourhoods are still intermingled. Current confessional boundaries will be fiercely fought over; minority enclaves will be the targets

of bloody assaults. Moreover, the violence is taking place within communities, with intrasectarian tensions giving rise to fratricidal clashes. In other words, Iraq's division may soon become inevitable. But it will not be a tidy three-way split and it will entail violence on a scale far greater than anything witnessed so far. It may become the final outcome. It should not be a U.S. goal.

The absence of an effective central state, coupled with Iraq's growing fragmentation and increased power of autonomous groups and militias, has enhanced the role of outside actors both as potential spoilers and as needed partners in any effort to stabilise the country. This is an issue over which there has been considerable confusion, but the reality is simply this: The fact that Iraq's neighbours did not instigate the crisis does not mean they could not sustain it if they so desired, nor that it can be resolved without their help. Given how dire things have become, it will take active cooperation by all foreign stakeholders to have any chance to redress the situation.

Regrettably, opposite dynamics today are at play. As it approaches its fifth year, the conflict has become a magnet for deeper regional interference and a source of greater regional instability. As the security vacuum has grown, various neighbours and groups have sought to promote and protect their interests, prevent potential threats and preempt their counterparts' presumed hostile actions. In principle, neighbouring countries and other regional powers share an interest in containing the conflict and avoiding its ripple effects. But, divided by opposing agendas, mistrust and lack of communication, they, so far, have been unable to coordinate strategies to that effect. Most damaging has been competition between the United States and Iran and the conviction in Tehran that Washington is seeking to build a hostile regional order. As a result, instead of working together toward an outcome they all could live with (a weak but prosperous and united Iraq that does not present a threat to its neighbours), each appears to be taking measures in anticipation of the outcome they all fear—Iraq's descent into all-out chaos and fragmentation. By increasing support for some Iraqi actors against others, their actions have all the wisdom of a self-fulfilling prophecy: Steps that will accelerate the very process they claim to wish to avoid.

Iraq's sectarian tensions are also spreading throughout the region. They are exacerbating a Sunni-Shiite divide that is fast becoming the dominant lens through which Middle East developments are apprehended. The most serious repercussions are felt in confessionally mixed societies such as Lebanon, Syria, and some gulf countries. One of the more perilous prospects is that of renewed conflict along an Arab-Persian divide. The more it develops, the more Iraq will become the theatre of deadly proxy wars waged by others. Should this happen, the United States will be fighting a difficult and highly unpredictable battle.

Mr. Chairman, the President's newly announced approach can only be properly assessed in light of this assessment. And it is in light of this assessment that its fundamental flaws and contradictions become clear: It seeks to provide a military solution to a political crisis; it leaves the political dimension to an Iraqi Government that is an integral party to the sectarian conflict; and it seeks to stabilise Iraq without offering a regional strategy or engagement with pivotal neighbours without which such a goal simply is unattainable.

1. *The President's plan essentially relies on military means to resolve a political problem:* Iraq may not be experiencing a war of all against all, but it is at the very least a war of many against many. Government-supported militias as much as Sunni insurgents are part of this confrontation, and intersectarian fighting mixes with intrasectarian struggles. The implication—critical in terms of devising an effective response—is that this is not a military challenge in which one side needs to be strengthened and another defeated, but a political one in which new understandings need to be reached. Even if the addition of several thousand U.S. troops quells the violence in Baghdad—an uncertain proposition at best—insurgent groups and militias are likely to focus their efforts elsewhere and/or to melt away. The President's plan is at best a short-term answer to a long-term problem: The moment the U.S. "surge" ends, violent actors will resume their fighting. In short, Washington's contemplated strategy of "clear, build, and hold" is no response to the insurgents' and militias' strategy of "recoil, redeploy, and spoil."

2. *To end the sectarian fighting, the President's plan depends on an Iraqi Government that has become an integral party to the sectarian war:* The President repeatedly describes the Iraqi Government as one of national unity. It is nothing of the sort. It is not a partner in an effort to stem the violence nor will its strengthening contribute to Iraq's stabilisation. The administration must come to terms with the fact that the current government has become one side in a growing dirty war. It is incapable of generating the compromises required to restabilize the country and

rebuild institutions that have decayed, been corrupted, and are today, unable to either provide security or distribute goods and services.

This does not mean, as sometimes is suggested, that the United States should engineer another Cabinet change, trying to forge an alliance that excludes Sadr and may ultimately sacrifice Maliki. Maliki and the Cabinet are symptoms, not causes of the underlying problem: The core issue is not with the identity of Cabinet members; it is with the entire political edifice put in place since 2003. No Prime Minster operating under current circumstances could do what Prime Minister Maliki has not. Structural, not personnel changes, are now needed.

3. The President's plan is premised on contradictory and self-defeating regional goals. One cannot simultaneously stabilise Iraq and destabilise Iran and Syria. Although neither Tehran nor Damascus is at the origins of, or even plays a major part in, Iraq's catastrophe, the situation has reached the point where resolution will be impossible without their cooperation, as both states have the ability to sabotage any U.S. initiative and as both are needed to pressure or persuade insurgents and militias to pursue a political path. Former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, Jim Dobbins, no stranger to successful U.S. efforts at conflict resolution, put it well: It has never been likely that the United States could stabilise Iraq and destabilise Iran and Syria at the same time. As long as the United States continues to operate at cross purposes with nearly all its neighbours, and particularly the most influential, American efforts to promote peace and reconciliation are unlikely to prosper. In refusing to combine coercion with communication in its dealings (or nondealings) with Iraq's neighbours, the Bush administration is making peace in Iraq less likely, and increasing the chances for war throughout the surrounding region.[1]

In lieu of talking to Iran and Syria, the administration is proposing a different kind of engagement: Military threats addressed toward Iran, combined with attempts to build an anti-Iranian coalition of pro-Western Sunni Arab governments. Besides raising the most obvious question (How can the United States rely on Iranian allies in Baghdad at the same time as it is developing a tough anti-Iranian strategy for the region?), this approach runs the risk of promoting internecine conflict and, possibly, all-out and unwinnable civil wars in Lebanon and Palestine—yet another series of catastrophes in the making.

At this late stage, only a radical and dramatic policy shift—entailing a different distribution of power and resources within Iraq as well as a different set of outside influences mobilised to achieve it—can conceivably arrest the spiralling decline. In contrast to the President's plan, the International Crisis Group bases its own on the belief that the Iraqi Government is one of actors in sectarian violence, not a partner in fighting extremists; that the entire post-2003 power structure must be overhauled, rather than strengthened; and that the United States must engage with all relevant regional actors, rather than seek to succeed alone and isolate those who, in response, are most likely to destabilise Iraq.

The International Crisis Group's proposal aims to meet the three most important challenges: To end the civil war, reconstruct the state and its institutions, and prevent dangerous regional spillover. This is not something the United States can do alone nor is it something it can count on the Iraqi Government achieving. It needs to reach out widely to seek collaboration from friends and foes alike. That will require not only requesting others to play a part in implementing a new policy but also giving them a key role in shaping it. Crisis Group advocates three essential and interrelated steps:

1. *A new forceful multilateral approach that puts real pressure on all Iraqi parties:* The Baker-Hamilton report was right to call for the creation of a broad International Support Group; it should comprise the five permanent Security Council members, Iraq's six neighbours, and the United Nations represented by its Secretary General. But its purpose cannot be to support the Iraqi Government. It must support Iraq, which means pressing the government, along with all other Iraqi constituents, to make the necessary compromises. It also means defining rules of the game for outside powers vis-a-vis Iraq, agreeing on redlines none would cross, and, crucially, guiding the full range of Iraqi political actors to consensus on an acceptable end-state. This does not entail a one-time conference, but sustained multilateral diplomacy.

The absence of an effective Iraqi State apparatus, the fragmented nature of Iraqi society, and the proliferation of self-sustaining militias and armed groups underscore the urgency of a much more substantial role for the international community, and in particular for neighbouring states. The United States, unfortunately, no longer possesses the credibility or leverage to achieve its goals on its own and Iraqi actors are unlikely to budge without concerted effort by all regional players with in-

[1] The International Herald Tribune, 18 January 2007.

fluence and leverage over them. Although what happens in Iraq will depend, above all, on the creation of a new internal momentum, such momentum cannot be sustained without cooperation from neighbors who each possess considerable nuisance and spoiling capacity.

2. *A conference of all Iraqi and international stakeholders, modeled after the Dayton conference for Bosnia and the Bonn conference for Afghanistan, to forge a new political compact:* A new, more equitable and inclusive national compact needs to be agreed upon by all relevant actors, including militias and insurgent groups, on issues such as federalism, resource allocation, de-Baathification, the scope of the amnesty, the structure of security forces, and the timetable for a U.S. withdrawal. This can only be done if the International Support Group brings all of them to the negotiating table and if its members steer their deliberations, deploying a mixture of carrots and sticks to influence those on whom they have particular leverage.

Indeed, if enlarging the scope of international players is one essential pillar, enlarging the range of Iraqi actors and injecting new momentum in national reconciliation efforts must be another. Much of the past few years of diplomacy have had an extraordinarily surreal and virtual quality: Pursuit of an Iraqi political process that is wholly divorced from realities on the ground through dealings between the United States and local leaders who possess neither the will nor the ability to fundamentally change current dynamics—who, indeed, have been complicit in entrenching them. The present government does not need to be strengthened—say, by expanding Iraqi security forces; it needs to have a different character and pursue different objectives. The time has come for a new, more inclusive Iraqi deal that puts rebuilding a nonethnic, nonsectarian state at the top of its objectives.

The conference should include all Iraq's political stakeholders—leaders of parties, movements, militias, insurgent groups, tribal confederations, and civil society organisations across the political spectrum. The point is to exercise pressure from above—through foreign supporters of local groups—and below—by enlisting the far more reasonable and conciliatory aspirations of most ordinary Iraqis. The conference's objective should be to guide Iraqi actors toward an internal consensus on the principal issues of dispute and amend the constitution accordingly.

3. *A new U.S. regional strategy, including engagement with Syria and Iran, and to end efforts at forcible regime change and revitalisation of all tracks of the Arab-Israeli peace process:* Polite engagement of Iraq's neighbours will not do. Rather a clear redefinition of U.S. objectives in the region will be required to enlist regional, but especially Iranian and Syrian help. The goal is not to bargain with them but to seek agreement on an end-state for Iraq and the region that is no one's first choice, but with which everyone can live.

Engagement with Iran and Syria was one of the core recommendations of the Iraq Study Group, and one of the first to be summarily dismissed by the President. Seriously engaging Syria and Iran will not be easy; bringing them around will be even harder. But the United States has no workable alternative if its objective is to restore peace in Iraq and defuse dangerous tensions threatening regional stability. On top of refraining from damaging steps, there is much Iran and Syria can do to help: Enhance border control; using Damascus's extensive intelligence on, and lines of communication with, insurgent groups to facilitate negotiations; drawing on its wide-ranging tribal networks to reach out to Sunni Arabs in the context of such negotiations; and utilising Iran's leverage to control SCIRI and its channels in southern Iraq to convince the Sadrists they have a stake in the new compact.

Given current U.S. policy, neither Iran nor Syria today sees much to gain from helping us extricate ourselves from Iraq. The question is not whether either side will surrender to the other. The question is whether there exists some accommodation that, while short of either side's ideal outcome, nonetheless meets each side's minimum vital interests. The answer is at best uncertain, given the considerable mistrust that currently prevails. But there are considerable costs for all sides with continuing along the present course: A deepening crisis for the United States in Iraq, the prospect of further international sanctions and isolation for Iran and Syria, and dissolution of the Iraqi State with potential harmful consequences for all. In other words, the most powerful inducement for a compromise are the risks associated with the status quo.

The issue of troop levels, which has consumed so much of the debate and to which the administration has offered its response, is the wrong question, disconnected from ground realities. On its own, and in the absence of significant political change, the addition of troops will have only marginal and temporary impact on the intensity of violence. Without fundamental changes in Iraq and in U.S. policy, a continued American presence serves little purpose. In fact, it risks making Washington complicit in the worst excesses of the Iraqi Government, providing it with both public excuses and the security to operate with impunity.

Rather, the issue of U.S. troops can only be properly understood in relation to whether or not a new Iraqi political compact is reached. If it is, then what are needed are negotiated arrangements for a relatively rapid coalition military withdrawal. The coalition's military roles, rules of engagement, and withdrawal schedule should be an item for discussion at the Dayton/Bonn-like conference, an instrument of leverage for the United States and a means of ensuring an orderly withdrawal. The coalition presence would be conditioned on this compact being reached and implemented; the schedule for its withdrawal should be agreed and, in any event, should be completed within a reasonable time period, probably not more than 2 to 3 years. If a consensus emerges for longer stay, that could then be considered. Should the consensus back a more rapid withdrawal, it should, of course, be carried out.

But, and by the same token, if the compact is not reached or not implemented, the United States should significantly accelerate the withdrawal of forces that then will have lost their main purpose. A residual number may remain, for example at the borders in order to contain the conflict within Iraq. Any such withdrawal raises difficult political and even moral issues, as the United States undeniably bears responsibility for Iraq's current calamity. But there can be no possible justification for an open-ended investment in a failing state.

Mr. Chairman, implementation of the plan put forward by the International Crisis Group would present one last opportunity. It is at best a feeble hope, dependent on a fundamental shift among Iraqi political leaders who have long been preoccupied with only short-term gain; on a radical rupture by an administration that has proved resistant to pragmatic change; on a significant alteration in relations between the United States and key regional countries that have been marked by deep distrust and strategic competition; and on involvement by international actors that have warily watched from the sidelines. But it is the only hope to spare Iraq from an all-out disintegration. And it would be the only possible justification for continuing to invest our troops and our resources in this misbegotten adventure.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you all very much.

You know, this is one of those cases where I wish we had a mandatory session in this Senate, and all of you sat in the well, and all four of you spoke to 100 Senators. They're all very busy. They all have other committee assignments. And they don't have the benefit of hearing the detail we just heard. I think the testimony this morning has been really very enlightening.

Let me say, we'll do 8-minute rounds. And, if possible, depending on the time of—the availability of the witnesses and on the participation here, maybe have a second round.

Let me start, if I may, by suggesting that as I listened to all of you, there is agreement on at least three or four items. One; the surge is not a good idea. Matter of fact, it's a very bad idea. Two; if we should begin to redeploy American forces, the timeframe over which that redeployment should take place, whether things are going well or poorly, is a frame that begins now and has an outside life of about 18 months. Three; that we need some regional interaction that is—engages all the neighbors. And four; that the United States has vital interests in the region.

Now, the reason I mention these is, the first three are in direct odds with the administration. It's not merely the redeployment that's at odds with this administration's strategy. It is all three of the areas of agreement that I've mentioned. I know some of you better than others, but I know of all of you, and one of the problems that you recognize, but that the vast majority of the public has understandable difficulty recognizing, is: We don't get to formulate foreign policy here. We get to react to it. We can, hopefully, influence it, but that's not always certain. And most times we're left with Hobson's choices here. The other thing you all agree on is, there's no, really great choices here. None of you are bullish on

the notion that there is a good way out, a good way to resolve the situation in Iraq. And we're left with an administration who's not likely to listen, thus far, and a government in Iraq that left us with a constitution that, as Les points out, 80 percent of the Iraqis voted for. And yet, with the exception of Les, basically the three of you are saying we should basically disregard that constitution. I'm not suggesting I'm certain that is wrong, but that's basically what you've all said.

Now, one of the things that the Constitution says is—and we essentially helped write it—in article 115, "The federal system in the Republic of Iraq"—I'm quoting—"is made up of decentralized capital regions and governates and local administration." And to go back to your point, Les, this administration has continued to push a rope here, they continue—and all of you point out—to insist on a strong central government that we would put our full faith and credit behind and support, yet there is nothing I have seen in the Constitution or in the conduct of the Iraqis that they're inclined to support a strong central government, which the very Constitution doesn't even call for.

So, my question is this: Do we essentially try to accommodate this Constitution functioning, or do we just pretend like it doesn't even exist, as we move from this moment on, in terms of "a clean break, a different policy, et cetera"?

Let's start with you, Les. Do we——

Dr. GELB. I completely agree with your question, Mr. Chairman. There is no way we can get out of this without a disaster without at least trying to help them to reach a political settlement. They put themselves on a road to a federal or decentralized alternative, and every time we raise this, people talk as if we're trying to stuff this down their throats. I think a majority of Iraqis would want to live this way, would want to be able to run their own affairs in their own regions. I've talked to them, too, and I do not ignore the fact that 80 percent voted for that Constitution, or that 80 percent voted for that implementing legislation. The support is there. The resistance is also there. But unless we help them toward this kind of political agreement, nothing is going to happen except trouble, and worse trouble than we've had.

Now, I don't disagree with Ed Luttwak about our inability to transform other societies, but I do disagree that the United States shouldn't interfere in the domestic politics of another state, particularly where we have such deep involvement and where we have real responsibility. That's really what foreign policy is all about. Foreign policy, serious foreign policy, is the interference by one country in the domestic politics of another country. And if you don't interfere successfully, you don't have a successful foreign policy.

But, in the end, this will work, or not, depending upon whether the Iraqis want to do it. But we have the responsibility, I think, to lean on them and to work with them.

One final point, quickly. I stress "to work with them," because there's got to be working at two ends here. First of all, working between you folks on this committee and the administration for a real bipartisan approach. It hasn't happened. And, second, between our administration and the Iraqis. And it hasn't happened. A 2-hour

visit by a senior official to Baghdad is not the way to work out a common strategy or to move these issues forward.

The CHAIRMAN. Now, let me say, since my time is up, I don't want to start by asking a question that gets everyone involved, and I end up spending 15 minutes, and my colleagues don't get to ask questions, so I'll go back to ask you all to illuminate on that, as well. I would like, in the minute I have left—there are several proposals put forward so far. One is to try to accommodate a bipartisan foreign policy, a bipartisan approach here to demonstrate to the administration to cease and desist from what they're doing. It looks like there's overwhelming support for that, in the sense that you have the proposal put forward by me and Levin and Hagel and Olympia Snowe. And then you have a proposal that says almost the same thing being put forward by Warner and leading Republicans. So, my guess is, there'll be an overwhelming rejection on the record of this President's continuing, as was stated by one of you, to "stay the course with 20,000 more," or whatever the phrase was that was used.

But there are also other proposals that I'd like to ask your input on. There are proposals just to cap the number of forces in Iraq and make that law. There are proposals to cut off funding for the "war in Iraq." Would you, each of you, as briefly as you can, respond to the efficacy of setting a cap? And what does that mean in Iraq, in the region? What are the consequences of that? Hard number. And two, the idea of cutting off funding, generically, for "the war in Iraq." And I'll start with you, Ed, and then end up with Les.

Dr. LUTTWAK. I really believe that this committee, led as it now is by people of unparalleled experience and seriousness, can acquire enough authority with your colleagues in the Congress—enough authority to guide policy the right way without the—what I—you know, the arbitrary cutoffs and putting yourself in a position where you, yourself, might hesitate about the absolute nature of it, and so on. I think that, you know, Senators Lugar and Biden and the—all their colleagues—as a voice of moderation, can guide them in the right direction. But I would really be opposed to these drastic sort of measures.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Korb.

Dr. KORB. I think that you can cap the forces, which doesn't mean that the President can't send more, but he has to come back to you to justify what more. And I would recommend that right now, given the situation, you put a cap, say, at 150,000, which would allow him to send more troops, because you don't want to hamstring him from having to deal with situations that occur, and for what military commanders want. But that certainly would enough. After that—and I think it's been misunderstood—people say, "Well, if you cap him, you're undermining the authority of the Commander in Chief." No, you just ask him to come back and justify why it has to go more than 150,000.

I think you can also condition the funding, not, you know, this year, but you're going to take up—my understanding is, when they submit the 2008 budget, they're also going to submit the supplemental for 2008, it's all going to be together—you can—you know, can condition the funding in fiscal 2008, where the administration provides verification and certification on key metrics for progress in

Iraq, that they've talked about. After all, remember, Secretary Gates has said, "If they don't do what we said, we may not even send all of the—all of the troops." So, I think that you can require steps to disband the ethnic and sectarian militias, measures to ensure that the Iraqi Government brings to justice Iraqi security personnel who are alleged to have committed gross violations of human rights, and steps toward political and national reconciliation.

You can't run foreign policy from here, but you can put the onus on the administration to demonstrate why their policy is the right policy.

The CHAIRMAN. The cap that's being discussed is a cap to prevent the troops from being able to be sent, so the cap is at 135 or whatever the number is. Would you support that?

Dr. KORB. Not right now, because, again, you started with 132, you got one brigade in there, another one's—to go. I mean, because it seems to me—I don't know what could happen there, but you don't ever want to put yourself in a position where the place goes to hell in a handbasket and you stop the——

The CHAIRMAN. And you can't—that would also prevent brigades we have in the outlying countries from being able to surge——

Dr. KORB. That's right. And the other thing that I recommended, if you constrain their ability to mobilize Guard and Reserve units for the second time, they're the ones that are supposed to replace the forces that have been sent, so this would give you an opportunity, again, to present this surge——

The CHAIRMAN. That's a different——

Dr. KORB [continuing]. From going on.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Way than capping.

Dr. KORB. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. OK. And, Mr. Malley, the cap and cutoff——

Dr. MALLEY. Well, let me start by saying I'm very comfortable, as Les said, intervening in the domestic politics of other countries, much less comfortable dealing with the domestic politics of the Democratic or Republican Party. So, I—not going to get into the—I don't think——

The CHAIRMAN. Well, there are people on both sides support all of these things.

Dr. MALLEY. No; exact—but—and my view is that right now the main priority is to send a message about what is not right, and that that plan that was put on the table is not right. And then you need to have an open discussion about what is right. And talking about numbers and troops, as I said earlier, abstracted from the political strategy, is an exercise in fantasy. I mean, let's get the political strategy right, then we would know what kind of troops we need. If we don't get the political strategy right, any talk of capping or anything else, for me, is surreal.

The CHAIRMAN. I agree. But—

Les, you have a final word? And I'll yield the floor.

Dr. GELB. I'm in favor of serious bipartisan consultations. The initiative for that has to come from the administration. The only decent way out of this situation is for the two parties and for the two branches to share responsibility for the very tough decisions

that have to be made. And if the administration won't seriously consult, then I think these resolutions are the least you can do.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman.

Senator LUGAR. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I appreciate not only the advice you have given with regard to foreign policy, but the advice you have given to this committee, and perhaps to advise our consultations with the President.

There could be, certainly, difference of judgment in this committee, how effective we can be. My hope is that, picking up the theme that you have just enunciated, Les Gelb, that is possible to work out, on a bipartisan basis, the best strategy for America, and a perception on the part of the rest of the world that we have the capability of doing that.

Now, the chairman has been pursuing that. I have been pursuing it, in my own way, and I would just report, without breaching confidentiality, that I had an opportunity, with Senator Warner, to sit down with the President for 15 minutes to talk about the things we have talked about today, I presented, as precisely as I could, most of the arguments that you have. We had another meeting 4 days later with at least eight other members of the Republican leadership, joined by the Vice President, the Secretaries of State and Defense, and so forth. Then, last week, we met with Steve Hadley, our National Security Director, with eight or nine Republicans sitting around the table. And I'm sure other meetings have occurred with Democratic Members of the Senate and the House. At least I hope that's the case. But I would just say that these have been opportunities, at least, to make the case, to hear the President, to hear his advisers.

Now, I don't think we have been necessarily overwhelmingly convincing in the arguments that we have made, although sometimes in politics persistence and the ability to stay the course is important. But let me just say, the President's arguments, as I have jotted down this morning—if he were here, perhaps he would say the same thing—is that he has a feeling there is going to be a large human loss. People might well be killed in Baghdad by the forces of the army or the police or the militia. He feels that, in essence, without an American presence in the nine police districts, there is going to be a great deal of killing perhaps, of Shiites by Sunnis, and that, as a humanitarian situation, although there has been counseling on the part of you and me and maybe others for, if not a withdrawal, at least a disengagement from Baghdad. Let's keep from sending our people out on patrol or into the various stations as you've talked about, Dr. Luttwak. The President believes that this is probably the only way that this killing is to be mitigated.

You have argued that might be the case for a while. A surge denotes a discreet period of time. And to execute a proper "clear and hold," probably many more troops than 21,500 would be needed—but, nevertheless, giving the argument its due, there is, on the part of our President, a humanitarian feeling here with regard to people that are going to be lost without our intervening.

And, second, he believes that the democratic structure of the country is unlikely to be perfected without there being substantially more American intervention in this process, that the Iraqis

have got it right, in terms of various elections and constitution-building and so forth, but that without these so-called benchmarks, these messages, essentially, to Maliki or to others, the rest of the job is unlikely to be perfected very well, if at all, and democracy is very important to our country, very important to the objectives, at least, that the President has stated. So, he sees that faltering badly without our being more involved.

There is also—I believe I fairly state the President's point of view—a feeling that there is now an impression that our military might is not as effective as it should be, or should have been, and that it is important to establish that impression, that we cannot be pushed around, that the assertion of these forces at this particular time is important, once again, in terms of credibility of our military.

And, finally, the President argues, both publicly and privately, that if we are not successful in this new strategy, it will be a setback in our overall war against terror. He brings up, frequently, the thought that we, here in the United States, may feel the impact of our failure to back our military, to perfect democracy, to take a view of humanity.

What I would like to explore for a moment with you, Dr. Luttwak, is the intriguing ideas that you have about disengagement. In essence, without being cynical about it, you suggested, in your testimony using the Spanish example, back in 1800 or so, and indicate that they were on the threshold of democracy, or at least some felt that way, but there were others in the country with religious motivation, other leadership, who delayed that democracy for several decades, if not longer. They felt that the time was not ripe, given the demographics of the country or the religious affiliation, and that the situation in Iraq now is much closer to that of Spain in 1800 than it was to Germany and Japan in 1945, for example. Therefore, disengagement, as you are suggesting, is a sophisticated process in which, as a matter of fact, you might find some bases in the desert, which you say were identified before. For a while, you keep out the invaders, you probably help continue training of Iraqi forces. You have an influence on democracy—but albeit from afar—and you allow the fact that some civil war might occur, that this is almost inevitable, given the artificial contrivance of the country to begin with. And that, finally, you have some basis to negotiate with all the parties, either all eight at the same time, or two plus six, or however you want to do it.

Nevertheless, all the parties in the region understand that we are going to be a force in the Middle East for a significant time to come. If not in the Iraqi desert, then certainly close by; but before we get out of the desert, we at least have made sure we have provided for safe passage out of the country, rather than in a haphazard, expeditious manner.

You bring up an intriguing set of suggestions, and that's why I underline it again. But why do you feel that the civil war is inevitable, and that, unhappily, a very large amount of killing, bloodshed, and so forth, even if not our own, is almost inevitable, which we must accept from afar, from the desert or from the boundaries, or so forth, of Iraq?

Dr. LUTTWAK. Senator, you have, indeed, presented many of my ideas in such an effective way that I don't want to repeat them. Instead, I'd like to address the specific point.

In the written statement, which will be submitted just after this hearing, I specifically address, as I must, the impact of disengagement on civil violence. I cannot sit here calmly in Washington and advocate a policy that will lead to the death of many people.

I believe that disengagement will not increase the level of violence, that reducing troop levels will not do it. And why is that? The reason is not philosophical, but, again, very tactical. As you all know from long experience, counterinsurgency without intelligence is a form of malpractice, because you are there, you're visible, you're spending money, you're moving around, you're wearing the right boots, but you're not doing the work. Now, you also know that the enemy is elusive, that he's low contrast, as they call it technically. You also know that there are so many different insurgent groups that normal processes of penetration cannot work. Moreover, when groups are very unstable, even when you penetrate a group, the group dissolves. There was a recent case, with a lot of work to penetrate the group; all members of that group essentially went out of business. So, without the intelligence, counterinsurgency is not effective.

Now, in a broader sense, what we're doing is interposition. We are trying to interpose ourselves, and yet, we cannot prevent the attacks. Why? Because the attacks are carried out by elusive, unstable, low-contrast targets that we cannot identify even when we see them. We cannot stop them. They go right through the checkpoints because they look like anybody else, and then they kill people.

If I believed that the current troop level would prevent mass death, I would never recommend its reduction. If I believed a surge could reduce deaths, I would be very hesitant to speak against it. On humanitarian grounds, that would be our duty.

However, I am convinced that because of tactical reasons, there is no relationship between U.S. troop levels and the number of Iraqi casualties and victims. And, moreover, I note that the fighting that's taking place, the terrorism that's taking place is over disputed zones. And by interposing ourselves, we are preserving those disputed zones. That's why you can take a taxi, right now, from Arbil, got to Mosul—it takes a few hours—and drive around a quiet Mosul, because the Arab Shia have gone from Mosul, it is dominated by Arab Sunnis.

Now, the final point—and, again, you take seriously the President's concerns as I think we should—we certainly do not want to disengage or withdraw, whatever the words are, and leave a vast zone where, let's say, groups such as al-Qaeda can run around. Well, the fact is that in Mosul Arab Sunnis are running the show; they don't want competition. The foreign jihadis who call themselves al-Qaeda are Sunnis themselves, but they happen to be of a different strain of Sunni. They are not nationalists at all. They believe that nationalism is a sin, that there should be the undivided Ummah of the Muslim nation. So, if you're an Iraqi nationalist, you are their enemy. If you're a Baathist, you are their enemy. They never forget that Baath was founded by Michel Aflaq,

a Christian. And, therefore, there is no al-Qaeda Mosul. Al-Qaeda exists in disputed areas created by our own interposition. That's why I'm convinced that disengagement and the refusal of the surge would not increase deaths in Iraq.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you very much.

Dr. LUTTWAK. Thank you, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

I would note one thing. My last trip to Iraq I flew out to an airbase called Al Asad Airbase. Middle of nowhere. If you all look at that map, those two lakes that you see up there—it was from Fallujah north and west. And all of a sudden, I looked out there, Ed, and I saw these—looked like two superhighways in the middle of this vast desert. And there are two 10,000-foot runways sitting there in pretty good shape. We landed there. There was a small fire brigade for fire suppression, in case someone landed. We had a young general, a very impressive guy, and a few troops out there. And he pointed out that the nearest city was a place called Baghdadi, which was only—was about, I don't know, 20, 30, 40 kilometer—I can't remember how far—6,000 people. And he pointed out that he thought there would be an awful lot of American forces there in the not-too-distant future. Is that the kind of prepositioning you guys are talking about, to drop 10–20,000 American forces there, with the surge capacity to go other places? Is that what you're talking about?

Dr. LUTTWAK. Sir, first of all, the places where Americans would remain must have airports, because the supply must be done by C–130, with the shuttle, which already exits, out of Kuwait, with no routine road convoys, because otherwise we would still be there, still interfering, still taking casualties. Any remote base would be suitable for a raiding force that would sally out to deal with any bad guys who show themselves, al-Qaeda and such.

The CHAIRMAN. All right, thank you.

Senator Feingold.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me first, again, thank the chairman for holding these hearings. They are very important. They are measured, with excellent witnesses. And I have been mostly in listening mode at these hearings, as I was at the excellent hearings that Senator Biden and Senator Lugar held in 2002, where people like you came before this committee. And, frankly, I couldn't imagine how anyone could possibly have voted for the war, after I listened to those 2 days of testimony. It made no sense to me. None of my questions were answered.

Well, we know the history since then, and we know that the President made a terrible mistake here. We know that that mistake continues. But let us remember that the Democrats were in the majority of the U.S. Senate when this was approved. So, anyone who thinks that Congress gets off scot-free here is wrong.

This is the moment. We are going to decide whether we take the most narrow view of our constitutional powers to end this or a reasonably broad view, based on history, based on the use of the power of the purse in the past, whether it be Cambodia or Somalia in the early nineties. I have to raise a concern. To the extent these hearings are used as a way to quell or limit Congress's responsibility

and role, I have a problem. It is entirely reasonable to look at whether it's caps or fencing or using the power of the purse to try to bring this disaster to an end. And it is our historic responsibility in this committee and in this Senate to stand up now and not let this taboo, this notion that you can't reasonably talk about using congressional power. It is irresponsible, and it puts us in the position of continuing a very unwise war that will cost many more American lives unnecessarily.

Let me use the rest of my time to ask a question that puts that aside, in terms of whether it's a good idea or not, putting aside the political debate about whether or not United States troops should remain in Iraq. I think we can all assume that the United States will, at some point, begin to redeploy troops from Iraq. So, leaving alone the issue of when that deployment should begin or end, I'd like each of you to briefly discuss what you feel would be the important elements of a deployment plan, and how we can redeploy our United States military personnel safely while mitigating the impact on the Iraqis and our allies in the region.

Let's start with each of you. Go ahead. Korb.

Dr. KORB. I think you are quite right that if—when the history of this war is written, you will find out that lots of institutions in this country didn't play their proper role—not only the Congress; I think, the media; I think, the generals who didn't back General Shinseki; members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff who didn't speak out; and even my own profession, the academic profession, many of whom glossed over the real problems that you would have.

Now, in terms of leaving, let me make a—I think that we should leave, and I—take 18 months. Actually, I recommended September 2005, but it hasn't happened yet, so I think—all right. And I think the way to leave in a responsible way is simply not to replace the units that, when their time is up, they come home. And I don't think this is going to involve any risk to the troops. And if you go 18 months, that's roughly about 8,000 troops a month. The reason I pick 18 months, I think you can do that without endangering the troops. It also, I think, fulfills our moral responsibility to the Iraqis. As has been pointed out, we broke it, we have some responsibility. And I think 18 months is a reasonable time. That would mean we'd be there to the middle of 2008, which is more than 5 years, which would—should be enough time for them to basically get their act together. And I think leaving troops in the region protects American interests. Putting more troops in Afghanistan, which is really the central front in the war on terror, putting our National Guard back home here to provide for homeland defense, overall will increase our security.

Let me quote a surprising person, Bill Buckley, editor of the National Review. He said, "Had we not left Vietnam, we would have lost the cold war." If you don't leave Iraq, you're not going to win the war on terror.

Senator FEINGOLD. That's just an excellent answer.

Mr. Malley.

Dr. MALLEY. So, I agree with what Larry said. I want to say one thing about your first comments. As I said in my testimony, I believe that if we don't take the political steps that are needed, then there is no justification for remaining in Iraq, and we should leave.

And, at that point, I think this committee, the Congress, needs to do what it needs to do to ensure that that takes place.

The issue of withdrawal, for me, is intimately tied to what happens politically in Iraq, and all the scenarios would dictate something different. Under any scenario, I think the withdrawal should not last more than a few years—2 years, perhaps, at the outer limit, depending, again, on what happens in Iraq and what Iraqis themselves say they want from us and whether they're taking the steps that we believe are consistent with a residual or remaining United States presence.

Senator FEINGOLD. Do you think it's possible to construct a plan to bring the troops home safely over that time period?

Dr. MALLEY. I would believe so. I would defer to military experts, but I would believe that it's—from what I've heard, that it is—that it is possible. But, again, I would defer to others on that.

Senator FEINGOLD. Dr. Luttwak.

Dr. LUTTWAK. Senator, in spite of my rather weak-kneed response previously, I'm aware of the fact that, historically, a very sharp congressional intervention, a very rigid one, worked out very well. That famous case was El Salvador. Congress set a limit of 55 advisors, and that was the key to victory, because it forced responsibility on the Salvadorians, who rose up to it—militarily, because they fought like hell instead of standing back waiting for our troops to fight; and politically, because eventually, as you know, everything was resolved.

So, I'm not unsympathetic. It's only that, in this context, because of the considerations mentioned by Senator Lugar, placing the President under some mechanical constraint could be damaging in a broader sense. But I think that congressional action that would prescribe a gradual withdrawal without an end date, without a final exit date could work, if presented properly and with bipartisan support.

The CHAIRMAN. Gelb.

Dr. GELB. I've studied these matters all my life, and I don't know how to answer your question. I would have to sit down—and, if I were in this administration, I would sit down—with our military and work out, first and foremost, what our missions would need to be over the next couple of years, and then I'd work with them on how to redeploy troops within that country, and withdraw them from the country, in order to fulfill that mission. I don't believe this is the job for professors and senior fellows at Washington think-tanks.

Senator FEINGOLD. And that's fair enough. And I—you know, just the theme I'm trying to pursue during these hearings, which, again, I appreciate, is that, since we did not appear to have a plan when we went into Iraq, isn't it time that we construct a plan for the possibility that we might be leaving Iraq, at some point——

Dr. GELB. Yes, I——

Senator FEINGOLD [continuing]. Instead of acting as if it's some kind of thing that'll never happen? That—and I'm—this isn't directed at you.

Dr. GELB. Absolutely.

Senator FEINGOLD. This is what's going on. People don't want to talk about redeployment in a serious way, they want to talk about

taking the little steps that may lead to that. But we need a full plan, with all the considerations of what it means for the troops, what it means for the region. And these need to be open discussions from all of our people.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Thank you very much, Senator. I happen to agree with you.

Senator Boxer, I guess.

Senator BOXER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for these hearings.

I want to place in the record the eight times Congress used the power of the purse to stop U.S. casualties. Could I do that?

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection.

I might add, not on your time, all the statements, as submitted, will be placed in the record in full, in addition to your oral testimony. I did not do that little mechanical thing at the front end.

Senator BOXER. OK. I'd like to start all over again, please.

I'd like to place in the record, at this time, the eight times the Congress used the power of the purse to stop escalation of wars.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection.

[The information submitted by Senator Boxer follows:]

CONGRESS'S HISTORICAL ROLE IN POLICING MILITARY ESCALATION

On numerous occasions over the past several decades, Congress has exercised its constitutional authority to limit the President's ability to escalate existing military engagements by capping the number of American military personnel available for deployment and by refusing to release appropriated funds. It is incumbent upon Congress to exercise that authority to ensure that our men and women are not put in harm's way unnecessarily or without a plan worthy of their great sacrifice.

- In the Foreign Assistance Act of 1974, P.L. 93–559, enacted during the Vietnam war, Congress limited the number of American military personnel in South Vietnam to 4,000 within 6 months and 3,000 within a year of the act's enactment.
- The Lebanon Emergency Assistance Act of 1983, P.L. 98–43, required the President to "obtain statutory authorization from the Congress with respect to any substantial expansion in the number or role in Lebanon of the United States Armed Forces, including any introduction of United States Armed Forces into Lebanon in conjunction with agreements providing for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Lebanon and for the creation of a new multinational peacekeeping force in Lebanon."
- Through the Department of Defense Authorization Act of 1985, P.L. 98–525, Congress prohibited the use of funds appropriated in the act or in subsequent acts from being used to increase the number of U.S. military personnel deployed in European nations of NATO. The act provided that Congress might authorize increased troop levels above the prescribed ceiling upon the Secretary of Defense's certification to Congress that the European nations had taken significant measures to improve their defense capacity.
- In the Military Construction Appropriations Act of 2001, P.L. 106–246, Congress limited the involvement of U.S. military personnel and civilian contractors in counternarcotics activities in Colombia by prohibiting the use of appropriated funds to expand their presence above specified levels.
- The Second Supplemental Appropriations Act of 1973, P.L. 93–50, specified that none of the funds appropriated by the act were to be used "to support directly or indirectly combat activities in or over Cambodia, Laos, North Vietnam, and South Vietnam or off the shores of Cambodia, Laos, North Vietnam and South Vietnam by United States Forces and after August 15, 1973, no other funds heretofore appropriated under any other act may be expended for such purpose."
- Congress authorized the use of U.S. Armed Forces in Somalia in the Department of Defense Appropriations Act of 1994, P.L. 103–139, but set a deadline after which appropriated funds could no longer be used to pay for their involve-

ment. The act specified that the deadline could only be extended if requested by the President and authorized by the Congress.

- In the Department of Defense Appropriations Act of 1995, P.L. 103–335, Congress required congressional approval of "any change in the United States mission in Rwanda from one of strict refugee relief to security, peace-enforcing, or nation-building or any other substantive role" and blocked funding for continued participation of the U.S. military in Operation Support Hope beyond a specified date.
- The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1998, P.L. 105–85, provided that no funds appropriated for fiscal year 1998 or any subsequent year could be used for the deployment of any U.S. ground combat forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina after a specified cutoff date unless the President first consulted with Congress and then certified to Congress that certain conditions existed in the field.

Senator BOXER. And that started in the 1970s, and it—the most recent one was in 2001. So, all this talk about, "Oh, my God, you can't do it"—I want to commend Dr. Korb for laying out what I think is a very smart and straightforward idea. You cap the forces. What you cap it at is something that has to be debated. I would discuss it with the military people. And then you say to the President, "Come back to us and tell us why it makes sense to redeploy some of our people who have been there three and four times."

I wanted to thank you for that clarity, because I sense a lot of weaving and bobbing among a lot of people, you know, on this point.

Congress has the power of the purse. And, God forbid, if we didn't, because there's checks and balances in the Constitution. Our chairman's an expert on the Constitution. He teaches. And I would say that, particularly in a democracy like ours, which is being tested every day, when people go the polls, Mr. Chairman, and they register dissent, which I believe they did, and then, in the polls, they register their very strong dissent with this President's policies, and then the Iraq Study Group registers its dissent with this President's policies and says, "Change from a combat role to a support role"—and I could just go on—all the generals on the ground, including General Abizaid said, "This escalation makes no sense." They call it a "surge," whatever term is used, the same thing. It's more of my people, and our people, being put in the middle of a civil war, which, as people know, I express myself every day on, because a lot of times we have these hearings and no one talks about who's paying the price. And that's why I raised it with Secretary Rice, and that's why I raised it last time we had the experts. Who's paying the price? It's all well and good for us to talk about this in an abstract way, but who's paying the price? And I always come back to that.

Dr. Luttwak, I have a question for you, because you talked about our enemies, and you were eloquent on the point. Do you think an enemy of America would be someone who says, "If an American troop is standing in my town, it's OK to kill that American"? Is that person an enemy?

Dr. LUTTWAK. Yes; certainly. But in Iraq today, there are not just friends and enemies. In Iraq, there are many different groups that have many different orientations, some of which have been on our side from the beginning very consistently, and others, who are not against us, but don't do anything for us, because we are doing the fighting for them.

Senator BOXER. Yes.

Dr. LUTTWAK. So, what's happening now, as I see it—and you draw attention to our casualties—I've had my nephew in Iraq—is that our troops are actually having very little affect on the situation.

Senator BOXER. OK. Excuse me, sir. I value your further explanation, but I'm running out of time, and I want to get to that point, because I'm glad you said, if somebody says it's OK to kill an American soldier, that they should be considered an enemy. And I would go to Dr. Korb's testimony, and I would thank him for pointing out that 61 percent of the Iraqi people say it's OK to kill an American. So, you know, we can make excuses for those folks—you didn't; you said, "Yeah, that's an enemy"—you are now admitting what I believe to be the case, where we're in a country where 61 percent of the people say it's OK to kill an American, 70 percent say we should get out in a year. So, you know, sometimes I think we need a reality check of what we are doing. It's—we get so caught up, you know, in, you know, a lot of minutia here, when I think we need to keep our eye on what we're trying to do. We're trying to bring a stable Iraq, and, instead of working on a political solution, as many of you have called out very eloquently for today, and my chairman has called out eloquently for, for a long time, we're sending our troops in the middle of a situation where 61 percent of the people say, "Yeah, it's OK. Kill that soldier." And I just cannot sit back and say, "Well, I don't know that I could vote to cap the troops, because the executive branch should have the ability"—I think we have a responsibility here, through this committee, and I think that these hearings are giving us this opportunity.

I want to make the point that even the most far-reaching bring-the-troops-home resolution, which is the Feingold-Boxer resolution, keeps our troops there, without a timeframe, to deal with the terrorism—for example, al-Qaeda in Anbar province—to deal with training the Iraqis, to deal with protection of our forces. So, there isn't anyone here—and I heard the word "irresponsible"—that basically says, "Tomorrow, we're all leaving." So, I think that's an important point.

Now, the other thing is, no one conceived to tell us what the casualty numbers will be. We've tried to get that. And it seems to me, if you're going to turn over a new page, which is the President's point, "This is a new policy"—of course, I don't really think it is—you at least owe that to the American people.

And, Dr. Luttwak, I was confused, you said you didn't see increasing human cost by the surge. What did you, exactly, mean?

Dr. LUTTWAK. I said that rejecting surge would not lead to increasing casualties.

Senator BOXER. I'm sorry.

Dr. LUTTWAK. What I said was that if you oppose the surge——

Senator BOXER. Yes.

Dr. LUTTWAK [continuing]. Nobody can say that you have, thereby, caused increased casualties for the Iraqis, because our troops—because the enemy is so elusive, so transient, cannot be seen, has no contrast, cannot be penetrated, because of the instability of the insurgent groups, there is no relationship between troop levels and the number of Iraqis who will die. Therefore, we are not, in fact,

containing the insurgency. And if you argue that you want to reduce troop levels, nobody can say that it will cause more deaths for Iraqis because our troops are not preventing the deaths for Iraqis. We have——

Senator BOXER. Because there's a civil war going on. Is that——

Dr. LUTTWAK. Our—we have——

Senator BOXER [continuing]. Correct?

Dr. LUTTWAK [continuing]. Conventional forces in Iraq, structured to attack visible, high-contrast conventional forces. And they cannot see the enemy, they cannot intercept him, they cannot detect him; therefore, the—at the tactical—that's why these generals, for the last few years, have been saying, "No, don't send us more troops." It was not because they were insincerely lying patsies to the administration. They actually know that, at the tactical level, when you send a platoon to a locality, you don't know what to do with that platoon, because it's not a constabulary. Constabulary walks down the street, people talk to the—to them and tell them, "You know, there's a bad guy around the corner." When nobody talks to you, the patrol is blind and achieves nothing. Hence, surge, in detail, or the entire deployment as a whole, cannot achieve the tactical effect, cannot reduce Iraqi casualties. Therefore, if you oppose surge, people can criticize you, but they cannot say, "Now you will be responsible with death of"——

Senator BOXER. Well, I don't—you're talking politics to me about something that we're trying——

Dr. LUTTWAK. It is not politics——

Senator BOXER [continuing]. To get beyond——

Dr. LUTTWAK [continuing]. At all. I'm——

Senator BOXER. We're trying——

Dr. LUTTWAK [continuing]. I'm addressing a very serious issue, that anybody who makes recommendations, one way or the other, must carry the burden.

Senator BOXER. OK.

Dr. LUTTWAK. The burden. And I'm saying there is no burden, because our—there is no relationship between our troop presence and casualties.

Senator BOXER. Dr. Korb, could you respond to that? Because—this is interesting, because when I met with General Casey—it was a year and a half ago—he said our troop presence was fueling the insurgency. So, I—is that what you're saying? Our troop presence is fueling the insurgency? That—am I missing what you're saying?

Dr. LUTTWAK. No, Senator, what I'm saying is——

Senator BOXER. So, he's not——

Dr. LUTTWAK [continuing]. That our troop presence is, of course, fueling the nationalist reaction, and, therefore, the insurgency.

Senator BOXER. You are saying——

Dr. LUTTWAK. But—yes—at the same time—you see, whenever you introduce troops anywhere in the world, you will cause some national reaction. But you, nevertheless, introduce them, because they achieve tactical operational purposes. Iraq is different. That is, by being there, you evoke a nationalist reaction, but you're not getting the tactical payoff, because they cannot even see the enemy.

Senator BOXER. Well, sir——

Dr. LUTTWAK. And that is the reason why the position is taken by Senator Biden and by all—by many people, including our generals, that we should not have more troops, but less troops.

Senator BOXER. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. He's agreeing——

Dr. LUTTWAK. And be——

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. With you.

Dr. LUTTWAK [continuing]. Less visible.

Senator BOXER. I appreciate that.

Dr. LUTTWAK. Yes.

Senator BOXER. Dr. Korb, anything? And then I'll stop. I'd just like your response.

Dr. KORB. Well, I think that Ed makes a terrific point here, and that the generals were correct that more troops will not stop more Iraqis from dying. And one of the things I think we have to be very careful of—I see this undercurrent from the administration and some of their supporters, blaming Casey and Abizaid for the failed strategy. No; they had the right strategy, and to put them up and to blame them, to me, is simply irresponsible. What I do think is, more American troops will mean more American casualties, rather than the question that Ed talks about with the Iraqi casualties.

The CHAIRMAN. So, I understand that you both agree with the Senator, that we should not surge, and a reduction in troops is more likely to lead to a positive outcome than a negative outcome.

Dr. LUTTWAK. Yes, sir.

Dr. KORB. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator BOXER. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. There you go. Governor.

Senator VOINOVICH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to say that I congratulate you and Senator Lugar for the hearings that you've had on Iraq, because I think it's one of the most important issues that have come before us, and it will have a longstanding impact on our national security and peace in the world.

You all agree that we need to engage more in the region, and get more parties involved in Iraq, but what is the best way to do that? Do you agree that we should sit down at a summit or a conference and talk about Iraq, or should it occur bilaterally? Should the Iraqis lead this process, or should the United States? Should America reach out to Syria and Iran? Most of you have said that we should. Is it possible to talk with Iran without involving Iran's President? And how would engagement with Iran and Syria affect the internal political situation in Iraq?

So, there is a series of things I'd like you to comment on. And the last one is the question I've been asking for 2½ years studying the history of Muqtada al-Sadr and his family. How can there possibly be a unity government with Sadr, who, from everything I read, wants to be the next Ayatollah of Iraq, and who has very close family connections with the Iranians—though some of you have said that the Shiites in Iraq are somewhat different from those in Iran?

Dr. MALLEY. Senator, as you know, I—as I said in my testimony, I believe that a multilateral strategy of engagement with the region is absolutely critical to success, not because the region—the neigh-

bors play—have played a critical role in instigating the crisis, but because the crisis has gone so far that, without the help of all the actors who have leverage, influence, contacts, whether with tribes, militias, groups in Iraq, it's simply going to be impossible to stabilize the situation.

Senator VOINOVICH. And what are the incentives for regional parties to come to the table to help stabilize Iraq?

Dr. MALLEY. I think there are two series of incentives. Some of them already exist. Basically, I don't think any country in the region has a real incentive in seeing Iraq collapse into civil war. We're already seeing—we have a presence in Syria, and we're already seeing the—some Syrians being very worried about the impact of having a civil war in Iraq, possible civil war in Lebanon, a minority Alawite regime in Damascus. That's not a comfortable position for them to be in. So, they are already built-in incentives that the status quo is dangerous for them. But that's not going to be enough. I think we know that both Iran and Syria, if nothing else changes, would prefer to see instability in Iraq rather than a United States victory there—United States success there. So, there's going to have to be—if we really want to engage the region—and, in particular, Iran and Syria—a revisiting of our strategy toward those two countries.

Now, that's doesn't mean, as Secretary Rice has said, that we're going to give in to extortion or that we're going to surrender to them. This is what diplomacy is about, and you've had a lot of testimony over the last few weeks of people who have been saying that. That's what diplomacy is, it's to try to put our interests on the table and see whether there's a way that their interests could also be taken into account. It may not work. I—just one more—it may not work, but at least it has to be tried. And for the last 6 years, we've given up diplomacy in the region, on the assumption that talking to people we don't agree with somehow is a sign of weakness.

Dr. LUTTWAK. I respectfully disagree with this. I note that it's been espoused by the most distinguished people, but I still disagree. Our cooperation with Iran, which was very real over Afghanistan, took place situationally. They had been supporting the Northern Alliance, keeping it alive. We needed to go in. They had their own interest in the Hazara and Herat. They were very concerned about the Hazara, because they are Shia. You know, they are the so-called oriental Shia of Afghanistan who were killed by the Taliban. In this context, we didn't discuss, we didn't negotiate. If we had negotiated with Iran at the time, we would not have had cooperation, because whoever Iranian would have negotiated with us would have been immediately attacked in his own country as a traitor and undermined because he talked to us. Formal diplomacy does not work in a situation where the politics within the ever-narrowing group of extremists who run Iran, mandates that whoever talks to the Americans is a traitor. So, formal diplomacy advocated by so many people—and I'd defer to their great experience and high reputations—is bound to fail——

Senator VOINOVICH. So——

Dr. LUTTWAK [continuing]. We've had with——

Senator VOINOVICH. So, you——

Dr. LUTTWAK. Yes; you talk to them, you get nowhere, but——

Senator VOINOVICH. So, you would not talk with Iran, but you would talk with the Saudis and with the Egyptians and with——

Dr. LUTTWAK. Again, it is not the talking—it's the situation that is driving things. We negotiated and talked to the Saudis for decades, and they were never our true allies. But when the Shia "crescent," as they call it, from Pakistan to the Mediterranean, emerges, suddenly here are the Saudis, spending hundreds of millions of dollars in Lebanon to help Prime Minister Siniora hold up the Hezbollah with one finger. He's holding them with one finger, because of—the Saudis are behind him. The Saudis have cut off Hamas. The Saudis are really cooperating, for the first time, because they're terrified of the Shia. Similarly, the Iranians cooperate in Afghanistan because of the objective circumstances. The moment you sit down and talk to them, you are entering in a negotiating process in which the internal dynamics of it make it difficult or impossible for them to really cooperate with you.

So, what we have to do is to continue to handle the situation. We did not create this division between Sunni and Shia. You could argue that it was implicit as soon as the Sunnis became fundamentalists, the emergence of the Shia identified as heretics and apostates——

Senator VOINOVICH. All right.

Dr. LUTTWAK [continuing]. Was inevitable. The situation is——

Senator VOINOVICH. So, you're saying that you wouldn not even gather the different regional parties and factions together to talk about——

Dr. LUTTWAK. What happens is that we—you are gathering, you are influencing, you're achieving an equilibrium. You disengage American forces. You don't abandon, you don't run. You disengage. And you force responsibility on people. You see, you can sit and talk—you see, there are complexities here. For example, you mentioned Muqtada al-Sadr.

Senator VOINOVICH. Yes.

Dr. LUTTWAK. The Sadr family has historically been in a feud with the al-Hakim family, which is the so-called Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq. And that's how we saw the spectacle of al-Hakim coming to the White House and talking to President Bush—a man who spent 23 years in Iran declaiming "Marg Barg America," death to America. He was in Washington, talking to President Bush. That's the reality level.

You manage the situation, and then you have the substance of diplomacy.

Senator VOINOVICH. All right, let me just——

Dr. LUTTWAK. But the act of talking destroys the substance.

Senator VOINOVICH. Let me get back to the last question. In your opinion, can there be a political deal that achieves a unified Iraq, with the presence of Muqtada al-Sadr?

Dr. LUTTWAK. Well, Sadr—you said that Sadr is pro-Iranian. Actually, Sadr's polemic in Arabic, is constantly attacking Ayatollah Sistani for being an Iranian. As you know, Sistan is the most remote province of Iran, on the Pakistani border. He's saying, here we have a remote Persian who is supposedly the leader of the Shia in Iraq. That's his polemic. So, again, there are great complexities.

As you would not want to go and manage the school board politics in Mississippi because of complexities beyond you, similarly we should not be going and trying to manage the complexities of Iraq. By disengaging, we are imposing responsibilities on everybody, including the Iranians, including the Syrians. The Alawite regime in Damascus is not even Shia, they're only nominally Shia; they're Nusayris, who are considered apostates from Islam, and pagans by orthodox Sunni Muslims. Once we withdraw, the Syrians will stop cooperating with the bad guys. So, in other words, the substance of diplomacy, but not its formality.

Dr. GELB. Senator, if I may respond to your question?

Dr. KORB. Well, let me——

Senator VOINOVICH. Yes.

Dr. KORB [continuing]. Go. I missed my chance here. It went right by me. I was about to go, and Ed took the microphone here.

Once we announce that we're leaving and we don't want to have any permanent bases in Iraq, the countries in the region, as well as the Iraqi people, know that it's no longer just our problem, it's theirs. None of the countries, including Iran and Syria, want to see Iraq become a failed state or a haven for al-Qaeda. And so, therefore, I think, if you appoint a high-level envoy of the stature of somebody like Colin Powell or Madeleine Albright, they will be able to get the countries in the region together.

I don't know if it's true, I've seen reports that the Saudis may have been responsible for the missile that shot down the American, you know, helicopter. We—so, they're involved, as well. They're not going to let the Sunnis lose, however you want to define that. So, they all have an interest in stability, and once they know that we will not be there forever, they're going to be willing to cooperate. Now, the form, I think, you know, becomes immaterial.

In terms of Sadr, it's very interesting, what Sadr has said is he's coming back into the government, but he wants an American withdrawal, he wants us, you know, to set a date to—you know, to get out. Remember that Maliki was not the original choice of the Iraqis. We did not like the original choices of the Iraqis. Jaafari and we put pressure on them to come up with someone else, so we're partly responsible, you know, for this. But, again, I think, once you set a date to get out and they know you will not be there permanently, a lot of the people will not continue to fight. Many of the people over there are fighting simply because they see this as an American occupation, and they will not, as has been pointed out here, ally themselves with al-Qaeda. They don't like al-Qaeda. Less than 5 percent of the Iraqis support them. So, once it's clear we're getting out, the violence, I think, should diminish.

But let me conclude with this on negotiations. Every time I hear people say, "Well, you shouldn't negotiate, it's a sign of weakness," I remember what the late Yitzhak Rabin said when they asked him, "Why are you negotiating with Arafat? How can you negotiate"—and he said, "You've got to negotiate with your enemies. It's your friends you consult with."

Dr. GELB. If I may, Senator, briefly, although your question deserves a long answer—and you may want to devote a session to the diplomacy of the region, it's worth it. To me, diplomacy is absolutely essential, but you can't talk about diplomacy as if to do it

represents American weakness. And I think that's a fundamental mistake that the administration is making. Diplomacy is going to give us answers to questions we don't really have good answers to right now. That's why you engage. We've engaged with some of our worst enemies throughout our history, and we prevent some things from getting worse, and we begin to use American power through diplomacy. And we shouldn't be afraid of doing it.

On the issue of Muqtada al-Sadr, I think none of the parties are going to give up their militias. They just aren't going to do it. You don't have any trust and confidence. You have hatred. And the militias protect the various sectarian groups, so they're not going to give them up. I think the only way to deal with them is in the context of a decentralization or federal system where the Shiites would be responsible for dealing with Muqtada. And I think they're better able to do it than we or the Sunnis or the Kurds. Muqtada is going to be a real problem, but let him be the Shiite problem, not ours.

Senator VOINOVICH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Appreciate the time.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator.

Senator Obama.

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

Thank you, to all the panelists. This is an illuminating discussion.

I would just like to summarize what I've heard. Because we have a very practical decision that Congress is facing, and that is, how do we approach the administration's proposal to escalate troop levels. And so, I just want to be focused on, and make sure that I'm hearing your testimony properly.

Is there anybody on the panel who thinks that it is the right approach for us to escalate troop levels, at this point?

[No response.]

Senator OBAMA. As far as I could tell, I didn't hear anybody suggest that increasing troop levels would be the correct approach. So, the second question I have is: Would everybody be in agreement with this premise that initiating some sort of phased redeployment or withdrawal of our troop levels—understanding that some United States troops would remain for force protection, training of Iraqi security forces, and counterinsurgency activities—would be more likely to result in a better outcome than the course that we're on right now? Is there anybody who disagrees with that?

[No response.]

Senator OBAMA. Since that is the case, I would like to note that one of the difficulties that all of us here are grappling with is that the tools available to Congress to force the administration's hand are quite limited. So, an issue that I'm interested in is the panel's assessment as to how quickly we could potentially begin a phased withdrawal in a responsible fashion. And I'm wondering if anybody has opinions on that. I'm interested if any of you have a timetable that you would feel comfortable with, saying, let's say, in May or June, that we would begin some phased redeployment to send a clear signal to the Iraqi Government, and to the factions involved, that they're going to have to move forward on a political solution. Anybody want to address that question?

Dr. GELB. My opinion is that we sit down with our military, on an urgent basis, and get an answer to your question.

Senator OBAMA. OK.

Dr. KORB. I think that you should begin to withdraw right now, take out about 8,000 troops a month, so you'd be there over the next 18 months. When we withdrew from Vietnam, we took out 10,000 troops a month to get the number down to what it was at the time of the Paris Peace Accords, which was about 21,000. I think that can be done safely. I think it helps us fulfill our moral responsibility to the Iraqis. It gives them time to do what they need to do. And it also improves our ability to deal with our other strategic interests around the world.

Senator OBAMA. Good.

Dr. MALLEY. Senator, two points. First, I think it's not only a matter of withdrawing. I mean, it is withdrawing, but also changing the task that our troops are currently involved in. The other point, which I emphasized in the testimony, is I think it's—the administration is taking this backward—it's not a matter of deciding the troop level, it's having a political strategy that you could then adapt your troop presence to. We could withdraw, but that needs to be attached to a political strategy. If there is no political strategy, I think you accelerate the withdrawal far more——

Senator OBAMA. OK. So, let's shift gears to address the political strategy. I'll start with Mr. Gelb. I know you and Senator Biden have put forward a proposal that I believe makes some persuasive points.

The only question I have on a more active federalist strategy of the sort that you're pursuing is whether that's one that we should be initiating, as opposed to letting that unfold as a consequence of us putting more pressure on the Iraqis to figure out their problems. In short, if we begin a phased withdrawal, it strikes me that this places pressure on the Iraqis to forge and subsequently own a political settlement that is going to work. And, at that stage, then, it might be that the proposals that you and the chairman have suggested are the ones around which we arrive at an Iraqi consensus. But is there a concern that if we predetermine what that consensus should be, and push that too hard, that there might be significant suspicion on the part of the Sunnis that this is just a strategy to disadvantage them?

Dr. GELB. Well, we haven't predetermined it. It's in their Constitution.

Senator OBAMA. OK.

Dr. GELB. And the chairman read from their Constitution, a moment ago.

Senator OBAMA. Right.

Dr. GELB. It explicitly calls it a federal system, it explicitly provides for provinces to unite with other provinces to create regional governments. Eighty percent of the country approved. Eighty percent of the national assembly approved implementing legislation for it, although they've deferred that because of the opposition. The opposition is based on some legitimate arguments, because everything is hard. People say it's going to lead to partition. But what's happening now is producing partition. People say it's going to lead

to ethnic cleansing. But that's what we've been witnessing for the last several years.

When you can't reach reconciliation politically on the basis of a strong central government, the historical alternative has been decentralization and federalism. We can't shove it down their throats, obviously, but we can help them to reach the conclusion that I think the majority of Iraqis want to reach; namely, stay together as a nation, with the central government performing certain essential functions, but with the regions doing the legislating and administering according to their own ethnic and religious wishes.

Senator OBAMA. OK.

Dr. LUTTWAK. May I?

Senator OBAMA. Please. Why don't we just go down the line, and then——

Dr. LUTTWAK. Yes.

Senator OBAMA [continuing]. I will just listen and ask no followup questions.

Dr. LUTTWAK. Senator, I don't like the word "withdrawal." I like the word "disengagement." It means you don't patrol the villages and towns, you don't interfere, you don't go through their underwear searching for items in their houses. You do stay in bases, and the number, therefore, you require—if you had no concern with numbers and you had an infinite number of troops, you still would not want more than 12,000, 15,000. And then, you allow the normal processes of politics to take place and allow the Iraqis to have their own history. I'm very uncomfortable about this talk of a federal constitution based on the principles of Locke, Burke, and Madison, which are—in the society that is tribal, that is multiethnic, multireligious, and which is in a completely different situation. And I believe that the act of disengagement will force responsibility on the Iraqis. And I believe that all their different politics will not result in areas of Iraq where you're going to have al-Qaeda living comfortably, because they want to rule in their own homes. And I additionally believe that the process will not increase the number of people who die in the process.

Senator OBAMA. Thank you.

Dr. KORB. I think that they may end up in the situation described by Chairman Biden and Les Gelb, but I think we have to be careful that it doesn't look like a "Made in America" type of solution. I think, as I suggested in my testimony, that we convene a Dayton-style conference, get the parties together, let them work out the arrangements that are most amenable to them. And it—and as long as those—that arrangement involves the—deciding what the provincial government should do, what the central government should do, the oil revenues are distributed fairly, minority rights are protected, the role of religion in society—as long as those issues are handled, the way they handle them really has got to be up to them.

Senator OBAMA. Thank you.

Robert.

Dr. MALLEY. Four quick points.

First, we've not tried, really, to create a political reconciliation between the parties. What we've done is, we've worked with a select group, many of whom, in fact, had as an explicit or implicit

agenda, the division of the country and their own personal private interests, as I said, acting—earlier—acting as warlords rather than statesmen.

Second, yes; there's going to have to be, if you want reconciliation, an amendment to the Constitution. I think, actually, the Gelb-Biden plan does include amendments to the Constitution. A constitution that is rejected almost en bloc by 20 percent of the population defined through sectarian—in sectarian ways, is not a constitution that could bring the country together. We know that, and—we should know it from our own history.

The third point is—and this is not in the Gelb-Biden plan, but there are some who are appealed—attracted to the notion that Iraq could simply devolve into a three-way confederation. Let's not kid ourselves, that's going to be extremely bloody, the lines are still shifting, it's a mosaic, but it's a mosaic that's continually being redefined. There are clashes within communities that sometimes are as vicious as between communities. It may be the outcome. I think that's something that we've all agreed with. It may be that the country just collapses. But it's not something that we should be a party to, it's something that we should—if it happens, we should stay away from.

Senator OBAMA. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman, thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Senator Menendez.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank all of the panelists for their tremendous insights.

Let me just ask—I'll start with you, Dr. Korb, but also anyone who wants to respond—it seems to me, whether it's disengagement, strategic redeployment, or even the administration's plan, which I oppose, the question is: Don't we need benchmarks that have consequences? We had the Secretary of State here, and she clearly did not have that view. But it seems to me that benchmarks without some form of consequences are merely aspirations. And we have seen, already on several occasions, where benchmarks without consequences have come and gone. And it just seems to me that they're critical, both in our context for the Congress, in keeping people accountable, particularly in Iraq and its leadership. Do you believe that we need to have benchmarks with consequences?

Dr. KORB. Very definitely, because if we do not, then the Iraqis will avoid making these painful political compromises that we spoken—because they are difficult, they want to remain in power and keep the government together. So, without these benchmarks, they'll continue as they have.

Let me make a point which I think is very important. They had their elections over a year ago. In that time, we have lost a battalion's worth of soldiers and marines, killed or wounded, while they have been dithering. They promised to modify the Constitution 4 months after the election. We're now 13 months. We have seen, for the last 5 years, "Give us 6 more months, give us 3 more months, and things will change." How many times do we have to do it? So, I think, yes; you need to have benchmarks. If you don't, there's no way in which you can use whatever leverage we have left to get them to do what they need to do.

Senator MENENDEZ. Now, National Security Advisor Hadley seems to be, sort of spinning the escalation plan by discussing the idea of benchmarks. He said on Friday, "It's going to be a little bit pay-as-you-go," which is a budgetary provision we have here, or we should have here, but we don't have it right now—and it's going to depend a lot on Iraqi performance. But without benchmarks to determine what those performances are, and consequences, it really isn't very much pay-as-you-go. Is that a fair statement?

Dr. KORB. Very, very definitely. I mean, one of the most interesting things I've seen on this is a column by Charles Krauthammer in the Washington Post on the 19th of this month, where he basically said, "We need to find a redeployment strategy that maintains as much latent American strength as possible, but with minimal exposure. We say to Maliki, 'Let us down, and we dismantle the Green Zone, leave Baghdad and let you fend for yourself. We keep the airport and certain strategic bases in the area.'" And he goes on and on with other things. And I think that's the key thing. We've got to put pressure on him.

Senator MENENDEZ. Yes.

Dr. MALLEY. If I could add, I think this is the key point. It's benchmarks, it's accountability, it's conditionality, things that have been completely lacking so far. And the problem in the way that I'm seeing the administration doing it is we're first giving—we've said we're going to send the troops, we say we're going to continue support, before having gotten from them the kind of commitments and the kind of proof that they're acting in the way they need to act. And I think that's taking it backward and upside down. We need to make sure that they are acting in the way that they need to act, and we need to condition any support on them delivering on those promises.

Senator MENENDEZ. Now, Dr.——

Dr. GELB. May I respond to the question, too——

Senator MENENDEZ. Surely, yes; please.

Dr. GELB [continuing]. Senator? Two things. First, on the issue of conditionality—to me, there's only one condition, and that is political reconciliation. I think if they don't achieve that, nothing else is going to be possible. They can go through kabuki acts about dismantling militias, and arrest 400 militia from Muqtada al-Sadr, and then release them 2 weeks later. The only thing that's going to work is political reconciliation, a political power-sharing agreement.

Meantime, I think the way to reinforce this and help bring it about is to start the withdrawal process.

Senator MENENDEZ. Even under political reconciliation, you could have benchmarks to determine whether you're moving in that direction.

Dr. GELB. You could. It's hard to define them, but I think we'd know it when we see it.

Senator MENENDEZ. Yes.

Dr. Korb, let me just take a moment—because I think one of the legacies here, one of the consequences of escalation, as the Congress thinks about its position on the votes that will be upcoming on the President's plan, is the consequences and the legacy of what happens to both our Armed Services and Reserve. And since you

were an Assistant Secretary of Defense, particularly on manpower and Reserve affairs, and have written on some of that, it seems to me that one of the important legacies of this war of choice for the American people and its leaders is—to wrestle with for the foreseeable future—is the consequences on our force structures, our Reserves and our Guards. And I'd like to ask you to comment on that. I know you were quoted, in December, talking about a post-deployment death spiral. Maybe you could speak a little bit to that. Also, what are the consequences of the President's plan, increasing the number of troops in Iraq, on both the Armed Forces and the Guard and Reserves, both in the short and the long term? I think those are real consequences, when we think about national security in an even broader context with some of our other challenges in the world as we debate Iraq, specifically.

Dr. KORB. I—if, in fact, you—this surge becomes permanent, it becomes—you're going to keep 21,500 more troops in Iraq over the long term, you're going to have to mobilize Guard and Reserve units who have already been mobilized at least once. When—as they say, when I was in the building, our policy was not to mobilize them for more than 1 year out of every 5, because the data showed, if you do that, you're going to lose a lot of the people. If you take a man or woman who's in the Guard, and you want to take more than 20 percent of their time away from their civilian career, they're simply not going to stay, they might as well join the Active Forces. So, you're going to have to mobilize units again that have already been mobilized at least once for close to 2 years, since September 11. And I think, if you do that, that will bring about this death spiral.

In my testimony, I urge Congress to clarify the law and force the President to come back if he wants to remobilize those units again and present the—present the reasons.

Let me put it very bluntly. I think it's—we have missed something in this whole war. When we created the volunteer military, the idea was that we would have a small Active Army, and that Guard and Reserve would be a bridge to conscription, to the draft, if we had a long ground war. That was the idea. What has happened is, the Guard and Reserve have become an adjunct to the Active Force, and we haven't even thought about going back to—going back to the draft. It's important to remember, this is the first extended conflict we've ever had where we have not had conscription and we have actually lowered taxes, not raised taxes.

And so, I say, you know, as look at this, you cannot—you need to understand, you've misused the Guard and Reserve. This was not what we intended for the Army Guard and Reserve. The first Persian Gulf war was the way the volunteer military was constructed, not the second Persian Gulf war.

And then, finally, one of the reasons I urge redeployment is, the Guard, particularly, has a role in homeland defense. This has become a new critical area of security. If they are spending their time away from—they're not going to be able to fulfill that. Remember, now, that you've taken a lot of the equipment, from the Guard particularly, sent it to Iraq, left at Iraq. The people home here do not have enough equipment to train on. So, you had not only—that's

why I talked about the death spiral—it's not just the personnel, it's also the training of these units.

Senator MENENDEZ. And, very quickly, several of the testimonies we've had here talks about—including the architects of this plan—talk about several years more of engagement, in a military context. If that is the case, how long can we continue to go through the present structure, engage for several years, and not, at some point, look at the question of whether conscription is necessary?

Dr. KORB. Well, the President has belatedly agreed to raise the size of the ground forces. This is something that should have been done, and many of us urged, right after September 11. That was the time when you could have gone and won. I don't think you can continue to maintain 150-or-so-thousand troops in Iraq, whatever—you know, 20–30,000 in Afghanistan, indefinitely without breaking your volunteer ground forces. You would have to really consider going back to some form of conscription. After all, if people are registering for the draft, and you don't use it now, when will you use it? I mean, why—we go through this thing about having people register. And I have urged the Congress to take a look at Congressman Wrangle's proposal. It doesn't mean you have to adopt it, but I do think it needs to be debated. And the American people have no emotional involvement in this conflict, and, because of that, I don't think that, even though they voted one way, they're going to be as involved as we were, for example, back in Vietnam.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator.

Senator Nelson.

Senator NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I have been in the confirmation hearings on General Petraeus. And, of course, this same issue has been discussed quite extensively.

Thank you all for coming, and thank you for your expertise, thank you for your public service.

With every mistake that has been made, we are where we are. I guess the essential question I want to ask is: What do we do? Aggressive diplomacy? Bring the people and countries in the region in to help us solve the problem? Reach out to those who have been ignored, with aggressive diplomacy? And, possibly, Senator Biden's plan of trying to separate the various sectors, to try to bring stability to the region? Please comment.

Dr. LUTTWAK. Should I——

Dr. GELB. Please.

Dr. LUTTWAK. Senator, many things have happened since this war started. Unplanned, unwanted. But some of the things that have happened have gone in our way and not against us. The ancient quarrel between Sunni and Shia has become a dynamic conflict. That has terrible consequences, but it also gives us, for the first time, real allies. Sunni states that, before, were taking our aid and support, but never did anything for us, are now working for us in Lebanon, they're working for us with the Palestinians—for example, the Saudis have finally cut off Hamas because of it, because they see how much it aligned with Iran, and anybody that's aligned with Iran is out. Another unexpected consequence is that this entire campaign by the most extreme element in Iran, to be-

come leaders of the Middle East by being the most anti-American, anti-Israeli, and anti-Jewish has entirely failed. Now they are no longer considered Middle Eastern fellow brothers, they are called Ajamis, which are apostates and so on.

Senator NELSON. So, on the——

Dr. LUTTWAK. So, in all these——

Senator NELSON. Let me just make a——

Dr. LUTTWAK. Sure.

Senator NELSON [continuing]. Parenthetical that will corroborate what you said. As I was sitting with King Abdullah, and he was talking about the threat of Iran, if I had closed my eyes, he could have been saying almost word for word what Benjamin Netanyahu had said about the threat in the region by Iran, only 7 days earlier.

Dr. LUTTWAK. Indeed. And this is—has consequences. And, at the same time, within Iraq, the different Shia groups rely on us to protect them from the Sunni revival, because, as you know, even though the Sunnis have always been—the Arab Sunnis—a small minority in Iraq, they've always ruled, because of—the Shia are fragmented hopelessly. Now, in this environment, if we remove and reduce—without disappearing or abandoning, we just withdraw our active presence, we disengage—we will impose on them the obligation and necessity of resolving these issues. And we have large areas of Iraq which already are at peace. And I mentioned the big city of Mosul, most of Basrah—Basrah, most of the time, and the areas are narrower and narrower. So, I think that the situation is not catastrophic, and I believe that if we just disengage our forces, we will allow more of this natural equilibrium to arise and that we'll be able to retain our influence.

I remember, in Vietnam—most of you are too young to remember this, but when we had United States forces in Vietnam, there was a "Hanoi Hilton," the prison where they kept American POWs, mostly pilots. Today in Hanoi, there is a Hilton and a Sheraton and a Marriott, and they're all coming up. In other words, the situation is not so bad as it is, and paradoxically—and there, I agree with the entire panel in every respect—by being, ourselves, active in the environment, we are generating negative elements, and that is why surge is a bad idea, why disengagement will bring, I think, positive results.

Dr. GELB. Senator, if I would answer your question very briefly, it is that we—if we have any chance of doing anything, given all the blunders that have been committed, it's got to be a strategy where politics is in the lead, where political settlement is the first thing we try for, and where we put forward a realistic way of doing it; namely, a decentralized federal system. I don't think anything else will work. And the military withdrawals, which ought to be taking place as soon as possible, and the diplomacy, should be in support of that political settlement.

If that doesn't happen, if the Iraqis don't want to do it, and we can't help them to do it, then we're going to have to think of more direct means to disengage.

Dr. KORB. Senator, I think you're right that we are where we are; however, I hope that we've learned the lessons, over the last couple of years, that will guide as the way to go forward. It's also important to keep in mind, as I mention in my testimony, that,

given where we are, there are no good options. If we knew what to do, we—you know, there would be complete agreement in the country. The question is, Do you pick an alternative that maximizes the chances of protecting overall American security interests and fulfills our moral obligation to the Iraqis? And as my colleagues have said, it's got to be not a military surge, but a diplomatic surge. And I would argue for a phased redeployment that gets completed by the summer of 2008. And, while I recognize that taking all of our troops out of there could have some potential drawbacks, the fact of the matter is, there are many people in Iraq who don't believe we'll ever leave, many people in the Middle East that think we see Iraq as another base to project American power, and I think it would diminish that. And I am also convinced that once we're out of Iraq, al-Qaeda will not get the support from the Iraqi population. Ninety-five percent of the Iraqis don't like al-Qaeda, and they're about 2 to 3 percent of the problem there right now.

Senator NELSON. Before Dr. Malley comments—I just want to say, regarding lessons learned, you're absolutely right, Dr. Korb. And, sadly, one of the questions I had to ask General Petraeus today—and I told him, before, I was going to ask him this—"Will you sit silently by your civilian superiors when you know that they are giving incorrect and misleading information?" In answer to that question, he said no; he would not. But I had to ask that question.

Dr. MALLEY. Senator, first let me say, even though it may end up that we disengage, as Ed Luttwak said, I don't think we should look at that complacently. We've rolled the dice once by going in. Rolling the dice by coming out is—could be a very risky venture. I'm not quite as optimistic about events in the region. I think the sectarian strife in Iraq is fueling sectarian tensions outside of Iraq, and vice versa, and that is not a very optimistic picture, I think, for U.S. interests. That's why I would argue—and along with what Les Gelb said, I think he said it very well—we have one last chance now to try to see whether we can achieve a political reconciliation, whether the Iraqis can achieve a political reconciliation. And that means using two tools we haven't used so far—multilateral diplomacy, diplomacy in the region, and a far more inclusive approach to Iraqis, not simply playing with those who we've played with so far, whose agendas have been, as I've said earlier, very personal partisan agendas rather than having an inclusive strategy in Iraq itself—and trying to reach a new political compact, and giving a real choice to those in Iraq who we've put in power, "Either you act in a national interest or we're going to cease supporting you."

If we take that chance, I think we should develop it immediately and see whether it can work, and then use our troop presence or withdrawal as leverage to achieve that end. If we don't, if the administration chooses not to, or if our Iraqi allies are not prepared to do it, then I think we need to very quickly accelerate our withdrawal and end this sad chapter in our history.

Dr. KORB. Senator Nelson, if I may, you raised the point about General Petraeus, and I made it before, I do not want to see this administration blaming the generals there for the policy. And General Abizaid and Casey were very honest with you, and it looks to me that now people are, you know, blaming them for being honest.

So, I think it's important to keep in mind, it's not that the predecessors haven't been honest—and I assume that General Petraeus will be as honest, as well—but that you ensure that people are not being punished for being honest and testifying forthrightly before the Congress.

Dr. GELB. Both General Abizaid and General Casey, I think, have been incredibly up front on the central point of this war; namely, that there is no military solution to it, there is only, if we can do it, a political solution. And they've said it week after week.

Senator NELSON. I agree with you about both Abizaid and Casey. And I was often the one asking the question of both of them, particularly Abizaid, because as I would tell him, "I trust you. I trust your judgment"—I'm referring to 6 years of the Secretary of Defense sitting at the table and saying such-and-such about troop levels, saying such-and-such about the cost of the war, saying such-and-such about weapons of mass destruction, saying such-and-such about sectarian violence. And it wasn't the truth. About the reenlistments, about the state and readiness of equipment of the Guard and the Reserves. And, often, generals were sitting there silently. That's what I'm referring to.

Dr. KORB. If I may, I think one—and I mentioned this before, and I think it's very important—when General Shinseki was asked by Senator Levin how many troops we needed, there were other generals sitting at the table who did not support him, and I think that is a very, very critical issue. And, as you know, that he basically was told he didn't know what he was talking about by civilian leaders in the Pentagon. And I don't remember, at that time, even people who now are urging more troops, speaking up for General Shinseki.

Dr. LUTTWAK. Sir—Senator, it's not just General Shinseki, although what was said is completely accurate. My own experience was, I was working with the Marine Corps in the preparation for the war. There was a consensus—there were young Marine officers in Quantico who had all the facts about Iraq. They knew about the fact that, in addition to Sunni and Shia, there are Yazidis. They knew about the situation of the Turkmen in Kirkuk. They knew about the correct force level. There was a consensus. In fact, our system worked. Their system worked. The professionals who were supposed to know these things knew them. So, if you want to draw a lesson from it, it is: There was a disconnect here between the policy level, that was much more optimistic and dealt in general categories called freedom and democracy, and the people who actually had to worry about what they called "rear-area security." Because the actual territorial control was viewed under the heading of "rear-end security." That's how General Shinseki came up with the number, because General Shinseki didn't think you needed 400,000 troops to defeat Saddam Hussein, it was the consensus that it would be very easy to defeat him. There was no disagreement. It was about how many troops you would need to control the environment. And I got myself labeled as a racist, by a nameless policy person in the Pentagon, because I said that our troops would have to guard everything including protecting hospitals and schools from the people who use those same hospitals and schools. I was labeled a racist. But that was the consensus view of all the military officers

I was dealing with professionally. So, that was a mistake. And today, the consensus is against surge, simply because the enemy is low contrast, unstable, cannot be seen. And we didn't listen to them before, we should listen to them now.

Dr. GELB. You know, Senator, I feel the military are in a particular bind on these questions. I sat and listened to your description of what they did while Rumsfeld testified, and it was heartaching, because you know that they felt very differently than he was testifying. But they're torn between telling what they believe is the best military advice and the need to salute the Commander and have a can-do attitude. And they're torn between that all the time.

Senator NELSON. But we are entitled to the truth.

Dr. GELB. Indeed. Indeed——

Senator NELSON. And the making——

Dr. GELB [continuing]. You are.

Senator NELSON [continuing]. Of policy is not just the executive branch with a compliant Congress. The making of policy is with a separate, but equal, branch of government asserting itself in the making of policy.

Dr. GELB. It's true. And you know the bind they're in, in dealing with it.

Senator NELSON. And that's why I had to ask him the question.

Dr. GELB. Absolutely.

Dr. LUTTWAK. Well, General Petraeus is the author of the new counterinsurgency manual, and that counterinsurgency manual writes, page after page, chapter after chapter, how you can do this and you can do that and do the other, but the actual historical experience is that the only people who do counterinsurgency well are the ones who can out-terrorize the terrorists, that we absolutely cannot do, must not do, will never consider. In fact, counterinsurgency is a form of malpractice. And there are issues here, beyond the can-do-ism and the desire to be loyal, and the desire to tell the truth. Counterinsurgency worked for the Germans in World War II. They sent a dispatch rider into a village, and he was killed, they went and killed everybody in the village. That village and 50 villages round about were safe for the next—years. We cannot do that. We will never compromise our values to win a war or anything of the kind. It's unthinkable. And hence, we have a problem beyond honesty, beyond can-do-ism, and that is a specific issue called counterinsurgency.

Dr. KORB. Senator, if I might, because you raise something important, in terms of military people. They have an obligation before you, that's why you gave them fixed terms in office, so they could be honest. One of the things that concerns me is them showing up on Sunday morning talk shows, you know, and things like this. And, for example, let me read you this, "Today, approximately 164,000 Iraqi police and soldiers—of which about 100,000 are trained and equipped—and additional 74,000 facility protection forces, are performing a wide variety of security missions. Six battalions of the Iraqi regular army and the Iraqi intervention force are now conducting operations. Iraqi national guard battalions have also been active in recent months. Some 40 of the 45 existing battalions are conducting operations on a daily basis, most along-

side coalition forces, but many independently." That was said—written in the——

Senator NELSON. By General Petraeus.

Dr. KORB [continuing]. By—in September of 2004.

Senator NELSON. 2½ years ago.

Dr. KORB. Why was he writing that?

Senator NELSON. I asked him that. I asked him that, this morning. And I said, "You say that they were trained, but they're not, so tell me: How do you think they're going to be trained any better today? And how many do we have trained?" And I didn't get a clear answer.

The CHAIRMAN. What we have here is a failure of communication.

Senator, we went almost 10 minutes over, because it was worthwhile.

Let me yield to the chairman, if you have any questions, and then I know Senator Boxer has another question, and I have a few as well. No?

Senator Boxer, I'll yield to you.

Senator BOXER. Yes; thank you so much. This has been really illuminating.

I can't thank you enough. It's a hard time, when there are no good choices, there are no great choices, and I think that's the—frankly, the worst kind of leadership, is when you're left with no good choices, but we'll leave that for another time.

When I was in Iraq, I rode in a—in an armored vehicle with General Petraeus. And I just want to underscore, Senator Nelson, what you were saying. When I was in Iraq, 18 months ago, I rode with General Petraeus, and he showed me his whole thing he was doing to train the Iraqis. We went out on the field, and they were driving around, and they were simulating a hostage-taking, and they jumped out of the truck, and it was impressive. And then he had all the soldiers there, and he said, unequivocally, he was very, very, very high on the quality of these soldiers. And when I came back, I said, "Terrific, let's get out, because General Petraeus said"—and remember that joke?

The CHAIRMAN. I do remember.

Senator BOXER. General Petraeus said, "This is fabulous, we've got 200,000-plus, trained, ready to go," and General Casey said, "The bigger our footprint, the worse off we are. We're fueling the insurgency." Now, the tragedy is, as I hear you—you're not the tragedy, you're helping us try to find the way here—I wrote down the things I take away, which is exactly what I took away 18 months ago, that our presence is fueling the insurgency—and whether you use the word "disengage," which I respect your view on that, or "get out" or some fancier word, "redeploy," it doesn't matter—that's part of the solution. And I take that away from you.

Now, I think one of the things that we never say, so I'm going to say it—and I always get myself in trouble for saying the truth; I'm going to say it—is that we do have to increase the end strength. But one of the reasons is a lot of our folks are gone—3,000-plus dead, and, I just asked, 10,000 of our wounded, out of the 20, cannot come back to fight. So, when we talk about increasing the end strength—and I understand Defense Secretary Gates

says 65,000—I hope we don't lose sight of—one of the reasons we have to do this is because some people can't come back. So, I want to put that out there.

The question I had—and I so very much—I have two questions, and I'll ask them now, and be quiet and let you finish, because I've got 5 minutes left.

The CHAIRMAN. You can take your time.

Senator BOXER. I have not heard—and please correct me if I'm wrong, because if I'm wrong, I'll be happy—I have not heard Prime Minister al-Maliki ever say—and he's a leader of a country that is going through hell—when we look at the pictures of the Iraqis, we feel a pang, whether it's at a supermarket, whether it's at a mosque, innocent children, babies, mothers, men, women, old, young, screaming in pain, and running from the scene—I have never heard him use the word "Cease fire. Let's come around the table. This is one country."

Now, I would like you—if I am wrong on this, please correct me, because that's the kind of leadership I'd like to see. If, in fact, it is one country, which leads me to my comments about the Biden-Gelb idea—which I think is gaining ground, Mr. Chairman; I hope you don't give up, because I think, at the end of the day, it's the only way, it's already happening—but I would say to Dr. Gelb, when you talked about it, you said, "Ethnic cleansing, well, it's already happening." I would use the word—yours isn't "ethnic cleansing," it's "ethnic separation," to avoid ethnic cleansing. So, I hope you'll go back and read what you said and correct the record, because I—no, I feel you said "ethnic cleansing is already happening," but I think the point is, your plan and the chairman's isn't for—it's to stop ethnic cleansing.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Dr. GELB. Absolutely.

Senator BOXER. Yes. And I think you should stick with it and—listen, I'm someone who knows how people can pound on you and pound on you and pound on you. You know, you have a solution, a political solution—and I agree—somebody said, "It shouldn't look like it's 'Made in America.'" One person said that. Fine. Better than a war that's "Made in America." OK? Better that a solution percolates from America than this war continues without end in the face of world opposition.

So, I guess I have—if you can comment if I'm wrong on al-Maliki. If anyone says I'm wrong, I'd like to know. And my question deals with a poll that just came out in—Tuesday, January 23.

Mr. Chairman and Senator Lugar, I don't know if you've seen this, "Global opinion of U.S. foreign policy has sharply deteriorated in the past 2 years, according to a BBC poll released today. Three-quarters of those polled in 25 countries disapprove of U.S. policies toward Iraq." Seventy-five percent of those polled in 25 countries. They asked 26,000 people, and the GlobeScan president said, "It's a horrible slide," and, "If this keeps up, it's going to be difficult for the United States to exercise its moral suasion in the world."

Now, you are much wiser than I am on the whole big picture, but this, to me, is frightening, because—we were attacked on September 11, 2001. The whole world was with us. Mr. Chairman, do you remember that? The whole—and I remember going down to the

floor of the Senate, just shaking and trembling after what had happened, and saying, "There's only one thing I could see that—a piece of sun—and that is that the world is with us, and, in this war against terror, we can lead with moral authority and get the whole world to stand with us." Now we have a world, because of the Iraq war—mostly, although there are other reasons, too—is against us.

So, I guess my question to you is: Could you respond to this poll? Does it alarm you? What is it going to take for us to turn around world opinion? Because it's a global economy, it's a global war on terror. Everywhere you look, it's global, global, and this is where we are.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the courtesy.

The CHAIRMAN. Very good questions, Senator. I'm anxious to hear their answers.

Dr. LUTTWAK. I'd like to refer you to the testimony of Secretary Condoleezza Rice, not her testimony now, but what she said at the very beginning of the Bush administration. She said that American foreign policy needs humility. The argument is that American economic, technological, and media power is so great that the world could not also tolerate very assertive U.S. policies, let alone much military action. That is to say, the moment a country is so inherently powerful in so many different dimensions of life, starts using its military force, you immediately evoke a reaction, even by people who are not anti-American, simply because they want to safeguard their independence, their sense of independence. So, reducing our profile, reducing our level of activity, could paradoxically increase our real leverage. And different—I think the Biden plan, the Gelb-Biden plan, whichever way your wife calls it, is part of——

The CHAIRMAN. Depends on the outcome of this hearing.

Dr. LUTTWAK [continuing]. Is recognizing, is disengaging the—allowing equilibrium to emerge naturally. Iraq is, indeed, a divided country; it will not be a unitary country, unless it's an evil dictatorship. So, I think that there's a remedy, Senator, to the very real situation that you have outlined, and the remedy is to go back to the original intention of the Bush administration, which was to follow a low profile foreign policy of humility, where you oblige others to come to us here in Washington, say, "Please intervene, please help out in this multilateral venture or that."

The CHAIRMAN. I think he's right.

Dr. KORB. To pick up on what Ed said in the debate between then-Governor Bush and Vice President Gore, he said he wanted a humble foreign policy, which I think underscores what Ed has said. It's not just Iraq, because we went in there without waiting for a second U.N. resolution, not allowing the inspectors to do their job, but it's other things, like in saying we're not bound by the Geneva Conventions, the renditions, Guantanamo. All of those things, I think, have hurt us. And the real key thing is, we're not going to prevail in this war on terror without convincing people around the world that what these al-Qaeda-like groups say about us is simply not true, and it is a war of ideas, and—with a poll like this, it doesn't help us. Look how our opinion went up when we sent the Marines to help Indonesia after the tsunami. Look how the opinion in a Muslim country went up. And I think that that answers your question.

Dr. MALLEY. Senator, you raised several issues I want to address. First, on the issue of training, I think one of the big misconceptions of—from the beginning of the war is this notion that by training the Iraqis in the abstract, it's going to make a difference. That's—it's a question of loyalty and allegiance that matters, and if they are—if they're loyal to their group or to their militia, it doesn't matter how well trained they are, and that's why so often trained troops have not performed.

Second, on the issue of Maliki, I don't know if he said—if he called for a cease-fire. Frankly, even if he did, I'm not sure what difference it would make. But I think that they would—it would be wrong right now to focus on the person of Maliki. And there's some whispering about, "Well, maybe he'll be changed, maybe we'll bring in a different alliance, with SCIRI and the Kurds and some Sunnis, for a different form of government." It's a structural problem. And if you just shift these actors, you're not going to make a difference. So, maybe Maliki today, Jaafari yesterday. And I remember when Maliki was appointed, and people were saying, "Well, he's much better than Jaafari." I'm not sure we see any difference. The next person won't be different unless you change—unless you reach a political reconciliation.

And finally, on the issue of United States image, which has been something I've been deeply preoccupied with for some time, of course Iraq is, in great part, responsible. There are other things, as well. I think our diplomacy in the Middle East has been notoriously absent. I think our disengagement from Arab-Israeli peacemaking has been extremely irresponsible. And I think there are things that we're going to have to do. Unfortunately, at this point, because of our lack of credibility, even good things we might do risk being perceived in a very negative way, so I think it's a very uphill battle, but we need to start.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Boxer, thank you very much.

I'd like to ask a question, if it's OK.

Gentlemen, again there's been a remarkable consensus on the big issues that have to be addressed relative to Iraq, not just from you gentlemen, who are among the brightest people we have in the foreign policy establishment, but, quite frankly, from former generals we had last week. We had a remarkable panel, I thought, of four generals representing about 15 stars, and there was remarkable consensus across the board of all the testimony we had, except from Dr. Rice. And I'm trying to be facetious. I mean, when she testified—I've been here a while, I was here during the tail end of Vietnam—as you know, Ed, that's when you and I met. And I've never attended a hearing that said as much by the response, universally, of a 21-member committee to a major initiative from a President presented by his Secretary of State. I mean, it was truly, in that sense, historic. I can't think of any time in the 34 years I've been here where there was such an outright range from skepticism to hostility toward the proposal being put forward.

But one of the things that you all said here—and it relates to what Senator Boxer raised, is that in order to have any salvageable best-case outcome of the bad outcomes that are likely, and there's no great outcome that's likely—there must be a political reconciliation in Iraq. Now, I keep trying to find points of common agree-

ment here, not just with you all, but across the board. Political reconciliation, either as a consequence of a civil war, where the objectives of the warring parties finally get resolved on the battlefield, or a reconciliation brought about by nudging from the international community, a reconciliation brought out of just self-interest being realized among the parties—does anybody picture that reconciliation, by any means, resulting in a strong central government in Iraq?

Dr. MALLEY. Let—just—and, obviously, it's a difficult question to answer. What do you mean by a "strong central government"? I think——

The CHAIRMAN. I mean what the administration is talking about, a central government—that's a democracy—where you have a majority population—meaning that over 60 percent of it is likely to be represented by the Shia, controlling the security of the entire country and controlling the security of each hamlet with a national police force which is now envisioned—not just national army, a national police force. You know what I mean by a "strong central government."

Dr. MALLEY. Well, Mr. Chairman, I would—I think it's—and it's in our plan, it's in, I think, everyone's plan, at this table at least, the notion of federalism. It's been what the Iraqis want, themselves.

The CHAIRMAN. No, no—now, please answer my question.

Dr. MALLEY. OK.

The CHAIRMAN. Can anybody envision a strong national government, as has been pushed by the administration for the last 5 years?

Dr. LUTTWAK. Every Arab country, Senator, from Morocco to Iran, has a strong central government. But that is a strong central government, because the—any—there are plenty of local autonomous tendencies of different entities—are simply suppressed by dictatorship.

The CHAIRMAN. Right.

Dr. LUTTWAK. Therefore, whoever advocates a strong central government in Iraq is advocating dictatorship.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, you've——

Dr. LUTTWAK. Unless we are ready to install our own dictatorship—I mean, Saddam Hussein is no longer with us. I notice that he seemed to be in good health before he died, and so on. Unless we are prepared to find a Saddam Hussein and install him in Baghdad, there cannot be a strong central government in Iraq.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, you've said it better than I asked it. In other words, is it possible to have a strong central government without a dictatorship or an authoritarian regime in Iraq? Is it possible for that to happen?

Dr. KORB. No, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. OK. Now everyone I've asked that question to but the administration has stated that. I find it interesting that there is this sort of nuance as to what constitutes a federal system. Whatever it is, the idea that, in the next decade, I would say, that there is an ability to have a united Iraq without an authoritarian government rests upon the notion that there is local control over their own personal security. I mean, does anybody think there's

any time in the next 10 years, without an authoritarian regime in Baghdad, that you're going to have a national police force patrolling Fallujah without there being war, without there being civil chaos? Does anybody think that's possible? And I haven't found anybody who does.

So quite frankly—I'm expressing my own frustration about the plan that used to be spearheaded by Gelb, but now is, I guess, just Biden—I'm joking. But this is why I find it so fascinating that people seem to fixate on whether or not we're splitting up a country, why I find it so fascinating whether or not what we're calling for is just what the Constitution says. And what it says—again, I know you all know this, but it's amazing how few people have read this document—it says in article 116, "This Constitution shall appropriate the region of Kurdistan." It sets in place, in the Constitution, that Kurdistan is a region, right from the get-go. Then it says, "This Constitution shall establish new regions in accordance with the provisions." Then it goes on to state what power it gives you if you decide to be a region. And it merely says what you've all been saying, "regional authorities shall have the right to exercise executive, legislative, and judicial authority in accordance with this Constitution, except for the powers stipulated to the central government," which Les laid out. Two; in the case of contradiction between regional and national, national wins. Three; region and governate shall allocate an equitable share of the national revenues. Four; the regions and governates shall establish offices and embassies and diplomatic missions. I mean, this is even beyond our Articles of Confederation, 200 years ago. And regions shall be responsible for all administrative requirements in the region, particularly the establishment and organization of internal security forces.

So, why do we keep pushing a rope here?

Dr. LUTTWAK. Senator, I would not be frustrated, if I were you, because it is an iron law of politics all over this planet that when you have strongly constituted ethnic and religious identities, you can only have one of two modes, either some form of decentralization, federalism, and so on, or an oppressive dictatorship. Indeed, if and when Iran becomes a democracy, in the full sense, you will see that Iran, too, will have to go federal, because they have the Azeri—population, 20 million, they have the Kurds, they have the Baluch, they have some—even some Tajiks, and they will have to be federal. So, you're going to win. Your proposal shall be reality whenever there is no dictatorship—in Iraq, as in Iran. So, this will succeed, and you shouldn't be frustrated.

The reason there has been some hesitation even at this table—Larry, for example—is the notion that we would prescribe a very specifically written constitution——

The CHAIRMAN. Gotcha.

Dr. LUTTWAK [continuing]. That, as I say, is redolent and has connotations. You can see, you know, Locke, Burke, Madison, and these other strange creatures in it who do not correspond to their culture and their history. And, you know, people like Sistani, in their Web sites, have little notes about politics in which they evoke discussions about democracy conducted in the ninth century——

Dr. GELB. But, Edward, I would just note that Locke did not write the Iraqi Constitution.

Dr. LUTTWAK. No. [Laughter.]

I will stop, then.

Dr. GELB. OK.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I obviously cannot speak for Les Gelb, and I'll ask you to respond to this, Les, but I suspect that neither Les nor I would quarrel with the idea that there would be some other way in which reconciliation takes place. The central point of what we are—we have been attempting to do, and it seems to be a consensus without people willing to state it's a consensus—is that we've got to get off this wicket of a strong central government, led by Maliki or anybody else, who's going to be in total control of the security of the whole country, and who is going to be able to decide, at a majority vote in the Parliament, how to distribute revenues, when they feel like distributing them—in terms of oil—and expect anything to happen positively within Iraq.

I can understand—and I'll conclude with this—if you did not think that a political solution and reconciliation was the key to moving beyond the quagmire we find ourselves in, then I would say it is rational and reasonable to argue that there's still some basis for suggesting that a military solution might be appropriate. But nobody thinks it can be solve militarily. I just hope my colleagues, as well as the administration—and I think my colleagues are way ahead on this—understand that the elements of reconciliation relate to a little bit of political breathing room, a little bit less of forcing all the parties together under a strongly constituted central government, which the Constitution doesn't call for, and some way to work out giving each of the major constituencies a reason to buy in to the notion of a united Iraq.

And I think I'll conclude by saying, Ed, I am always impressed by your—I'm not being facetious—you talked about your tactical input—by your strategic vision here. I happen to agree with you on one overarching point, the same point made by Les—that Iran is somehow this new, emboldened superpower in the region, or, second, that a disintegration of our efforts in Iraq will result in an international catastrophe in the region that requires us, even when we're "losing," keep American forces in Iraq.

And so, the last point I'd like to ask each of you to comment on, as briefly as you can: If all fails—meaning that the administration does not budge over the next 2 years on insisting that a military solution has to predate the possibility of a political solution—if, in fact, the surge is as counterproductive as all of us—well, five of us, anyway—think it's likely to be, and if the result will be—which I predict, as Senator Boxer said—the American public will not sustain this effort for 2 more years, I predict that you will see a whole cadre of people running, in both parties—new people, as well—in 2008, who will not only be calling for us to get out of Iraq, they'll be calling for us to get out of the region. And I think that would be a real problem.

Here's my question. What is the worst case that you can see if, in fact, we end up having to, absent any political solution, disengage from Iraq? I refer to "disengage and contain," and I don't think it's the end of the world. If all this fails, what do you see as the downside? Is it as bleak as the President paints it for our interests in the region and the country and the world?

Dr. KORB. Oh, I think he's well overstating the danger to American foreign policy. I mean, when he talks about Iraq being the central front on the war on terror, and somehow, if we leave Iraq, you know, they're going to come over here and attack us, I mean, that assumes there's a sort of a finite number of terrorists, and they're all in Iraq, and so we keep them busy there, they won't—they will not come here.

To me, the real danger is the one you pointed out, is that Americans will tire of bearing their responsibilities around the world, they will not trust their political leaders when they tell them about danger. And that's why I think it's important that we have to stay involved in the region, because we do have strategic interests. I think the worst thing that could happen is that you would have even more violence than you have now, though when people say, "Gee, if we leave, there will be a civil war." Well, what's going on now? I mean, in terms of the number of—the number of casualties. And as long as we're in the region, we can prevent that from undermining regional stability.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Anyone else want to comment?

Dr. GELB. If I may, Mr. Chairman. And, again, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Former Chairman, for this opportunity.

I think the real catastrophe would be staying the course. That's the main thing causing all these problems. And they've been listed ad nauseam from the beginning of this hearing and from the beginning of your hearings on this subject. And it's a catastrophe, in my point of view, that the President and the White House keep saying there are no alternatives. There are alternatives. And until you recognize the legitimacy of these alternatives, you can't have a decent dialog. And that dialog is absolutely essential if we're to have a bipartisan foreign policy on Iraq, and that bipartisanship is essential for making the very tough decisions that lie ahead.

I would only remind the committee what I know many of you remember. In the waning days of the Vietnam war, President Nixon said that losing would make the United States a pitiful helpless giant. Well, heaven forfend, we did lose, or the South Vietnamese lost, and we took Americans off the rooftops of our Embassy in Saigon, and we all shuddered at the thought. But then, having predicted the worst, having created the most fears, President Nixon and Henry Kissinger set about to do diplomacy to blunt this. They opened the door to China, they created the trilateral diplomacy to put pressure on both Moscow and Beijing. They strengthened our relations and our security relations with the countries of Asia. And 3 years after we lifted our people off the rooftops of the Embassy in Saigon, the United States position in Asia was stronger than it had been at any time since the end of World War II.

This country is still the paramount power in the world. We're not a hegemon. We can't order anyone else around. But others still look to us to prevent great harm and to do good. And that is a basis for recovering from the horrors of these blunders of the last 3 years.

Dr. MALLEY. Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. If you can do it briefly, if you would.

Dr. MALLEY. OK. Mr. Chairman—oh, you want to add something there?

Mr. Chairman, first, on the issue of the internal disposition of Iraq, I think the main issue on which there is consensus from all of us is that the key is reconciliation, however the Iraqis choose to reach their compromises on federalism, on a weak central government, but on keeping their country together, hopefully, in some fashion.

The worst-case scenario, as you said, would be to stay the course and then end up, a year or 2 years from now, doing what people are calling for us to do today, but in a far weaker position. I don't think we should underestimate the damage that's already been done by the years we've been there. No doubt about it, I think, in the region, there has been damage. We may not be a weak power, but we are a weaker power. But, if in fact, we chose to listen—if we try to do a political reconciliation, and it doesn't work, and we choose to leave more quickly, then our emphasis needs to be on reengaging diplomatically in the region, something we haven't done, to prevent the breakdown in Iraq from spreading to the rest of the region. And I think we can do that.

Dr. LUTTWAK. There is now a so-called way of jihad, whereby you go to Jordan, or you go to Syria, and then you go to Anbar province, and then you enter the jihadi group. They are not the largest group, but they are the ones we are most troubled by. There is no doubt that, if there is no way of jihad leading to Anbar, there will be people who will attack elsewhere. So, Senator, I think that you have an opportunity here, with Senator Lugar, of exercising great influence over this policy and bringing everybody to their senses, because I want to show you that the Bush administration is full of people who agree with you two. Full of it. They're—so, our—but I don't think one should give hostages to fortune and totally ignore the considerations that Senator Lugar presented, which he got from his encounters with President Bush. Yes; there could be dangers in some. But I believe that Les Gelb is entirely accurate, the fundamental global equilibria are what they are. Iran is not a great power. We are more than a great power. And, moreover, my concept of the division of the Middle East giving us equilibria. So, I don't think, in the macrosense—but there's no reason to give hostages to fortune here, because there is a bit of a mechanical factor, which is: Right now, if you're a jihadi anywhere in the world, you want to go to Anbar. You close down Anbar, they'll find some other places. But the totality of it will be trivial, as opposed to the—what's happening now.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. I hope we keep focus on the big picture here. Your testimony has been incredibly helpful.

I was told, if it really is a brief question—do you have one question left, Senator? Would you mind asking it briefly, and maybe we can let these folks go to lunch? Because we're back here at 2:30 again.

Senator NELSON. I just wanted to say to Dr. Korb, in you quoting the article by General Petraeus from 2½ years ago, specifically, when I asked him that today, "How many do you think we have trained today?" And he said 300,000. And I said, "How many of them are reliable?" And he said he didn't know. And I said, "Well, can you put a percentage on it?" And he said, no; he couldn't.

Now, I'm going to insist, as a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, that we get an answer from the Government of the United States as to how many, or what percentage, do we think, of the Iraqi Army and police force, are trained.

The other thing I wanted to ask was—I went to Syria as part of the Iraq Study Commission. And, of course, the White House roundly criticized me. In this aggressive diplomatic initiative that you all have been discussing, what part do you think Syria can play in that, in helping us in our situation in Iraq?

Dr. MALLEY. Senator, I think I was in Syria the same time as you, and, certainly from my discussion with Syrian officials, they claim that they are prepared to do things if, in fact, there's reciprocation.

I think there's a lot they can do because of the links they have to Sunni Arab tribes. I think there's a lot they can do because of links they have to the insurgents. I think there's a lot they can do because of their historical links with the Baath Party. So, there are things they can do in the context of a political reconciliation that is led by us in which they can then play a part. In the absence of that, and if they don't see any engagement with them, then I think we could be pretty sure that they won't be doing too much good to help us stabilize the situation.

Dr. KORB. One good thing is, we have this—all the parties in the region together, and the United States is clear that we'll be leaving. We're going to break this axis, if you will, between Syria and Iran, because one is Sunni, the other is more Shia. And so, I think, based upon what Rob said, you can get them involved, but you've got to get all the countries involved, because even the Saudis, if we can believe the press reports, are causing problems there now with the money that they are sending in.

And if I can briefly—think—the problem with the Iraqi security forces is not training, it's motivation. That's the real key. And you won't have that motivation until they make these political compromises.

The CHAIRMAN. Ed, if you make it brief, OK?

Dr. LUTTWAK. Yes; just very briefly. The word "militia" describes somebody who is in a group that he believes in, that he identifies with. He's for real. It's the army and police who are not for real.

Senator Biden's plan—one of the reasons his plan will succeed, unless it becomes a brutal dictatorship, is because, in effect, there'll be these regional forces which are true to their identity. So, this—whenever I hear people now—and Larry made the same point, I think everybody agrees—talking about numbers, numbers are irrelevant. They really are. The only ones I trust are the militias, which is the militias reaching an equilibrium in what will be a decentralized system.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, gentlemen, I'm never going to get you all back here if I don't let you go. I would say to my colleagues and anyone who's listening, we'll reconvene here at 2:30, and we'll have Congressman Murtha and former Speaker Gingrich, who will be testifying.

I thank you for your input. It's been invaluable.

We are recessed til 2:30.

[Whereupon, at 12:37 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ALTERNATIVE PLANS (CONTINUED)

TUESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2007 [P.M.]

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:34 p.m., in room SD–106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Joseph R. Biden, Jr. (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Biden, Dodd, Feingold, Boxer, Menendez, Casey, Lugar, Coleman, Corker, Isakson, and Vitter.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR., U.S. SENATOR FROM DELAWARE

The CHAIRMAN. The hearing will please come to order.

Let me suggest—we've got two very important witnesses who are also significantly well grounded in the ways of the House and Senate. There's a vote at 2:45. What I'd like to suggest we do when that vote comes is to recess the committee so we all go and vote and all come right back, because it's too important what these two gentlemen have to say to let this sort of go on, you know, one at a time.

I also want to say to Senator Casey before I begin, when it comes time to question, I'm going to yield my spot to you first, because you had waited all this time to question our early morning panel. You had to speak and preside, and so, I will do that, just so no one's surprised.

I have consulted with Chairman Lugar's staff. He has no opening statement and suggests that we get going right away. I have a very brief opening statement.

This afternoon, we continue our thorough examination of the remaining options in Iraq, and we're very honored—and we are honored—to have with us Chairman Murtha and Speaker Gingrich. Both are men of stature, both are patriots, and both have offered serious and provocative ideas that have helped frame this debate on Iraq and our overall national security policies.

We will hear specific recommendations today. We have heard specific recommendations from 18 witnesses in the past 2 weeks, and we'll hear specific recommendations over the next 2 weeks—so much for Vice President Cheney's assertion that Members of the Congress "have absolutely nothing to offer" in place of the current policy.

The White House has grown accustomed to policy debates in an echo chamber. Dismissing competing ideas has become a matter of routine, but it's a dangerous way to govern and conduct this war.

And that's the most partisan thing I've said since these hearings began, but I want to make it clear—make no mistake—there are a number of very serious people with very specific alternatives that have been offered.

Our goal in these hearings is to strike a different tone, it's to start from the proposition that all of us are united in our devotion to this country and our desire to help see it through a difficult time. I believe no foreign policy can be sustained unless there are two essential elements. First, it must be bipartisan, and, second, it has to have the informed consent of the American people. I think both are lacking right now.

Our policy today lacks these fundamental ingredients, in my view, and it's my hope that the hearings we have held the last 2 weeks and the next week and a half will help generate that bipartisan consensus on key elements of a successful strategy in Iraq.

Our witnesses today are going to contribute to that effort mightily. Chairman Murtha single-handedly shifted the debate—and I can't emphasize that enough; whether you agree or disagree with him, he single-handedly shifted the debate in Iraq when he had the courage to challenge a policy that was clearly failing. No one's said it more clearly, whether you agree with him or not. And, I might add, Mr. Chairman, we've had a score of witnesses—I mean, left, right, center, Democrat, Republican, military, retired military, et cetera—I have not heard anybody—I've never heard the word "redeploy" used as much as when you said it, what, a year and a half ago, or however long ago it was. And so—

Speaker Gingrich is one of the most eloquent spokesman of a strategy on foreign policy. And he's argued eloquently about what's at stake in Iraq. He's offered creative proposals to succeed there and in other foreign policy challenges confronting this Nation.

I just want you to know, if you call his cell phone, you're not going to get through. I left four messages on your cell phone to come and testify. I don't want you to think, Newt, I wasn't trying to get you here, because I think it's real value-added, having you here, and I appreciate it very much.

Senator, do you have anything you'd like to say?

Senator LUGAR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to hearing from two good friends. I'll forego another opening statement, so we could expedite the hearing.

The CHAIRMAN. Great.

Let's start with you, Chairman Murtha, and then—take what time you need, and we will—when we get to questioning, we'll limit it to 8-minute rounds again, and if there's time, and the witnesses' physical constitution will bear it, we may ask them a second round, if that works, based on their schedules.

So, Jack, it's all yours.

STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN P. MURTHA, U.S. CONGRESSMAN FROM PENNSYLVANIA, CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE, COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. MURTHA. Mr. Chairman, I'm delighted to be here. And I want to say that I won by 122 votes in my first election, and Joe Biden came to Johnstown—he just had been elected Senator—and

he swung the election. I attribute my election to him. So, anybody that's got criticism can criticize Joe Biden, because he got me elected. [Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. Well, Mr. Chairman, if you don't mind the point of personal privilege here, the word was, you would have won by 1,022 votes had I not shown up. [Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. But, at any rate, thank you.

Mr. MURTHA. And Senator Lugar and I went to the Philippines, and, I have to say, we changed the election in the Philippines. We made sure—we convinced President Reagan that—what was that guy's name that had to go? Marcos had to go, yeah.

And, of course, I'm delighted to be here with Bob Casey, who's such a good friend, his dad and his family have been such a good friend, and two distinguished Senators.

So, let me say, Mr. Chairman, Senator Lugar, for the past 5 years, the United States has had an average of 130,000 troops in the ground in Iraq. The Pentagon reports that the Iraqi security forces have grown in number, nearly reaching their goal of 325,000 equipped and trained. The Iraqis have a constitution and have held national elections.

These milestones have been met, yet security in Iraq continues to deteriorate. The past 4 years, the Iraq war has been plagued by mischaracterizations based on optimism instead of realism. Reality dictates that conditions on the ground are simply moving in the wrong direction. There are limits to military power. And I've said this over and over again. There's no military solution to Iraq's civil war. It's up to the Iraqis.

Beginning in May 2005, after 2 years of mischaracterizations and misrepresentations, the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee required the Department of Defense to submit quarterly reports to the Congress on facts necessary to measure stability and security in Iraq. Since July 2005, we've received these reports. They are dismal, and they demonstrate a clear lack of progress in the vital areas of concern. Electricity, oil production, employment, and potable water are all below prewar level. The average weekly attacks have grown, since I spoke out last year—from 430 per week, in July 2005, to well over 1,000. Iraq casualties have increased from 63 per day to 127 per day, to date. The latest polls show that 91 percent of the Sunni Iraqis and 74 percent of the Shia Iraqis want the United States forces out of Iraq. In January 2006, 47 percent of Iraqis approved of attacks on United States-led forces. Now it's 61 percent approve of attacks on U.S. forces. Support of the American public continues to erode, and there's little confidence in the current strategy. Today, less than 30 percent of Americans support the war, and only 11 percent support the President's plan to increase troop levels.

February 2006 polls showed that 72 percent of American troops—and I picked this up long before I saw it in the polls—in Iraq believe the United States should exit Iraq within a year; and 42 percent said that their mission was unclear; they didn't understand what they were doing.

Wars cannot be won with slogans, there must be terms for measuring progress, and a clearly defined purpose, if success is ever to be achieved.

General Schoomaker said, in a recent hearing, that in order for a strategy to be effective, we have to be able to measure the purpose, yet the President sets forth a plan with no defined matrices for measuring success, and a plan that, in my estimation, is simply more of the same plan that has not worked. A new strategy that is based on redeployment, rather than on further military engagement, and one that is centered on handing Iraq back to the Iraqis, is what is needed. I do not believe that Iraq will make the political progress necessary for its security and stability until the United States forces redeploy.

Now, here's what I believe, if we're going to achieve stability in Iraq and in the region. I believe the first step is to redeploy American forces; the execution of a robust diplomatic effort and a restoration of international credibility; the repairing of our military readiness, and the rebuilding of our Strategic Reserve to face future threats—and this is probably as important as anything else that I have found in my hearings that I've just concluded in the last week or so.

Now, redeployment of United States forces in Iraq. To achieve stability in Iraq, I believe we first must have a responsible phased redeployment of U.S. forces. General Odom, Army retired, recently testified, "We're pursuing the wrong war. Stability and security in the region should be the overarching strategy, not a victory in Iraq." I agree with General Odom, and I believe that regional stability can only be accomplished through redeployment.

Who wants us to stay in Iraq? I am convinced, in my opinion, that Iran and al-Qaeda, because we intensify the very radical extremism we claim to be fighting against, while, at the same time, depleting our financial and human resources.

As long as the United States military continues to occupy Iraq, there'll be no real security. Maintaining United States troop strength in Iraq, or adding to the strength in specific areas, has not proven effective in the past, it didn't work recently in Baghdad. We just put 10,000 to 15,000 troops in Baghdad, increased the strength, and the violence has increased substantially. Nor do I believe it will work in the future. The Iraq war cannot be won by the United States military, predominantly because of the way our military operates. They use overwhelming force—and I advocate that—to save American lives. But, let me tell you, that makes enemies. When you go and kick down the doors—and we have to do that in order to protect our people—when you use mortars and all the ammunition we have to use to protect our Americans, you kill the enemy, you kill other people, and inadvertently kill civilians, and 34,000 people have been killed—not by Americans, but have been killed in this civil war—and it doesn't help us to win the hearts and minds of the people.

Now, how would you redeploy? I recommend the phased redeployment of U.S. forces from Saddam's palaces. That's where we are. We're in the palaces. I've told them that when I was over there, "Get them out of the palaces." Then from the Green Zone, get them out of the Green Zone. The Green Zone is surrounded by Iraqis who have no electricity, no water, none of the things they need, and yet, inside the Green Zone, they have everything that

they need. They have electricity, they have all the food that they want, and everything else.

Next, from the prime real estate, redeploy from the prime real estate of Iraq's major cities—out of the factories and universities. We own the best in the cities. We go in and take it over. Finally, out of the country altogether.

We need to give the communities back to the Iraqis so they can begin to self-govern, begin economic recovery, and return to some sort of normality. I recommend the adoption of United States policy that encourages and rewards reconstruction and regional investment, and one that is dictated and administered not by the United States, but by the Iraqis.

Restoration of international credibility. I think this is just as important. I believe that a responsible redeployment from Iraq is the first step necessary in restoring our tarnished international credibility. Since the United States invasion of Iraq, our international credibility, even among allies, has plummeted. Stability in Iraq is important, not only the United States, but it is important to the region and important to the entire world.

Just this morning, the BBC released a poll showing that nearly three-quarters of those polled in 25 countries disapproved of United States policies toward Iraq. More than two-thirds of those polled said the U.S. military presence in the Middle East does more harm than good. And 29 percent of respondents said the United States has a general positive influence in the world, down from 40 percent 2 years ago—29 percent.

How do we restore international credibility? I believe that it's necessary for the United States to completely denounce any aspirations of building permanent United States military bases in Iraq. I believe we should shut down Guantanamo detention facility. We must bulldoze Abu Ghraib, just because of the symbolism of it. We must clearly articulate and demonstrate a policy of no torture, no exceptions, and directly engage countries in the region with dialog instead of directives. This includes allies, as well as our perceived enemies.

Repairing our military readiness. Now, that's the business I'm in. Our annual defense spending budget is currently in excess of $450 billion. Above this amount, we are spending $8.4 billion a month in the war in Iraq. And yet, our Strategic Reserve is in desperate shape. While we are fighting an asymmetric threat in the short term, we have weakened our ability to respond to what I believe is a grave, long-term conventional and nuclear threat. At the beginning of the Iraq war, 80 percent of all Army units, and almost 100 percent of Active combat units, were rated at the highest state of readiness. Hundred percent. Today, virtually all of our Active-Duty combat units at home, in the continental United States, and all of our Guard units are at the lowest state of readiness, primarily due to equipment shortages resulting from the repeated and extended deployments to Iraq.

In recent testimony given by a high-ranking Pentagon official, it was reported that our country is threatened because we lack readiness at home. Our Army has no Strategic Reserve. None. No Strategic Reserve. And, while it's true that the U.S. Navy and the Air Force can be used to project power, there's a limit to what they can

achieve. Overall, our military remains capable of projecting power. We must be able, also, to sustain that projection. In this regard, there's no replacement for boots on the ground.

How do we repair readiness and rebuild our Strategic Reserve? We must make it a national priority to restrengthen our military and to repair readiness. I advocate an increase in overall troop strength. The current authorized level is below what I believe is needed to maintain an optimal military. In recent testimony, the Defense Subcommittee I chair, the Army and Marine Corps commanders testified that they could not continue to sustain the current deployment practices without an adverse effect on the health and well-being of servicemembers and their families.

For decades, the Army operated on a deployment policy that, for every 1 year of deployment, 2 years were spent at home. This as considered optimal for retraining, reequipping, and reconstituting. Without relief, the Army will be forced to extend deployments to Iraq to over 1 year in country. It will be forced to send troops back with less than 1 year at home. The Army reported that a 9-month deployment was preferable.

Medical experts testified, that, in intensive combat, deployments of over 3 months would increase the likelihood of servicemembers to develop post-traumatic stress syndrome. We must invest in the health and well-being of our servicemembers, providing the right amount of troops for the appropriate deployment and rotation cycles.

Our military equipment inventories are unacceptably low. The services report that at least $100 billion more is needed to get them back in a ready state. In doing so, we must not neglect the investment in military technologies of the future. While we remain bogged down in Iraq, the size and sophistication of other militaries are growing. We must not lose our capability to deter future threats.

And let me conclude by saying, historically, whether it's India, Algeria, or Afghanistan, foreign occupations do not work. In fact, they incite civil unrest. Our military remains the greatest military in the world, but there are limits to its ability to control a population that considers them as occupiers. And I've said this before, and I continue to say it, there are essentially only two plans. One is to continue an occupation that has not worked and has shown no progress toward stabilization, and the other, which I advocate, is to end the occupation of Iraq, redeploy and restrengthen our military, and turn Iraq over to the Iraqis.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Murtha follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN JOHN P. MURTHA, CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE, COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. Chairman, Senator Lugar, and distinguished members of this committee, for the past 5 years, the United States has had, on average, over 130,000 troops on the ground in Iraq. The Pentagon reports that the Iraqi Security Forces have grown in number, nearly reaching their goal of 325,000 trained and equipped. The Iraqis have a constitution and have held national elections. These milestones have been met, yet security in Iraq continues to deteriorate. The past 4 years of the Iraq war have been plagued by mischaracterization based on unrealistic optimism instead of realism. Reality dictates that conditions on the ground are simply moving in the wrong direction.

There are limits to military power. There is no U.S. military solution to Iraq's civil war. It is up to the Iraqis.

Beginning in May 2005, after 2 years of mischaracterizations and misrepresentations by this administration, the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee required the Department of Defense to submit quarterly reports to Congress on the facts necessary to measure stability and security in Iraq. Since July 2005 we have received these reports. They are dismal and demonstrate a clear lack of progress in vital areas of concern. Electricity, oil production, employment, and potable water remain at woeful levels.

The average weekly attacks have grown from 430 in July 2005 to well over 1,000 today. Iraqi casualties have increased from 63 per day in October 2005 to over 127 per day.

The latest polls show that 91 percent of Sunni Iraqis and 74 percent of Shia Iraqis want the U.S. forces out of Iraq. In January 2006, 47 percent of Iraqis approved of attacks on U.S.-led forces. When the same polling question was asked just 8 months later, 61 percent of Iraqis approved of attacks on U.S-led forces.

The support of the American public continues to erode and there is little confidence in the current strategy. Today only 30 percent of Americans support the war and only 11 percent support the President's plan to increase troop levels in Iraq. A February 2006 poll showed that 72 percent of American troops serving in Iraq believed the United States should exit Iraq within the year and 42 percent said their mission was unclear.

Wars cannot be won with slogans. There must be terms for measuring progress and a clearly defined purpose, if success is ever to be achieved. General Peter Schoomaker, Chief of the United States Army, said in a recent hearing that in order for a strategy to be effective we "have to be able to measure the purpose." Yet the President sets forth a plan with no defined matrices for measuring success and a plan that in my estimation is simply more of the same plan that has not worked. A new strategy that is based on redeployment rather than further U.S. military engagement, and one that is centered on handing Iraq back to the Iraqis, is what is needed. I do not believe that Iraq will make the political progress necessary for its security and stability until U.S. forces redeploy.

In order to achieve stability in Iraq and the region, I recommend

(1) The redeployment of U.S. forces from Iraq;

(2) The execution of a robust diplomatic effort and the restoration of our international credibility; and

(3) The repairing of our military readiness and the rebuilding of our Strategic Reserve to face future threats.

Redeployment of U.S. forces from Iraq

To achieve stability and security in Iraq, I believe we first must have a responsible phased redeployment of U.S. forces from Iraq. GEN William Odom (U.S. Army, Retired) recently testified, "We are pursuing the wrong war."

Stability and security in the region should be our overarching strategy, not a "victory in Iraq." I agree with General Odom and believe that Regional Stability can only be accomplished through the redeployment of U.S. forces from Iraq.

Who wants us to stay in Iraq? In my opinion, Iran and al-Qaeda, because we intensify the very radical extremism we claim to be fighting against, while at the same time depleting our financial and human resources.

As long as the U.S. military continues to occupy Iraq, there will be no real security. Maintaining U.S. troop strength in Iraq or adding to the strength in specified areas, has not proven effective in the past (it did not work recently in Baghdad) nor do I believe it will work in the future. The Iraq war cannot be won by the U.S. military, predominantly because of the way our military operates. They use overwhelming force, which I advocate to save American lives, but it is counter to winning the hearts and minds of the people.

How to redeploy

I recommend the phased redeployment of U.S. forces, first from Saddam's palaces, then from the Green Zone. Next, from the prime real estate of Iraq's major cities, out of the factories and universities, and finally out of the country all together. We need to give communities back to the Iraqis so they can begin to self-govern, begin economic recovery, and return to some type of normality. I recommend the adoption of a U.S policy that encourages and rewards reconstruction and regional investment and one that is dictated and administered, not by the United States, but by the Iraqis themselves.

Restoration of international credibility

I believe that a responsible redeployment from Iraq is the first step necessary in restoring our tarnished international credibility. Since the U.S. invasion of Iraq, our international credibility, even among allies, has plummeted. Stability in Iraq is important not only to the United States, but it is important to the region and to the entire world. In a 2006 world opinion poll, France, Russia, Turkey, Pakistan, India, and China believed that the United States presence in Iraq was more of a danger to world peace than Iran, North Korea, or the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In 2002, public opinion in Great Britain was 75 percent favorable toward the United States; today it is 56 percent favorable. In France, it was 63 percent favorable in 2002 and is now 39 percent favorable. Germany has gone from 61 percent to 37 percent, Indonesia 61 percent to 30 percent, and Turkey now has only a 12-percent favorability rating of the United States.

How to restore our international credibility

In order to restore international credibility, I believe it is necessary for the United States to completely denounce any aspirations of building permanent U.S. military bases in Iraq; I believe we should shut down the Guantanamo detention facility; and we must bulldoze the Abu Ghraib prison. We must clearly articulate and demonstrate a policy of "no torture, no exceptions" and directly engage countries in the region with dialog instead of directives. This includes allies as well as our perceived adversaries.

Repairing of our military readiness and rebuilding our Strategic Reserve to face future threats

Our annual Defense spending budget is currently in excess of $450 billion. Above this amount, we are spending $8.4 billion a month in the war in Iraq and yet our Strategic Reserve is in desperate shape. While we are fighting an asymmetric threat in the short term, we have weakened our ability to respond to what I believe is a grave long-term conventional and nuclear threat.

At the beginning of the Iraq war, 80 percent of all Army units and almost 100 percent of Active combat units were rated at the highest state of readiness. Today, virtually all of our Active-Duty combat units at home and all of our Guard units are at the lowest state of readiness, primarily due to equipment shortages resulting from repeated and extended deployments to Iraq. In recent testimony given by a high-ranking Pentagon official it was reported that our country is threatened because we lack readiness at home.

Our Army has no Strategic Reserve, and while it is true that the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Air Force can be used to project power, there is a limit to what they can achieve. Overall, our military remains capable of projecting power, but we must also be able to sustain that projection, and in this regard there is no replacement for boots on the ground.

How do we repair readiness and rebuild our Strategic Reserve

We must make it a national priority to restrengthen our military and to repair readiness. I advocate an increase in overall troop strength. The current authorized level is below what I believe is needed to maintain an optimal military. In recent testimony to the Defense Subcommittee that I chair, the Army and Marine Corps commanders testified that they could not continue to sustain the current deployment practices without an adverse effect on the health and well-being of servicemembers and their families.

For decades, the Army operated on a deployment policy, that for every 1 year of deployment, 2 years were spent at home. This was considered optimal for retraining, reequipping and reconstituting. Without relief, the Army will be forced to extend deployments to Iraq to over 1 year in-country and will be forced to send troops back with less than 1 year at home. The Army reported that a 9-month deployment was preferable. Medical experts testified that in intensive combat, deployments of over 3 months increased the likelihood for servicemembers to develop post traumatic stress disorders.

We must invest in the health and well-being of our servicemembers by providing for the right amount of troops and for appropriate deployment cycles.

Our military equipment inventories are unacceptably low. The Services report that at least $100 billion more is needed to get them back to ready state. In doing so, we must not neglect investment in military technologies of the future. While we remain bogged down in Iraq, the size and sophistication of other militaries are growing. We must not lose our capability to deter future threats.

Let me conclude by saying historically, whether it was India, Algeria, or Afghanistan, foreign occupations do not work, and, in fact, incite civil unrest. Our military

remains the greatest military in the world, but there are limits to its ability to control a population that considers them occupiers.

I have said this before and I continue to say that there are essentially only two plans. One is to continue an occupation that has not worked and that has shown no progress toward stabilization. The other, which I advocate, is to end the occupation of Iraq, redeploy our military, and turn Iraq over to the Iraqis.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I say to the Speaker, there's about 9 minutes left in this vote; because I think it's important we all hear you, I'd like to suggest, Mr. Chairman, we recess to go vote, and get back here as quickly as we can to hear the Speaker.

We'll recess until the call of the Chair.

[Recess.]

The CHAIRMAN. Hearing will come to order.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for your number, as well as for your time. I have never been in your presence when I haven't learned something, and so, I'm anxious to hear what you have to say, for real. Welcome. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF HON. NEWT GINGRICH, FORMER SPEAKER OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES; SENIOR FELLOW, AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. GINGRICH. Thank you very much.

And I just want to start by both commending you and reminding you that almost ruined my career, I think, the last time I was before this committee, by recommending I become the Ambassador to the United Nations. So, I'm hoping there's nothing——

The CHAIRMAN. It was a good idea——

Mr. GINGRICH [continuing]. Nothing I say——

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. And it's still a good idea.

Mr. GINGRICH [continuing]. Today will reinforce those kind of thoughts.

But I want commend you, Mr. Chairman and Senator Lugar, for going through these kind of hearings. And I want to build on a comment you made earlier, which is that in the larger war—getting beyond Iraq for a moment—in the larger threat that faces us, from North Korea to Iran and Syrian to Venezuela, having the kind of effort to reach out and develop a bipartisan national strategy, in the way that Democratic President Truman and Republican Senator Vandenberg laid the base for a 44-year containment strategy, I think, is probably the most important national security challenge this country faces, and these hearings, which I am well aware of, at times, contentious, are a part of that dialog and a part of that process. And I really want to thank both of you for your joint leadership in working together in trying to move this entire process forward.

I also want to say that, while I disagree with Chairman Murtha on some things, which I'll get to, I could not agree with him more strongly on the need to develop and strengthen a larger military, and particularly a larger Army and Marine Corps. And there, I think those who have advocated a larger system have proven to be entirely right, and those who are trying to defend getting along with an inadequate system have been proven, I think, decisively wrong. And I commend the chairman for that.

The real danger we face, if I can frame my comments, writ large, and come down to Iraq, is that we live in a world in which the combination of nuclear and biological weapons, combined with a set of dictators who hate the concept of freedom because it threatens their dictatorships, and a religiously motivated movement that is irreconcilable with the modern world, creates a danger that Americans have not yet come to grips with. I believe it is entirely possible that, in our lifetime, we will lose three or more cities to nuclear weapons, and I believe that my two grandchildren, who are 5 and 7, are in greater danger of being killed by enemy activity than I was at any time when I was—throughout the cold war.

I first wrote on the danger of terrorists and nuclear weapons in 1984, in a book called "Window of Opportunity." I participated, working with President Clinton, on the Hart-Rudman Commission, which, in March 2001, warned that the greatest danger to the United States is a weapon of mass destruction going off in an American city, probably by terrorists. And I think we have to start with the following observation.

We find ourselves in a world in which there are determined deadly enemies. Iraq is a campaign in that larger contest. It's more like Sicily as a part of the Second World War, rather than an isolated war on its own.

Let me say, bluntly, that Iraq is currently a mess. This is not something from me that is new. In December 2003, I publicly said we had gone off a cliff during the summer of 2003, and, both in a long Newsweek interview and in an appearance on Meet the Press, I was very explicit about how much I thought we were on the wrong track.

Where we find ourselves is very hard. And I think there are largely three paths, two of them at this table, and the third in the White House.

The first path, the White House path, is to stay the course, with marginal change. I believe, frankly, that that will fail. And I'll come back to that.

The second is to accept that we have not succeeded, to try to manage the defeat, and to try to think through how you would reassure our allies, deal with people who might be—have their lives threatened, and try to restabilize the system after the world comes to recognize that we have, in fact, been defeated.

The third is to determine that we will take whatever changes are necessary to defeat our enemies.

Let me start by saying that I think the present course is inadequate, and is based on an inherently confused argument. As I cite in my—and I ask permission to submit for the record my much longer testimony.

The CHAIRMAN. If the Speaker will yield, I failed to mention, both your written statements will be placed in the record as if delivered. Congressman Murtha has submitted—and I'll make them available to all Senators—a chronology of statements and comments made on this issue, which will also be put in.

[EDITOR'S NOTE.—The submitted material mentioned above was too voluminous to include in the printed hearing. It will be retained in the permanent record of the committee.]

Mr. GINGRICH. In that context, in the written statement, I have a much longer section, I'm not going to use in detail, of just quoting—quote after quote in which President Bush says that Iraq is a matter of vital national security of the United States, and then ends up by saying, "And we're going to do as well as the Iraqi Government lets us do." Now, they can't both be true. If Iraq is genuinely a matter of vital national interest, then, as Americans, we have an obligation to do what it takes to win. If Iraq is so unimportant that it's up to a new, relatively incompetent and untested Iraqi Government, then why are we risking a single young American? They can't both be true. We did not say, in the Second World War, that as soon as the Free French liberated Normandy, we would be glad to land. And this is the core problem the administration faces, that it has a harder problem than it wants to confront, and, therefore, it doesn't undertake the scale of change it needs.

Now, Chairman Murtha outlines a legitimate strategy that has, I think he would agree, some hard consequences and would take enormous management, but it's—it is, nonetheless, a legitimate reaction to where we are.

I'm going to outline a different strategy, but I want to be clear, up front, it's equally hard. I think there are no easy solutions in Iraq.

Essentially, what I want to suggest is that we can insist on defeating the enemies of America and the enemies of the Iraqi people, and we can develop the strategies and the implementation mechanisms necessary to force victory, despite the incompetence of the Iraqi Government, the unreliability of Iraqi leaders, and the interference of Syria and Iran on behalf of our enemies. But it will be difficult. I would commend to all of the Members of the Senate, General Petraeus's comments this morning in front of the Armed Services Committee, which I think are candid and which indicate this is a hard road, and which also indicate that most of what we have to get done is not combat military kinetic power. And I want to emphasize that. So, I want to very briefly, without going into great detail—and I'll be available for questions, obviously—outline 18 steps. And they're basically a sentence each.

One, place General Petraeus in charge of the Iraq campaign and establish that the Ambassador is operating in support of the military commander. That's how Eisenhower ran the Second World War in Europe; that is how Wellington ran the campaign in Portugal. You cannot have two people trying to collaborate in a setting like this.

Two, since General Petraeus would now be responsible for victory in Iraq, all elements of achieving victory are within his purview, and he should report daily to the White House on anything significant which is not working or is needed.

Three, create a Deputy Chief of Staff to the President and appoint a retired four-star general or admiral to manage Iraq implementation for the Commander in Chief on a daily basis.

Four, establish that the second briefing after the daily intelligence brief that the President gets every day is from his Deputy Chief of Staff for Iraq Implementation.

Five, establish a War Cabinet, which will meet once a week to review metrics of implementation and resolve failures and enforce

decisions. The President should chair the War Cabinet personally, and his Deputy Chief of Staff for Iraq Implementation should prepare the agenda for the weekly review and meetings.

Six, establish three plans, one for achieving victory with the help of the Iraqi Government, one for achieving victory with the passive acquiescence of the Iraqi Government, one for achieving victory even if the current Iraqi Government is unhappy. The third plan may involve very significant shifts in troops and resources away from Baghdad and a process of allowing the Iraqi central government to fend for itself if it refuses to cooperate.

Seven, communicate clearly to Syria and Iran that the United States is determined to win in Iraq and that any further interference, such as the recent reports of sophisticated Iranian explosives being sent to Iraq to kill Americans, will lead to direct and aggressive countermeasures.

Eight, pour as many intelligence assets into the fight as needed to develop an overwhelming advantage in intelligence preparation of the battlefield.

Nine, develop a commander's capacity to spend money on local activities sufficient to enable every local American commander to have substantial leverage in dealing with local communities.

Ten, establish a job corps or civil conservation corps of sufficient scale to bring unemployment for males under 30 below 10 percent. And I have attached an op-ed that Mayor Giuliani and I wrote on this topic.

Eleven, expand dramatically the integration of American purchasing power in buying from Iraqi firms, pioneered by Assistant Secretary of Defense, Paul Brinkley, to maximize the rate of recovery of the Iraqi economy.

Twelve, as—and here, I think I'm totally in agreement with Chairman Murtha—expand the American Army and Marine Corps as much as needed to sustain the fights in Iraq and Afghanistan, while also being prepared for other contingencies and maintaining a sustainable rhythm for the families and the force.

Thirteen, demand a war budget for recapitalization of the military to continue modernization while defeating our enemies. And, here again, I want to associate myself with Chairman Murtha. They should quit trying to fund this war with supplementals, be honest up front about the total budget, fight over the total budget, and have a rational track of spending. I would point out that, as big as the dollars sound, the current national security budget is lower, as a percentage of the economy, than at any time from Pearl Harbor through the end of the cold war. It is less than half the level Truman sustained before the Korean war.

Fourteen, the State Department is too small, too undercapitalized, and too untrained for the demands of the 21st century. There should be a 50-percent increase in the State Department budget and a profound rethinking of the culture and systems of the State Department so it can be an operationally effective system.

Fifteen, the Agency for International Development is hopelessly unsuited to the new requirements of economic assistance and development and should be rethought from the ground up. The Marshall Plan, and Point Four, were as important as NATO in containing the Soviet empire. We do not have that capability today.

Sixteen, the President should issue executive orders, where possible, to reform the implementation system so it works with the speed and effectiveness required by the 21st century.

Seventeen, where legislation is needed, the President should collaborate with Congress—and let me reemphasize those words, because I think the chairman will find them interesting words—the President should collaborate with Congress in honestly reviewing the systems that are failing and developing new merits—new metrics, new structures, and new strategies.

Eighteen, under our Constitution, it is impossible to have this scale of rethinking and reform without deep support from the legislative branch. Without Republican Senator Arthur Vandenberg, Democratic President Harry Truman could never have developed the containment policies that saved freedom and ultimately defeated the Soviet empire. The President should ask the bipartisan leaders of Congress to cooperate in establishing a joint legislative/executive working group on winning the war, and should openly brief the legislative branch on the problems which are weakening the American system abroad. Only by educating and informing the Congress can we achieve the level of mutual effort and mutual support that will be needed for a generation if we are to save this country from the threats that exist.

And I appreciate very much the chance to offer these ideas.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Gingrich follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. NEWT GINGRICH, FORMER SPEAKER OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES; SENIOR FELLOW, AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE, WASHINGTON, DC

Chairman Biden, Ranking Member Lugar, and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to testify.

This is an extraordinarily important series of hearings on a topic of enormous national importance.

The United States finds itself in a global struggle with the forces of Islamic fascism and their dictatorial allies.

From a fanatic American near Chicago who attempted to buy hand grenades to launch a personal jihad in a Christmas mall, to 18 Canadians arrested for terrorist plots, to the Scotland Yard disruption of a plot in Britain to destroy 10 civilian airliners in one day that if successful would have shattered worldwide confidence in commercial aviation and potentially thrown the world into a deep economic contraction.

We are confronted again and again with a worldwide effort to undermine and defeat the system of law and order which has created more prosperity and more freedom for more people than any previous system.

The threats seem to come in four different forms:

First, from individuals who are often self-recruited and randomly inspired through the Internet, television, and charismatic social and religious friendships.

Second, from organized nonstate systems of terror of which al-Qaeda, Hezbollah, and Hamas are the most famous. Additional groups have sprung up and provide continuity, training, and support for terrorism.

Third, from dictatorships in the Middle East, most notably Iran and Syria who have been consistently singled out by the State Department (including in 2006), as the largest funders of state-supported terrorism in the world. These dictatorships are investing in more advanced conventional weapons and in chemical and nuclear weapons.

Fourth, from a strange assortment of anti-American dictatorships including North Korea, Venezuela, and Cuba.

This coalition of the enemies of freedom has growing power around the world. Its leaders are increasingly bold in their explicit hostility to the United States.

To take just two recent examples: Ahmadinejad of Iran has said "[t]o those who doubt, to those who ask is it possible, or those who do not believe, I say accomplishment of a world without America and Israel is both possible and feasible." He has

also said that Israel should be "wiped off the map." Chavez of Venezuela, just last week in a joint appearance with the Iranian leader in Latin America, announced a multibillion-dollar fund to help countries willing to fight to end "American imperialism."

Both of these statements were on television and are not subject to misinterpretation.

Similarly, there are many Web pages and other public statements in which various terrorists have described in great detail their commitment to killing millions of Americans. I described these publicly delivered threats in a speech on the fifth anniversary of 9/11 which I gave at the American Enterprise Institute. The text of this speech is attached to this testimony.

[EDITOR'S NOTE.—The attached speech mentioned above was too voluminous to include in the printed hearing. It will be retained in the permanent record of the committee.]

These threats might be ignored if it were not for the consistent efforts to acquire nuclear and biological weapons by these enemies of freedom.

I first wrote about the extraordinary increase in the threat to our civilization from nuclear weapons in the hands of terrorists in "Window of Opportunity" in 1984. Attached to this testimony is a copy of the relevant pages from this book.

It is not accurate to suggest today that people were not aware of terrorism or were not warning about the threat to America's very survival prior to 9/11.

Many sophisticated observers and professional military and intelligence officers have been issuing these warnings for two decades.

What has been amazing to watch has been the absolute inability of our system of government to analyze the problem and react effectively.

It is this collapse of capacity for effectiveness which is at the heart of our current dilemma.

The United States is now in a decaying mess in Afghanistan and an obviously unacceptable mess in Iraq.

While this language may seem harsh to defenders of the current policy, it is sadly an accurate statement of where we are.

Efforts to think through and solve the problems of Afghanistan and Iraq have to be undertaken in a context of looking at a wider range of challenges to American leadership around the world and potentially to our very survival as a country. These larger challenges are described in my attached presentation entitled "The Real World and The Real War."

[EDITOR'S NOTE.—The attached presentation mentioned above was too voluminous to include in the printed hearing. It will be retained in the permanent record of the committee.]

With these caveats I want to focus on the challenge of Iraq.

TWO VERY HARD PATHS FORWARD IN IRAQ

America is faced with two very hard paths forward in Iraq.

We can accept defeat and try to rebuild our position in the region while accommodating the painful possibility that these enemies of freedom in Iraq—evil men, vicious murderers, and sadistic inflictors of atrocities will have defeated both the millions of Iraqis who voted for legal self-government and the American people and their government.

Alternatively, we can insist on defeating the enemies of America and the enemies of the Iraqi people and can develop the strategies and the implementation mechanisms necessary to force victory despite the incompetence of the Iraqi Government, the unreliability of Iraqi leaders, and the interference of Syria and Iran on behalf of our enemies.

Both these paths are hard. Both involve great risk. Both have unknowable difficulties and will produce surprise events.

Both will be complicated.

Yet either is preferable to continuing to accept an ineffective American implementation system while relying on the hope that the Iraqi system can be made to work in the next 6 months.

THE INHERENT CONFUSION IN THE CURRENT STRATEGY

There are three fundamental weaknesses in the current strategy.

First, the strategy relies on the Iraqis somehow magically improving their performance in a very short time period. Yet the argument for staying in Iraq is that it is a vital American interest. If we are seeking victory in Iraq because it is vital to America then we need a strategy which will win even if our Iraqi allies are inad-

equate. We did not rely on the Free French to defeat Nazi Germany. We did not rely on the South Koreans to stop North Korea and China during the Korean war. When it mattered to American vital interests we accepted all the help we could get but we made sure we had enough strength to win on our own if need be.

President Bush has asserted that Iraq is a vital American interest. In January 2007 alone he has said the following things:

> "But if we do not succeed in Iraq, we will leave behind a Middle East which will endanger America in the future."
>
> "[F]ailure in one part of the world could lead to disaster here at home. It's important for our citizens to understand that as tempting as it might be, to understand the consequences of leaving before the job is done, radical Islamic extremists would grow in strength. They would be emboldened. It would make it easier to recruit for their cause. They would be in a position to do that which they have said they want to do, which is to topple moderate governments, to spread their radical vision across an important region of the world."
>
> "If we were to leave before the job is done, if we were to fail in Iraq, Iran would be emboldened in its pursuit of nuclear weapons. Our enemies would have safe havens from which to launch attacks. People would look back at this moment in history and say, what happened to them in America? How come they couldn't see the threats to a future generation?"
>
> "The consequences of failure are clear: Radical Islamic extremists would grow in strength and gain new recruits. They would be in a better position to topple moderate governments, create chaos in the region, and use oil revenues to fund their ambitions. Iran would be emboldened in its pursuit of nuclear weapons. Our enemies would have a safe haven from which to plan and launch attacks on the American people. On September 11, 2001, we saw what a refuge for extremists on the other side of the world could bring to the streets of our own cities. For the safety of our people, America must succeed in Iraq."
>
> "Iraq is a central component of defeating the extremists who want to establish safe haven in the Middle East, extremists who would use their safe haven from which to attack the United States, extremists and radicals who have stated that they want to topple moderate governments in order to be able to achieve assets necessary to effect their dream of spreading their totalitarian ideology as far and wide as possible."
>
> "This is really the calling of our time, that is, to defeat these extremists and radicals, and Iraq is a component part—an important part—of laying the foundation for peace."

The inherent contradiction in the administration strategy is simple. If Iraq matters as much as the President says it does (and here I agree with the President on the supreme importance of victory) then the United States must not design and rely on a strategy which relies on the Iraqis to win.

On the other hand if the war is so unimportant that the fate of Iraq can be allowed to rest with the efforts of a new, weak, untested, and inexperienced government then why are we risking American lives.

Both propositions cannot be true.

I accept the President's analysis of the importance of winning in Iraq and, therefore, I am compelled to propose that his recently announced strategy is inadequate.

The second weakness is that the current strategy debate once again focuses too much on the military and too little on everything that has not been working. The one instrument that has been reasonably competent is the combat element of American military power. That is a very narrow definition and should not be expanded to include the noncombat elements of the Department of Defense which also have a lot of difficulties in performing adequately.

The great failures in the Iraq and Afghanistan campaigns have been in noncombat power. Intelligence, diplomacy, economic aid, information operations, support from the civilian elements of national power. These have been the great centers of failure in America's recent conflicts. They are a major reason we have done so badly in Iraq.

The gap between the President's recent proposals and the required rethinking and transforming of our noncombat instruments of power is simply breathtaking.

No military leader I have talked with believes military force is adequate to win in Iraq. Every one of them insists that the civilian instruments of power are more important than the combat elements. They all assert that they can hold the line for a while with force but that holding the line will ultimately fail if we are not using that time to achieve progress in nonmilitary areas.

This failure of the noncombat bureaucracies cannot be solved in Iraq. The heart of the problem is in Washington and that brings us to the third weakness in the current strategy.

The third weakness in the current strategy is its inability to impose war-time decisionmaking and accountability in Washington.

The interagency process is hopelessly broken.

This is not a new phenomenon. I first wrote about it in 1984 in "Window of Opportunity" when I asserted:

> [W]e must decide what sort of executive-branch planning and implementation system are desirable.
>
> At a minimum, we will need closer relationships between the intelligence agencies, the diplomatic agencies, the economic agencies, the military agencies, the news media, and the political structure. There has to be a synergism in which our assessment of what is happening relates to our policies as they are developed and implemented. Both analyses and implementation must be related to the new media and political system because all basic policies must have public support if they are to succeed.
>
> Finally, once the professionals have mastered their professions and have begun to work in systems that are effective and coordinated, those professionals must teach both the news media and the elected politicians. No free society can for long accept the level of ignorance about war, history, and the nature of power which has become the norm for our news media and our elected politicians. An ignorant society is on its way to becoming an extinct society.

In 1991 my concern for replacing the broken interagency system with an integrated system of effective coordination was heightened when GEN Max Thurmond who had planned and led the liberation of Panama told me, unequivocally, that the interagency process was broken.

In 1995 that process was reinforced when General Hartzog described the failures of the interagency in trying to deal with Haiti.

As early as 2002 it was clear that the interagency had broken down in Afghanistan and I gave a very strong speech in May 2003 at the American Enterprise Institute criticizing the process.

By the summer of 2003 it was clear the interagency was failing in Iraq and by September and October 2003 we were getting consistent reports from the field of the gap between the capability of the combat forces and the failure of the civilian systems.

No senior officer in the Defense Department doubts that the current interagency cannot work at the speed of modern war. They will not engage in a fight with the National Security Council or the State Department or the various civilian agencies which fail to do their job. But in private they will assert over and over again that the interagency system is hopelessly broken.

It was very disappointing to have the President focus so much on 21,500 more military personnel and so little on the reforms needed in all the other elements of the executive branch.

The proposals for winning in Iraq, outlined below, follow from this analysis.

KEY STEPS TO VICTORY IN IRAQ

1. Place General Petraeus in charge of the Iraq campaign and establish that the Ambassador is operating in support of the military commander.

2. Since General Petraeus will now have responsibility for victory in Iraq all elements of achieving victory are within his purview and he should report daily to the White House on anything significant which is not working or is needed

3. Create a Deputy Chief of Staff to the President and appoint a retired four star general or admiral to manage Iraq implementation for the Commander in Chief on a daily basis.

4. Establish that the second briefing (after the daily intelligence brief) the President will get every day is from his Deputy Chief of Staff for Iraq implementation.

5. Establish a War Cabinet which will meet once a week to review metrics of implementation and resolve failures and enforce decisions. The President should chair the War Cabinet personally and his Deputy Chief of Staff for Iraq implementation should prepare the agenda for the weekly review and meeting.

6. Establish three plans: One for achieving victory with the help of the Iraqi Government, one for achieving victory with the passive acquiescence of the Iraqi Government, one for achieving victory even if the current Iraqi Government is unhappy. The third plan may involve very significant shifts in troops and resources away from Baghdad and a process of allowing the Iraqi central government to fend for itself if it refuses to cooperate.

7. Communicate clearly to Syria and Iran that the United States is determined to win in Iraq and that any further interference (such as the recent reports of sophisticated Iranian explosives being sent to Iraq to target Americans) will lead to direct and aggressive countermeasures.

8. Pour as many intelligence assets into the fight as needed to develop an overwhelming advantage in intelligence preparation of the battlefield.

9. Develop a commander's capacity to spend money on local activities sufficient to enable every local American commander to have substantial leverage in dealing with local communities.

10. Establish a jobs corps or civil conservation corps of sufficient scale to bring unemployment for males under 30 below 10 percent (see the attached op-ed by Mayor Giuliani and myself on this topic).

11. Expand dramatically the integration of American purchasing power in buying from Iraqi firms pioneered by Assistant Secretary Paul Brinkley to maximize the rate of recovery of the Iraqi economy.

12. Expand the American Army and Marine Corps as much as needed to sustain the fights in Iraq and Afghanistan while also being prepared for other contingencies and maintaining a sustainable rhythm for the families and the force.

13. Demand a war budget for recapitalization of the military to continue modernization while defeating our enemies. The current national security budget is lower as a percentage of the economy than at any time from Pearl Harbor through the end of the cold war. It is less than half the level Truman sustained before the Korean war.

14. The State Department is too small, too undercapitalized, and too untrained for the demands of the 21st century. There should be a 50-percent increase in the State Department budget and a profound rethinking of the culture and systems of the State Department so it can be an operationally effective system.

15. The Agency for International Development is hopelessly unsuited to the new requirements of economic assistance and development and should be rethought from the ground up. The Marshall Plan and Point Four were as important as NATO in containing the Soviet empire. We do not have that capability today.

16. The President should issue executive orders where possible to reform the implementation system so it works with the speed and effectiveness required by the 21st century.

17. Where legislation is needed the President should collaborate with Congress in honestly reviewing the systems that are failing and developing new metrics, new structures, and new strategies.

18. Under our Constitution it is impossible to have this scale of rethinking and reform without deep support from the legislative branch. Without Republican Senator Arthur Vandenburg, Democratic President Harry Truman could never have developed the containment policies that saved freedom and ultimately defeated the Soviet empire. The President should ask the bipartisan leaders of Congress to cooperate in establishing a joint legislative-executive working group on winning the war and should openly brief the legislative branch on the problems which are weakening the American system abroad. Only by educating and informing the Congress can we achieve the level of mutual understanding and mutual commitment that this long hard task will require.

Thank you for this opportunity to share these proposals.

[From the Wall Street Journal, Jan. 12, 2007]

GETTING IRAQ TO WORK

(By Newt Gingrich and Rudy Giuliani)

The American mission in Iraq must succeed. Our goal—promoting a stable, accountable democracy in the heart of the Middle East—cannot be achieved by purely military means.

Iraqis need to establish a civil society. Without the support of mediating civic and social associations—the informal ties that bind us together—no government can long remain stable and no cohesive nation can be maintained. To establish a civil society, Iraqis must rebuild their basic infrastructure. Iraqis must take control of their destiny by rebuilding houses, stores, schools, roads, highways, mosques and churches.

But the constant threat of violence, combined with a high unemployment rate estimated between 30 percent and 50 percent, fundamentally undermines that effort. This not only sustains the fertile breeding ground for terrorist recruiters but has the same corrosive effect as it would in any city—raising the likelihood of further violence, civic decay, and a crippling sense of powerlessness.

A massive effort must be made to engage in a well-organized plan to rebuild Iraq. The goal: An infrastructure to support and encourage a strong, stable, civil society.

The week before Christmas, the Pentagon asked Congress to approve a supplemental $100 billion for military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, on top of the estimated $500 billion spent to date. The administration should direct a small percent of that amount to create an Iraqi Citizen Job Corps, along the lines of FDR's civilian conservation corps during the Great Depression. The Job Corps can operate under the supervision of our military and with its protection. The Army Corps of Engineers might be particularly helpful in directing this effort. It will place our military in a constructive relationship with the Iraqis—both literally and figuratively.

Today, Iraq has almost 200 state-owned factories that have been abandoned by the governing authorities since the outbreak of war in 2003. Deputy Under Secretary of Defense Paul A. Brinkley has led a team to 26 of those facilities, traveling far beyond the Green Zone to idled plants from Fallujah to Ramadi. Mr. Brinkley believes that under Department of Defense leadership, at least 10 of these facilities could be reopened almost immediately, putting more than 10,000 Iraqis to work within weeks. This should be done without delay—and it is only the beginning.

The wages that these thousands of gainfully employed workers receive will be used to purchase goods and services that will employ other Iraqis. Those goods and services must be produced by still other Iraqis. These are the first steps in creating the requisite conditions of a stable functioning economy and the best hope of displacing retribution and violence with hope and opportunity.

We must try to achieve constructive and compassionate goals through conservative means—jump-starting civic improvement and the individual work ethic in Iraq, without creating permanent subsidies. The goal is to get more Iraqis working, especially young males, who are most susceptible to the terrorist and warlord recruiters.

There are many lessons from the successful welfare reforms in New York City that can be readily applied in Iraq. In the early 1990s, New York City suffered an average of 2,000 murders a year while more than 1.1 million people—one out of every seven New Yorkers—were unemployed and on welfare. Too many neighborhoods were pervaded by a sense of hopelessness that came from a combination of high crime, high unemployment and despair. "Workfare" proved an excellent method to change this destructive decades-long paradigm. It required able-bodied welfare recipients to work 20 hours a week in exchange for their benefits. In the process, we reasserted the value of the social contract, which says that for every right there is a responsibility, for every benefit an obligation.

As many as 37,000 people participated at a single time, working in the neighborhoods that most needed their help, cleaning up streets with the Sanitation Department, removing graffiti from schools and government buildings, or helping to beautify public spaces in the Parks Department.

More than 250,000 individuals went through our Workfare Program between 1994 and 2001, and their effort helped to visibly improve the quality of life in New York City. Many of them moved on to permanent employment. This change from welfare to work did as much as the New York Police Department Compstat Program to keep reducing crime. A similar model can work in Iraq.

There is an opportunity not only to increase employment by rebuilding roads, houses, schools, and government buildings, but also to engage the Iraqi people to participate in laying the foundation for a civil and prosperous society.

The population of Iraq is roughly 30 million with a prewar median annual income equivalent to $700. Subsidizing unemployed Iraqis with a meaningful wage in exchange for meaningful work rebuilding their society is well within the means of the United States and its allies.

The entire effort will help stabilize and grow the Iraqi economy. It should be open to all willing Iraqis—Sunnis, Shiites, and Kurds—as a means of helping to create a common culture through shared participation in work projects to rebuild and take ownership of their nation.

One word of caution: The program should be overseen by the U.S. military, not private contractors, to avoid unnecessary delays in deployment or accusations of cronyism in the bidding process. Our military will still be devoted to its primary role of hunting down terrorists and patrolling the streets, but administering a jobs program would be a direct extension of their effort to secure law and order. After the program has been started and becomes successful, it can be transferred to a civilian authority within the Iraqi Government.

The creation of an Iraqi Citizen Job Corps will help expedite the establishment of a more stable civil society and improve the growing Iraqi economy through the transforming power of an honest day's work.

WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY

(EXCERPTS ON TERRORISM AND STRATEGIC EFFECTIVENESS)

The fact is that we stand on the brink of a world of violence almost beyond our imagination.

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The picture is sobering indeed. Imagine the more extreme elements in any terrorist movement with weapons of mass destruction. It is a prospect likely to gray the hair of any reasonable person.

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Just as the comfortable Russian landowner before Stalin could not imagine the horrors of collectivization and the comfortable bourgeois German Jew really could not believe Hitler was serious in his speeches, so it is hard for us to believe that these kinds of nightmares are possible. We keep rejecting information about the world around us because it is too far outside our personal experiences, our historical experience, and our shared general view of the world.

It is the refusal to think seriously about the violence we see each night on television and to develop a new explanation for the world we live in which keeps us at a level of shock and surprise. Watch your own reactions the next three or four times you see really violent news reports about a terrorist or a war or the latest atrocity somewhere.

We are going to have to develop an intellectual split-vision which allows us to accept both the reality of our peaceful neighborhood and the reality of a horribly dangerous outside world. If we don't develop a new sophistication to analyze and deal with the dangers from abroad, we will find those dangers creeping closer and closer to our neighborhood. If we don't learn to take serious precautions and to be honest with ourselves about all levels of violence—from individual terrorist-criminal all the way up to a Soviet-American nuclear war—then we increase the danger that these events will occur.

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Yet our problem will not come only from terrorist, illegal organizations. There are bandit nations willing to operate outside the tradition of modern international behavior. The three most obvious current bandit governments are North Korea, Libya, and Iran. The leaders of all three countries are inner-directed and likely to do what they personally decide is appropriate. All three leaders have proven themselves risk-takers willing to subsidize terrorist organizations and willing to kill innocent people in the pursuit of their goals. The thought of them having nuclear weapons is daunting indeed.

. . . Furthermore, we must remember that it is only in the West that we focus military power on military engagements. There is every reason to believe that Middle Eastern ideologies will strike at the American heartland rather than at our military power if we threaten them directly.

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We have been surprised again and again by other nations because we refuse to study their habits, their culture, and their history. Five hundred years before Christ, Sun T'zu stated, "know the enemy and you have won half the battle. Know yourself and the battle is yours." We have a passion for knowing about technology, hardware, and management, but we disdain knowing much about either the capacity of others or ourselves to endure (e.g. Vietnam) or our opponents' techniques and approaches.

Only this willful ignorance can explain our underestimation of the Japanese before Pearl Harbor. Bernard Fall warned us again and again in the early 1960s who Ho Chi Minh was and how long he would fight, but we continued to underestimate the North Vietnamese until they defeated us just as Fall had predicted. We underestimated the Lebanese-Syrian-Iranian-Soviet terrorist connections which had already used vehicle bombs and produced numerous young fanatic volunteers willing to die for their cause, and 241 U.S. Marines died as a result.

Because we reject history as a serious preparation for understanding and operating in the work at large, we find ourselves consistently underestimating how difficult, how intractable, how brutal and violent that world can be. History is powerful precisely because it carries us outside our peaceful neighborhoods and our calm communities. At its best, history can open our minds to possibilities which we would never encounter in our own family or surroundings. The world that has been can be again.

Americans in general tend to underestimate the savagery of the world, but Liberals in particular carry the tendency to extremes. Liberals seem to have an ideological block against accepting the notion that there really are dangerous people out there who will do evil things unless they are stopped.

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If we do not become practical and candid about the nature of the dilemma we face, we will lose many more men, women, and children to bombings, and we will begin to experience an erosion of civilization here at home. We must develop a doctrine which states clearly American policy toward violence aimed at the destruction of our society. We must take the steps necessary to prove that no terrorist organization can kill Americans with impunity.

The long-term struggle against terrorism will be a dark and bloody one, involving years of vigilant counterterrorism—a level of surveillance and spying that Liberals will call intolerable—and a willingness to strike back with substantial force at the originators of the action rather that the foot soldiers of the terrorist movement.

A free, open society cannot survive by trading violence for violence. If we kill an Iranian extremist every time Iranians kill an American soldier, we will lose the struggle. In the end, no free society can keep pace in enduring pain with a fanatical terrorist organization. We must develop a doctrine which severely and directly threatens the leaders of terrorist movements that they refrain from attacking the United States because they fear personal consequences. Any other policy is an invitation to a blood bath in which we will certainly be losers.

The need to develop doctrines and tactics of aggressive counterterrorism goes against the grain of the American historical memory as taught in modern schools. By blotting out the wars against the Indians, the Barbary Pirates, the pacification of the West, and the campaigns against guerrillas in the Philippines and Central America, it has been possible for the Wilsonian intellectual tradition to dominate—a tradition that argues for a sharp and vivid distinction between war and peace. Liberals dominated by this tradition declare war on a country or are impotent to challenge it; they have no capacity for a long and difficult struggle in the twilight zone of low-intensity conflict.

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Only when our professionals master their professions can we begin to design structures that will work. Then we must decide what sort of executive-branch planning and implementation system are desirable.

At a minimum, we will need closer relationships between the intelligence agencies, the diplomatic agencies, the economic agencies, the military agencies, the news media, and the political structure. There has to be a synergism in which our assessment of what is happening relates to our policies as they are developed and implemented. Both analyses and implementation must be related to the news media and political system because all basic policies must have public support if they are to succeed.

Finally, once the professionals have mastered their professions and have begun to work in systems that are effective and coordinated, those professionals must teach both the news media and the elected politicians. No free society can for long accept the level of ignorance about war, history, and the nature of power which has become the norm for our news media and our elected politicians. An ignorant society is on its way to becoming an extinct society. It is to be the two great centers of political behavior, the news media and the politicians, that we must now turn.

The CHAIRMAN. I appreciate very much the breadth and the depth of your recommendations.

I might note that one of the things I've been quoting—someone in the press asked me to make sure I was quoting it correctly. I want to say it again. I have quoted General Petraeus over the last several months about armies of occupation when he was first in Iraq. And in July 2004, he said, "An army of liberation has a certain half-life before it becomes an army of occupation." And for those who have asked me that question, that's the answer. And my rhetorical question is: Has that half-life passed? I think it has. But that's another question.

I'm going to proceed, Mr. Chairman, on my side, with—and I will ask questions last—I'm going to yield to my friend from Pennsyl-

vania, because he sat through the whole morning, and, by the time it got his time to question, he had to preside over the Senate. And that will not mean I will usurp my other two colleagues. I will ask after my other two colleagues on this side, as well.

So, the floor is yours, Senator Casey.

Senator CASEY. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for that point of personal privilege, but also for your leadership of this committee and the great hearings we've had already; and Senator Lugar, you, as well. And I just want Senator Biden to know that he's made me look really good in front of the dean of our delegation to the Congress of the United States.

But first of all, I want to commend both Chairman Murtha and Speaker Gingrich for your presence here, for your patriotism, and for your public service over many years. We're grateful for all of that.

I want to add a few personal comments, even though it's against my time, I think it's important that I say hello and welcome in a formal way to Chairman Murtha. I know that Speaker Gingrich is a native of Harrisburg. He was born there. And I'm—we're all a little bit Pennsylvania on this committee today, I guess. But I'm grateful to Congressman Murtha for his leadership on the issues that surround the important question of what we do in Iraq, for the leadership he's shown over many, many years, not just on the battlefield, as a solder, but also, of course, in the Congress of the United States. And I wanted to direct my first question to Chairman Murtha.

You talked, at the outset here today, about a couple of very important points about readiness, specifically on pages 7 and 8 of your testimony. I didn't want to read all of that, obviously, but I was struck by what you testified to and what you wrote. You wrote that—this is in the middle of page 7—at the beginning of the Iraq war, 80 percent of all Army units and almost 100 percent of Active combat units were rated at the highest state of readiness. Today, virtually all of our Active-Duty combat units at home, and all of our Guard units, are at their lowest state of readiness, primarily due to equipment shortages resulting from repeated and extended deployments in Iraq.

If you had a chance to expound on that, because I think that's critically important, in terms of our ability to confront threats all over the world. And I just wanted to give you that opportunity, if you——

Mr. MURTHA. I appreciate that, Senator.

I want to say to the committee that there's nothing more important to our subcommittee than trying to get the readiness back. If Gingrich were still the Speaker, this wouldn't have happened, he would not have allowed this to happen, because the money we're spending in Iraq was diverted from the spending of the money at home. There's no question, if you go to any unit in the United States today, in continental United States, Guard and Reserve, no units are above the lowest state of readiness. The Active-Duty units I'm talking about, our Strategic Reserve, is well below any deployment level, partly because of equipment, but also because of changed standards, also because the families are disrupted by these continued deployments. But the biggest thing is the equip-

ment shortages. For instance, I'm the one that found the shortage of body armor when I went to Iraq in the first place. We sent insufficient forces with inadequate equipment to Iraq in the first place. Then, during the war, we made sure that they had everything they needed in the war zone, but then, back at home, we started to deplete the resources of our Strategic Reserve.

The Air Force and Navy aren't so bad, but we only bought six ships last year, so we are beginning to dissipate our ability to act in the future, not only to deter a war, but to project and sustain a war. As serious as the deployment schedule is, one of the most serious problem we have, is this depletion of our Strategic Reserve. And we're going to fix that as quickly as we can. That's one of the things the subcommittee is working on.

Senator CASEY. I think I have two more. One that I'll hold for last. I'll go to Speaker Gingrich on the second one. I wanted to ask you two, but I may not have time for two.

I was struck by the list of recommendations you made, and we could spend a lot of time on each of them, but I wanted to focus for a moment on diplomacy, No. 14, where you assert the State Department is too small, too undercapitalized, too untrained for the demands of the 21st century. I just wanted to have you expound on that, if you could, because a lot of what we're trying to grapple with here on this committee, as everyone across America is, is not just how we get the military strategy right, but also in terms of the politics and the diplomacy involved. And I just want to give you a chance to expound on that.

Mr. GINGRICH. Well, I think that—let me tell you a very simple example. If you go to a senior military command, Central Command in Tampa, the quality of their videoconference capabilities, their ability to have secure conferences across the world, is a stunning ability to improve our communications, our leadership, our decisionmaking. If you go to the average embassy, they are operating on 25-year-old capabilities. And so, you can't have, for example, in a region, a videoconference capability to get seven ambassadors to talk with each other on a regular basis, to just share the problems. And just take that one capital investment as an example.

Second, if you look at the career track of a rising military person, they have time to go off to school, they have time, on occasion, to be interns and do fellowships. The Foreign Service is—and you can imagine, for a right-wing Republican, how difficult this conversation is—the Foreign Service is simply too small to have the level of professional development necessary for the kind of ongoing complexity we need.

So, just take those two examples. And I must say, by the way, I think that Secretary Powell did an extraordinary job in recognizing how badly underfunded the Department was. And I would have to say that the Republican Congress, when I was Speaker, was part of that problem, because what happens is, if you're conservative, you don't like many aspects of the Foreign Service, although you really wish we were more effective overseas, and if you're liberal, you, kind of, don't want to reform the Foreign Service, because you like it. And so, the result is, they stay permanently underfunded and permanently too small. And I think Secretary Rice is working in this direction, but I also think that they

need, frankly, dramatically more resources than she feels comfortable asking for. And I would strongly urge this committee to look at comparative investment between DOD and State, and look at the notion of bringing State up to the quality of information flow, and also the quality of training, which inherently requires a larger State Department.

Senator CASEY. Thank you.

One last question. I'll make it very brief. We're going to listen to the President tonight on a whole range of topics, very important issues. The one part of his—what he calls a "surge," what others call an "escalation"—the one aspect of it, I think, that doesn't get enough attention, to some degree, in the press—but, in terms of your—both of you, in terms of your understanding of the reality on the ground in Baghdad, in neighborhoods, from what you've heard of the President's plan and what you know about it, can you just describe—and I know we only have less than a—less than half a minute now—just describe, as best you can, in a few seconds, what that means for the—for a combat soldier on the ground, going door to door. What does that mean—the reality of that, apart from the deployment—what does that mean, kind of, hour to hour, day to day? What are they going to be doing on those streets?

Mr. MURTHA. Let me tell you, I go to the hospitals almost every week. I go to Bethesda and Walter Reed. I've been to all the hospitals—Landstuhl—and the problem is—and we have tried to disassociate the policy from the guy on the field. We try to make sure they understand we support them. But they go out in the most intense situation, where somebody in front of them gets blown up, somebody behind them gets blown up, and the mental anguish that they go through is absolutely unbelievable. IEDs or sniper fire, whatever it might be—this is much more intense than Vietnam, much harder emotionally. We're going to have a lot of problems, a lot of money we're going to have to spend afterward for——

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Chairman, did you say harder than in Vietnam?

Mr. MURTHA. Oh, I believe——

The CHAIRMAN. And you were in Vietnam.

Mr. MURTHA. Yes. I believe this is much more intense, much harder, because you just never know—you don't have any idea who the enemy is. You're walking down the street, and somebody pops out or you don't even see anybody and they're blown up. In talking to the troops—and I tell them, "Look, I was wounded in Vietnam, but let me tell you something, I believe this is much worse than Vietnam."

Senator CASEY. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Mr. GINGRICH. Let me just say, for 1 minute—my dad was a career infantryman in the U.S. Army in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. I agree with Chairman Murtha, that—I think urban policing and warfare is far and away the most intense thing you have going. I suspect, if you were to ask a number of the majors, lieutenant colonels, and colonels, they would tell you that the additional troops will probably be useful, but they are, by themselves, not an answer. They will tell you that they're proud of what they're doing, and the reenlist rates prove they're willing to walk those streets,

but they, frankly, deserve dramatically larger changes in our policy if we're going to stay, and, if we're not prepared to make the larger changes, then, frankly, I think we have to look seriously at what Chairman Murtha is saying, because—and General Petraeus said this, this morning. The core to the—the key to this is not simply military power, it's an entire range of things, many of which have to be driven from the White House if they're going to be effective.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Senator Lugar.

Senator LUGAR. Mr. Chairman, let me begin by making a comment on Speaker Gingrich's thought that we ought to manage defeat. Now, I have a problem here, because clearly the idea of victory and defeat, success and failure, and so forth, bring forward emotions, and my thought here is to quote a very novel interpretation of what has occurred that Ed Luttwak gave us this morning. He said, "The Iraq war has, indeed, brought into existence a new Middle East in which Arab Sunnis can no longer gleefully disregard American interests, because they need help against the looming threat of Shiite supremacy, while in Iraq, at the core of the Arab world, the Shias are allied with the United States. What past imperial statesmen strove to achieve with much cunning and cynicism the Bush administration has brought about accidentally, but the result is exactly the same." Now, President Bush might not accept this as victory or success, but Ed Luttwak says, inadvertently, accidentally, whatever the case is, there is progress here. And this is what I want to emphasize, in a way.

I appreciate very much both of you stressing the Truman-Vandenberg relationship, and the 44 years of strategic bipartisanship that flowed from their mutual vision of the security imperatives our nation faced and which enabled American power to express itself magnificently. This is a necessary part of our current predicament. And this morning, I tried to indicate, without breaking confidence, conversations with the President about this, one involving Senator Warner and myself, for 50 minutes, talking about some of the things that you've talked about. I won't characterize the conversation as victory or defeat, or successful or unsuccessful. I would say it's ongoing. It has to be ongoing, because everything is very, very serious for our country, quite apart from our President or the Congress or the prestige of any of us.

Now, tomorrow we will have a debate about various motions, and I appreciate the need for members to vent their feelings about this. Some want to get on record, tweaking the President and others will defend the President. My own view is that this is probably not particularly helpful, in that essentially what needs to happen is something you have suggested. Whether we do it in twos or fours or as a group, there will have to be a coming to grips with the predicament, which is, as you've suggested, the need for a long-term strategy that talks about our whole Armed Forces and the civilian components of the government. How many people do we need, men and women under arms, really, to do the job for America everywhere against the war on terror or instability or however you wish to characterize it? What sort of appropriate equipment is going to be required to fulfill these missions? You've mentioned specifically what kind of diplomacy is going to be required, an upgrading of the

people on the ground, whether it's the State Department or Commerce or Interior or whoever else is going to be required if we are involved, really, in technical issues.

In other words, what I'm talking about is how we provide a complete situation with our military, our diplomacy, and comprehensive intelligence. We had testimony this morning that it's very difficult to succeed in quelling an insurgency, or in this case in surging into cities—where you are putting forces on the street to secure neighborhoods—without adequate intelligence. There is doubt that we do not have adequate intelligence, and we will need to perfect that a great deal more.

So, I would simply hope that there would be the potential for a development that we would recognize over the course of time, and that we would say, essentially, that, for the moment, we want to provide presence—a long-term presence in the Middle East. We want to do this so that economic development might occur, and provide greater hope for the people. We want to do this so that democratic development might occur over time, albeit incrementally. We want finally, at least by having a presence there, to be able to prevent al-Qaeda from developing training camps or prevent others who are able to gather in subversion; and, that we have bases for our forces and improved intelligence capacities.

Now, if you come at it from that standpoint, then we've had all sorts of testimony as to where our troops might be emplaced. Some suggested there were desert locations in Iraq, in Al Anbar and elsewhere, that are being used and have been used before. We might establish striking or reaction forces so if there are difficulties on the border or if there's lack of confidence of our allies, we can respond and reassure.

Now, I go through all of this, because it's—it appears to me that we need to have a dialog. For the moment, this evening in fact, the President may present another program to the Nation. But some of us do not accept that that's the end of the affair. The dialog, engagement and consensus-building with the Congress and with the Nation as a whole on what is to happen in Iraq and the Middle East must continue.

Now, with all that precis, let me just ask either one of you: Do you accept the fact that we ought to have a presence in the Middle East in an attempt to develop relations with all of these countries in a long-term pattern, and that, essentially, our basic objective ought to be that, to have a presence, which is welcomed, or at least supported, because that will be required for us to fight the war on terrorism in the long term, as well as to advance Middle Eastern people, who, for the moment, don't like us, indicate frequently, as they have an opportunity, that they would prefer not to be dealing with us?

Mr. MURTHA. I think the Middle East, Iraq, the whole area is absolutely essential, not only to the United States, but to Europe. I think we have to restore our credibility by opening a dialog with them and getting suggestions from them, absolutely. I think we need a presence there, I just don't think we necessarily need a presence in Iraq itself. So, I absolutely think it's important that we have an influence, because of the resources they have in the Middle East, and because of our allies there.

Senator LUGAR. But, Jack, would you accept, though, the thought that, by having a presence in Iraq, we are in a better position to keep the borders stable, to keep others from intervening, even if we are not in the middle of Baghdad, in the nine districts?

Mr. MURTHA. No; I think the opposite. I think if we don't get out, if we stay there, we increase the intensity of the opposition. I think there's a civil war going on. I know a lot of people don't define it that way, but I see it, and we're caught in that civil war. Our troops are caught in that civil war. I think the Iraqis will get rid of al-Qaeda. There's not that many al-Qaeda, and they weren't there before we invaded. So, I'm convinced that, when we leave, the Iraqis themselves will get rid of al-Qaeda. There'll be instability, but I just think we're adding to the instability by being in Iraq itself. So, my phased withdrawal, I think, is the answer to this thing.

Mr. GINGRICH. Let me comment briefly. I think you've put your finger on, maybe, a fundamental challenge. Let me say, first of all, we do not have adequate intelligence. There is no reason to believe we're going to have adequate intelligence. We are no more than 10 percent into the process of reforming intelligence, and it is a fundamental problem, and should be a fairly large-scale scandal, how bad our intelligence is, still. OK? That's an institutional problem, not a Bush administration problem, and it is a deep American problem.

Second, there's riots underway in Lebanon today. Hezbollah has been rearmed in south Lebanon. Hamas is being paid for by Iran. The Taliban elements in northwest Pakistan are stronger than they were a year ago. This is a really dynamic, dangerous environment. And I want to make two points about it that I suspect will be controversial.

The first is, the notion that Iran and Syria are going to be our allies—and I'm not against talking with them, but I would talk with them rather bluntly about what they need to do without us hurting them. We can hurt them in lots of ways that don't involve ground troops, and in lots of ways that don't involve bombing. Now, there's a virtue to having the largest navy in the world, and there are many things you can do to make life stunningly harder for very weak dictatorships. But this idea that Iran and Syria, which are consistently listed by the State Department as the largest supporters of state terrorism in the world, and an Iranian leader who comes to Venezuela to announce publicly the creation of a joint Venezuelan-Iranian fund for the end of the American empire, and who says publicly he wants to wipe Israel from the face of the Earth and defeat the Americans, the idea that we're now going to find a way to have a dialog that will lead them to be nice to us or help us win in Iraq just strikes me as a fundamental misunderstanding of the dynamics of the war that we're in. The bigger war, not just the Iraq war.

Second, historically, there is an enormous danger from the psychology of defeat. In 1977, I was in the Vice Chief of Staff of the German Army trying to get them to help me with something, and that morning they had announced that we were shifting a brigade to Bremerhaven, and there was a lot of turmoil in Germany, and I said, "Oh, they're worried that we're securing the brigade like

Dunkirk." He said, "No, like Saigon." And I think we underestimate what defeat—al-Qaeda and the world, including the BBC, which is often worse than al-Qaeda, will define an American-forced withdrawal from Iraq as a defeat, no matter how you describe it. The last time we were seen as weak in the Middle East, we had a 444-day hostage crisis in Iran, the American Embassy in Pakistan burned, and the American Ambassador in Afghanistan killed. A Marine general told me recently, "If we are perceived as having lost our nerve, there are not enough Marine detachments to evacuate the number of embassies he suspects will be under siege."

And finally, if the Chinese conclude we've lost our nerve, Taiwan is going to suddenly become a dramatically more dangerous place. What we are talking about here—and the Congress has every right to debate this, and if the Congress decides to cut off the funding, the Congress has the legitimate constitutional right to do so, but what we're talking about here will be perceived in the world as defeat, and defeat in the world is a very dangerous commodity if you are the leading guarantor of the system.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Dodd indicated he's prepared to yield to Senator Feingold.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you, Senator Dodd, of course.

These have all been great hearings. This is a particularly distinguished and unique panel. And I have really enjoyed listening to you.

Congressman Murtha, you have been tremendous on this issue. You and I haven't just been on the same page for years, we've been on the same sentence. Everything you have said about this has rung true for me, and I thank you for your leadership.

And Speaker Gingrich, you and I don't always agree, but I am impressed by your candor about the Foreign Service, about the State Department, the examples you give. This is what I observe, as well. And perhaps on a bipartisan basis, we can work together to address some of those issues. So, I have limited time, so I want to get directly—despite your different perspectives that you come from, I want to get right to this.

Both of you have been critics of this President's handling of this war, and you've talked about the strain it's put on our national security. So, what does Congress need to be doing right now to ensure that the President does not continue to pursue a course in Iraq that is putting such a strain on our national security and that, obviously, has not brought stability in Iraq?

Congressman Murtha.

Mr. MURTHA. What I'm trying to do is to build a case in the subcommittee for rebuilding our Strategic Reserve. I worry about defeat in Iraq, but I worry more about the fact that we're going to get out at some point. It doesn't make any difference if it's going to be tomorrow or it's going to be the next day—the way things are going, I see no way that this is not going to ultimately lead to the United States having to redeploy. But to restore our Strategic Reserve is absolutely essential. And then, I think we have to look at how we restore international credibility, and I listed some of the things I think are important. I think we need to close the Guanta-

namo detention facility. I think we need to bulldoze Abu Ghraib. And I think we need to stop torture—when I say "stop torture," we need to make sure that the world knows we're not torturing. Our poll numbers are so low, we can't get anybody to cooperate. I think there's a diplomatic element to this. And I've said this from the very start. We have to use diplomacy, and diplomacy is going to be the key in the end. And how we manage getting out or redeploying is going to the key to how successful we'll be in the end.

But events on the ground are going to control what happens. And, so far, they've gotten worse and worse. Everything I predicted, unfortunately, has turned out to be true. It hasn't gotten any better.

So, we need to find out how we can reinvigorate our Reserves, our Active-Duty Reserves, our Strategic Reserves. So, it's not an easy problem. It's going to be very expensive. But when you're spending $8 billion a month—$2 billion just to get equipment back and forth—we've got to find a way to reduce that expense.

Senator FEINGOLD. Speaker Gingrich, what should Congress be doing right now about this?

Mr. GINGRICH. Let me say, first of all, as I indicated earlier, I mean, the Congress does have constitutional authority, if it wants to exercise it, but that is, (a) not very likely, and (b) an enormous acceptance of responsibility.

I think General Petraeus has made an offer which is unique and very important, in that he has indicated a willingness to brief the Congress directly. I have a hunch that Secretary Gates is much more open to the kind of genuine dialog I described in my earlier comments.

And I think that there are two large-scale strategies that people up here should be exploring. And I tried to define them earlier. And I don't—I—they're—neither one's easy. One is: What will it take us to succeed? And here, we disagree on whether it's even possible, but what would it take? But the other is: If we are determined—if we decide, for whatever reason, that we truly cannot succeed, then how do you manage the consequences? I think sometimes the debate gets to be bunchball about Iraq—you know, 21,000 troops, more or less, frankly, in the end, is irrelevant. I mean, it's not going to decide this. What's going to decide this is either a dramatic change in the capacity of the American system to be effective or a decision that we have lost, and, therefore, we'd better—and we will still be the most powerful nation in the world, even if we lose. I mean, our ability to rebuild our relations in the region will be nontrivial, but may involve, frankly, greater violence, in the long run.

But I think that—it's important for you, up here, to explore, you know, and to bring in experts and to—and, frankly, to send delegations to the region to find out from people who are our allies, "If X happens, what's your reaction going to be? If Y happens, what are you going to do?" And, again, I mean—and I'm not—I'm talking, here, to some of the people who have traveled the most in the history of the Senate. You all know every single one of these people intimately, personally. Because we've got to be prepared, I think, almost like an option playing football—we've got to be prepared either to drive to victory or to manage the cost of defeat and under-

stand, you know, that this is just the nature of the world we're caught in.

Senator FEINGOLD. Well, I—Mr. Speaker, I certainly agree with that, as I've said at a number of these hearings, since we didn't have a plan when we went into Iraq, we sure as heck better have a plan for getting out. And that gets me back to Congressman Murtha, where you said what I believe is, obviously there is going to be a redeployment at some point, whether it's sooner or later. And you've studied the approach, and you've talked with senior military commanders. Can you say a little bit more, in terms of detail, about how a redeployment would actually work and how we can be sure that the lives of Americans will be protected as we redeploy? The—of course, the statement that's always made is, "Well, this will endanger the troops." Well, you know, could you talk about that a little bit?

Mr. MURTHA. Yeah.

Senator FEINGOLD. Isn't there a safe way to redeploy the troops?

Mr. MURTHA. Absolutely. And I think the first thing that I've heard from all the experts—not necessarily just the military experts—is, "Get out of Saddam Hussein's palace. Get out of the Green Zone." We have everything you need in the Green Zone. We have all the amenities. The troops are eating the best food, they have electricity, they have all the things that they need. And right around them, people have 5 or 6 hours of electricity in Baghdad. So, the psychological impact of getting out is so important. Then you phase it out of the city itself, and then you phase them out of Iraq.

The military can plan a redeployment, and it won't be any problem at all. What I worry about more is restructuring our Strategic Reserve. That's where it's going to take a lot of money. And the minute the war ends, we're not going to have the money to do that, and that worries me as much as anything else. These supplementals, I don't like them. But the minute the war's over, money for defense will be cut even more. And I can remember when Cheney was Secretary of Defense, he said it ought to be 5 percent over GDP. Well, he's the Vice President, and it's a helluv a lot less than 5 percent. We need more troops to change the redeployment schedule.

But the big thing is, if you start redeployment, I think that starts us on the road to reintroducing some dialog, reintroducing credibility to the United States, and then these other things that I've mentioned need to be done. I don't think there's any problem at all with the redeployment.

Senator FEINGOLD. And if you could just elaborate, finally, as my time expires, on your proposal for what the force presence should be in the region. Could you be a little more specific about what you envision there?

Mr. MURTHA. I think it's very difficult to know what it ought to be in the region. I think it could be much less. I think a division, at the most, in the periphery, whether it's Kurdistan or whether it's Bahrain or Qatar, wherever it is—or over the horizon. And I don't advocate going back in, unless it affects our national interests or the interests of our allies. I mean, I don't get involved in the civil war. So, I think we could reduce our presence substantially

and have the forces necessary to go in if it affects our national security.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Senator Dodd, again.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Let me say, to the chairman and to the witnesses, it's possible, in the next 10 minutes, I may have to leave and hopefully come back, but, if I do not, Senator Dodd is able to stay. He will ask his questions, but Senator Boxer has graciously indicated she would stay and chair this, if that becomes necessary. So, if you see me get up, gentlemen, it's not out of a lack of respect. I just want you to know why.

Senator Coleman.

Senator COLEMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I have great respect for you, though we probably disagree on a number of things. And Speaker Gingrich, I find myself consistently being on the same page as you. I appreciate the broad view that you take on this issue, and your mayor-like approach—from my perspective as a mayor—to getting things done.

Chairman Murtha, where I agree with you is on the rebuilding of the Strategic Reserve of our Armed Forces. I think there is broad bipartisan support for that. What I'm struggling with is the consequences of failure in Iraq. I'm one of those who is concerned about whether 20,000 extra American troops in Baghdad is going to make a difference in the midst of sectarian battle. On the other hand, when I visited with General Zilmer in Anbar, I saw that our Marines are doing what Marines do well there—they are killing the enemy, and they're making progress on stifling the insurgency there. If the General needs more support in Anbar, I'm not going to stand in the way of that. And I have consistently heard, in the discussions we've had here, praise for General Petraeus. I don't know if there's a finer military leader than him. But we still face major challenges in our military campaign in Iraq.

I just want to be clear—as I understand, Mr. Chairman, when you talk about redeployment, you are talking about an American troop withdrawal. You want us out of Iraq. Is there a timeframe for that withdrawal for you?

Mr. MURTHA. I've never set a timetable. I said, obviously they could do it within 6 months if the military decides it's going to do it. But that's purely an arbitrary figure that I said. I'm just saying that I don't think there's anything that can stop the momentum in the direction it's going now. I think, at some point, we're going to have to get out, and I think the lack of support of the American public—and I don't think the 21,000 troops are going to make any difference, because an increase in Baghdad for 5 months made no difference; everything got worse.

What we measure it by is what we—the committee asked—electricity production, which is below prewar level, oil production, water, all those kind of things, we measure. And, of course, unemployment is 30 to 60 percent. So, I see no way, the direction it's going now, that we can recover from this. So, I say we're going to have to get out, but we have to do it in a way that protects our troops the most, and put them in the periphery, where, if some-

thing happens that affects our national security, they can go back in.

Senator COLEMAN. The concern that I have is with your statement that somehow we restore credibility through a U.S. withdrawal. The Iraqi Study Group said this, "A premature American departure from Iraq would almost certainly produce greater sectarian violence and further deterioration of conditions, leading to a number of the adverse consequences outlined above. The near-term results would be a significant power vacuum, greater human suffering, regional destabilization, and a threat to the global economy. Al-Qaeda would depict our withdrawal as a historic victory. If we leave and Iraq descends into chaos, the long-term consequences could eventually require the United States to return."

I would ask both of you: Do you agree or disagree with that statement?

Chairman Murtha.

Mr. MURTHA. Well, I have a great regard for the Study Group, and I don't doubt that they may be accurate, but I've heard so many predictions about how it was going, and none of them turned out to be true. As the Speaker said, our intelligence has been abysmal. And so, these predictions have been abysmal. No matter what the predictions were, they turned out not to be true.

My predictions, unfortunately, have been accurate in everything that I've predicted. I'm not happy that that's happened, but I saw—in talking to the military commanders, in talking to wounded, I saw there's no way this thing can come to a happy conclusion for us. So, we have to find a way, I think, to restore our credibility. Now, how do we restore it? I think we have to do the things that I listed before to restore part of our credibility. But I think redeployment is the first step. We, at first, were liberators, now we're the enemy. And we're the enemy because of the way we have to operate.

The military cannot win this. This is what I've said over and over again. The military tactics that we have to use when we go into—overwhelming force. I advocate that. I want to save American lives. I want to protect American lives. But you make enemies when you do that. If you fly a Black Hawk in, and they use missiles, if you send mortars in, or artillery to protect Americans, you kill people inadvertently, and we become the enemy. Even if they kill each other, we get blamed for it. So, I just don't see any way that we're not going to have to redeploy, at some point.

Senator COLEMAN. I don't think there's much disagreement on that point. Speaker Gingrich talked about Iraq being "a mess." But the question gets back to the consequences of our actions in Iraq—and the consequences of withdrawal that the Study Group laid out are not only from intelligence analysts. A broad cross-section of military folks, diplomats, and others, I think, would clearly come to the conclusion Speaker Gingrich provided when he described the consequences of defeat. I just want to make sure we understand that the price that has been laid out here with regards to an immediate withdrawal is pretty dramatic.

Speaker Gingrich, do you have a perspective on that?

Mr. GINGRICH. Yeah; I want to—I mean, first of all, I do think it's important to emphasize that, no matter how clever we think we

are, if we are driven out of Iraq—and Chairman Murtha may be right, we may be driven out of Iraq—the world will see that as a defeat. And so, we need to think through how you manage, on a world basis, all the different implications of that.

Second, I think where I disagree—and I apologize, I've—I had a very hard time figuring out how to say this—I don't think it's a question of staying or leaving, because staying, without a—without the drive and the energy and the toughness to win, is a dead loser in the long run. I mean, presence is negative. And I agree entirely. I was deeply opposed to an American occupation. That's why, as early as the fall of 2003, I spoke out so angrily, because I really believe that that system was doomed to failure, and did fail. The question is: Now that we are where we are, is it possible to win? Now, it may not be possible. Let me be clear. I think the odds are—they're never 100 percent, because the enemy gets a vote.

I believe, with the 18 specific suggestions I brought today, on top of what the President wants to do—if the President were driving the system, if he was genuinely Commander in Chief, and if he had a Deputy Chief of Staff with genuine ability to drive the system, we would have at least a three-out-of-four chance of winning.

But nobody should kid themselves. I mean, General Petraeus, General Mattis, General Odierno, these are first-rate people who will do the best they can do. These are people who are very good at their job. But in the end, if we can't fix our systems—and I would argue, the American bureaucracies are a bigger problem than the Iraqi bureaucracy, and the American inability to deliver economic aid, the American inability to get things done in a timely way, is a bigger problem, because you can't manage the Iraqis if you can't manage yourself. And I just think we're faced with a lot of problems.

I just wanted to say one other thing, Senator. One of the reasons I—and I think we're a lot like Lincoln, in 1862, when the Union Army kept getting beaten in the east all the time, or like Lincoln in August 1864, when he really thought he was going to lose reelection and was trying to figure out what they would do to try to save the Union after they lost—after they lost the election. I mean, history is dynamic, you can't be sure what's going to happen. But what worries me as much as anything is if we accept defeat, we will never fix the large bureaucracies of our own system that are failing—the intelligence bureaucracy, the State Department bureaucracy, the noncombat parts of defense, the problems in the interagency, the problems with all the civilian agencies that refuse to cooperate. And the next time we get hit, it'll be worse. And I think that if we don't force ourselves to fix these systems now, we will someday, down the road, pay a horrendous price for our growing bureaucratic incompetence.

Senator COLEMAN. I know my time is up—are we going to have a second round, Mr. Chairman?

Senator DODD [presiding]. Well, I won't be here, but I'm sure you can.

Senator COLEMAN. There is so much more that I want to inquire about, but I appreciate your perspective, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. DODD. Thank you, and I'll—thank you both, two of my favorite people in public life. I agree with one more, probably, than the

other, but always—to listen to Newt Gingrich and not be provoked and to think is—there's something wrong with you. I appreciate your passion, Newt, and it's good to have you. Jack, always good to see you, and thank you for coming before us.

Sort of related questions, in a way. Chairman Murtha, I went to the barber in Deep River, CT, the other day, and the barber's son is going to his fourth tour in Iraq. And I know that's probably the exception right now, but if you take the argument that many are putting forth, and implicitly—and Newt will correct here on this—but the idea the three options here, the third being that we sort of have to do it whether the Iraqis like us or not. Do we have the capacity to do that? Even if the President, tonight, decided that he was going to massively increase the number of people in this surge, decide that he really has to do what should have been done, many argue, at the outset—give us a very specific reality-check, as to whether or not, even if that were an option we'd want to exercise, are we capable of exercising that option tonight if we wanted to?

Mr. MURTHA. We're not capable of substantially increasing the number of troops. But I don't think we can win it militarily anyway. I think the military tactic we have to use in an occupied country to protect our military—and I agree with the tactic we use, but I don't think they work. We just can't win it militarily. But as far as the facts are, we don't have a Strategic Reserve. We have none of the units in the United States that are up to what I would call the top level of readiness. As a matter of fact, 80 percent are not at the top level. None of the National Guard units are.

We're extending troops in Iraq, but we're also sending troops back that have not had a year at home. They like 2 years at home to rebuild and rehabilitate them. But the next tranche is going to be less than 1 year, they're going to have 9 months at home. So, we're stretched so thin—now, if we had to deploy a substantially larger number of troops, it would be impossible, because we don't have the equipment to do it, and we have to build up the equipment. We have a $100 billion shortage of equipment. So, we could not increase it more than the surge. I would assume the President probably asked the question, "Could I send in 40,000," and the military said, "You cannot." And this is going to be a stretch, even to do it this way. We can't sustain it, even if we were able to deploy 20,000 troops, we won't be able to sustain that deployment without using National Guard and Reserve forces who now, in this country, are below the readiness level to be deployed.

Senator DODD. So, as a practical matter, even if they wanted to do it, they really could not.

Mr. MURTHA. They couldn't do it, that's exactly right.

Senator DODD. Newt, you were on the Defense Policy Board, going back, with Don Rumsfeld, back earlier, and this transformational doctrine that he embraced. Share with us your views, at the time that discussion was going on—were you supportive of it, not supportive of it? What was your reaction to that approach that became at least the tactical approach that the administration took in 2003?

Mr. GINGRICH. Well, let me——

Senator DODD. If you want to comment on——

Mr. GINGRICH. Yeah; let me also comment, just for a second—I—in my 18 recommendations, I don't recommend any increase in forces, except for intelligence. I don't think combat forces are the key to this, although I think you can reorganize them some. And I agree with Chairman Murtha, that they should be repositioned in certain ways, although I'd reposition them in the country, not out of it. But I think there are things you can do to have more effective forces. But I think most of the major changes we need are, in fact—and I'll give you a specific example. We currently have tolerated an Iraqi policy of releasing people we arrest as terrorists and as insurgents. So, we have a catch-and-release policy—and I've been told about this by lieutenant colonels and colonels for the last 2 years—where we pick up the same person seven times. Well, that's not a number-of-troops problem, that's a policy problem. And there are a whole series of things like that, that could be reformed pretty dramatically, I think.

Let me draw a distinction about transformation. And I think this is a legitimate argument. I was with General Zinni the other night, reminiscing about plans they had at CENTCOM when he was there. And I know you've talked with him and have had testimony from him. I think transformation is real. I think that there are amazing things we are doing today, you couldn't have done 5 or 10 years ago. And I think it gives us capabilities that are pretty remarkable.

It is not a substitute for the right strategy in the right circumstance. Transformation clearly worked in Afghanistan, where a much smaller land force was successful than anybody would have predicted historically. Transformation worked reasonably well up through capturing Baghdad. I mean, 23 days is about as good a campaign as you're going to get.

What didn't work was that you had—you had to do one of two things immediately after you occupied Baghdad. You either had to hire the Iraqi Army, which is what I favored, and immediately—because I didn't want an occupation—or you had to do what Central Command had always planned, which is put about 400,000 people in, so you had physical presence everywhere. They adopted the worst of both worlds. They had the right size army to not be an occupation, and then sent in Ambassador Bremer to be an occupied leader, giving speeches on television. I mean, if you're going to do that, you'd better be so overwhelmingly dominant that nobody becomes an insurgent because it's physically impossible.

So, we literally created a mess that was unnecessary. But it wasn't because of transformation. It was because, at the key moment, when people like, by the way, David Petraeus, Jim Mattis, were doing exactly the right things—Petraeus hired 15,000 Iraqi soldiers, put them on the payroll, had them busy. Then the Coalition Provisional Authority reversed virtually everything.

So, I wouldn't put the—I wouldn't get in—personally, would not associate transformation as part of the problem. The problem was a fundamental mistake made, I presume, in the end, by the Commander in Chief. I'm not picking on Paul Bremer. He reported, ultimately, to the Commander in Chief. It was a fundamental mistake about the nature of what you do in a country once you've won the campaign.

Senator DODD. Thanks for that. And I'll yield in a minute. I was in Baghdad about a month ago. Senator Kerry and I were there, in the region. We were in Lebanon and Syria and Jordan and Israel, as well. I just want to share with both of you and my colleagues one of the—about 5 o'clock one evening, as our helicopter came down in the Green Zone, a young man walked up to both of us and introduced himself. I haven't used his name. I will now. Brian Freeman was his name. He was a West Point graduate, a captain. And he pulled us both aside, Brian did, and said, "I want to share with you what I'm concerned about." In these days, it was just a discussion of this surge, nothing had been laid out very specifically—but he warned us about it, and said, "This is a very bad idea." And he said, "Look, I'm sending 19-year-olds, and their mission is to go out on a patrol and be shot at or blown up and come back, not to hold anything, not to secure anything, not to defend anything. Their mission is really to become a target." And he said, "I can't do this much longer. I'm being asked to do State Department jobs I was never trained to do." And he was just very impressive, about 6′2″, 6′3″—he's about as handsome a kid as you'd ever see.

We lost him on Saturday. I spent last evening talking to his parents, his wife. He's got a 14-month-old and a 3-year-old. And losing the Brian Freemans of this world just cannot go on. This is crazy. And I would hope the President, tonight and in the coming weeks, would listen to people like John Warner, listen to people like Norm Coleman, listen to others who—good, card-carrying strong Republicans who have no interest in seeing this President fail at all. But he needs to get this message. This has got to stop. And my hope is, he'll listen to people like you, Newt, and others.

I don't want to hear about any more Brian Freemans—a remarkable young man, with a bright, bright future, who had the guts to come up and talk to two Senators about what he thought was wrong.

John.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Senator Dodd.

Jack, I—first of all, it's great to see you again. And I want to apologize, I'm not going to ask you a question, because I've known Newt Gingrich for 33 years, when we both entered politics in Georgia in 1974, and this is the first time I've had control of 8 minutes when he and I were in the same room, so——

[Laughter.]

Senator ISAKSON [continuing]. This is a real treat for me, and I want to be able to do that. But, Jack, it's a privilege to have you here.

Newt, you—we have heard a lot of testimony in the last 2 weeks regarding what happens if we withdraw, redeploy, et cetera, but don't escalate our troop force in Baghdad. And to—and the ones I've heard—and I haven't heard all of them—almost to the one, they've suspected that the violence has gotten so bad, the sectarian violence, both inter- and intrasectarian violence, that there would be an increase in violence—in Baghdad, in particular—if we did. Do you agree with that? Or do you have an opinion on that?

Mr. GINGRICH. Well, I think it's likely—I mean, you know, when people talk—and I agree with Chairman Murtha, we can arrange

an American withdrawal in a way which protects our troops reasonably well. What we can't do—and we did this in Vietnam; we didn't lose many people, leaving—what we can't do is protect all the people who help the United States, who are going to get slaughtered. And you—people just need to think through the cost of defeat. I mean, it's a legitimate strategy to say we can't win, and cutting our losses is better than continuing to get beaten up. But when we make that decision, we're going to watch a lot of people killed.

I also believe the odds are at least even money that you'll immediately have the Shia attempt to massacre the Sunnis, who they outnumber by better than three to one, and you will then have the Saudis finance the Sunni, who are better organized, who will then promptly countermassacre the Shia, and you will have Lebanon times 50, in terms of sheer violence. And I think—there's a lot to think about in this region. It's a very hard region. And my only point is, is that—is not that I think the President did the wrong thing—here, we obviously would have some arguments—but that the administration has consistently underestimated how hard this region is and how difficult it is to get these things done, and that we need to be dramatically more determined—because I agree entirely with what Senator Dodd said, I don't think a single young American should be sacrificed if we're not serious about winning. And, therefore, my reaction is to say I think we should—we should be very serious about doing everything it takes to fix our own systems so these young men and women have a reasonable chance to actually accomplish the mission.

Senator ISAKSON. I don't want to put words in your mouth, but you correct me if I'm wrong. What I have heard you say is that the President's recommendation is incomplete, in terms of dealing with the situation in Iraq, and, in the absence of substantially all, if not all, of the 18 recommendations, then it is problematic that it will be successful. Is that a fair statement?

Mr. GINGRICH. Yes. I had somebody I trust a great deal who, like Chairman Murtha, has had long, sad experience of being correct in their negative predictions, who said to me the other day that he thought, in its current form, that we had about one chance in six of succeeding, and that, as I walked him through these 18 recommendations, he thought it got you up to about three out of four. You never get much above that in this kind of a conflict, because the other side gets to vote, too. I mean, you can, in a Second World War kind of environment, where you just drown the other side and crush them, but we're not prepared to do that. But I do not think the President—I think the President's intentions are correct, and I would rather take the gamble of trying to win than take the gamble of trying to manage defeat. But I would hope that those members of the House and Senate who believe we should be successful in Iraq would insist that the President take very seriously profound changes in Washington, because most of the biggest implementation problems that General Petraeus is going to face are going to be Washington problems, not Baghdad problems.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, you've led me to where I had hoped that we would go in this "managing defeat" versus "winning"—and I put "winning" in quotation marks—vis-a-vis the Iran and Syria ques-

tion. And item seven in your recommendations was for us to make it clear—I believe; I'm restating this—would make it clear to Iran and Syria that we are determined to win, and call on them to behave. And I think—and, if they don't, it'll lead to direct and aggressive countermeasures. That was your statement. There have been some on Capitol Hill in recent weeks that have been suggesting we, in Congress, get into directing policy or resolutions not to engage either Iran and Syria on any pretense, no matter whether there's provocation or not. Is that a faulty mentality for us to take at this time?

Mr. GINGRICH. Well, I'm not opposed to talking with them, if what we say to them is stunningly clear. But I think when you have evidence, as was reported last week by Government officials, that there are Iranian sophisticated explosives being sent into Iraq for the purpose of killing Americans, and we don't do anything about it, there's just something fundamentally wrong.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, the——

Mr. GINGRICH. And we have enormous capacity to make life extraordinarily difficult for both of these fragile dictatorships; and, for a variety of reasons, we are psychologically immobilized. The Syrian dictatorship is a family-owned monopoly of power on behalf of 15 percent of the country, the Alawites. The Iranian dictatorship routinely has to stop people from running for office, because the fact is there are thousands of candidates they kick off the ballot because they are moderates who are disgusted with the regime. And they're already suffering severe economic problems. They import 40 percent of their gasoline, because they don't have adequate refinery capability. And the idea that Iran is powerful and can bluff us, and we are weak and timid and cannot bluff them, is entirely a figment of Washington's imagination.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, lastly—and I guess this is a combination of a comment and a question. Your opening sobering remarks about the potential dangers to this country, vis-a-vis terrorism, and, second, your acknowledgment—and I—again, I think I'm right—that this is a battle in the overall war on terror, makes it very important that whatever we do—I think Chairman Lugar is very correct in encouraging diplomacy all the time, and he is an absolute first-rate gentlemen of that, and has been in this Congress for years—but we should not, as a Senate, preclude, by policy, the administration from taking measures that are appropriate against any country if they're going to be out to destroy us or to do harm to our citizens. Is that not a fair statement?

Mr. GINGRICH. Well, I think all I—along that line, all I would leave for the Senators to contemplate is—we told the North Koreans, this summer, that missile tests were unacceptable, so they picked the Fourth of July to fire seven missiles, which we then accepted. We then told the North Koreans that a nuclear test was unacceptable, so they set off a nuclear weapon. Now, if you're the rest of the planet watching this dance, what you begin to learn is that it's absolutely irrelevant what the Americans say and that they will put up with almost anything. So, you end up with Chavez's grotesque speech at the United Nations, followed by the performance, this last week, where he and Ahmadinejad created a fund for the defeat of the United States, publicly. And, over time,

these dances have consequence. And all I would suggest is that—if anything, my concern with the administration is that it zigzags back and forth, that—I can't figure out what their policies are toward North Korea, Iran, and Syria right now. I mean, are they countries we should be talking with to try to find out what they mean, or are they countries that we know what they mean, and we should be doing something to stop them? Are they actually helping kill young Americans, or are they people we should be chatting with to help us solve Iraq? I mean, which country are they? And my experience, looking at the open press, is that they're actually pretty straight. These are dictatorships who hate us and are determined to drive us out of the region, and are defined by our own State Department as the two largest financers of terrorism in the world. Now, what—so I would agree with Senator Lugar, there's nothing at all wrong with talking to them, but I would talk to them in a fairly direct way, and have consequences to the conversation as part of that process.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you, Jack.

Senator BOXER [presiding]. OK. I will ask some questions, and then we'll go back to Senator Vitter, and then to—have you already asked questions? I think Senator Menendez is coming back.

Thank you both for being here. This has been really important for us.

Congressman Murtha, I've known you for a very, very, very long time, worked with you since 1983. It's hard to believe. You always have been tough. You've always been direct. You've always been the best friend the military's ever had. I think, in presenting your views, and when you presented them, you were tough, you were direct, but, to me, you were correct. And to the vast majority of the American people, who now agree with what you're saying. And I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart. When history is written, you have a place in it, a very important place in it.

Now, anyone who takes the time to read your testimony will have hope, because—here's the point. I love to write. I used to be a newspaper reporter and an editor. This is direct. This is clear. You tell the truth. You don't use, as the Speaker would say, bureaucratic, you know, dodging. You're just right there. And everything you say makes sense, "The past 4 years of Iraq have been plagued by mischaracterization based on unrealistic optimism instead of realism. The conditions on the ground are simply moving in the wrong direction." Who could argue with it? "There are limits to military power. There is no U.S. military solution to Iraq's civil war. It's up to the Iraqis." Now, there—there may be a disagreement with the Speaker, because I read his, and his is very strong for a military solution. I'm going to get to that. But I think most people agree with you, that if there's not a political solution, there'll never be an end to a civil war. Never. And there are some great ideas out there. My chairman has, I think, a very sound idea about following the Constitution, looking at semiautonomous regions, getting the neighbors to sit down, and so on.

So, I could go through this, and I—I won't go through everything, but I think your point that you made today, which Dr. Korb made this morning, 61 percent of Iraqis approve of attacks on United States-led forces. Now, I don't know how anyone, in good con-

science, I swear—and I must be missing something—could send our troops to help liberate a country and rebuild it when 61 percent of the people say it's OK to shoot our soldiers. I just don't get it. And that's, I think, one of the reasons why you see, in the Army Times here, which I've talked about before, now only 35 percent of the troops approve of the way this war is being handled. And if you—if Speaker Gingrich is right, and the only way to win—and he talks about winning; I want to talk about winning—is to have a good—and, Speaker, if I don't say this right, please correct me—that people are strong for winning, that they feel good about the mission, they want to stay there, and the public supports it, and the troops support it—if that's the only way to win, then, unless something major happens, this is a problem.

Now, I take a little different view about winning and losing, and I'd like to put this out here. Maybe it's because I think I've negotiated a lot of issues in Congress and in my household, where everyone comes out a winner, which is what good leadership is. Everyone comes out a winner. Now, I would ask both of you to comment on this, really tell me if I'm onto something or not.

If I were to have told both of you, years ago—let's say, like, 5 years after gulf war one, that Saddam would have been overthrown by the Americans, that there were—we were sure there were no weapons of mass destruction, because our people could assure us of that, that things were such that there—that the American military was able to make sure that there could be not one, not two, but three elections where the turnout was huge and people were excited about it and showed their purple dot on their finger—two elections, one referendum—if I were to tell you that in the mid-1990s, and say, "This is what America did for this country: The tyrant is gone, they've had their elections, and there are no weapons of mass destruction," would you say—would you have said, "What an accomplishment"? I just wonder if you would have said that, in the—if somebody came up and said, "This is what's going to happen in Iraq," would you have said that was an accomplishment?

Mr. MURTHA. Well, I'll tell you what they look at. They look at the amount of electricity they have. They look at the employment. They look at potable water. They look at the basic things that our people in the United States look at. And that's why it's been so distressing to go from very popular to unpopular. So, those things are certainly important, from an overall standpoint, but not near as important as insecurity, increased incidence, unemployment, and electricity——

Senator BOXER. OK. So, if I had said to you, that, in the 1990s, you would have said, "Well, that's good, but how's their daily life?" Is that what you would have said at that point in the mid-1990s? Or would you have said, "Barbara, there's no way to get rid of Saddam. It would have been too hard. There's no way he could have had three elections." See, I think it's a huge accomplishment by our military. And that's why, when Newt Gingrich talks about losing, losing, losing, I don't look at what we've done there as a loss. I just think it's been changing missions. "Mission accomplished," was stated——

Mr. MURTHA. Let me tell you——

Senator BOXER [continuing]. At a time when it wasn't—it wasn't right to say that. But the bottom line is, it depends on your mission.

Mr. MURTHA. I thought we could prevail in Vietnam. When I came back, in 1967, they had an election right after that, and President Johnson said, "It's all over. We had an election—Vietnam had an election. Everything's going to be all right." We lost 35,000 people after that. There's no question in my mind that I was mistaken. I went to Vietnam, asked by Gerry Ford to go there—and I found that there was going to be a bloodbath. I said there's going to be a bloodbath in Cambodia, and that we'd have a terrible problem—that's going to happen. There's nothing we can do about that, because we are not prevailing, and it's getting worse.

So, yes; I agree with you, those kind of accomplishments are magnificent. Our military did a marvelous job. But we can't win this, militarily. We're considered occupiers, and the way we have to operate is to use overwhelming force, and that forces us into a position where we——

Senator BOXER. OK.

Mr. MURTHA [continuing]. Kill people.

Senator BOXER. So, just going a little further, if I were to just summarize what I think you said to me, it's that, yes, the military did some magnificent things, in terms of getting rid of Saddam and in terms of allowing the people to freely choose their leaders, but, in your opinion right now, that can't be perceived as a win.

Mr. MURTHA. Well, I think the polls and internationally, we're looking at it as being defeated. I understand what you're saying, but I think there's no question in my mind that internationally and in the United States people are fed up with it, they've lost confidence, they want out. That's what they're saying. Now, that's not necessarily the reason to leave, but I just don't see any chance of prevailing. I understand what you're saying, and I praise the military all the time. Nobody has a higher regard for the military than I do. But they can't prevail in this thing, because of, just, the guerrilla war and the type—Algeria, India, Afghanistan—the Russians had——

Senator BOXER. Well, I totally agree. The only place we disagree is—I feel, just from my seat, what the military did was amazing win for a people.

Mr. MURTHA. It is.

Senator BOXER. And the question is what they do with it. If they choose not to treat each other the way they should and have a country that can work, I don't think we can fix it. But—so, I don't like to see things as losing and winning, which you and Newt, I think, agree on, that it's—if we leave, it's a loss. You agree it would be a loss. The situation is a loss.

So, I—my time has run out, but I'm going to ask, just, Newt, this one question, then I'm going to go to Senator Vitter.

I read your 18 key steps to victory in Iraq. I notice that you say something here, "Establish three plans, one for achieving victory with the help of the Iraqis, one for achieving victory with the passive acquiescence of the Iraqis, one for achieving victory even if the current Iraqi Government is unhappy."

If the current Iraqi Government said, "Get out. You're making things worse for us, you're fueling the insurgency, you're fueling al-Qaeda, and we just want to deal with our own country, ourselves," would you not leave, at that point?

Mr. GINGRICH. Well, I think if the current Iraqi Government said, "Get out," we would leave.

Senator BOXER. But you say—but you say a plan—we should have a plan. It seemed to me you're implying that we would stay, because you say, "achieving victory even if the current Iraqi Government——

Mr. GINGRICH. Well——

Senator BOXER [continuing]. "Is unhappy,"

Mr. GINGRICH [continuing]. Let me draw a distinction——

Senator BOXER. And before, you said, "Leaving is defeat." So, explain that to me.

Mr. GINGRICH. Well, I think—I think, as a practical matter, in the modern world, if you have a sovereign government, and the sovereign government asks you to leave you'd have a relatively difficult time staying. The question would be: What would be the odds that the Iraqi Government could, in fact, achieve clarity of asking you to leave, if all of your allies inside the Iraqi Government were blocking them from doing so? So, you could end up in a situation where Maliki's unhappy, but is very constrained.

And the only reason I raised this is—I don't—I don't think you can deal with Iraq in isolation. If you don't wake up every day and look at Iran first, Syria second, international terrorism third, and say to yourself, "What's the implication of our defeat on all of these various moving parts?"—and I think if the United States is defeated in Iraq, that the consequences, in terms of an Iranian surge in the Persian Gulf and an Iranian belief that their model of terrorism will work, will be extraordinary and will be very, very violent.

Senator BOXER. Well, you know, it's interesting, because a lot of things were said about Vietnam that would happen, and now the President went there, and he is just thrilled to be there, and he's thrilled with what they're doing. So, I think, you know, we all heard that before. But I think—but I just worry a lot about this. If I—you know, you set up a War Cabinet. I don't see anything about a political solution. I don't see anything about a postwar solution here. And I just would urge you—because, you know, a lot of these things are good and I do agree with, but I don't see anything here that leads you to political solution. And I think right now the biggest winner is Iran. My gosh, we're doing for them what they were unable to do for themselves. And that's a disaster.

Senator Vitter.

Senator VITTER. Thank you, Senator Boxer.

And I join all my colleagues in thanking the two of you for your service and ideas, and for being here. I deeply appreciate it, as well.

Chairman Murtha, I believe a few minutes ago you talked about a "phased withdrawal," and you used that term, but resolution 18, which you introduced, says withdrawal, "at the earliest practicable date." And neither of those is really precise about time, but they sound different to me. So, would you advocate a phased with-

drawal, or would you advocate getting our troops out as quickly as is consistent with their safety?

Mr. MURTHA. Yeah, I would advocate getting out as quickly as possible, but I think it still has to be phased. I've always believed that the military could set the timetable, and that would give the incentive to the Iraqis to take over their responsibility. For instance, I said earlier that they first ought to get out of the palaces. You've been there, and you know the palaces are where Saddam Hussein was. Then they ought to get out of the Green Zone. Then they ought to get out of Baghdad. And then they ought to get out of the country itself. I believe we need stability in the Middle East, there's no question about that. I think it's absolutely essential to our international interests, but I believe that both are consistent. A phased withdrawal is something that it would have to be. I don't think you could protect our troops if you didn't do it that way.

Senator VITTER. So, what I'm hearing is: Relatively quickly, consistent with the troops' protection.

Mr. MURTHA. Exactly.

Senator VITTER. Is that fair to say?

Mr. MURTHA. Exactly, yeah.

Senator VITTER. What—none of us have a crystal ball, obviously, but what would your prediction be about the level of violence and sectarian conflict following that in Iraq?

Mr. MURTHA. Well, I think there would be instability. And I don't think any of us can predict how much there'll be. And I've heard all kinds of estimates. But they're going to have to do this themselves. Just like our own Civil War, we had to settle it ourself, and nobody else can settle it for us. Our troops are caught in the middle of a civil war; you call it "sectarian violence." That's the thing that worries me the most. We can't do it militarily. The way we have to operate militarily is overwhelming force, and that makes enemies.

Senator VITTER. Right.

Mr. MURTHA. And so, I just believe that—even though there will be instability—now, we should be——

Senator VITTER. Would you expect that violence, following our relatively quick withdrawal, to go up, or not?

Mr. MURTHA. I don't know that I could predict whether it would go up or down, but one thing I do predict is: The longer we're there, the more troops are going to be killed, and we're not going to make any more progress. And so, I believe the sooner we get out, the better off we'd be, and the violence is going to come, whether we get out now or we get out 6 months from now or a year from now. Unless, what the Speaker said, we were to put an overwhelming force into place, 4 or 500,000 troops——

Senator VITTER. Well, I guess the biggest reason I ask is because you say, "Well, we might have to go back in if certain things happen." And so, therefore, it seems pretty important to me to understand the likely consequences of whatever action we're going to take. None of us have a crystal ball, but it seems pretty important to try to figure out if violence would surge following a relatively quick withdrawal, or not.

Mr. MURTHA. Yeah; I appreciate that question, because what I've said is, we wouldn't go back in unless our national interests were affected.

Senator VITTER. Right.

Mr. MURTHA. I wouldn't go back in to interfere in the civil war, and that's where our troops are caught now.

Senator VITTER. Right.

Mr. MURTHA. So, I would have a very small force stationed in Okinawa, even, which is a long ways off, but we could get back there in a short period of time, and the periphery, even Kurdistan, I would——

Senator VITTER. In that scenario, would our national interests be affected if Iraq was being controlled by clearly extremist elements which had a violent worldwide agenda, like other of our enemies do?

Mr. MURTHA. Well, Iraq is an old established civilization, and I don't think they're going to fall under the purview of Iran or anybody else. I know that's what everybody thinks. I'm worried about Iran. I've always worried about Iran.

Senator VITTER. Let me clarify. I'm not talking about Iran. I'm talking about forces within Iraq that I think we would all agree to characterize as extremist elements with a violent agenda.

Mr. MURTHA. Yeah, I see what you mean, and I think the Iraqis will handle that. I think the al-Qaeda presence is minimal compared to the sectarian violence that's going on. I absolutely believe that they will get rid of them. In the Sunni areas——

Senator VITTER. Well, again, I'm—and I'm not trying to cut you off, but I do have limited time.

Mr. MURTHA. Yeah.

Senator VITTER. I'm not talking only about al-Qaeda either. I'm talking about, for the most part, religious-motivated, ultraextremist groups who would have an anti-American violent agenda.

Mr. MURTHA. Well, the longer we're there, the more possibility of that happening, in my estimation. The sooner we redeploy, the less chance of that happening.

Senator VITTER. OK. Another scenario. Would it be in our national interest if—to get reinvolved directly in the situation if that sectarian and other violence was spilling over to the broader Middle East region?

Mr. MURTHA. Well, I think it depends on which countries you're talking about, and that certainly is something that we'd have to decide whether it's in our national interest. The oil reserves are so important to everyone. And this is why we need to get the Europeans involved; they're the ones that have as much stake as we do. In the first gulf war, you remember, we had 170,000 troops from the coalition. They paid for it themselves. They understood the importance of the Reserves in that country. And that's the same thing today. But they haven't gotten involved, because we've tried to do it on our own. We need their involvement. I'm saying redeployment is the first step to get them involved, and then a heavy diplomatic effort, working with them and doing some of the things that I've suggested.

Senator VITTER. But you'd admit, certainly, that if that violence was spilling to the Middle East more broadly, it—something like

that could get into that category you're talking about, where it involves our national interests.

Mr. MURTHA. If it affected Saudi Arabia, if it affected Israel, if it affected our allies in that area, certainly we'd have to think about getting involved.

Senator VITTER. OK. Mr. Chairman, you seem to be saying that it's inevitable that the presence of United States forces cannot be successful in Iraq. Is it also—is part of reaching the conclusion you've reached that it is inevitable that this attempt to have a stable democracy in Iraq is a failure, or is that still a possibility?

Mr. MURTHA. I think—that's a possibility, but I think the longer we occupy Iraq—for instance, the examples I used, in Afghanistan and India and countries like that, where their occupation created civil unrest—I think the sooner we get out, the more chance we have of democracy in Iraq.

Senator VITTER. So, you would allow for some possibility of that success of a stable democracy.

Mr. MURTHA. Absolutely. They've had an election. They wanted an election. They want to have a stable government. But they have to settle it themselves. We cannot prevail, militarily, in Iraq. There's a limit to military power, and we've reached that limitation by not getting it under control earlier.

Senator VITTER. Mr. Speaker, let me—I'm running out of time, but let me pick up there with you, at least quickly.

Senator BOXER. This is the last question, because we need to vote and——

Senator VITTER. Sure.

Senator BOXER [continuing]. Senator Menendez still needs a turn.

Senator VITTER. That's fine. Sure.

You start your column with Mayor Giuliani saying that our goal promoting a stable, accountable democracy in the heart of the Middle East cannot be achieved by purely military means. I think we all agree with that. I assume you would also agree that achieving that goal takes, under the present circumstances, some military security component.

Mr. GINGRICH. Absolutely. It takes a—it takes a substantial advantage in intelligence, it takes a capacity to impose security, it takes a requirement to grow the Iraqi security forces so that they're capable, on their own, of helping implement security. But if you read General Petraeus's testimony this morning to the Senate Armed Services Committee, he is equally clear that the military, by itself, cannot succeed. I mean, even those of us who are optimistic about the opportunity of success believe that there are very substantial elements of the American Government, outside the combat military, that have to be effective for us to be able to have any hope of succeeding in Iraq.

Senator VITTER. Right. Thank you very much, to both of you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Senator BOXER. Thank you very much, Senator, for being so mindful that Senator Menendez has been waiting. And please go ahead.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Let me thank both of you. I had the privilege of serving with both of you in the House and appreciate your commitment to our country and your leadership. Chairman Murtha, I always appreciated all of the insights and the plain-spokenness with which you brought powerful arguments in our caucus and to the Congress, and so I appreciate you coming over here today to share your insights.

Mr. Speaker, I will probably concern some people back in New Jersey by saying there's a lot I agree with in the statement that you gave, and particularly in the written statement. I want to read from part of it, as a preface to a question.

You said, "The second weakness is, the current strategy debate once again focuses too much on the military and too little on everything that has not been working. The one instrument that has been reasonably competent is American military power, but that's a very narrow definition and should not be expanded to include the noncombat elements of the Department of Defense, which also have a lot of difficulties in performing adequately. The great failures in the Iraq and Afghanistan campaigns have been in noncombat power: Intelligence, diplomacy, economic aid, information, operations, support from the civilian elements of national power. These have been the great centers of failure in America's recent conflicts. They are a major reason why we've done so badly in Iraq. The gap between the President's recent proposals and the required rethinking and transforming of our noncombat instruments of power is simply breathtaking." And I agree with you on all of that.

So, as I look at your 18 points for success in Iraq, I ask: If one were to accept that all of those 18 points were vital to success in Iraq, how long do you think that would take to accomplish?

Mr. GINGRICH. Let me say, first, that what is truly discouraging is—I included, as an appendix, some things I wrote in 1984 on the fact, that the interagency was broken, and I reported on conversations, that Chairman Murtha will remember, with very fine people—General Thurmond, after the 1990 Panama campaign, and General Hartzog, after Haiti, in which they both reported that the interagency was broken. I mean, this is a longstanding reality.

I believe—and, again, General Petraeus talked about this some this morning—I believe that it is possible, with luck, that, within a year, there will be fewer American casualties, and there would be a dramatically greater Iraqi capability. And I believe, if you did all 18 points, which includes a great deal of economic breakthrough and a great deal of effort to change the tone and the quality of life for the Iraqi people, that you would have the beginnings of moving in the right direction. But——

Senator MENENDEZ. But the——

Mr. GINGRICH [continuing]. But I think——

Senator MENENDEZ [continuing]. The implementation of your 18 points would take a significant amount of time to achieve, certainly——

Mr. GINGRICH. No; look——

Senator MENENDEZ [continuing]. Some of them.

Mr. GINGRICH. Here's the great dilemma of the American system. And I have to say, as somebody who spent 20 years representing Georgia, that, in fact, we ended our Civil War not by political dis-

cussion, but by defeat, as seen from a Georgia perspective. I mean, there are moments in history—Yankees may not always fully appreciate this view, but there are moments in history when, in fact, you just have to drive through. Lincoln changed things every day. George Catlett Marshall, when he was creating the American Army of the Second World War, changed things every day. If this President were to bring in a Deputy Chief of Staff who is a senior retired military person of the right background and were to genuinely drive the system, 90 days from now we would be in a different system, we'd have—and, by the way, if he also brought in the Congress, something that I mentioned when you weren't here, I think——

Senator MENENDEZ. I did——

Mr. GINGRICH [continuing]. OK—and genuinely worked, on a bipartisan basis, on those aspects of the law which are genuinely destructive—I mean, they're not Republican or Democrat, liberal or conservative, they're just stupid——

Senator MENENDEZ. I don't mean to interrupt you, but——

Mr. GINGRICH [continuing]. I think, that Congress would help pass it.

Senator MENENDEZ [continuing]. But the—I looked at your 18 points. Some of them clearly could be done by executive prerogative and order, but there is a fair number there that would take a very significant restructuring, which means time.

And so, my question is: In your defeat or victory, what is the price of victory, as defined by you? How many American lives, how much money, how much time? Because I think the American people need to have a sense—in the honesty that you were talking about before, when I was listening to your testimony and your answer to questions—I mean, we are being told that this plan is the Iraqis'—we're following the Iraqis somehow. But I don't believe it for a moment. We're being told that we're following the Iraqis, Iraqis are going to take the lead, we're going to be there in a supportive context, and that's what makes this plan so fundamentally different than every other plan the President has had in the past as it relates to surges or escalations in the process. And yet the reality is that when we listen to all the other expert testimony—there's no way that that's going to happen, if we're going to have any degree of success—and I oppose the escalation—but if we're going to have any degree of success, it certainly is not going to be under that scenario.

So, the question is: Isn't it fair for the American people to know, for those who advocate that, "We cannot accept a defeat, in classic terms, that, therefore—and we must strive, at all costs, to have victory"—what is the quantifiable aspects of victory, in both lives and national treasure?

Mr. GINGRICH. Well, I want to—I think, first of all, you shouldn't underestimate that it will cost lives. I think it'll cost money. I think it will cost time. I think the total lives engaged would probably be less than 1 percent of the lives we'll lose when we lose an American city. I think that the amount of money we lose will be dramatically less than it will take us to build one American city. And I think that anybody who can make a decision on Iraq without worrying about nuclear war and the degree to which our opponents in Iran,

North Korea, Syria, Venezuela, and elsewhere, are emboldened by our defeat are kidding themselves. So, I would say to you, Senator, how much do you think it's going to cost in American lives when the terrorists around the planet are emboldened?

Senator MENENDEZ. That's if one accepts your proposition that——

Mr. GINGRICH. And——

Senator MENENDEZ [continuing]. In fact, that's what happens in Iraq, as defined by you, in terms of success, means the loss of an American city.

Chairman Murtha, do we lose an American city, thousands of American lives, because we follow your plan in Iraq?

Mr. MURTHA. No; I think, actually, we reduce the intensity in the recruiting that goes on in Iraq. We have become the enemy, and that's actually increasing the intensity of the recruiting against us. So, I really believe the first step to rehabilitating ourselves is to redeploy our troops and to lessen this intense aggravation and hate that they have toward Americans. The BBC just did a poll showing the whole world says we're making a mistake. They believe we're more dangerous than Iran. This is people, ordinary people, of course. But, no, I don't think that solves the problem at all. I think we've got to reduce our presence, and that is the start of stability in Iraq.

Senator MENENDEZ. Isn't it fair to say security is worse today than it was before?

Mr. MURTHA. When I spoke out, there were 400 incidents—that's over a year ago—400 incidents a week, and now there's over 1,000 a week. That's attacks. So, it's much worse than it was. Plus, the things that I measure, the things that our subcommittee asked them to measure, is potable water, electricity, oil production, and unemployment. All those are worse than they were—or less than prewar.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, I'll close by simply—and I see my time's now up—by saying that General Pace was giving a briefing here, about 6 months ago, I guess it was, and he said something that was fundamental. He said, "We have to get the Iraqis to love their children more than they hate their neighbors." And that's probably a very powerful truism, it's just that it doesn't happen by military might.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Senator BOXER. Thank you so much, Senator.

The reason I'm trying to move us along is because of a vote that's coming. And I know Senator Coleman wants to take a round. I'm going to give you 4 minutes, I'm going to give you 4 minutes, Senator, and I'll take 4 minutes, and we'll be done.

I just wanted to recognize the military Reservists who are here from all the different services. Will you just raise your hand? You're attending a course, at the National Defense University, on national security and policy development. Well, we hope that this is so clear today that you come away with a very good feeling that we're getting it together. But I think we are, and this is democracy, and this is important in this great free country. And that's why it breaks my heart that we were able to offer this up to a country

that doesn't seem to be able to want to deal with it. And—well, we'll move on.

Senator Coleman, you have 4 minutes, please.

Senator COLEMAN. Thank you, Madam Chair. This is a good discussion.

What are the consequences of failure? What's the—is there a path to success? I share the Speaker's concern about failure. I remember the al-Zawahiri letter to al-Zarqawi, where he says, "Here's what we're going to do. Americans are going to lose heart in Iraq. We'll establish a caliphate, take over the rest of the region, destroy Israel, and then destroy you—destroy the West." Take him at his word.

On the other hand, what's the path to success? I don't know if putting 21,000 more troops in the midst of what's going on in Baghdad, without the Iraqis showing that they're going to take greater responsibility—I don't know if that will do anything.

I have two questions, then, for the Speaker.

No. 1, so—do I understand—does your 18-point plan—does it necessarily involve an upsurge of—an increase in troops in order for us to achieve some kind of victory?

Mr. GINGRICH. I think it accepts, as part of the plan, the President's increase in forces, and it does suggest that a lot more intelligence people would be used in the area.

But if I could ask your indulgence, Senator, I just want to make a point that I think is very hard for Americans to accept. If you have people who hate you enough——

Senator COLEMAN. Let me—before you comment—I want you to do this, in my 2 minutes, but maybe the second question——

Mr. GINGRICH. Good.

Senator COLEMAN. Fit it right in. You talk about achieving a bipartisan, and Congress—is there any way to get the American people to understand the cost of failure? And can we get the—right now, there is not support for this war—is that at all possible? And maybe your response can, kind of, tie those two together.

Mr. GINGRICH. Well, I—first of all, as I said a while ago, I mean, in the American Civil War, Abraham Lincoln fully expected to lose, as late as August 1864, and didn't think he'd get reelected. I mean, wars are hard. People don't like wars. People shouldn't like wars. They're terrible. And they're hard to sell, in that sense. So, I don't know that that's what we should do.

The only point I wanted to make, because I think, intellectually, the American leadership has to come to grips with this—what if you have enemies, as we discovered this summer in Britain, when Scotland Yard arrested a couple who were going to use their 8-month-old baby to disguise the bomb as baby milk—if you have enemies who are prepared to kill their 8-month-old baby as long as they get to kill you, you're up against a hard problem.

And one of the places I guess I disagree with some of my friends is that the Baker-Hamilton Commission was very clear that they believe that a defeat in Iraq will lead to a substantial increase in terrorist recruiting worldwide and a substantial increase in terrorist aggressiveness.

And, last, I would say, every American should simply be shown what Ahmadinejad, the Iranian leader, says publicly and routinely

about eliminating Israel from the face of the Earth and defeating the Americans, and just ask: What do you think they mean? And that's why I think this is—this is a very serious period, where we're making decisions that may affect the lives of our children and grandchildren for a very, very long time.

Senator COLEMAN. And is there any question in your mind that precipitous withdrawal would embolden Iran in its effort—would embolden the enemies of the United States? Any question in your mind?

Mr. GINGRICH. There's no—first of all, I don't want to disagree with my good friend, Chairman Murtha, with "precipitous." There's no question in my mind that if we are perceived as having been defeated, that the Iranian hard-liners, the Syrian dictatorship, and the terrorists of al-Qaeda, Hamas, Hezbollah, and others will all feel a surge of jubilation, increase their recruitment dramatically, and be far more aggressive in pushing us than they have been up till now. I have zero doubt that, historically, that's what will happen.

Senator COLEMAN. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Senator BOXER. Thank you so much. And I guess I will have the last word, because I'm the last one here and I have the gavel.

But I want to thank both of you very, very much. It's been very provocative, very interesting. And I'm going to make my comments on what I see here.

The greatest country in the world needs to respond to every threat to its national security with all the power and force that we have, if necessary. That's why I think Congressman Murtha is so on the right track, because what happened, when we went into Iraq and stayed there too long, was that we took our eye off the terrorism ball. I agree with everything that Speaker Gingrich says about the enemy we face with the terrorists. That's why it was shocking to me, as someone who voted to go to war against Osama bin Laden—and every Senator did—every Senator did—that suddenly we turned away from that and find ourselves in a situation where we're stretched thin. And that's why I think what Congressman Murtha is doing—and I would posit—and this is always up for debate—that of all the people in this room who are elected people, knows more about the real thing of war than any of us do. I may be wrong on that. Maybe reading books is important, too. We all do that. But I've got to say, brings this credibility, as someone who's known to fight with every fiber in his body for our fighting men and women. And when he came out, as he did—I'll tell you, it was a turning point with the American people, because of the credibility.

So, I would argue, the kind of plan that you have put out—and Russ Feingold and I have a similar—a bit different—we—I think we stay right over the horizon to—with a force that could quickly respond to terrorism, training the Iraqis, and protecting American forces. But, other than that, it's pretty similar. Nobody says precipitous. I mean, I think, in your plan, it's done in an orderly way, and you've laid that out, how you would even do it; you've gone that far.

So, what we would do, by redeploying our troops and changing the mission from combat to support and freeing our troops up, is make us stronger in the world.

The world, right now, doesn't think much of us. This is true. And Speaker Gingrich says, "Oh, my God, if you lose, you lose the support of the world." Well, the world doesn't support what we're doing. As you pointed out, Congressman Murtha, the latest poll shows—it's unbelievable. Even in Indonesia, where we were way up there, we've slipped, even after what we did for them.

So, I would say that your plan makes us stronger, gets us ready for everything that's to come, stops fueling al-Qaeda, stops fueling the insurgency, and, if we do this right, we can still have a rapid-reaction force to go where we need to go, especially if things get out of hand, which you talked to Senator Vitter about.

So, I think—you know, I look at where we are. Thirty-five percent of the military now supports the President. I think that's shocking. The people don't support this war, which I think—Speaker Gingrich, I didn't hear you make the point, but I think one of the things we did learn after Vietnam is that the people have to be behind it. You can't—you can't—this is not a dictatorship, this is a democracy. People's voices have to be heard.

But I think what you have put before us is the best. And I just—I'd like to just close, asking you one quick question, Congressman, about this surge. According to the Baltimore Sun, 21,500 troops, who will be ordered into this escalation strategy, will not have access to specialized blast-resistant armored vehicles, because they're in such short supply. The Sun also reports the Army is 22-percent short of the armored Humvees it needs in Iraq for the troops currently there. I want to know if you agree with this assessment and if you have looked into what we're going to do about sufficient equipment if we do not succeed in stopping this surge.

Mr. MURTHA. We're looking into, right now, whether those figures are accurate.

Senator BOXER. OK.

Mr. MURTHA. We don't know, and we'll find out. You remember, we sent troops in, the first time, 44,000 of them didn't have adequate armor, Humvees weren't armored, all kinds of problems. So, we're looking into that. We're going to make sure that we point out whether that's true or not. I just don't know whether it's true or not.

Senator BOXER. Well I would really appreciate it if you would keep in touch with us——

Mr. MURTHA. Yeah.

Senator BOXER [continuing]. And let us know the fruits of your research.

And I just want to say, there's 5 minutes left in the vote. We have made the most of every minute of your time. Speaker Gingrich, Congressman Murtha—Chairman Murtha—we're just honored that you've spent so much time with us, and I think this has been very productive.

And the hearing stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:58 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

RECONSTRUCTION STRATEGY

THURSDAY, JANUARY 25, 2007 [A.M.]

U.S. SENATE,
FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:35 a.m., in room SH–216, Hart Senate Office Building, Hon. Joseph R. Biden, Jr. (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Biden, Feingold, Obama, Cardin, Webb, Lugar, Hagel, Coleman, Corker, Voinovich, Murkowski, Isakson, and Vitter.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR., U.S. SENATOR FROM DELAWARE

The CHAIRMAN. The hearing will come to order.

I apologize to my colleagues, as well as the witnesses and the press for starting a few minutes late. Since I commute every day on Amtrak from Wilmington, DE, as my colleagues—especially Senator Lugar, after the last three decades—used to say, "Well, the train was late." Well, the truth of the matter was, I stayed down here last night, and I was late. But I do apologize, it's not Amtrak's fault this time.

Ladies and gentlemen, let me begin by saying to my committee members that, regardless of the outcome of the vote we had yesterday on the resolution, I want to say how proud I was to be a member of this committee. The way in which my colleagues on both sides of the aisle were so articulate in expressing their concerns I think was truly impressive.

And, one of the things that the chairman and I have talked about in the different contexts over the years is that, what happens here, more and more because of the rush of business regarding who is in charge on the floor, and the like, we don't have much real live interaction with one another on the floor, or in the committee.

And I was enlightened yesterday, and I really mean it—I don't want to hurt anybody's reputation, but I was really impressed with Senator Murkowski. I was impressed with Senator Cardin, I was impressed with all of you, the way you articulated your positions. And I hope that doesn't sound gratuitous, but I genuinely mean it. I was proud of the committee. And I want to thank you.

And that is not self-congratulatory. The only guy who wasn't so good yesterday was me. You all were really impressive, and I appreciate it. Hopefully we can continue in the same spirit this has started, and I'm confident we can.

Today we're going to wind down the third week of intensive hearings—intensive, that's a self-serving, self-descriptive adjective—but the serious hearings we've had here on Iraq, and continuing the pattern set by Chairman Lugar.

This morning, we're going to hear from the administration about its reconstruction strategy in Iraq. We go back in this committee to hearing about reconstruction, legitimately, back to the first "$87 billion vote" on reconstruction. It's been a long haul. It's been a tough road, and there were a lot of obstacles put in the way of this effort on the ground.

This afternoon, we're going to hear from experts on Iraq's internal political dynamics, and appearing before the committee now, Ambassador David Satterfield, Senior Advisor to the Secretary of State, and Coordinator for Iraq at the U.S. Department of State. A man that I've come to respect and know, and I'm delighted he's here.

And BG Michael D. Jones, the Deputy Director for Middle East Political-Military Affairs of the J–5 on the Joint Chiefs of Staff, probably the toughest staff job on the joint chiefs, and we're delighted he's here. Both men have long, distinguished careers, but most importantly, they have both also spent a lot of time on the ground in Iraq, which is a different dynamic.

Ambassador Satterfield served for more than a year as Deputy Chief of Mission in Baghdad. We crossed paths, I think, three times, during his tenure in Iraq. And he was always, always straightforward and helpful and informative to the delegations that I was a part of.

From June 2003 until March 2005, General Jones served as the Assistant Division Commander for the 1st Cavalry. I think he may not remember, but when General Chiarelli gave us that first briefing, I think he was—I may be mistaken, General, but I think you were an integral part of that. And I was impressed then, and came away convinced that if—it's a heck of a thing to say—if the military had more leeway in terms of those funds, we might have gotten even further. But you guys did a great job with what you were given.

General, I'd like to offer you, as I said, a special word of appreciation for your willingness to appear before the committee on such short notice.

General JONES. I'm honored, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. In light of that, we understand that you didn't have time to prepare a detailed witness statement, and if you get questions today that you would rather answer in writing, that's fine too. We're just trying to get the facts as best we can.

To this point, we have not been successful in our mutual desire—and in some cases Herculean efforts—to rebuild Iraq as we had hoped we could. Three and a half years ago, we held a similar hearing to this one. Ambassador Paul Bremer sat where you are sitting now and told us about the administration's need for an $18.4 billion in reconstruction money.

Here's what he said; he said, "We have a plan, with milestones, dates, and benchmarks. No one part of this $87 billion supplemental is dispensable, and no part is more important than any other. This is a carefully considered, integrated request. This re-

quest is urgent. The urgency of military operations is self-evident. The funds for nonmilitary action in Iraq are equally urgent. The link to the safety of our troops is indirect, but no less real."

Mr. Ambassador, General—$14.7 billion of that integrated $18.4 billion strategy that Ambassador Bremer presented has now been distributed. And, as you know better than I do, the results aren't pretty.

Let me just cite two examples: Before the war began, Iraq pumped an average of 2.5 million barrels of oil per day. The administration's initial goal was 3 million barrels per day, later reduced to 2.5 million barrels per day. Three and a half years later, we have never met this reduced goal, to the best of our knowledge. The average crude oil production last week was only 1.7 million barrels per day, a third less than the prewar levels.

Of this total, according to an article in yesterday's Washington Post, 200,000 barrels are siphoned off and smuggled out of Iraq, with much of the proceeds ending up fueling Iraqi violence.

Before the war began, Iraq's electricity production was about 4,000 megawatt/hours. Ambassador Bremer warned the committee, unless Congress quickly approved the administration's reconstruction proposal, and I quote, "Iraqis face an indefinite period of blackouts, 8 hours per day." The goal was to raise that level to 6,000 megawatts by July 2004. This month's electric production is averaged 3,600 megawatts, below prewar levels. Last week, the average Baghdadi only had 4.4 hours of electricity a day, and the average Iraqi had an average of 7.7 hours of electricity a day. At this point, the 8 hours of daily blackouts that Ambassador Bremer warned about would be a dramatic step in the right direction.

The reconstruction efforts have not been a total failure, I might add. The administration is moving toward small-bore reconstruction projects. I can remember, and I think it, coincidentally, was the three of us sitting here in a row, who were in Baghdad shortly after the statue fell, and I think—I'll speak for myself—my recollection is that then, and subsequent to that, I made—and I think my colleagues did as well, but they speak for themselves—arguments that we should focus a lot more on small-bore projects, rather than mega-projects.

General Chiarelli, your former commander, that was one of his mantras. I remember him saying to us that, you know, we've got a tertiary sewage treatment plant that's being built that's going to cost X hundreds of million or billion dollars, it's going to take Y years, he said, "Just give me some PVC pipe, let me hook it into the back of these homes," and he showed us your Humvees going through, in Sadr City going through—up to their hubcaps, you may remember, I know you know this better than I do—up to their hubcaps in raw sewage. Literally, stepping off the front porch of homes. And then he showed us 12 and 15 feet of piles of garbage that were unable to be collected. And he said, "Let me drain that swamp, let me—I know it's not environmentally sound, but it's urgent—let me put some PVC pipe in the back of the homes, and get it to the Tigris River," and you know, he said, "I'll quiet this neighborhood, let me clean up this garbage."

So, the fact of the matter is that we're now moving to smaller bore projects that involve Iraqis in tribal areas, doing this stuff themselves, as I understand it.

A first, General, in my seven trips to Iraq, I've been—as I've said—highly impressed by the Commander's Emergency Response Program, which you will speak to. This program allows our soldiers to fund low-cost, commonsense projects, which can potentially produce big results, such as building wells, buying textbooks, or fixing up health clinics.

Second, the decision to focus on local capacity development with the Provincial Reconstruction Teams, I believe, still has some promise.

Third, the USAID Community Action Program—which partners with communities in determining their own needs, I think, has had impressive results. And I hope the program is going to continue.

I understand the President's going to ask for an additional—I don't know this for a fact—but an additional $1.2 billion in reconstruction funds for Iraq. Though, in principle, I believe these programs are vitally important to our efforts in Iraq, I hope that we will hear today some concrete details of why these funds will achieve better results than we've been able to achieve before.

Gentlemen, I want to thank you for being here. You are in front of, not a hostile, but a friendly committee who wants very much to make this work, but some of us have become very skeptical of your capacity to organize this, and the capacity to actually implement it. At least, speaking for myself, and I think some of my colleagues. But again, welcome, and I now yield to Senator Lugar.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD G. LUGAR, U.S. SENATOR FROM INDIANA

Senator LUGAR. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I would echo your thoughts about the importance of our meeting yesterday, and the conduct of all members. That was at the highest level, I'm sure that will be true today.

Although, I would just say, at the outset, that my opening comments will echo, I suspect, in a bipartisan way, many of the thoughts that you have expressed so well.

Let me just reflect, that since the war in Iraq started, the United States has allocated more than $35 billion for reconstruction assistance. We have achieved some successes: Children are being immunized, the deepwater port near Basra has been rebuilt, and thousands of schools have been rehabilitated.

But overall, the results have been disappointing to the Iraqi people, to Congress, and to American taxpayers. Electricity remains in short supply, oil production is far below its potential, scores of health clinics remain unfinished, and most roads still need repair. The economy is encumbered by high unemployment, high inflation, widespread poverty—all of which contribute to conditions that intensify the insurgency.

I would just say the Minister of Industry of Iraq visited with us last week, estimated unemployment at 40 to 45 percent, described how difficult it is—even for Iraqis—to fix the grid system, given restrictions maybe they have imposed, or we have imposed.

The security situation, including deliberate sabotage, has played a major role in these failures. But so, too, has the inadequate performance by U.S. Government agencies, including poor planning, shifting priorities, insufficient integration of civilian and military activities, and uncertain lines of authority.

President Bush has said that as part of his decision to send more troops to Iraq, he will ask Congress for another $1.2 billion in reconstruction initiatives. This gives us a new opportunity to review the basis for the President's new request and we look forward to exploring how the new funds might help us reach our reconstruction goals, and what measures should be put in place to ensure that they will be spent effectively.

The President's proposed funding includes $350 million for the Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP), which has proven effective in the past. This program allows American military officers to distribute development grants at the local level. Another $400 million is designated for the civilian version of CERP. This funding must be accompanied by an effective sequencing plan, so that the benefits flow quickly to neighborhoods in the wake of any security progress made by United States or Iraqi forces.

Also, the President has suggested adding $414 million to nearly double the number of Provisional Reconstruction Teams that operate outside of Baghdad. This is designed to widen the effectiveness of these teams, which have seen mixed results to date, and have struggled to recruit qualified staff.

As we consider this reconstruction boost, Congress must know the administration's procedures for ensuring that funds are not stolen or siphoned off for other purposes. This plan must achieve a difficult balance between anticorruption measures, and excessive redtape. Reports indicate that bureaucratic obstacles and long delays have occurred because both Iraqi and American officials are afraid of being accused of corrupt practices. And this is one reason why, according to some news reports, Iraqis last year were able to utilize only about 20 percent of their $6 billion capital budget.

Oil production is at the heart of the Iraqi economic potential. Iraq is still pumping less oil than it did before the war. What is necessary to achieve an Iraq oil production? We surely must find this. And under the best-case scenarios, how soon can we expect a significant increase in oil revenue for the Iraqi Government? When is it likely that the new Iraqi hydrocarbon law will take effect? What impact will the law have on oil production, and on foreign investment in the petroleum sector, absent any significant change in the security situation? Is there reason to believe that this law could improve the security situation by guaranteeing the Sunnis a portion of the oil revenue?

Finally, one must ask how President Bush's request fits into the larger picture of getting the Iraqi economy on its feet, which is the ultimate purpose of reconstruction. Is there a plan that will lead to a sustainable economic growth? To complement the proposed United States funds, Prime Minister Maliki has committed $10 billion of Iraqi funds for reconstruction, including a jobs program. Are these make-work jobs that will expire when the funds dry up? Or will they serve to prime the pump to create long-term employment? Is this Iraqi program well-coordinated with the United States ef-

forts? And is it dependent on Congress appropriating all of the funds the President will now request?

I welcome, as you do, Mr. Chairman, our distinguished panel, we look forward to our discussion with you today. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Gentlemen, the floor is yours.

STATEMENT OF HON. DAVID SATTERFIELD, SENIOR ADVISOR TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND COORDINATOR FOR IRAQ, DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON, DC

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Mr. Chairman, Senator Lugar, members of the committee, I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today. And I would like to talk about the reconstruction efforts that we are currently undertaking, as well as our plans for the future in the light of the President's strategy, enunciated on January 10. And I would ask concurrence in my more lengthy written remarks being entered into the record.

The CHAIRMAN. They will be placed in the record.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. On January 10, the President outlined the need for a new way forward in Iraq, and on January 11, Secretary Rice provided further detail on how we would be pursuing this strategy.

I'd like to reiterate briefly both the premise of the strategy she and the President outlined and then expand further. And in response to your specific questions during the course of the hearing today, on how we plan to bring our civilian resources into the fight.

There are five core principles underlying our strategy. First, the Government of Iraq is in the lead. It is not a question of putting them in the lead, or encouraging them to take the lead—it is a recognition of reality. They are responsible for their country, they are a sovereign government, and they have to act as such. Success will not, in Iraq, be dependent primarily on United States resolve and effort, however strong they are. It will depend on the commitment, the performance, the will, and the skill of the Iraqi Government.

Second, we will support the Government of Iraq's efforts to stabilize that country, to bolster their economy, to achieve national reconciliation. Here again, Iraqis are in the lead, but we recognize they require help in certain critical areas.

Third, we will decentralize; we will diversify our civilian presence and our civilian assistance to the Iraqi people. While we will continue to work closely with the central government in Baghdad—Baghdad is the center of gravity, both for governments, but also for the sectarian violence now affecting that country. But we also have to reach beyond the Green Zone. We have to reach to help local communities and leaders transition to self-sufficiency, and to encourage moderates throughout that country.

Fourth, we will channel our targeted assistance to those Iraqi leaders, regardless of party or sectarian affiliation, who reject violence and pursue their agendas through peaceful, democratic means. We must isolate extremists, we must help empower moderates throughout the country.

Finally, we will be engaging in reinvigorated regional diplomacy, beginning with the Secretary's recent trip to Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait, to try and strengthen support for the Government of

Iraq. Iraq cannot emerge from its current situation without the positive influence, without the positive role being played by its neighbors.

We're going to be applying these principles I've just articulated on three critical fronts: Security, economic, and political. All of which are inextricably tied to the others.

As you know, the President has decided to augment our force levels in Baghdad and Anbar by 21,500 forces. The mission of this enhanced force is to support Iraqi troops and commanders who are in the lead, to help clear and secure neighborhoods, protect the local population, provide essential services, and create conditions necessary to spur local economic development—the "build" part of Clear, Secure, Build.

The Department of State is contributing robustly to this effort, by expanding our present, very close coordination with our military counterparts in and outside of Baghdad, and with the Iraqi Government, to capitalize on expected security improvements by creating jobs and promoting economic revitalization. There has to be the fullest possible civil-military unity of effort, if we are to be successful. That is what our mission in Baghdad, that is what our missions at the existing PRTs, are committed to achieve.

But to help make this possible, we are immediately deploying greater resources alongside our military, first in Baghdad and Anbar province. The centerpiece of our efforts will be the expansion of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams, the PRTs, which will be doubled from a current number of 10 to 20. We will be adding more than 300 new civilian personnel, and will be expanding our PRTs in three phases.

The first phase is going to occur over the next 90 days and it will coincide with, and complement, our expanded military efforts. We hope to colocate nine new PRTs, six in Baghdad, three in Anbar, with the brigade combat teams engaged in security operations there.

Now, the Department of State will be recruiting and deploying senior-level team leaders for these new Provincial Reconstruction Teams. They will work closely with their brigade commander counterparts, to develop plans for that critical "build" part of Clear, Secure, Build. Well-qualified State Department officers have already stepped forward for these assignments.

The PRTs will target both civilian and military resources, including foreign assistance in the commanders emergency response program, against a common of a jointly developed strategic plan to sustain stability, promote economic growth, and foster Iraqi self-sufficiency where we have made security gains.

In the next two phases of our PRT expansion, we're going to be adding a new PRT in North Babil; we will augment our existing PRTs in the country with specialized technical personnel, such as irrigation specialists, veterinarians, and agricultural development experts based on local needs. And I want to talk a little bit here about how we developed our sense of what was needed, who was needed.

This didn't come from Washington. It was not a top-down process. It was developed from the ground up, in consultation between our brigade commanders, our existing PRT figures, through divi-

sional command, to Baghdad and then came back to here. This is a real-world, ground-based assessment of what is needed, province by province, area of operation by area of operation—it is designed to affect the greatest possible synergy between our military and our civilian experts.

The PRTs will have a role beyond simple development assistance. They will support local, moderate Iraqi leaders through targeted assistance such as microloans and grants to foster new businesses, create new jobs, and develop provincial capacity to govern in an effective, sustainable manner. We intend to complete all three phases of our PRT expansions by the end of this calendar year. Completion, I would note, though, is dependent both on funding levels and on circumstances on the ground.

And with respect to funding levels, I'd like to express a particular note about funding. While we are currently applying fiscal year 2006 funds to begin implementation of this new strategy, we will need additional funds very shortly. Under the continuing resolution, we are now requesting $538 million to avoid a shutdown of mission-critical programs—programs directly related to the "build" phase of Clear, Secure, and Build. Delaying funding of these programs until future budget requests would undermine our ability in a very real sense, to support our military counterparts and our Iraqi partners.

Now, those Iraqi partners must do their part, to invest in their country's own economic development, and follow through on our joint strategy.

The Government of Iraq, as the chairman noted, is committed to spending $10 billion to help create jobs, and to further national reconciliation. Serious progress has been made on the National Hydrocarbon Law, which we expect will be completed very shortly, and then submitted to the Council of Representatives.

The Council of Representatives has taken the first steps toward holding provincial elections, and drafting de-Baathification reform legislation. They have also agreed to an impressive set of very far-reaching and comprehensive economic reforms, as part of the International Compact with Iraq. We expect that compact to be completed formally in the coming few weeks.

The most pressing challenge facing Iraqis on the fiscal side, however, is budget execution. Simply put, the Government of Iraq has available assets—the product of last year's and previous year's underspent budgets, and profits from higher-than-anticipated oil prices. But they do not have the mechanisms to spend those funds, especially with the speed necessary for post-kinetic stabilization in Baghdad and Anbar. Iraq must develop the means to put its money to use, both for short-term build efforts, and longer term capital investment.

To help the Iraqi Government face this challenge and take responsibility for its own economic future, Secretary Rice has appointed Ambassador Tim Carney as her new coordinator for Economic Transition. Ambassador Carney will head to Embassy Baghdad in the days ahead, to help the Government of Iraq meet its financial responsibilities, especially on budget execution, job creation, and capital investment projects.

A note about the environment which Iraq faces, we face, in the region as a whole. Iraq doesn't exist in isolation from its neighbors. It will require the help and support of the region to have a stable, prosperous, and peaceful future. While we are working with our partners in the region to strengthen peace, two governments—Syria and Iran—have chosen to align themselves with the forces of violent extremism in Iraq and elsewhere. The problem is not a lack of dialog, but a lack of positive action by those states.

As you know, Secretary Rice recently returned from travel to Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait, to urge support for the Government of Iraq and for our new strategy. Her interlocutors expressed their very strong concern over the growth of negative Iranian influence in Iraq, and al-Qaeda terror. At the same time, they made equally clear their concern that the current Iraqi Government was acting in a manner that reflected a sectarian, rather than a national, agenda.

We understand these concerns. We believe the Iraqi Government understands them as well. Prime Minister Maliki and his government have pledged not to tolerate any act of violence from any community or group. That means that all those engaged in killing, and intimidation—whether Shia or Sunni—need to be confronted. We have already begun to see positive steps taken by the Iraqi authorities in this regard. Notably, Iraqi security forces in recent weeks have detained more than 600 Jaysh al-Mahdi fighters. They are currently in detention, including over a dozen senior leaders, responsible for organizing and ordering sectarian attacks against innocent Sunnis.

Iraqi forces are operating in all areas of Baghdad, including Sadr City. We will need to see more sustained, robust action in the weeks and months ahead. And in this regard, Prime Minister Maliki delivered a speech this morning to the Council of Representatives in Baghdad in which he stated his support—strong political support—and that of his government, for the security efforts being undertaken in the joint security plan now unfolding in Baghdad. He noted that there would be no quarter for any involved in violence against civilians, that there would be no immunities granted to Sunni or Shia mosques, that all those engaged in killing would be confronted and would be stopped. This is a very positive step.

Only through fact on the ground—tangible evidence of action against all those pursuing violence—can the Government of Iraq establish the credibility at home, abroad, and here in the United States that it needs to charter a successful future.

The President's strategy is intended to lower the level of sectarian violence, and to ensure that Iraq's political center has the space it needs to negotiate lasting political accommodations through Iraq's new, democratic institutions. But, ultimately, Iraqis must make the difficult decisions that are essential to the success that is so critical for Iraq and the United States. We know there are no silver bullets, no guarantees regarding the question of Iraq. We know that most Americans are deeply concerned about the prospects for success there. But the situation now in Iraq, and the stakes for the United States, the region, and the international community are extraordinary. We believe that the strategy the Presi-

dent, after deep reflection and consultation, has outlined, is the best approach possible to serve our vital national interests.

We ask for your support and time for this new course to work. I thank you very much, and look forward to your questions.

[Prepared statement of Ambassador Satterfield follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF AMBASSADOR DAVID M. SATTERFIELD, SENIOR ADVISOR TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND COORDINATOR FOR IRAQ, DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Lugar, members of the committee, ladies and gentlemen, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss implementation of the President's new strategy for Iraq, to review what we have achieved with the foreign assistance Congress has provided and to highlight the steps we have taken to improve its administration.

NEW WAY FORWARD

On January 10 the President outlined the need for a New Way Forward in Iraq. On January 11, Secretary Rice provided further detail on how specifically we will pursue our new strategy. I would like to reiterate briefly both the premise of the strategy she and the President outlined and then expand further on how we plan, specifically, to bring our civilian resources to the fight.

There are five core principles underlying our strategy.

First, the Government of Iraq is in the lead. Success will not be dependent primarily on U.S. resolve and effort, but on the commitment and performance of the Iraqi Government.

Second, we will support the Government of Iraq's efforts to stabilize the country, bolster the economy, and achieve national reconciliation. The Iraqis are in the lead, but they require our help in certain critical areas.

Third, we will decentralize and diversify our civilian presence and assistance to the Iraqi people. While we will continue to work closely with the central government in Baghdad, we must reach beyond the Green Zone to help local communities' and leaders' transition to self-sufficiency.

Fourth, we will channel targeted assistance to those Iraqi leaders regardless of party or sectarian affiliation who reject violence and pursue their agendas through peaceful, democratic means. We must isolate extremists and help empower moderates throughout the country.

Fifth, we will engage in reinvigorated regional diplomacy to try and strengthen support for the Government of Iraq. Iraq cannot emerge from its current predicament without the positive influence of its neighbors.

We will apply these principles on three critical fronts—security, economic, and political—all of which are inextricably linked to the others.

IMPLEMENTATION

As you know, the President has decided to augment our own troop levels in Baghdad and Anbar by 21,500. The mission of this enhanced force is to support Iraqi troops and commanders, who are now in the lead, to help clear and secure neighborhoods, protect the local population, provide essential services, and create conditions necessary to spur local economic development.

The Department of State is contributing robustly to this effort by expanding our present close coordination with our military counterparts in and outside of Baghdad, as well as with the Iraqi Government, to capitalize on security improvements by creating jobs and promoting economic revitalization. There must be the fullest possible civilian-military unity of effort if we are to be successful.

To that end, we will immediately begin deploying greater resources alongside our military in Baghdad and Anbar. The centerpiece of this effort will be our expansion of our Provincial Reconstruction Teams. We will double our PRTs from 10 to 20, adding more than 300 new personnel. We will expand our PRTs in three phases with the first phase occurring over the next 3 months to complement our enhanced military efforts. In that time, we plan to colocate nine new PRTs—six in Baghdad and three in Anbar—with brigade combat teams engaged in security operations.

The Department will recruit and deploy senior-level team leaders for these 9 new PRTs who will work jointly with brigade commanders to develop plans for the "build" phase of Clear, Hold, and Build. Well-qualified officers have already stepped forward for these assignments. These PRTs will also include USAID development advisors, as well as civil affairs officers and bilingual advisors from the Department

of Defense. Although State will have the lead in recruiting and hiring staff, full interagency support and robust interagency contributions will be necessary to deploy the new staff to Iraq as quickly as possible.

PRTs will target both civilian and military resources, including foreign assistance and the Commanders' Emergency Response Program, against a common strategic plan to sustain stability, promote economic growth, and foster Iraqi self-sufficiency where we have made security gains.

In the next two phases of our PRT expansion, we will add a new PRT in North Babil and augment our existing PRTs with specialized technical personnel, such as irrigation specialists, veterinarians, and agribusiness development experts, based on local provincial needs.

PRTs will support local moderate Iraqi leaders through targeted assistance (e.g., microloans, vocational education, and grants) to foster new businesses, create jobs, and develop provincial capacity to govern in an effective and sustainable way. PRTs will continue to play a leading role in coordinating several U.S. programs funded by the Congress, including Iraqi Provincial Reconstruction Development Councils (PRDC) and USAID's local governance, community stabilization, and community action programs.

We intend to complete all three phases of our PRT expansion by the end of the calendar year. Completion, however, will be dependent both on the level of funding appropriated in the FY07 supplemental (and its timing) and circumstances on the ground in Iraq.

IRAQI EFFORTS

The Iraqi Government must also do its part to invest in its own economic development and to follow through on our joint strategy. The Government of Iraq is committed to spending $10 billion to help create jobs, to remove impediments to economic growth, and to further national reconciliation. Serious progress has been made on the vital national hydrocarbon law, which we expect will be completed very shortly and then submitted to the Council of Representatives. The Council of Representatives has taken the first steps toward holding provincial elections—essential to ensuring full participation in local governance by all of Iraq's communities—and drafting de-Baathification reform legislation. They have also agreed to an impressive set of far-reaching and comprehensive economic reforms as part of the International Compact with Iraq. We expect the compact to be completed formally in the coming weeks.

The most pressing funding challenge facing Iraqis is budget execution. Simply put, the Government of Iraq has available assets, the product of last year's underspent budget and profits from higher than anticipated oil prices, but they do not have the mechanisms to spend them—especially when money must move rapidly, as is the case with post-military action stabilization in Baghdad and Anbar. Iraq must develop the means to put its money to use, both for short-term "build" efforts and longer term capital investment.

To help the Iraqi Government improve budget execution and take on more responsibility for Iraq's own economic future, Secretary Rice has appointed Ambassador Tim Carney as her new Coordinator for Economic Transition. Ambassador Carney will head to Embassy Baghdad in the days ahead to help the Government of Iraq meet its financial responsibilities, specifically on budget execution, job creation, and capital investment projects.

REGIONAL DIPLOMACY

Iraq does not exist in isolation from the region. It will require the help and support of its neighbors to have a stable, prosperous, and peaceful future. As you know, Secretary Rice recently returned from travel to Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait—where she met with the Foreign Ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) plus Egypt and Jordan to urge support for the Government of Iraq and the President's new strategy. Her interlocutors expressed their strong concern over the growth of negative Iranian involvement in Iraq and al-Qaeda terror. At the same time, they made clear their concern that the current Iraqi Government was acting in a manner that reflected a sectarian rather than national agenda.

We understand these concerns, and we believe the Iraqi Government understands as well. Prime Minister Maliki and his government have pledged not to tolerate any act of violence from any community or group. That means that all those engaged in killing and intimidation, whether Shia or Sunni, need to be confronted.

We have already begun to see some positive steps taken by the Iraqi authorities on this front. Notably, Iraqi security forces in recent weeks have detained more than 400 JAM fighters, including some high-level leaders responsible for ordering sec-

tarian attacks against Sunni innocents. Iraqi forces have operated in all areas, including Sadr City. However, we will need to continue to see more sustained robust action in the weeks and months ahead.

Only through new facts on the ground—tangible evidence of action against all those who pursue violence—can the Government of Iraq establish the credibility at home and abroad that it needs to chart a successful future.

While we are working with our partners in the region to strengthen peace, two governments—Syria and Iran—have chosen to align themselves with the forces of violent extremism in Iraq and elsewhere. The problem is not a lack of dialog, but a lack of action by those states. As the President and Secretary Rice have stated, we will continue, in particular, to work with the Iraqis and those who support peace and stability in the region, using all our power to limit and counter the activities of Iranian agents who are attacking our people and innocent civilians in Iraq.

SUPPORTING PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEMOCRACY WITH THE IRAQ RELIEF AND RECONSTRUCTION FUND (IRRF)

While our focus is on the way forward, we are also determined to manage, as effectively as possible, the remaining funds for Iraq reconstruction.

In fiscal years 2003–04, we received $20.9 billion in the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund (IRRF). This funding was intended to kick start the Iraqi economy, and focused primarily on helping to reestablish the Iraqi security forces and police; restore essential services like water, electricity, and oil; and improve health and education. Despite challenges, including insurgent attacks, IRRF projects have made significant improvements in Iraq. We have increased access to clean water for 4.2 million Iraqis and to sewerage for 5.1 million; installed, rehabilitated, or maintained 2,700 MW of electricity; and helped Iraq increase oil production over prewar levels. Democracy programs also helped Iraq hold three elections and provided advisers to support the drafting of the constitution.

We have obligated 98 percent, or $18.08 billion of IRRF II, and, as of January 9, have disbursed $14.7 billion (79.9 percent). The remaining funds under IRRF II are "expired," and will be used to cover any unanticipated increases in costs in ongoing projects. We expect to complete most ongoing IRRF II projects during the course of 2007.

We have made significant improvements in essential services available to the people of Iraq, of which U.S. taxpayers and the Congress can be proud. But we know that not every project has progressed as we would have wished. Some projects have deservedly attracted attention, including from the Congress and from Special Inspector General for Iraq (SIGIR), with whom we work very closely. In all such cases, we have taken action to get them moving back in the right direction and have moved over the past 18 months to put in place management oversight structures to help ensure that similar problems do not occur.

SUPPORTING IRAQ'S TRANSITION TO SELF-SUFFICIENCY WITH THE FY06 SUPPLEMENTAL AND FY07 BUDGET REQUEST

We carefully designed the FY06 supplemental and the FY07 budgets as two parts of a coordinated whole. The FY06 supplemental was designed to be integrated with the military's counterinsurgency operations, recognizing that economic development cannot take place without a secure environment, and that better economic and political prospects would undermine the recruiting efforts of the insurgency. The FY06 supplemental addressed the urgent programs needed to support military counterinsurgency programs, while the FY07 budget contained the programs needed to create and sustain economic, political, and rule-of-law improvements.

We received $61 million in the FY06 budget, and an additional $1.6 billion in the FY06 supplemental budget at the end of FY06. Of total funding in FY06 (base and supplemental), we have obligated $1.4 billion (86 percent) for programs in the security, economic, and political tracks of the President's strategy. Of this funding, more than $500 million is allocated to support programs coordinated by the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) to build the capacity of local and provincial governments to provide services for the Iraqi people. Over $300 million is being used for programs to enhance the rule of law; governance, civil society, and political party development; and Iraqi ministerial capacity. Other programs in the FY06 supplemental are also helping Iraq improve the protection of its critical oil and electricity infrastructure.

We directed the $771 million in the FY07 budget request to support a new phase of policy engagement with the first full-term Government of Iraq (GOI) on a range of programs, including rule of law, democracy, and economic reforms essential to Iraq's transition to self-reliance.

NEED FOR FY07 FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

While we are currently applying FY06 funds to begin implementation of our new strategy, we will need additional funds very soon. Under a continuing resolution (CR), we are now requesting $538 million to avoid a shutdown of mission critical programs for which we requested funding 11 months ago.

Delaying funding of these programs until future budget requests would undermine our ability to support our military counterparts and our Iraqi partners. Without funding for our PRT expansion and programs to support economic development and assistance to moderate Iraqi leaders, it will be difficult to achieve the unity of effort we need to be successful.

ACHIEVING SUCCESS

The Iraqi Government must meet the goal it has set for itself—establishing a democratic, unified, and secure Iraq. We believe the Iraqi Government understands very well the consequences of failing to make the tough decisions necessary to allow all Iraqis to live in peace and security. President Bush has been clear with Prime Minister Maliki on this, as have Secretary Rice and other senior officials. We expect the Prime Minister to follow through on the pledges he made to the President to take difficult decisions.

A political solution in Iraq is indeed critical to long-term success, but since al-Qaeda launched the Samarra attack a year ago, extremists and terrorists have been able to hold the political process hostage. The President's strategy is intended to lower the level of sectarian violence and to ensure that Iraq's political center has the space it needs to negotiate lasting political accommodations through Iraq's new democratic institutions.

The President has made clear to Prime Minister Maliki that America's commitment is not open-ended. The Government of Iraq must—with our help, but with their lead—articulate and achieve the political, security, and economic goals that are essential to the success that is so critical for Iraq and for the United States.

Thank you very much. I look forward to your questions and ideas.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

General.

STATEMENT OF BG MICHAEL D. JONES, USA, J–5 DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR POLITICAL-MILITARY AFFAIRS—MIDDLE EAST, JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF, WASHINGTON, DC

General JONES. Mr. Chairman, Senator Lugar, and members of the committee, I'm honored to be here. And, Mr. Chairman, I do vividly remember your visit to Baghdad and I just want to say—to all of the members of this committee—how grateful the military is for the numerous trips that you all have made to Iraq to listen to the commanders and the servicemembers on the ground about the situation there. It means a great deal.

And also, to thank you for your steadfast support of the men and women in uniform, and providing them the tools that they need to accomplish their mission. And I'd be remiss if I didn't also say, thank you for your support of our civilians who serve with us side-by-side and are exposed to the same dangers. So, thank you very much for your support, and I look forward to answering your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

We'll begin with 8-minute rounds of questioning, if that's all right with my colleagues.

Let me, Mr. Secretary, begin with one of the things that I still find factually conflicting, and I don't know who's correct. You quoted, and it's been quoted repeatedly in the last week or so, that to demonstrate that the Prime Minister is going to be even-handed in dealing with the bad guys, that I think you said 600 and some members of the Mahdi Militia have been arrested.

Now, Sadr, when confronted with these numbers, indicated that it was really 425 that had been arrested, and of that 425, 96 had been arrested in 2006, and the remainder had been arrested in 2004, after the uprising in Najaf. So, for a point of clarification, if you know, and if you don't, submit it for the record—how many of these 600 and some Mahdi Militia have been arrested in the last 2 months, or thereabouts?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Mr. Chairman, there are some 600 Jaysh al-Mahdi figures currently in coalition custody as a result of joint Iraqi-United States operations. I will get back to you with the details on the timing of their detention. What I can tell you is that a very significant portion of those 600 were detained in operations that have been undertaken over the course of the recent past.

The CHAIRMAN. Recent past meaning weeks? Or years?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Recent past meaning weeks.

The CHAIRMAN. Well that would be——

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. I'll get you the numbers, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. That'd be very useful, because, as you know, that matters, because a lot of us have seen—have thought we have seen an erosion of the willingness of the government to deal with Sadr—as a matter of fact, it seemed to me in 2004 there was a greater willingness to deal with him than there was in 2005, than there was in 2006, and the question is: "What about 2007?" Anyway, that was the first question.

[The information supplied by the State Department follows:]

As Vice President Cheney said on January 28, Iraqi forces have rounded up as many as 600 members of the Jaysh al-Mahdi in the last couple of weeks. This number is changing due to ongoing operations. For the most current figures, we recommend you contact the Department of Defense.

Second, the supplemental that is being requested, $238 million—how much of that supplemental, if you know, will go to private security for contracts, and how much of that is actually going for specific reconstruction projects? In other words, labor costs and material, versus private—and I'm not suggesting there's anything wrong or nefarious about hiring private security contractors—but as we know, as your office has reported to us over the last year—a significant portion of the reconstruction money has not gone to physical bricks and mortars and paying employees, but it's gone to private security forces. Can you give us some sense, of the supplemental, what portion of that is really going to security, as opposed to bricks, mortar, and labor costs?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Certainly, Mr. Chairman, we will get you those specific breakdowns.

[The information submitted by the State Department follows:]

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, DC, February 1, 2007.

Hon. JOSEPH R. BIDEN, Jr.,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: In response to your question to Ambassador David Satterfield during his testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on January 25, we would like to provide you with the following information.

You asked about project security costs. Under the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund (IRRF), security costs represent 16–22 percent of the overall cost of major

infrastructure reconstruction projects in Iraq. For nonconstruction projects such as national capacity development or policy reform, USAID's security costs represent 18–22 percent of overall costs, but can be as low as 4–5 percent. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers estimates that security costs are only 5–10 percent for nonconstruction projects, such as infrastructure sustainment or technical training.

Please note that we do not plan to use the FY06 Supplemental funds for new, large-scale infrastructure construction. Therefore, given the current security environment, we expect that the great majority of funding (80–90 percent) will be used for direct costs and project management costs, and the remainder for security costs.

The President's forthcoming foreign assistance requests are also a critical part of our strategy to assist Iraq's transition to self-reliance, providing crucial support for programs in democracy, economic growth, community stabilization, rule of law, and other critical areas. We look forward to working with the committee to answer any questions you may have on this or any other matter.

Sincerely,

JEFFREY T. BERGNER,
Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs.

The CHAIRMAN. Third, are you able to report to us at this time what progress is actually being made on de-Baathification? Again, I have vivid memory of my second trip, and being with Ambassador Bremer, and him very proudly announcing to our collective surprise that we were going to shut down all of the government-run factories, and some of us pointed out that this wasn't Poland, and Jeffrey Sachs wasn't the economist running the show, and second, that there was basically total de-Baathification, including teachers and anyone that had ever belonged to the party. And a number of us in this committee, including the chairman, thought that was maybe not the smartest thing to do, and so we've been trying to climb back out of that hole.

But then again, we've had our great ally in charge of de-Baathification, the man who gave us all of the inside intelligence as to what we're going to find in Iraq—Ahmed Chalabi. Is he still in charge of de-Baathification? And has he—as they say in the southern part of my State, has the boy had an alter call? Has he figured out anything?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Mr. Chairman, de-Baathification reform is a critical element in any meaningful national reconciliation. The effect of how de-Baathification has been applied is to exclude from participation in national life, large classes of Iraqis who have no individual criminality associated with them. They need to come back into national life, for a number of different reasons related to the future of that country.

The CHAIRMAN. That's a welcome change in our policy, it's been changed for awhile.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Yes; it has.

The CHAIRMAN. Now, can you tell me what progress—you said, I don't want to put words in your mouth, I got the impression you were optimistic about reforms that were going to take place within the present unity government to deal with de-Baathification in the sense that—say, commonsense terms, more folks will be brought in out of the cold. Can you tell us anything about that progress?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Yes; I can Mr. Chairman. The Parliament is responsible, the Council of Representatives, for de-Baathification. Ahmed Chalabi is indeed in charge of the committee responsible for this program. The initial outlinings of the reforms proposed, frankly, are not adequate to meet the needs of meaningful national reconciliation—they need to be changed. We

have had very direct conversations with Mr. Chalabi and others on this issue; the Prime Minister has articulated publicly a very expansive intent with respect to de-Baathification reform, but that expansive intent needs to be translated from rhetoric into reality and it needs to happen soon.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, if it goes through Chalabi, it will be a cold day in Hades before I have confidence in anything he undertakes. Just for the record—I want to emphasize it, I can't emphasize it enough—I have zero, zero, zero confidence in anything Mr. Chalabi undertakes, just to be on the record. I find him to be a duplicitous individual. And I have no faith, and I think he's one of our giant problems, and continues to be. But as you can see, I have no strong feelings about it.

Senator HAGEL. Mr. Chairman, if I may, I might add my absolute agreement, and would the record show that I support everything you've said. I find it astounding. I find it astounding—it's not my time to question—that this man is still on the American payroll. You might, when I get my chance to question, recite Mr. Chalabi's record on behalf of this country.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Mr. Chairman, if I could just——

Senator HAGEL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, it's your question.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD [continuing]. Comment. Ahmed Chalabi is not on the American payroll.

The CHAIRMAN. That's good news.

Senator HAGEL. No; that's a question, but what I'm saying is, when I have my opportunity to question you, Mr. Ambassador, I would like a reflection of his record, on our payroll, all the money we've given him, what he did to us, the bad information, the mischaracterization of what was going on—I'll ask that for the record, but you might want to be thinking about that, as well as you, General, if you can offer anything. Thank you very much, I'm sorry that——

The CHAIRMAN. No; that's OK. We have a small enough group here that I don't mind at all any of this interchange.

I'll just conclude, though, by asking you, General. I wasn't being solicitous when I said, I have been so impressed—so incredibly impressed—with the talent of our uniformed military, working with the American civilians who—as you pointed out, are risking their lives.

I can remember my son, when he was in, as a civilian—he's now in the military—but a civilian working in Kosovo for the Justice Department, he was a representative for the U.S. Justice Department. And I remember him coming back, and the way he talked about the military and what they did. As a matter of fact, you guys were a bad influence on him. He got back and at 32 years old, he joined the military. He's now the attorney general of the State of Delaware, and he's joined the military. You guys. My wife will never forgive you for being so good.

But, my point is this, and I'm not joking about this—the efficacious way in which you have used the funds in what is—what's the term of art again? It slipped my mind, the fund available to the military for reconstruction?

General JONES. CERP funds, sir?

The CHAIRMAN. CERP funds. How much is plussed up on those funds? What portion of this supplemental, what portion of the billion, if it is—it might turn out to be $2 billion—are they in the same basket, or are they separate accounts? Can you tell us how that works?

General JONES. Sir, my understanding is that all of the CERP funds are out of the DOD portion of the supplemental, and they're designated as such.

The CHAIRMAN. So the $538 million supplemental would not cover any of the CERP funds?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Mr. Chairman, the $538 million is continuing resolution moneys.

The CHAIRMAN. No; I'm sorry, that's what I meant to say.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Under the supplemental, we will be requesting a significant amount of funding, which the Secretary will be enunciating when she comes up before the Congress shortly, for what amounts to a civilian CERP program, with a request for the kinds of authorities to spend those funds on the ground, as the military commanders now have.

We view the military CERP program as an outstanding success. We want to help augment, supplement, and expand along the purposes of the military CERP with a civilian CERP administered in large part, through the new PRTs, the existing PRTs, with their military columns. So, there will be a significant request coming.

The CHAIRMAN. I'm about 20 seconds over, if you'll indulge me for one more quick question. One of the things that all of us have talked about on this committee, and both parties, I think, is the need to get more talented civilians on the ground.

Under the leadership—and I'm not being solicitous here—sometimes, I think people think we're just being solicitous, saying nice things about this guy. Let me be precise—the chairman had hours and hours and hours of meetings with Democrats and Republicans, former high-ranking administration officials in previous administrations. The best that he could muster, and we agreed on, the most talented people we've worked with, I'd say, in the last I don't know how many years, and the idea the chairman had, and I hope you will expand on this, and I don't want to suggest what he should question, but I hope he talks about at some point, was the recognition that the missing ingredient—among other things—and such a massive undertaking as we did in Iraq, was to have a readily available cadre—essentially a civilian army—of people with real, genuine skills, interagency cooperation. As the retired generals before you went in said to us in our July 2002 hearings: Look, the problem we have with the proceedings in Iraq—of course this is before we went in—is that we need as many talented civilians, military police, civilian experts going in with the military to have any chance of making it work in Iraq.

And so the chairman came up with a very, very thoughtful proposal that we ended up getting into the State Department legislation. The President referenced it in the written document, and I guess, now that I say it, I'm a minute and 20 over—I'll withhold, because it will take awhile for you to answer that question. But I want to come back and have you speak, for the record, to what the President talked about. It comports with the legislation from the

Senator from Indiana, and I was happy to cosponsor, and put it forward. And what that means in terms of a reorganization, is that we have to have a different mindset about us when we project force into another country. That's a more complicated, longer subject, but the real quick question that relates to that is, you indicated that you were pleased that some talented State Department people have signed up to step into the breach and go into Iraq. From our discussions in Iraq, at the Embassy, inside the Green Zone—between you and me and others, I know firsthand that there are some very talented people at the State Department.

I asked the same question 6 months ago, about agriculture people, about Commerce Department people, about people who are in the public works side of this event. The agencies that are basically—according to General Chiarelli—incapable. A great line I heard from the General, "Senator, if you ever hear me criticize a bureaucrat again, pop me." There's no bureaucracy here.

And he gave an example about you guys going out and spraying the date palms because the Agriculture Department did not do it and the State Department wasn't particularly interested in it, other than letting them do it. So, my specific question, and I'll cease—is how many State Department personnel are we talking about that are going to be moving from the building in town to Baghdad to help implement this new or more informed reconstruction effort?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Mr. Chairman, the State Department currently has over 140 Foreign Service officers in Baghdad, over 50 in the existing PRTs—that's the largest presence of the Foreign Service in any country in the world.

The CHAIRMAN. Right, I know that.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. We have an additional large number of individuals contracted through the State Department who serve as full-time employees working with IRMO and other entities in the country. As a result of this surge, some dozen additional State Department officers will be heading the new PRTs; but the skill sets, of the over 300 civilians whom our brigade commanders, our own PRT staffs want out there, are not skill sets which one finds within, typically, the Department of State. They're camel vets——

The CHAIRMAN. Right.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD [continuing]. They're agricultural irrigation specialists. They are very highly——

The CHAIRMAN. Are they contractors, or are they out of the Department of Agriculture? Are they out of——

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, we are going to be working—and are working now—with the Department of Defense as well as with other agencies, including Agriculture, when identifying who and when bodies will be produced. I can tell you that for the initial surge, the majority of the individuals that we will be bringing in—let's look at the next 6 to 9 months, period—where we've got to get guys on the ground—will be coming out of Department of Defense resources. They can tap—they can move people with these skills.

The CHAIRMAN. Contractors? Contract personnel? That's not bad; I just want to understand what we're talking about here. I mean——

General JONES. Sir, I believe that between the two Secretaries what they've discussed are actually reservists who have skill sets which in our Reserve component——

The CHAIRMAN. That's what I thought.

General JONES. They're very talented.

The CHAIRMAN. So, you're talking a total of roughly a dozen State Department officers——

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. To head the PRTs.

The CHAIRMAN. Head the Department. OK; thank you. I've gone well over my time, 5 minutes, and I apologize.

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

I just wanted to carry on in that area, is that Senator Biden has generously referenced our meetings with people from various Departments. The total view was that in the old days we were not involved in "nation-building." And some people feel we should still not be involved, but we are, in fact, and we're talking about this very explicitly today. And in order to have the Civilian Reserve Corps that we need—whether lawyers, attorneys, economists, engineers, health workers, and so forth—this is going to require a lot of organization.

Now, we didn't raise the question of who does it. But, at some point—and I was intrigued, as Senator Biden was, when the President in his State of the Union Message mentioned this Civilian Reserve Corp. We are not asking you today to flesh this out, but it almost is as revolutionary as the year before when the President said we were addicted to Middle East oil. In other words, it was an extraordinary breakthrough.

Now, bureaucrats, or even the Secretaries may not understand what the President has in mind yet. I hope that they do. There is no possible way in which the United States can become successfully involved in one country after another, without having a huge number of people who are willing to serve in a Reserve capacity, willing to go when called, and who have skills.

When the three of us were in Baghdad at the time the chairman has referenced, fortunately, the security was better. We were venturing out into neighborhoods. We visited a neighborhood council meeting in which people raising concerns about what was going to happen in their schools, or what was going to happen in the neighborhood group, and so forth.

Now, unfortunately, in one of these meetings, there was a brilliant second lieutenant——

The CHAIRMAN. That's right, yeah.

Senator LUGAR [continuing]. Who was, really, serving almost like the superintendent of schools for this area. For that matter, he had legal training, he was able to advise these people, they had extraordinary confidence in him. And I thought, thank goodness, somehow or other, in the course of all of this, somebody like this arrived quite by chance as it was explained to us.

But we really cannot always guess that this will happen, and this, in fact, was an Army reservist as I—and he was going to be gone in 3 months, and so, you know, we're back to ground zero. And I just ask you not, today, to produce, in response to this question, all the explicit details, but please, you know, for the record, give us some idea of how serious the President's proposal is going

to be taken? The legislation we passed last year, in 2006, that several of us cosponsored, is there for the taking, and we'll have another go at it legislatively and hopefully see it pass the House this time around. But ultimately, someone in the administration has to act upon it—and really press the action.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator and Mr. Chairman, because you both referred to the same concept—this is an extraordinarily good idea; it's a very necessary thing. State Department Foreign Service officers are commissioned officers, the military are commissioned officers, we can order service. The Department of Agriculture doesn't have the ability to order its civilians to deploy to a combat zone. There needs to be a reserve of talented individuals in a database that can be tapped—not just for Iraq—but for other situations like this. And we very much want to move forward on this, it's very necessary.

And just a word on the date-palm spraying—this was an extraordinary example of civilian military coordination. The Iraqi agriculture authorities were unable in the end to organize themselves to obtain the necessary spraying equipment for this vital undertaking. Through close work with our military, the Corps, General Chiarelli, our Embassy in Maldova, I was directly involved in this—we mobilize the delivery of the helicopters necessary—but this was very much a State Department and military joint undertaking.

Senator LUGAR. Well, I'm—we congratulate you on that coordination.

Let me just say, getting back to the beginning of your statement as you talked about the $538 million and the continuing resolution to avoid the shutdown—quite apart from the additional moneys—what, I've found, at least in our oversight thus far, is that the State Department is not unique in this, but today I'll—since you're here, Secretary Satterfield, I would just say, there's never been very much explicit detail as to how many persons were going, what they were doing, and so forth.

In other words, we have on the one hand, now, a much more explicit detail in terms of the armed services, how many persons are going where, and almost detailing neighborhood by neighborhood—but when it comes to the civilian side, this has never been quite so explicit.

My general feeling is from the tenor of the conversation we had around the table yesterday, that this committee, maybe others, in terms of our oversight, are going to request frequently—if not weekly, biweekly—what's happening? In other words, this is not a situation now in which we go on from year to year and we take a look back a couple of years ago, and see how it all went. This is very much on the minds of the American people now. As to, physically, who gets there, and where they go and what they do. So I—once again, you cannot furnish a book today for us, but I'm really asking you to begin to prepare something that is much more detailed, in terms of the precise amounts of money. Otherwise, the $538 in the minds of many—hopefully not around this table, but elsewhere—will be lumped with the military, somewhere, as just additional funds. And, in fact, you've tried to give an explicit way in which these, other than military procedures, are going to

progress. And we're going to have to try segregate those in our minds, and the minds of press people who cover this and the audience that witnesses, because it's very important.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, I appreciate that point, and it's a very good one. And it is very germane to what we will be doing along with our military colleagues with this committee, and I think with others, here and in the House, over the time ahead.

There is a synergy between our request, and programs, and what the military is requesting and doing on the ground.

Senator LUGAR. Exactly.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. But, there is also a distinction. And we know that there is a requirement, that we not only explain heading in what we want these funds for and what they will do, but explain to you as time progresses what is happening on the ground. We are full scale and we do have a report on this, which we will look forward to discussing in great detail.

Senator LUGAR. That would be important, and there is a distinction between—they're all a part of a synergy, but nevertheless, we need to know the facts.

My office has been sending out the facts that you, or others, produce monthly to all of our colleagues. So, we know how many barrels of oil, how many kilowatts in Baghdad—we're trying to finally get down to the facts, as opposed to some generalization about the country. Having more details would be extremely important here.

Now, finally, let me just say, we like to know the facts about what Ambassador Tim Carney will actually do. Now, we want to know whether his role will be different, say, from the Office of Strategic Effects, the Reconstruction Management Office, the USAID Mission Director—in essence, there are people doing various things. And it does not occur to some of us what they do, either. But now that we're explicitly sending Ambassador Tim Carney, and I think that's a very important move. What is his authority? What will he do? Does he supervise the rest of this crew? Or, if not—try, if you can, in some additional testimony for the record, so that we have some idea of how to follow him. How oversight can occur with regard to this very important appointment.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Certainly, Senator, we will get back to you with more detailed commentary on Ambassador Carney and his role, but if I can, I can summarize it very shortly.

Ambassador Carney will be going out to oversee Iraqi performance and to help coordinate United States performance with all of the entities, all of the offices now responsible—IRMO, AID, our own economic section working closely with MNF–I and MNC–I on execution of the economic "build" part of the current security undertaking. This is not the job which existed before this surge; it is something very much related to making effective what Iraq has to bring to the fight, and coordinate what we are bringing to the fight. It is to bird-dog, if you want to use that term, Iraqi performance in a constant dialog. You need a dedicated person, a single person to be focused on that effort, and to have the resources and the data from our side, collectively, on what we're bringing in, to make sure the two work together. That, in a nutshell, will be Ambassador Carney's role.

Senator LUGAR. Will you be able to share his reports with us, in other words, as a part of this oversight, what he's going to be seeing, what you've just described he's going to be doing. It's tremendously important for all of us to know. Is there likely to be some reporting flow, in which you get information from the Ambassador and you can share that for us?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, he will be under Chief of Mission authority, reporting through the Deputy Chief of Mission and the Ambassador back to the Department of State, and we'd be delighted to keep you updated on the progress of those undertakings.

Senator LUGAR. Well, that would be great, hopefully whatever he has to say will not be muffled by the rest of this. In other words, we really want to know from somebody on the ground, what the Iraqis are doing, what they're contributing, the whole raft of questions, others will ask about that, but maybe Ambassador Carney can be illuminating.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, if I could just comment a moment longer on what you just raised—what's happening on the ground? What are Iraqis doing? And I'll be expansive in this response.

Whether it is on the security side, the political side, or the economic side, the American people—we in the Government—will demand an updating on what is actually happening. Are Iraqis doing what they need to do? They've got to be held to a standard, which is ultimately not ours. But the standard the Iraqi people demand. That information will be available, and it is something we will all be following very closely.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you very much, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Senator Obama.

Senator OBAMA. Let me defer to Senator Webb.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Webb.

Senator WEBB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First, Mr. Chairman, I ask you a question, I'm new to this committee, although I did work as a committee counsel for a number of years on the House side, and I'm curious about the general rules in the committee about when testimony is supposed to be submitted? Witness testimony?

The CHAIRMAN. Well, generally, I think it's 24 hours, 24 hours before. But, in the case of General Jones, I'm told we went to him, we got to him fairly late, is that correct?

Senator WEBB. Well, Ambassador, we got your testimony, I think, after 7 o'clock last night? That makes it very difficult for myself and my staff to prepare. And I hope that you can show us a greater courtesy in the future.

I'd like to first make a statement, a statement of strong concern here. I'm new to this committee, I'm not new to the issues, I spent 4 years on the Defense Resources Board, going through these kinds of programs. I'm a data guy, I intend to really develop some energy—devote some energy to these programs, not only the State Department side, but I'm on the Armed Services Committee as you know, and on the Department of Defense side.

The administration's Iraq construction programs have been plagued by miserable planning. Iraq is, obviously, not a safe or an easy place to work, but according to the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, as well as numerous public reports, this has been the most poorly managed reconstruction program in recent memory.

The inspector general has dozens of cases pending, regarding fraud and abuse. The worst blunders have been made by the CPA in the Department of Defense. I want you to know that I am not inclined to support any additional funding in this area without strong assurances that this sort of mismanagement has been alleviated.

I've got a number of reports that have been provided to me by staff, and by the way, this is not anecdotal, and I don't think it's below the belt to make that comment. Report after report, oil revenues are in the billions, but Iraq is failing to spend them—they don't know how to spend the money. I know this is a chaotic country, but I don't think that really answers the mail on this kind of stuff.

Idle contractors add millions to Iraq rebuilding. The highest proportion of overhead—and this is from the New York Times—overhead costs have consumed more than half of the budget of some of these reconstruction projects. The highest percentage was incurred in oil facility contracts—one by KBR, a Halliburton subsidiary which frequently has been challenged by Congress—more than half of their money is oversight, just housing people.

The United States has said to fail on tracking arms shipped to Iraqis. We don't know, in some cases, whether the weapons we are sending them are actually ending up in the hands of the insurgents.

I've got a Special Inspector General Report here on Iraq reconstruction—I'm sure you're aware of it, I intend to go through it in detail. I have a GAO study, and what I would like to ask of you, first of all, here, is that you can make yourselves available, and if you are otherwise occupied, key members of your staff. I would like to meet in other than a committee forum, and to talk with you about these issues.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, we are delighted to meet with you to discuss these issues. And we can certainly bring the staff that is necessary to——

Senator WEBB. I appreciate that.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD [continuing]. Explore in detail these reports.

Senator WEBB. When you address your fourth point in here, you say that you will target, or you will "channel targeted assistance to Iraqi leaders, regardless of party or sectarian affiliation who reject violence and pursue their agendas through peaceful, democratic means," how are you going to measure this? How are you going to quantify that?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. There's a very simple test: Are individuals engaged in violence as a pursuit of their political or individual ambitions? Or are they working through a political process?

Senator WEBB. Who makes that determination? Who's going to make that determination?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. It is the U.S. officials on the ground—civilian and military—in their direct contact on the ground who make that determination.

Senator WEBB. It's a fairly vague standard, wouldn't you agree?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. No; I think it's a very crisp standard. I think it is very clear who is engaged in violence, and who is engaged in the political process.

Senator WEBB. It's only clear if you have adequate intelligence.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. That's correct, Senator, and we do have intelligence.

Senator WEBB. I think we've pretty well demonstrated, throughout this war, that on the ground there is frequently inadequate intelligence.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, the purpose of the expansion of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams, the additional pairing with our brigade commanders, is to enhance our ability at a finer and finer level. To have a better sense——

Senator WEBB. I understand. I understand that.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD [continuing]. Of development on the ground——

Senator WEBB. I understand that.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD [continuing]. For exactly this reason.

Senator WEBB. I understand that, Ambassador. I understand that. These are judgments, though, right? These are going to be judgments by people on the ground?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. They are, of course, judgments by people on the ground.

Senator WEBB. OK. So, are you gonna let us know exactly what kind of standards are being used?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. We certainly can discuss with you the kinds of criteria, the kinds of information that we use in making these determinations.

Senator WEBB. You know, basically saying—and having been in that environment, in this environment, not only in the military, but as a journalist—including in Afghanistan in 2004, basically saying that someone has rejected violence, to me, is just a vague standard. We don't know—unless you can document that in some way—unless you have some assurance. You're going to be giving people money other than, sort of, some vague form of payola?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, we take very seriously, the issue of who U.S. funding——

Senator WEBB. I understand the intention, Ambassador.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. It is based upon a best and better assessment——

Senator WEBB. I understand the intention, and I agree with the intention. What I'm asking for is some assurance that, in carrying out that intention, there are measurable standards that we can apply with respect to intelligence.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. I can certainly give you that assurance.

Senator WEBB. OK. Can you tell us what percentage of the funding in these programs has gone to American companies?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. For the extended IRRF funds?

Senator WEBB. For the reconstruction programs.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. We can get you that information.

Senator WEBB. Particularly the construction programs.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. We can get you that information.

Senator WEBB. You don't know that at this moment?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. I don't have those numbers in front of me. What I can tell you is that the majority of the funds in the initial phases of execution went primarily to American and other multinational design/build companies. That has turned around, almost completely. The majority of that funding is now going over 80 percent to Iraqi firms. That is part of a fundamental reform, from the bottom up, of the reconstruction program undertaken over the last 18 months. It is a different program than the program that was initiated in 2006.

Senator WEBB. So, in terms of the funding that has been going forward from what point? Are they now principally Iraqi?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Particularly in the course of the last year, but really, the last 18 months, there has been a steady shift in funds away from the large design/build multinationals, including United States firms, to Iraqi contractors.

Senator WEBB. And so you can provide us the information in terms of the aggregate amounts, and then where your present contracts are?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. We can indeed, sir.

Senator WEBB. OK; I would like to see that.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. You will, sir.

Senator WEBB. And, again——

The CHAIRMAN. You will submit that for the record?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Certainly, sir.

[The information supplied by the State Department follows:]

U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT,
Washington, DC, March 16, 2007.

Hon. JIM WEBB,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR WEBB: In response to your question to Ambassador David Satterfield during his testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on January 27, we would like to provide you with the following additional information.

You asked for a breakout of reconstruction funds that have gone to American firms vs. local Iraqis. In our interim response we provided general information about the evolution of U.S. implementing agencies' contracting practices. We also undertook to investigate your question more thoroughly and to provide additional information.

From October 2003 to December 2005, an average of 5.4 percent of all USG-funded contracts was awarded to Iraqi contractors. However, in the last 6 months this average has increased to approximately 80 percent. This change reflects a major shift from large, multi-year contracts implemented by international firms, including U.S. and regional firms, to small contracts awarded to Iraqi firms.In addition, many international contractors, including U.S. firms, employ local staff to execute projects; this should be considered when evaluating where contract dollars are spent to benefit local employment.

Sincerely,

JEFFREY T. BERGNER,
Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs.

Senator WEBB. And I—as I said—I would reiterate my desire to be able to meet with you, or your key members in an, other than a committee setting, so that we can try to get into this data and

try to get a—from my perspective, being a new member on a committee, an examination of where this past money has gone.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Certainly, sir.

Senator WEBB. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator.

There is a vote on, and I'm happy to yield to the Senator from Tennessee. He'll have time to do his 8 minutes, and then what we'll do if, by that time, anyone is back from having voted, we'll just continue the hearing. If not, we'll recess very briefly.

I want to point out for the record that a number of Senators who couldn't be here today have expressed the desire to submit questions in writing, and so, with your permission, we will submit those to you.

And I hope that the response is quicker than—and I ask you to make it quicker—than those Senators submitted last July, which weren't received until December. So, we're not going to overburden you, but we expect you to answer them in 10 days or so. By the time we get the answers, they're almost no longer relevant.

And one last point before I yield is that, I'm going to enter into the record, there's two very distinguished people in our audience today—Paul and Rosemary, Paul Schroeder and Rosemary Palmer—who are parents of Marine LCpl Edward "Augie" Schroeder, who was killed on August 3, 2005, near Haditha. They formed an organization called Families for the Fallen for Change. It's a nonpartisan organization representing an awful lot of people.

And I'd like to submit, for the record, for the edification of all of you, the letter that they addressed to me, but it is, I think, worthy of every member on the committee having it available to them. And there's just one quote I'd like to read, "In our last conversation with Augie," that is their son, "In our last conversation with Augie, he said, 'Pop, the closer we get to leaving, it's clear this is less and less worth the cost.'" That's really the question I think we're all wrestling with here. Is it worth the cost?

Senator VOINOVICH. Senator, I'm really pleased that you're submitting the letter from these parents to the record. The Schroeders are from Ohio, I've met with them——

The CHAIRMAN. Oh, is that right? I apologize; I should have let you do that.

Senator VOINOVICH. I'm meeting with them today again, and they're very serious people, they're very concerned, and I think they've got some questions, it's constructive to hear from them.

The CHAIRMAN. They're here today, I'm corresponding with them, and I'm glad to hear you say that. We welcome them, and they have our deepest sympathy.

With that, let me yield now to my friend from Tennessee, and I'm going to go vote, and come back.

Senator CORKER. I'm going to let you're—I think we're under 6 minutes now on the vote, and I don't know if it's practical to actually——

The CHAIRMAN. All right. Well, as you all know, we never let the vote go off on time, but I think you're probably right. Maybe what we should do is recess, recall the chair, and when Senator Lugar gets back, or whomever gets back, we'll yield immediately to the

Senator from Tennessee, and so we'll temporarily recess. I thank the witnesses.

[Recess at 10:42 a.m.]

[Reconvened at 11:02 a.m.]

Senator LUGAR [presiding]. For the sake of continuity, the chairman has asked me to continue the meeting, and I'll recognize now Senator Hagel for his questions.

Senator HAGEL. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Gentlemen, thank you, for your time this morning, as well as your good work and your efforts on behalf of our country, and please, relay to your colleagues that we appreciate your efforts and your good work.

I wanted to go back, Mr. Ambassador, briefly to the point I made regarding the chairman's reference and question regarding Mr. Chalabi. I don't want to take any of my time dealing with Mr. Chalabi, but what I would request if you and General Jones could provide some history of Mr. Chalabi's relationship with this Government, with this country, including the contracts that our Government had with him, how much money he got per month, what was he required to do for that money, and some history of his record, involvement with the Iranians, and other pertinent issues that would be helpful to this committee, and I appreciate that very much. Both DOD and State Department, thank you.

[The information supplied by the State Department follows:]

In response to your question, we have reviewed this matter and have determined that the relationship between Dr. Chalabi and the U.S. Government was addressed in considerable detail by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (SSCI) in a report entitled "The Use by the Intelligence Community of Information Provided by the Iraqi National Congress," issued September 8, 2006, in both unclassified and classified versions. Specifically, section II of the report, entitled "Background on IC Relationships With the INC," contains a history of the U.S. Government's relationship with the INC and Dr. Chalabi, beginning in May 1991 through May 2004, when the Department of Defense announced a termination of its funding relationsip. As this is a report of the Senate Select Committee, I do not wish to comment on its overall findings. Nevertheless, the Department of State provided extensive information for that report and made numerous officials available for interview by the committee. except for some minor issues and omissions, we find this report, particularly the classified version, a factually accurate account of the USG's relationship with Dr. Chalabi.

Since the termination of the relationship with the DOD in 2004, the U.S. Government has maintained contacts with Dr. Chalabi, as we do with Iraqi officials and other influential members of Iraqi society. Dr. Chalabi was from 2005 to 2006 the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq and has been a member of the Higher National de-Baathification Commission from its inception to the present. Since 2004, however, Mr. Chalabi and the Iraqi National Congress have not received any direct or indirect funding from the U.S. Government.

We have coordinated this response with the Department of Defense, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the National Security Council staff.

[The information supplied by DOD follows:]

Elements of the USG maintained contacts with a wide variety of individuals and groups opposed to Saddam Hussein's regime prior to Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, including Dr. Chalabi and the Iraqi National Congress (INC). The Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) did not have a relationship with Dr. Chalabi personally, but rather with the INC, a coalition of Iraqi opposition parties in which Dr. Chalabi served as the chairman. DIA's routine points of contact with the INC in the United States were Mr. Intifadh Qanbar and Frances Brooke, the INC representatives in Washington. DIA maintained contact prior to the war and in Iraq with Mr. Arras Habib Kareem, Chief of Intelligence for the INC, in the INC offices in London and Baghdad. DIA was directed by the Department of Defense to establish an overt Information Collection Program with the INC, which began in October 2002 and

lasted until May 2004. Prior to October 2002, this program was managed by the Department of State.

DIA did not have any contracts with Dr. Chalabi and therefore he was not provided any funds. The INC was provided $350,000 each month to their INC bank account for operational expenses. They submitted a monthly voucher/expense report that was audited by the DIA Inspector General's office, and there were no findings.

(U) Like almost all groups opposed to Saddam Hussein's regime, Dr. Ahmad Chalabi dealt with the Iranians prior to operation IRAQI FREEDOM as a means to operating in Iraq and surviving Saddam's tyrannical regime. [Deleted]

Senator HAGEL. As I listened carefully, as I always do, Ambassador Satterfield, to what you have to say, you are one of our most respected and senior diplomats, and for those years of service, we appreciate it.

You talked, in your testimony, in fact it was a subheading, "Regional Diplomacy," and you went into a paragraph saying, "While we are working with our partners in the region to strengthen peace, two governments—Syria and Iran—have chosen to align themselves with the forces of violent extremism in Iraq and elsewhere. The problem is not a lack of dialog, but a lack of action by those states." My question is this: What new diplomatic U.S. initiatives are we putting forward in the region, as you have noted here, Regional Diplomacy, trying to build, focus on a regional strategic framework that would be, I hope, a rather significant part of what the President is talking about in his total package.

And, I would add to that, in way of addressing this, somewhat directly to you, General Jones, as General Petraeus assumes his new, critically important position in Iraq—and we all have the highest regard for General Petraeus—he, as you know, has recently finished rewriting our counterinsurgency field manual.

And, in that I have not read every page of it, I have read some of it, in that he notes that probably the most significant part of success in dealing with counterinsurgencies, is to have and employ a political strategy. In fact, I think he says something to the effect that it's almost more important than a military strategy.

So, with that added into the mix of my question, I would very much appreciate your thoughts, and if you could enlighten our committee on what new diplomatic efforts, regarding what you said here, the United States is taking, and General Jones, I'd like to hear from you on this, as well. Thank you very much.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Thank you, Senator.

Secretary Rice, commencing in September of the past year, has been working with our partners in the gulf, with Jordan and with Egypt to construct a new framework, we call it the GCC for Gulf Coordination Council, plus two—Jordan and Egypt—as a framework in which strategic issues can be discussed in a strategic frame, rather than purely in bilateral fashion.

The Secretary has had several meetings with the GCC-plus-two Foreign Ministers, most recently this past week in Kuwait. The topics discussed there were broad: Iraq, Iran—Iran, not just with respect to its threats to Iraqi security and stability, but also Iran in a broader regional context, the Palestinian-Israeli issue—and you know the Secretary had just been involved prior to her visit to Kuwait in rather intense diplomacy that established a meeting to take place between Prime Minister Olmert and President Abu Mazen—as well as the issues of Lebanon, broad discussion of how

those in the region who are committed to a political process can be strengthened, can be invigorated, against those radicals who are using violence; whether that violence is in Palestinian territories, in Lebanon, in Iraq, or elsewhere, to achieve their ends.

The GCC-plus-two is a very good format for this, because there's enormous receptivity to the strategic view of the region, rather than taking each issue independently. I said in my oral remarks, Iraq can't be considered in isolation from the region, Iran can't be considered solely as an Iraq-related issue, either. They need to be addressed comprehensively.

We are seeing progress made, this is the beginning, it's not the end, of a long process. But we have seen the beginning taken. But I will note again, with respect to Iraq, there is a significant impediment to moving forward in mobilization of real and effective support from the Gulf States for Iraq. And that is the perception that this government in Baghdad is not acting from national motivations, but indeed is pursuing a sectarian agenda.

This is a reality. Whatever one discusses on reality versus perceptions, it is what they see. And they need to change what they see. That is why it is so important for the Iraqi Government, and the conduct of the Baghdad Security Campaign, in the political initiatives which the government itself is committed to undertake, that it shows it is a national government, and is not operating from sectarian motives.

Senator, we can say—the Secretary, the President—all we want, to our colleagues in the gulf. But they're going to watch, and what they're going to pay attention to is what happens on the ground, in Baghdad and elsewhere. And this is a message we believe Prime Minister Maliki and the senior leaders around him understand as well.

Senator HAGEL. Well, let me follow up a little bit on what you've said. If I'm hearing this correctly then, what you're saying there is that there's not going to be a military solution to this, it's the Iraqi Government, representing the Iraqi people, representing the various sectarian factions that must come together to bring stability, security, and peace to their nation. Is that right?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, there is no question that the ultimate resolution in Iraq, on security as well as on other issues, has to be political. But there are real security deficits right now, because of the sectarian violence focused in Baghdad that are affecting the ability of Iraqis to move forward to that political solution.

Senator HAGEL. What are the regional partners doing in the way of, for example, the President laid out a plan to increase our troop levels—Americans—by 22,000, roughly. Tens of billions of dollars of new American taxpayers' money going in. What are we getting from our regional partners? For example, our coalition of the willing, and you, General, tell me this is not correct, the Ambassador certainly knows this one way or the other, but put it on the record. The British are pulling out their troops, most all of our allies have been there are withdrawing troops, or have gone.

I asked Secretary Rice when she was here a week and a half ago, who is putting more troops in, for example. Unless something's changed, no one is. Who is putting more billions of dollars in? Who

is putting more investment in? Who is doing more? If you'll answer that, I'd appreciate it, because I do not see, or have not been told that anybody is doing anything, other than United States putting more of its blood and treasure into Iraq. But yet, as you have just noted, Ambassador, this is Iraqi—this is an Iraqi issue that will be resolved by the Iraqis. I understand the security issue, and I don't think there's anybody who doesn't quite get that. But when we talk about regional diplomacy and regional issues, and working with our partners, what are our partners doing?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, and I'll defer to my colleague, General Jones, for specific commentary on the military side.

What we are doing is trying to mobilize on two different fronts. To mobilize both politically and in terms of meaningful economic support—primarily through debt forgiveness, but also private sector investment. Support, not just from the region, the primary debtholders we're talking about are in the gulf—but also from the broader international community, including Asia and the European Union.

The Iraqis have moved forward with a very bold, very progressive, economic statement of principles, much of which have already been implemented, or are being implemented, and deserve quite a bit of praise. But the ability to rally meaningful support in the face of these positive steps on macroeconomic issues by the Iraqis is colored by the security situation on the ground in Baghdad, and with respect to the Gulf States, by this perception of sectarian/vice-national agenda, and that needs to be addressed by Iraqis.

On the coalition side, the coalition remains intact. Our critical partners, the United Kingdom, which has indicated a desire over the course of the next several months to reduce force levels to, I believe, 4,500, but to keep forces in Iraq at least through the end of this year. Poland, which is similarly committed to retaining its forces, El Salvador, the South Koreans, our key partners are not moving.

But they are not engaged——

Senator HAGEL. They are moving; they're reducing their forces.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. But they are not leaving.

Senator HAGEL. But they're not increasing, like we are, and that's my overall question: Who is putting more investment in, like we are? Who is putting more dollars? Who is putting more of their reputation, their treasure, their blood, their investment, in? That's my question.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, there is—the Baghdad Security Plan augmentation is U.S., it is not a coalition issue. And that's based upon our own commander's assessment of the kind of forces, the numbers of forces and the timing for the application of those forces required.

On the economic side, there is continued fund flow from partners, such as the European Union, from Japan, from others, but not directly associated with this surge.

Senator HAGEL. Well, my time is up, and I've gone over and I appreciate that, and if we have another round, I'll have a chance to come back.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Certainly.

Senator HAGEL. But, General Jones, I know you've not had a chance to answer, but we'll come back.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you, Senator Hagel.

Senator Feingold.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, General Jones and Ambassador Satterfield, thank you for coming today.

Ambassador, let me take a minute to thank the men and women who work at the State Department. At this and other hearings we, of course, appropriately and often recognize the sacrifices and valor of U.S. military personnel in Iraq, and rightly so. We should not forget the dedication and determination and courage of the members of the U.S. Foreign Service and civil servants, that they have displayed in Iraq.

State Department personnel are accustomed to hardship assignments—which are now becoming almost the norm in the world—and these mostly, unarmed, individuals are working hard in Iraq under the most dangerous of circumstances. My colleagues and I appreciate the U.S. Foreign Service and their families, and the civil servants at the State Department for their unique efforts in Iraq, and around the world.

Ambassador and General, let me move to some questions. Given the fact that the topline indicators in Iraq—things like the number of displaced persons, and attacks on civilians, and the strength of militias, just to name a few—are all increasing, it appears that our efforts in Iraq—whether political, military, or economic—have yet to yield significant results.

Can you explain how, given this rising instability, the administration is adjusting or calibrating its efforts to continue reconstruction efforts in the future? More specifically, what are you going to do differently, in the President's, so-called, "New Wave Forward" that we've heard a lot—we've heard a lot about these kinds of things before, including the PRTs.

Ambassador.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Certainly.

Senator, first let me thank you for your kind remarks regarding the Foreign Service and our civilian colleagues, and I'd just like to note, five of those colleagues perished this week from BlackWater in a shoot-down that was attendant to their efforts to secure one of our reconstruction officer's safety as he moved from one of his official meetings back to the Embassy compound. And we remember them, as well as our other colleagues who have sacrificed so much in Iraq, both from the military and civilian services.

With respect to your question—we have radically transformed—and I use the term radically in an advised fashion—over the course of the last 18 months. And we will continue that reformation of how and what we do with taxpayer moneys in Iraq.

We took the IRRF program—that's the large $20 billion reconstruction program launched in 2003—we reexamined it from the bottom up, starting in the late summer of 2005. We relooked at where we could reallocate funds to achievable projects, to Iraqi-contracted projects, rather than multinational or design/build contracts, to place greater responsibility and accountability into Iraqi hands and to ensure that we had—the U.S. Government—a much

greater ability than the admittedly, very defective oversight mechanisms which existed during the earlier part of the IRRF program. And with the good work of Stu Bowen, and the SIGIR, we have been able to affect very significant changes.

We're going to continue those because, Senator, we're getting out of the reconstruction business in Iraq. Over the course of 2007, the calendar year, at the latest, the beginning of 2008, the remaining unspent, but obligated, IRRF funds will burn through. They will be spent on projects.

What we are asking money for is not more reconstruction. Iraqis need to take charge of reconstruction of their country; the international community needs to come up to the table on reconstruction, as they always have needed to do.

We're going to be focused on programs like community support. Working with local leaders, local figures, local projects that are Iraqi-designed, that have Iraqi stakeholders, that are designed to improve the situation at a local level. Obviously, we're not ignoring Baghdad. There is a critical post-kinetic stabilization requirement in Baghdad as we move from Clear and Secure, to Build. And there will be a similar need in Anbar province. And we've asked for the resources in terms of people and in terms of money to do that.

But it's not going to be big-ticket reconstruction anymore. It's going to be small projects, microenterprise lending, job generation. And the chairman asked a question about: What kind of jobs are we talking about here? Well, we're talking about, on the Iraqi and the United States side, in the immediate term, after you clear and secure a neighborhood, getting people back to work. That's a short-term undertaking. But short-term, 60/90/128 job programs really can't be sustained over time, and they're not good to sustain over time. You need a longer term, employment generating program that brings meaningful jobs to people—not just picking up trash, not just rebuilding damaged roads.

And that's where the Iraqis kick in. Their $10 billion needs to be applied, in large measure, to those longer term programs. We're working with them on the kinds of training, structures they will need to generate those kinds of jobs in Baghdad, Anbar, and other troubled areas.

Senator FEINGOLD. General.

General JONES. Senator, first of all, I would endorse this change in direction that the Ambassador just outlined, in terms of the types of projects and the effect that they will have. Essential to that, I believe, are the PRTs, as well as the Minister of Capacity Development that is going on, because as we do this shift, what I believe is important is Iraqi capacity.

The reconstruction teams, one of—if I had to say what I thought their most important contribution will be—is in helping the Iraqis to develop capacity of their government to do the things to, for instance, spend this $10 billion in a productive way that's going to make a real difference in the country for its people.

So, I think the renewed emphasis by the Iraqis on using their money to do reconstruction will make a significant change, as well as our commitment to helping them develop the capacity to spend it well.

Senator FEINGOLD. But, you know, I hear the ideas of a different approach, but let me just ask you this: I've been given this horrible story, Ambassador, you just told about trying to secure a reconstruction site—does the administration have a contingency plan? If security and economic and military efforts don't work in this President's New Way Forward?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, I'll answer that in two different parts.

First, with respect to the specific funding that we will be requesting—the projects, the kinds of purposes we were applying those moneys to very much reflect the reality, the stark reality of the security situation on the ground. We're not engaging in projects we don't believe can be completed, and completed by Iraqis under the conditions that prevail today. We're trying to change those conditions, but we're not blue-skying this. This is a very reality-based set of programs.

The second answer to your question, which is really—if I can take it—what's the plan B? We're focused on making plan A a success, we believe it can succeed, and we're not going to discuss the alternatives, that is, the plan for a less than successful option while we are trying now to initiate the steps necessary to make our primary strategy succeed.

Senator FEINGOLD. Well, I hope you'll consider that, because I think one of the problems we have here is that we, obviously, hope things work out, and this has to do with the whole mission, with the whole military issue. But I think we do have to think at two different levels at the same time and have a contingency plan.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, we appreciate——

Senator FEINGOLD. Because there's so many things that have been tried haven't worked. So I would urge you to do both, I know you have a lot on your plate.

And just, again, on the PRTs you said that the State Department plans on doubling the number of PRTs, and sending an additional 300 new personnel to staff them.

Given that these have worked pretty well in Afghanistan, why has it taken so long to get PRTs up and running in Iraq? I know there's security concerns, but why hasn't it been made more of a priority in the past?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Several issues here, Senator. The Baghdad, or I'm sorry, the Iraqi PRTs—going back to their launch in late summer of 2005/early fall 2005, are fundamentally different from the Afghan PRTs, both in their structure—the Afghan PRTs are almost entirely military—they are very small scale. The Baghdad and the non-Baghdad PRTs in Iraq are very large entities, they are located in areas which are often contested, they are active combat zones, and they are very much a civil military undertaking. They are a much more sophisticated and complex set of bodies.

They have taken off. The 10 PRTs that exist today have been up and running for some time, they've got a lot of successes under their belts, and we're moving these next 10 PRTs, starting with the critical nine in Anbar and Baghdad very, very swiftly. This is a 60-to-90-day up and running timeframe.

Senator FEINGOLD. My time is up, but General, do you want to quickly respond to that?

General JONES. Yes, Senator. I'd reinforce that they are two significantly different situations. In Afghanistan, a lot of what the PRTs are doing is trying to create those efforts in order to tie into what has been a very weak central government in that country.

In Iraq, you have a fundamentally opposite problem, and that is overcentralization of the government, so now the PRTs need to help create capacity in provinces and in municipalities where before, they didn't have the authority or the resources to be able to function. So, there are significant differences between the two.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thanks to both of you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you very much.

Senator Coleman.

Senator COLEMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First I want to associate myself with the praise that my colleague from Wisconsin has offered to the State Department folks for their service and their sacrifice—you've got some extraordinary people there. In Iraq I met with Ambassador Joe Saloom, who is overseeing reconstruction efforts—I don't know if there's anybody better in that area. And Bob Murphy, dealing with rule of law and Par Sido and others, and they're really extraordinary folks.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Thank you.

Senator COLEMAN. And I hope they know how much we appreciate their service, and the challenge of their service.

Let me talk a little bit about oil production. I think it was the chairman who noted in his opening comments that we may be looking at 200,000 barrels a day of what I call "corruption leakage" from the production output. When we were there, in the briefings we received, it was indicated that it's hard to distinguish between the common criminals, the terrorists, and the government folks. And I'm wondering if we have a New Way Forward in terms of dealing with the oil production issue, dealing with the security issue, dealing with the corruption issue. Is there a New Way Forward in protecting oil production, a New Way Forward in dealing with the corruption leakage?

I believe that this "corruption leakage" from the oil production is clearly, at least in part funding some of the violence in Iraq. It is funding the extremist killings that are taking place. So this is a critical element, I think, of security. Not just the economy, but security. I would like to be updated as to what our plan is to do a better job of protecting oil production and limiting corruption associated with it.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, oil production has steadily increased, and at a sustainable figure over the course of 2006. And, in fact, both production and export levels are up over all but the 2 weeks that immediately preceded the March invasion of Iraq. Over the average of production and exports from Iraq in 2002, and that's a very positive sign. Because oil remains the primary money earner for the Iraqi economy, and frankly, will for some time to come.

Corruption robs Iraq of a considerable share of what should be national resources, national revenues. It is a critical problem; indeed, it is one of the fundamental problems affecting the economy, along with execution skills.

There are two aspects to this corruption. First is the northern oil sector, second is the south. In the north, the sector is essentially shut down for export purposes, and has been for some years. The attacks on the pipelines which feed the export routes to Turkey have been so consistent, so professional, so well done, that our very good efforts, Iraqi good efforts to build new pipelines, to get old pipelines in operation, are thwarted at just the moment when we're ready to start moving product, or crude, through those lines.

If you'd asked us 2 years ago: What's the major source of those attacks? We would have answered insurgency. They are ideological and insurgency-motivated. That's not our answer today, they're criminal. They may well involve insurgents, but profit's the motive here. It's redirecting product or crude to another place where it can be profited from.

How do you get at this? I could tell you it's by fighting corruption in Iraq, but that's going to be a generational undertaking, and a very significant one.

But there's a more immediate way to get at it, and that is by disincentivizing oil sector corruption, by raising the prices of fuel and product to a level that at least matches regional prices. When it pays a smuggler to move a small quantity of crude or refined product to Kuwait, to Iran, to Saudi Arabia, because it's at a cheaper price in Iraq, then they're going to smuggle it. When you raise market prices, then you not only increase revenues to the central government, you disincentivize smuggling.

The Iraqi Government has moved over the course of the past year-plus, to double the price, the market price, of crude and products. They need to take additional steps now, we want to see it come up fully, at least to the regional market price, and that's a big step forward.

Senator COLEMAN. I presume there's a political challenge to increasing the market price of oil in Iraq. You've got a populace in Iraq that had gotten used to subsidized oil, and now all of a sudden the price is increased. Oil was so much cheaper under Saddam's regime because it was given away. Do the Iraqis have the political will to meet this challenge?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator——

Senator COLEMAN. To do what has to be done?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Yeah.

Senator COLEMAN. To deal with this market price issue, so as to undercut some of the corruption?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. They have, indeed, the picture is very positive on that.

The Iraqis moved, as I said, over the course of the last year to meet and exceed the standard set by the IMF by the standby arrangement on fuel price increases. There's another increase which is due now, very shortly, which they will need to meet as well. But, yes, they have taken those steps.

But you touch upon a very important issue, and it's a public issue. When people were used to free electricity, to free gasoline, they're willing to pay a black marketer outrageous prices to get it. But when the government comes in, they expect it to be free. That's a mentality, that's a mindset, not just in Iraq, but elsewhere in the

region, that very much needs to change. And that's something where the government needs to take the lead.

Senator COLEMAN. General Jones, is there more we can be doing on the military side to deal with the terrorism that is disrupting the oil production?

General JONES. Senator, that's a very good question. And, in fact, over the course of the last year, there have been a lot of work that's been done in order to try to reduce the number of attacks, and in fact, it has happened. If you look at the attack trends, the attack trends are down significantly. And I'd be happy to take that for the record, and provide that information to the committee.

Senator COLEMAN. I would appreciate that.

Can we just turn, in the time left to electricity? It is a somewhat similar issue to that of oil production. I'm a former mayor, and it is these kind of basic needs such as electricity that keep people satisfied with their local government. If people have electricity, they feel better about a lot of things. On the electricity front, one of the things that I heard when I was in Iraq is that there is a profit issue there, too. Folks don't want electricity flowing from one region into the other. I also observed, for the first time, a kind of black market electricity operation. You fly over Baghdad at night, and you'll see lights on, even though the electricity is shut off for the city. And I understand that there are private generators. In my conversations in Iraq I was told that some of the folks on the private side cut the government lines, because they don't want the government to be providing electricity. How do you deal with that?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, there are overlapping issues that affect electricity, particularly in Baghdad. The first is, the provinces are reluctant to shed electricity to the capitols—the opposite of the system Saddam built, where provinces could only send their power into Baghdad, and Baghdad had to shed back out again. That system was physically destroyed in 2003.

The provinces now, Anbar province, enjoys perhaps the highest level of electricity anywhere in Iraq—they don't shed to Baghdad. Baghdad has suffered from—here it is an insurgent campaign to cut off both power-line supplies and fuel supplies for the plants in Baghdad as a metropolis, deliberately to deny the government the ability to be seen as providing essential services to that capitol.

O&M has been badly mismanaged by Iraqis. We have put in, taxpayer money has put in, half—2,500 megawatts—of generation capacity in Iraq. That is very significant, but it's underutilized because of O&M issues, wrong fueling issues, and then because of the effect of the insurgency on supplies. And an entrepreneurial body has, indeed, arisen. Perhaps some 2,000 megawatts a day of power in Baghdad are supplied by the black market, by private entrepreneurs.

It is a significant problem, how do you get to that? You get to it by a government that is committed rationally to using the generation facilities it has, to applying the right resources to protecting those facilities, and to putting those involved in the black market out of business, because the government shows that it can deliver a product more cheaply.

Senator COLEMAN. And again, I think my time is up.

But General, the question I had, for you to think about, is whether there is a military piece to the issues we've described here? Do we need a new way to deal with things like oil production and electricity production? These are things where the indicators aren't where we'd like them to be and if they were raised, I think the situation would be much better.

General JONES. Senator, I'll just take that for the record, and give you a written response, if that's OK.

Senator COLEMAN. Thank you, General.

[The information previously referred to follows:]

The U.S. military is engaged in training and equipping Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) responsible for securing critical infrastructure. Coalition forces work side by side with the ISF along critical infrastructure nodes. Part of this effort includes developing 17 Strategic Infrastructure Battalions; units which did not exist prior to 2005. Infrastructure hardening projects have been accomplished to increase physical security measures along infrastructure corridors. Additional hardening measures are planned or underway. Attacks on infrastructure were down to 1.4 attacks per week from 6.7 per week in 2004. However, attacks on infrastructure have continued to result in disruption of services. In addition, weak ministerial oversight, ineffectual rapid-repair teams, and criminal harvesting of infrastructure assets (e.g., copper from power lines) have proved to be major impediments to improving the supply of essential services.

Coalition forces are actively supporting Embassy Baghdad's Anti-Corruption Strategy for Iraq, which includes initiatives in the energy sector. Working closely with the Government of Iraq and Iraqi Security Forces, MNF–I advisors are assisting the Iraqi Army with their security operations supporting ground transportation of petroleum products to facilitate careful accounting of the quantities of product at both departure and arrival points. Most corruption in the Ministry of Oil and Ministry of Electricity is not observable by military advisors of security forces, and is therefore in the domain of Embassy Ministerial Advisory Teams. For greater detail on Iraq's efforts toward market reform, financial transparency, and public integrity in their energy sector, we recommend you contact the Department of State.

Coalition forces are determined to work closely with the ISF, the Ministries of Electricity and Oil, and U.S. Embassy Baghdad to resolve issues related to the security of Iraq's critical infrastructure.

Senator COLEMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN [presiding]. Thank you very much. The Senator from Georgia.

Senator Corker, have you already gone? I didn't see you there. I apologize.

Senator CORKER. No; no problem.

Thank you, gentlemen, both for being here, I would like to say that General Jones is a constituent of mine. He was educated in Tennessee and, more importantly, met his wife in Tennessee, and my understanding is he votes in Tennessee. Don't know how he votes, but thank you for your—thank you for being here.

Listen, I—we're looking at the economic efforts that are underway. And Ambassador Carney is in this new position, I guess, to coordinate those efforts.

And yet there's been a lot of discussion about the fact that security depends a great deal on Iraqis having jobs that take them away from being part of sectarian violence, take them apart from criminality. And yet, it does seem that there's a lot of impatience, if you will. That, in essence, people are focusing on this effort as something that needs to take place in a very short amount of time as far as showing results.

And I look at our own country, you look at what happened in Louisiana and Mississippi, and here we are a sophisticated society

with everything working and bureaucrats to deal with these kind of things that certainly do a good job at what they do, and yet, we have trouble ourselves doing that. We have a very low-functioning government in Iraq today.

Talk to us about the realities, if you will, of those moneys actually doing the kind of good that people are placing a lot of faith in happening in a very short amount of time?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, we're going to be asking the administration, Congress and the American people through the Congress to approve an extraordinary thing. To approve a significant amount of assistance to a country that has significant resources, financial resources of its own. We do this very rarely, if at all.

We're justifying this request in the case of Iraq for a reason directly related to the question you posed. Iraq does have fiscal resources; it has money in the bank, some $12.5 billion from unspent prior budget years, and also a certain amount from windfall profits from unexpected oil prices. They lack the resources, the mechanisms to move that money within their own budget. On an urgent basis, they lack it, frankly, to move it on even a year budget-cycle basis. And we're working with them on developing, over the course of this year, the mechanisms to do that.

But, when we look at Clear, Secure, Build, at the employment generation part of it, at the nonemployment generation, but financial part of that picture—money has to be moved quickly. We are the body to do that, in this immediate time ahead.

Now, the Iraqis have to be in the fight as well, both on developing budget execution mechanisms, and also moving moneys of their own as rapidly as possible for the "build" part of things. But we have a critical obligation here, to make our military strategy—our joint military strategy—succeed over the long run. And that requires an economic plan as well.

So, we do believe we have the ability to move these resources out of the box, onto the street, rapidly in the days and weeks that follow the "secure" part of Clear, Secure, and Build. We need the support of Congress, though, both in approving those moneys, and moving them out expeditiously so that we and our military colleagues have them available at the right time in Baghdad and in Anbar.

Senator CORKER. And so you're talking about timeframes where 30, 60 days after approval, the moneys will be on the streets, in people's hands.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. We are talking, ideally, Senator, of a situation in which if—on a given day, a neighborhood has been cleared and secured, we—the U.S. Government, and to the maximum extent, the Iraqi Government—are able to move moneys to begin employing people, taking them out of their houses, putting them onto the streets, in a positive sense, working, and then to build longer term, sustainable projects to give a stake in the economy, those areas, those neighborhoods.

General JONES. Senator, if I could, just as an example. We had a significant fight in Sadr City in the August/September timeframe of 2004. About the southwest third of that city, we had very good

control of, and even during that fighting, we were continuing to employ and to do projects in that part.

What we saw was a difference in the population, in terms of their response to the Mahdi Militia—in the April 2004 timeframe, in those same areas, in those same fights, when we would have an engagement, generally a militiaman would run back through a house, go into an alley and we would lose them.

After we had worked those construction projects, worked with those people, developed confidence, when they went to houses, they found doors locked. So, it makes—you can, as close as you can to where military operations are being conducted, have integrated the economic part of this; it is a combat multiplier from a military perspective.

Senator CORKER. I know that this is not our subject today, but I know that based on your backgrounds you both know much about this.

A lot has been said about the fact that the Iraqi Army is way underequipped. We had General McCaffrey in the other day and talked about the fact that we're spending $8.4 billion a month, and yet have been—have decided not to actually equip the military side of the Iraqi operations the way that they need to be equipped. He suggested a number of $5 billion necessary to actually cause them to have a helicopter, the tanks, the things they need to actually be an army.

I've had other comments made offhanded that actually are stunning, I referred to those yesterday. I'd like for you all to just, if you will, talk a little bit about what really is happening there. Whether there are, in fact, serious deficiencies as it relates to having an army, in Iraq, by the Iraqi people that really has people, but not the equipment resources to actually defend themselves, secure themselves, do the things that we're depending upon them to do.

General JONES. Yes, Senator, I can address that.

In terms of the equipment that the Iraqi forces have, the thinking that they are somehow out-gunned or somehow out-equipped by the people that they fight, I believe, is erroneous. The, typically—the kinds of insurgents that the Iraqi Army has been fighting has small arms, machine guns, on occasion you see body armor or something, but rarely. The Iraqi Armed Forces are not nearly as well equipped as United States forces. There are no forces I know of that are as well equipped as U.S. forces. But, in addition to those kinds of things, they have body armor—we started to design this force as a counterinsurgency force, which is relatively light infantry with some mechanized capability.

We have adjusted over time, to give them increasing capabilities for the counterinsurgency force that we are building, based on the enemy's increase in attacks, increase in capabilities. We are fielding up-armored systems—they do have tanks, they do have armored personnel-carrier kinds of vehicles—not in the quantities it takes to have a defense force, where they can defend their country from outside aggression. That plan is in the works, and will be a future fielding plan that will have to happen in order to transition them once they have succeeded against the insurgency.

I will say, however, that in terms of equipment, the Iraqis have, in fact, stepped up to the plate. I believe they've committed about

$700 million—and I'll get the numbers for the record, if it's OK, Senator, but I think it's about $700 million of their own funds to buy additional equipment. They also have, I believe, $1.5 billion in a foreign military sales account in order to buy additional equipment that they think will help them meet needs.

[The information submitted by DOD follow:]

Answer. The GoI has committed nearly $1.2B of CY06 Security Funding against Foreign Military Sales (FMS) cases for equipment requirements. There are additional cases for infrastructure and sustainment requirements which total approximately $500M. Furthermore, the GoI is on the verge of committing approximately up to $1B of its currently available CY07 Security Funding against additional equipment, infrastructure, and sustainment FMS cases.

So, I think that we have had to adapt because the situation has changed, I think that they are absorbing equipment at the ability that they have, and we have not fielded some types of systems like aircraft, and other kinds of things that are much more sophisticated, because we've given priority to the insurgency fight that they're in, where those kinds of assets aren't quite as important.

Senator CORKER. I think my time is up, but I want to thank you both for your testimony, for your service, and what you're doing on behalf of our country, thank you.

General JONES. Thank you, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator.

Senator Isakson.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I want to echo what Senator Feingold, Senator Colman, and others have said about the State Department. In my experiences around the world where I have encountered State Department people, they're the unsung heroes of America around the world, and we appreciate very much what you do.

In your printed testimony, Ambassador Satterfield, you said, "Serious progress has been made on the vital national hydrocarbon law," and then in the answer to Senator Coleman you said, I believe you said, and I want to make sure I heard this right, or it gets corrected if I heard it wrong, you virtually said, at this time we can't secure the oil pipeline, because of the criminal element more than the insurgents, is that correct?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. With respect to the northern oil production——

Senator ISAKSON. Right.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD [continuing]. At the northern oil export facilities, it has been an exceedingly difficult task of securing that in a sustained fashion over the last several years; yes, Senator.

Senator ISAKSON. And you then said that the best hope to secure it is to increase the price, so there's not profit to attract the criminal element. It would seem like, to me, that it's equally important that this hydrocarbon deal become completed. The Middle East—and I said this in one of the other testimonies—suffers, and Iraq principally suffers, from what's known as the Dutch Disease, where the governments have run off the profit of oil, the countries have not developed, because they have a rich, natural resource. People aren't used to entrepreneurship, running businesses or anything else, and one of the key things to stability in that country is going

to be for the people themselves to get a piece of the action, which is petroleum.

So, my first question is how: How serious is the progress and what are the obstacles that remain for them to complete the deal?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, the progress is critical, just as you have outlined. It's critical to developing a free market economy in this critical sector. There are many investors outside Iraq who want to come in, if they see a stable, economic framework—business framework—for their investments.

The law that is under consideration is a very progressive one. It is part of a set of laws that will reform the hydrocarbon sector in Iraq, but it's the beginning, it's the frame. And it's a framework that contemplates several very important principles.

First, that oil is a national resource. It should be maximized for the benefit of all Iraqis. That the central government is responsible in the first instance for receiving revenues, and then distributing revenues back out, because that avoids the chaos of revenues being managed at a local level entirely.

But, it has the important corollary principle, that the federal government, the central oil authority will redistribute revenues to local authorities, and that local authorities will have the initial responsibility for soliciting investment opportunities, for working on a national model of working contracts, which will then be submitted for some form of national consideration.

And on that last point, Senator, lies the essential controversy, or dispute that has held up moving this law forward this law. What will be the nature of the relationship between a national oil authority, and local oil authorities with respect to either disapproval, or approval—and there's a difference between the two—of contracts that are set. We believe the road is open to a resolution of this issue within the coming days, if not weeks.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, I think this is probably the most critical thing that needs to be accomplished, personally.

I'm going to send you a paper that a constituent of mine, who is a distinguished citizen of Georgia and has been in the bond business for the better part of 30 years, has written. It's an intriguing suggestion, dealing with the deployment of capital, and the difficulty you referenced the Iraqis have.

If we could get an oil deal, and we had a reasonably secure situation in Iraq, you could actually bond the Iraqi oil production to front-end the flow of money in the world marketplace and get it deployed almost immediately, rather than on a cash-flow basis. His name is John Mobley, and I'm going to send you that information, because it is very intriguing. I know Senator Clinton and Senator Murkowski and some others have talked about some way to get that benefit to the people; Mr. Mobley has an outstanding proposal, and I would like for you to, at least, get it in the right hands and see if it has some merit.

Mr. Chairman, if I could ask you a question while I've got my time——

The CHAIRMAN. Take what time you need, there are not many people here.

Senator ISAKSON. Have we scheduled, yet, a hearing on John Negroponte?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes. We have scheduled it. Tuesday, at 9:30.

Senator ISAKSON. I want to commend the Chair—although the mind can only absorb what the seat can endure—I've enjoyed all of our hearings, and being here, listening to everything that we've heard. But in particular, I appreciate that, because I think John Negroponte comes to the State Department at a critical time. When you talk about the accountability measures, you talk about the civilian and the military efforts that are going on, you talk about the difficulty the centralization of the Iraqi Government as it is right now, and makes it somewhat stodgy and removed from the people, we have in Negroponte somebody who's been there and done that. And I had the privilege of being in Iraq when he was there, and I think he will bring a wealth of knowledge to State as you're involved with the Department of Defense and everyone else in this plan.

Last, I guess, my final point is: I can't stress how important I think the accountability factor of this New Way Forward is. For whatever the reasons that we haven't had good accountability on the part of the Iraqis, I have said in my statements that the New Way Forward is also to me, the last way forward, or the last best way forward. And, its success is going to be dependent on the Iraqis and them delivering. And, I want to commend you on what you're doing, and commend the general on what the Joint Chiefs are doing to see to it there's meaningful accountability on the Iraqis, because if they drop the ball on their part, then there's no way we can have the type of success that we need to have to ultimately have the reconciliation in that country. And that's not a question, that's just a comment.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. We fully agree, sir.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

I just have one question, Mr. Ambassador. Last July when we met in Baghdad, you indicated to me you'd provide the committee with a plan to build the capacity of the Iraqi Ministries. And then I asked the Ambassador that question later, and before these hearings, he said he would provide such a plan as well. And, I haven't received it—is it because there isn't one, or there is a plan and you don't want to share it with us? Or there is a plan and you thought you shared it with us?

And I will say that, from an unclassified report, I don't know the exact date, but during early 2005, you attempted to take all of the Ministries of Iraq, from Finance through Agriculture—Finance, Oil, Electricity, Municipalities, Water Resources, Justice, Education, Health, Planning and Development, Agriculture—and you gave them a rating, based on a color chart, of whether or not they had performed—from red, essentially no capacity to perform the function, to green, indicating developed capacity to perform ministerial functions. And you broke it down by leadership, strategy and planning, partnership, resources, program, budget, et cetera.

Can you tell us, do you have a plan to build capacity in the Iraqi Ministries that have so far shown very little capacity to function on their own?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, we certainly do, and we certainly have, and I will follow up on——

The CHAIRMAN. Can you follow up within the next 3 days?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD [continuing]. Standing request which I thought had been answered.

The CHAIRMAN. No, within the next 3 days? If you have a plan, you ought to be able to get it to me, literally, you ought to be able to e-mail it to me in the next 2 hours. We waited now for 6 months, and I would truly appreciate it.

You talk about these new plans, though I've yet to find out what you have underway already. Quite frankly, it undermines my confidence in what you all are doing.

[The information supplied by the State Department follows:]

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, DC, January 30, 2007.

Hon. JOSEPH R. BIDEN, Jr.,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: In response to your question to Ambassador David Satterfield during his testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on January 25, we would like to provide you with the following information.

You asked for information about our Ministerial Capacity Strategy and related progress chart (from July 2006 and a current version). You also asked for information on metrics or indicators used to measure progress. The interagency Embassy team in Baghdad has developed a robust Ministerial Capacity development program, which began with a baseline assessment of the capacity of ten key Iraqi Ministries in nine areas, such as leadership, strategy and budgeting. Ambassador Satterfield's staff has contacted your staff to arrange a more detailed briefing on the details of these programs.

Continuing these efforts to build Iraqi ministerial capacity to perform core functions, such as design and execution of budgets, will be a key component of "The New Way Forward" announced by the President.

I hope this information is useful for you.

Sincerely,

JEFFREY T. BERGNER,
Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs.

The CHAIRMAN. The second half of that question is: Is there a relationship between, I ask you both this question, between the potential efficacy of this new plan with regard to PRTs and their backup capacity to go in and build, et cetera; and the capacity of the Iraqi Ministries? In other words, we're going in there, and you're bringing in folks who are going to try to get potable water to every part of the city, and other places; you're going to try to get their electricity and educational systems back up and running. But is our doing this going to improve the capacity of the Iraqis to be able to eventually run their own government?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Absolutely, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. What is it?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. There's a very material relationship, and it falls into two categories. One encompasses all of the Iraqi Ministries, and its budget execution—it's their ability to move their own moneys out, onto the street, into the field, in Baghdad and beyond. Which is very, very defective, and deficient and we are focusing, perhaps, the largest share of our ministerial capacity efforts, right now, on budget execution governmentwide, but focused on the critical Ministries. Finance, above all, Planning, Oil, Electricity. That's the first step.

The CHAIRMAN. Beyond moving the moneys out, what about the operational control of whatever it is you're moving them out for?

Increasing the effectiveness of the electric grid, getting more oil pumped through the pipeline, so that the central government has resources, et cetera. What is the relationship? Do you have confidence that you have a partner in the Iraqi Ministries that you can essentially hand this off to?

I mean, I'll give you one example. Your former commanding officer, General Chiarelli, used a specific example, and I'll not belabor the point, it was along the lines of what Senator Webb was talking about. He said, "We build a first class," he called it, "the biggest water fountain in the Middle East." He talked about how we had successfully built within Baghdad a water facility that could provide potable water to all of the city. But, we decided—if I understood him correctly—that it was up to the Iraqis to connect—what he referred to as the fountain—to Iraqi homes. And that meant laying pipe. That meant laying the facility to get the water from the facility to the spickets of Iraqi homes. And he talked about the ineffectiveness of the Iraqi Ministry to get that done.

So, these are very practical considerations. And tell me, I would like for the record, if you're willing, to update us on the present status of these Ministries? Because to go back to what Senator Webb and also, I think, Senator Lugar talked about—we're not even rebuilding, sufficiently, New Orleans. We're not rebuilding, we're surging into Baghdad, and we're surging police out of American cities as the crime rate rises. We're eliminating the crime bill, we're eliminating funding for local law enforcement, or drastically cutting it by $2 billion a year.

And so, we want to help—I speak for myself—I want to help. But it's kind of hard to go back and explain to my constituency why I am conceding to the President's request for another, total this calendar year, as it will turn out, year and a half, probably a billion and three-quarters dollars. You know, your $588 million supplemental, your billion, two or three, whatever. It's a big number. It's a big number, and that billion dollars would go a long way to providing housing in the ninth ward. It would go a long way to reinstate the cops in the 34 largest cities in America. It would go a long way to provide interoperability to cities that have no interoperability if another hurricane or disaster strikes.

So, we have to get down to the weeds. Not now, I'm not asking for an answer, unless you want to provide one, I'd like one in writing, where you're able to demonstrate to us that we're going to go in, risk American lives to clear, we're going to risk American lives, as stated, to hold, and then we're going to build. Once we build, we've got to turn it over to somebody. And is there any reason for us to believe this time out that there no longer exists, what I believe to be, an almost totally ineffectual ministerial bureaucracy in almost all of the Ministries?

Now, I may be dated here, maybe things have really progressed in the last year or 6 months. But we need some hard data. We need your best assessment to pile onto what my friend from Virginia is saying, we need some metrics. We want to know what it is you are basing it on. Because I do agree, and I'll conclude with this, there is a correlation between the standard of living for Iraqis increasing, and the likelihood of them wanting to shoot at our men and women in uniform. I do think there's a correlation.

And thus far—and I don't want to go back, I said these hearings would not be about the past, but about the future—I am very skeptical of taking very limited resources and assigning them to a worthy goal without much, much, much harder data. Much tighter reasoning, and much closer oversight on a monthly basis as to what's going on. And I think you will find that it's not just Senator Webb who is knowledgeable about these things due to his past duties at the Pentagon, but I think you're going to find a lot of us are equally knowledgeable, on both sides of the aisle.

Senator WEBB. Mr. Chairman, if I may?

The CHAIRMAN. Please.

Senator WEBB. I—Mr. Ambassador, I want to clarify the concern that was behind the questions that I asked, and the exchange that we had. I have a great deal of respect for your career of focusing on this region and the positions that you've held, and at the same time, I'm very mindful that you're here as a member of the administration. And these kinds of concerns are not simply whether the programs are working inside Iraq—although there is a great deal of concern. And the questions that I asked about where these contracts have gone, you know, to American companies, and et cetera, I think they are relevant to the way that we're trying to examine fairness, misuse of funds, those sorts of things.

And it's not only how this impacts the region. It's how we're trying to look at fairness in terms of situations like the aftermath of Katrina, and the obligations that we have. And so, one of the questions, really, honestly at this point, is to what extent is the United States actually responsible for the full reconstruction of Iraq—this is not a question for you, it's just a clarification of what I was saying before—and to what extent the Iraqis themselves are ultimately going to have to be responsible. They have a long history of entrepreneurial activities, notwithstanding some of the more recent events under Saddam Hussein, so you know, for me looking at this and coming here, and having heard again, and again, and again, on the campaign trail and through the course of this war, about the misuse of money, and the favoritism that went into contracts, and a lack of performance, and these sorts of things.

I believe that a lot of arguments that are fueled by emotion are best resolved by going to the facts. And that's the motivation behind my questions, and I'm looking forward to being able to sit down, again, as I said, with you, or someone who is a representative of your office, and also with people from the Department of Defense and let's start breaking down the facts, and reporting to the American people.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Mr. Chairman, Senator, we'll certainly respond, Mr. Chairman, to the various questions that you posed.

But, the last point that you raised—confidence in execution because that's really, if I take it, what you're asking.

The CHAIRMAN. At the end of the day.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. In the ability of Iraqis and the United States to execute the critical economic steps necessary to build a success. We would be happy to brief you on the considerations that have gone into our planning, how we are working with the Iraqi Government on this score because it is the fundamental challenge, and it's the fundamental element in success on this part.

Which leads me, Senator Webb, to your question—are we responsible, the United States, the American people, for the reconstruction of Iraq? Absolutely not.

In 2003, the World Bank estimated the reconstruction figure for Iraq to be something around $100 billion. With all of the generosity of the American people and the U.S. Congress, the $20 billion that was allocated—and those portions of it that were actually applied to reconstruction—were only intended to, if you will, jumpstart, other than security, efforts in oil, electricity and certain other sectors. There was every expectation that the Iraqis themselves, the international community, the region, would come to the table and play their part.

And I can assure you, Senator, there is more than an expectation right now that Iraqis are, and must be, responsible for the reconstruction of their country. They need help from outside, they should get that help, but they are going to have to take the lead on this. This is not a U.S. challenge.

The CHAIRMAN. The jumpstart—I'm sorry, General, please.

General JONES. I'm sorry.

The CHAIRMAN. No——

General JONES. Mr. Chairman, the Department of Defense is responsible for two Ministries—Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Defense—and we will provide you those assessments promptly.

[The information provided on the slides submitted by General Jones follows:]

Ministry of Interior Development

Fully Effective
Level 2 Largely Effective
Level 3 Partly Effective
Ineffective

STATUS	CATEGORY	ASSESSMENT
	Command Control Comms	The Operations Directorate continues to develop positively. The National Command Center is able to maintain cross-Iraq situational awareness and the planning for recent high profile religious and other events has been done to an acceptable standard. Continue to work Statement of Work (Purchase Request and Commitment) of our communications programs and transition. Have coordinated with MoI Director of Communications for follow-on contract support; concerns sole-source contract for communication support.
	Intelligence	Manning at 2,412 personnel. Criminal Investigator graduates at 1,140 and Criminal Analysts at 383. Equipment issue at 51 percent of Modified Table of Organizations and Equipment. Headquarters Criminal Investigations and Analysis and Production sections at minimal capability; surveillance capability minimal but growing.
	Force Development	MOI poised to move forward on Facilities Protection Service (FPS) when signed consolidation order is received from PM. Iraqi-led Border plan is progressing and equipment needs for Department of Border Enforcement and Ports of Entry are being addressed. The plan for nationwide inspections of IP stations started slowly. The first inspection was completed in late December. Inspections are scheduled to resume Jan 07. Collator project was revitalized and pilot program can progress once written order is received.
	Internal Affairs	Internal Affairs begins 2007 with an effective structure in place. Training of the entire staff is 75 percent completed. The investigative production remains strong and continues to improve significantly. Indications are that MOI recognizes the important of IA and the job IA is doing as logistic issues are now being addressed. Optimism for success is abundant on both sides.
	Human Resources	Continuing steady improvement with increased optimism. Hiring and Assignment processes are functioning. Recent evidence of effective manpower planning and officer selection processes. Audit and review processes are being initiated within the MOI Staff. Integration of FPS requires close coordination and planning.
	Contracting and Infrastructure	Directorate has shown some initial progress working life support contracting issues in addition to supply and construction contracts. Work still needed on improving cradle to grave contracting processes and transparency of ongoing contracting actions as well as requirements forecasting. 2004 and 2006 Investment Plans being executed. 2007 Investment Plan awaiting approval (via holistic approval of MoI FY07 budget).
	Logistics and Vehicles	While the MOI is not capable of receiving/distributing large quantities of vehicles (due to lack of storage and trained operators), they are slowly making progress in several areas. They are creating an internal fuel distribution office and are preparing to begin execution of FMS funding.

☆ No significant change this month

Ministry of Defense Development

Fully Effective
Level 2 Largely Effective
Level 3 Partly Effective
Ineffective

STATUS	CATEGORY	ASSESSMENT
	Executive Support	Partly Effective. Defence Council still mired; Minister assigning major actions to Secretary General and Deputy Chief of Staff; many operational military decisions raised to Minister-Prime Minister level.
	Personnel Management	Partly Effective. 30K personnel admin working. Lack of engagement by the Director General and the absence of the Directors for both Military and Civilian personnel has exposed the organization's limited capacity.
	Intelligence	Partly Effective. Director General Intelligence Services (DGIS) collection capabilities working. Rudimentary operational analysis improving through continued engagement with analysts. Strategic analysis stalled. Dissemination needs drastic improvement. DGIS Liaison Officer at Baghdad Joint Coordination Center disseminating Intel to Iraqi Police (IP) and Iraqi Army (IA). Intel Exchange Conference (DGIS & Combined Intelligence Operations Center) improving analytical capabilities/Intel sharing.
	Logistics	Partially Effective. Transformation in Armament & Supply (A&S) continues; A&S responsible for MOD-level logistics pending MoD approvals; Self-Reliance Committee for Life Support (LS) initiated; fuel agreements with MoO still require formalization (being worked) – waiting MoD response.
	Plans and Policies	Partly Effective. Strategic planning process improving, although still vulnerable. Lack of corporate knowledge and experienced personnel limits throughput within the Directorate-General.
	Commo	Partly Effective. Tender process for Statement of Work for Iraqi Defense Network and Ministry of Defense Local Area Network (MOD LAN) at Acquisitions. DGOC has taken over system control of MOD LAN. Continuing to plan for Iraqi control of all Communication Systems.
	Budget	Partly Effective. $1.55BN Foreign Military Sales transfer has taken place. While lack of clarity exists as to CY06 budget execution, CY06 budget is expected to be better than 90 percent spent. The CY07 budget negotiations continue with MOF.
	Acquisitions/ Contracts	Partly Effective. Some major projects moved to contract award; others not awarded in CY 2006. FMS cases funded. Bureaucratic hurdles above A&S level continue to cause difficulties for international companies and contract awards.
	Inspector General	Partly Effective. On the job training conducted- trained staff actively conducting inspections, investigations, and audits in targeted areas of human rights, contract fraud, life support, and payment/payroll related areas. Need Minister of Defence approval for more Staff.

★ No significant change this month

The CHAIRMAN. I appreciate that because I know that it's beyond. I appreciate, Mr. Secretary, your willingness to sit down and further discuss with us these issues. But you all have produced, in making this assessment, specific data. We'd like to have the data. Not just the explanation, generically, of why you've arrived at the conclusions you have reached.

And, in terms of the international community, I was voting when Senator Hagel was questioning, but my understanding from my staff was that there was some discussion about whether this is a wholly owned American subsidiary here. Whether or not we really are getting cooperation from a consortia of other countries.

I noticed we are rightfully dropping the charade of speaking of Coalition Forces—the Brits are on their way out, in large part. They only have 7,000 folks there, and you add up every other force from every other country in the region and you don't get as many people as are in the Washington, DC, police force.

So, I guess what I'm trying to say is, it goes down a little bit to truth in advertising here. For me to go back to my home constituents and justify voting, again, for "reconstruction" moneys, I'd better have a much, much tighter understanding of the process and be able to demonstrate with specificity to my constituents why I think this may work.

With regard to the international community—my observation, and it may not be complete—my observation is that there is an awful lot of people sitting on their hands. It seems to me there would be an overwhelming interest on the part of the Saudis who are awash in oil money to commit moneys to the reconstruction of Iraq. The Saudis who have more money than the Lord Almighty these days, and for them to commit $10, $20, $30 billion would not take up a month's profit. Whether it's literally a month's profit or not, I don't know—but this is not a heavy lift for them financially. I guess it is a heavy lift in terms of diplomacy and politics, and the question is: How are we going to feel if, in fact, there is continued financial assistance and outreach from the existing government of Iran? Iran has a fair amount of money right now because of oil.

And so, I hope at some point we'll be able to discuss that. So, I'm not asking you to respond, but I'd invite your response, if you could tell us about, or if you'd rather do it for the record—about what are the hard donor commitments, other than from the United States Government, for the reconstruction of Iraq.

And I'll conclude by saying, the World Bank has concluded that we're talking about $100 billion, thereabouts. Well, if it takes $100 billion to rebuild it, and we spend $10 billion to rebuild it, we're not likely to succeed. And so, if we're pouring our $10 billion into an empty bucket here, that there's no prospect of Iraq and the international community keeping the pace to get to $60 billion, $100 billion, or $120 billion. It makes you sort of reassess the investment.

So, that's why I ask the question, but if you want to respond to the participation of the international community, feel free. My time is up and I will close the hearing after this, unless my friend has more questions.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Mr. Chairman, we'll respond on the hard commitments and the delivered commitments.

We've got some significant partners—the Japanese, the Canadians, the Italians, the European Union—have all moved forward with significant amounts of economic assistance.

The CHAIRMAN. Can you give me a sense, have they moved forward——

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. And we can give you the specifics on that, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. When you say "significant amounts" could you be more specific, because without specifying we'll leave this public hearing believing that the international community is contributing "significant amounts" of economic assistance to the reconstruction effort. When you say significant amounts, I suspect the average Senator watching this in their office, or their staff, or the public watching it, thinks that means "significant," like us. That means, you know, hundreds of millions, billions of dollars, combined. Is that what we're talking about?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. In the aggregate, it is in the hundreds of millions.

The CHAIRMAN. Hundred of millions?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Hundreds of millions.

The CHAIRMAN. Yeah?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. But, there are very significant donor pledges which have not been fulfilled, that date back to the Madrid Conference, and as significantly, there are tens of billions of debt forgiveness from the Gulf States, over $30 billion from Saudi Arabia alone.

The CHAIRMAN. How much from us?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Which we're pledged. We have forgiven all of Iraq's debt.

The CHAIRMAN. But how much did that add up to?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. It was around $4 billion, I believe, Senator. I will get you the precise number.

But, those commitments remain to be fulfilled.

The CHAIRMAN. OK, I thank you.

Senator Webb, do you have any further questions?

Senator WEBB. No, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the testimony of the witnesses.

The CHAIRMAN. And I thank you and look forward to your written comments, as well as to the reports we've requested. I thank you for your cooperation, and—to state the obvious—we hope it works. We hope it works.

We are recessed. Adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:06 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

"FAMILIES OF THE FALLEN FOR CHANGE" LETTER SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

FAMILIES OF THE FALLEN FOR CHANGE,
Cleveland, OH, January 15, 2007.

Senator JOSEPH R. BIDEN, Jr.,
Chairman and Members, Senate Foreign Relations Committee,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Recognizing error, cutting losses, altering course, is not something governments are good at. Changing course requires con-

siderable self-confidence on the part of leaders, something we are hoping you have today.

We are the parents of Marine Lance Corporal Edward "Augie" Schroeder who was killed August 3, 2005, near Haditha, Iraq, while deployed with the Third Battalion, 25th Marines, a Reserve unit based in Brook Park, Ohio.

In November 2005 we founded Families of the Fallen for Change, a non-profit organization that seeks to bring about change in overall Iraq policy and strategy. Today, Families of the Fallen for Change has more than 1,500 members nationwide, half of whom are veterans.

Though we are not novices at foreign relations (one doctorate in international relations and several years of living and working abroad), we remain amateurs in Middle East affairs in comparison to those who have testified and are scheduled to testify before the committee.

Thus we do not speak from the head, so to speak, but from the heart, and our hearts are broken. Though family members of American service men and women who have been killed in Iraq may differ on the validity of American efforts there, I am certain that their hearts, too, are broken.

We grieve as each additional American KIA is announced, for we feel the pain of each new broken heart added to the list.

Further, we understand that the families and friends of the 140,000 or so Americans remaining in Iraq—and those of others about to be deployed—are living each day with the anxiety that comes from fear their loved one may be killed or grievously injured.

In our last conversation with Augie, he said, "Pop, the closer we get to leaving, it's clear this is less and less worth the cost."

He described his unit's repeated efforts to clear the same cities and towns of insurgents, only to leave and let the insurgents come back. Augie said: "We don't have enough troops to do this. We can't hold these places."

He went on: "Two guys were killed walking past a wall. The wall just blew up. We all walked past that wall everyday. It could have been any one of us. It's just a crap shoot."

We heard the fear in his voice. We've seen a haunted expression in some of the last photos taken of him. We felt the helplessness of being unable to do anything to take care of our only son.

Augie's KIA number was 1,824 if we go alphabetically (he died with 13 comrades in a single explosion). Today, that number is 3,020. In Augie's estimation, the efforts in Iraq were not worth the cost nearly 1,200 deaths ago. In his estimation, survival for American marines and soldiers in Iraq was "just a crap shoot." To be sure, this is the case in any war, and we believe that at times war is necessary. But in the case of Iraq, it was not.

It is obvious from the reaction of many committee members and others in Congess that you understand the human costs of this war. For the sake of urgency, however, there is a need to consider these costs in terms of what lies ahead. At the current daily Killed-in-Action rate of 2.34 since the war started (according to http://icasualties.org/oif/):

- Number 4,000 will be recorded on or about March 7, 2008. That is an additional 982 American lives as of today.
- The death toll on January 1, 2008 (first day of troop withdrawal recommended by the Iraq Study Group—first quarter next year), will be 3,846. That is an additional 828 American lives as of today.
- The death toll on January 20, 2009 (Inauguration Day), is 4,747. That is an additional 1,729 American lives as of today.

These estimates do not consider that attacks on American troops could escalate, which would push the daily KIA rate higher. It also does not consider the hundreds of thousands of Iraqi civilians who have been killed, wounded, or displaced.

Nonetheless, additional American lives will be lost after a majority of the American public, the American military, and Members of Congress have recognized that this war cannot be won militarily and that a political solution must be sought as soon as possible.

These lives are worth much more than Secretary of State Rice's concern about negotiating a political solution from a "supplicant" position.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, it is long past time to withdraw our troops. It is a moral imperative that we do so.

In the last 18 months, we have given a lot of thought to one question: Why did our son die?

We don't mean the manner of his death. We don't mean the reasons why he joined the Marines. And we don't mean the specifics of why and how we got involved in Iraq in the first place.

We're trying to get at the larger Gestalt, the historical, perhaps even the philosophical reasons that prompted his death.

Augie is part of that long line of ghosts whose lives were taken by the folly of governments.

The lessons of history are seldom heeded. Samuel Taylor Coleridge said that "passion and party blind our eyes, and the light which experience gives us is a lantern on the stern, which shines only on the waves behind us."

Barbara Tuchman, in her book "The March of Folly: From Troy to Vietnam." (1984, Michael Joseph, Ltd.) wondered why governments pursue policies that are clearly not in the best interests of their nation or the people.

She identifies three stages of folly.

First is a standstill, when principles and boundaries governing a political problem are fixed.

Second, failure and criticism begin to appear, which in her words "rigidify" those principles and boundaries.

It is here that changes in policy are possible, but Tuchman calls them "rare as rubies in the backyard."

More typical in this stage are increased investments along with an increasing need to protect egos that make a change in course next to impossible.

In the third stage, the pursuit of failure enlarges the damages until it causes the fall of Troy or the American humiliation in Vietnam.

So Augie is dead because of folly. American folly that all the world sees. Iraq is just another chapter in Barbara Tuchman's book.

How sad that we haven't come any further than the Trojans, who let that horse into the gates. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, we have a request.

These two parents—and a large number of other parents with whom we have spoken—turn to you and all Members of Congress to consider the lives now at risk. Consider the additional families and the broken hearts they will suffer by inaction or delay.

As soon as possible, bring 'em home Senators, bring 'em home.

Thank you.

PAUL E. SCHROEDER,
ROSEMARY A. PALMER,
Families of the Fallen for Change.

RESPONSES OF AMBASSADOR DAVID SATTERFIELD TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JIM WEBB

Question. Please provide a description of measurable standards—criteria used by the USG to award reconstruction contracts and prioritize and control distribution of funds.

Answer. After consultations with the administration, Congress provided specific funding levels for sectors under the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund (IRRF). This allowed Congress to give the initial legislative direction on the prioritization of funds. Following the closure of the CPA, the State Department, through the Iraq Reconstruction Management Office (IRMO), determined specific USG implementing agencies for IRRF sector projects, within guidelines established by Congress. The primary IRRF implementing agencies are the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Division (USACE–GRD) and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

The more than 13,000 IRRF projects vary widely in their scope and purpose. Some are relatively simple contracts for procurement of goods and services, while others involve the construction of large, complex electricity, oil, and water facilities. For more complex construction projects, the implementing agencies write detailed scopes of work for projects, which form the basis for requests for proposals from contractors. Depending on the nature of the project, these scopes of work tend to be very detailed, and are project specific. The implementing agencies follow their relevant Federal Acquisition Rules governing contract award, which allow a range of procurement approaches. For example, the Department of State has asked contractors to comply with FAR competitive contracting to the greatest extent practicable in a post-conflict environment.

IRMO prioritizes and manages funds by developing and coordinating the Iraq foreign assistance budget request. The implementing agencies make every effort to monitor the contracts for compliance with the specific requirements, and verify that

work has been completed satisfactorily before disbursing payment. They also work closely with our auditors, including SIGIR and GAO, to ensure that we are conducting adequate project oversight. While SIGIR and GAO have identified specific problems, SIGIR has consistently noted that most U.S. reconstruction projects have been completed satisfactorily. Finally, reporting mechanisms are in place to assist implementing agencies and IRMO in identifying early any potential issues with project progress and compliance.

Over the last 3 years, we have learned a number of lessons in managing our reconstruction contracts in Iraq. Although we initially awarded large contracts to international design-build contractors, we have increasingly shifted our focus toward specific, fixed-cost contracts, which we have awarded to regional and Iraqi contractors in larger numbers. Along the way, we have improved our management capabilities, including on-sight inspections and financial tracking. These efforts contributed to improved distribution of funds by providing greater information on which reform and reconstruction efforts may require greater or lesser resources to achieve U.S. policy objectives. We will continue to work closely with our auditors to improve our project management as we complete the remaining IRRF projects.

Question. Please provide a breakout of reconstruction funds that have gone to U.S. companies versus local Iraqis. Ambassador Satterfield said 80 percent of assistance is now going to Iraqis. Since when?

Answer. We are currently working with IRMO and the agencies responsible for implementing IRRF projects to compile a specific response to your inquiry, and we expect to respond more completely by February 16.

As a general matter, early in the reconstruction effort U.S. implementing agencies entered into contracts with large American international design-build contractors. Later, in an effort to complete reconstruction projects more effectively and at lower cost, the implementing agencies shifted toward direct fixed-price contracts with Iraqi and regional firms and labor to the greatest possible extent.

This allowed quicker disbursement of funds while reducing security risks to Americans, lowering overhead costs and increasing employment opportunities for Iraqis.

Question. Please provide a chart of all Iraq reconstruction funds to reflect how much has been appropriated, obligated, expended, and for what activities.

Answer.

IRRF FINANCIAL SUMMARY—JANUARY 30, 2007

(In millions of USD)

Sector	Apportion	Committed			Obligated			Disbursed		
		Last week	Current	Change	Last week	Current	Change	Last week	Current	Change
Security and Law Enforcement	$5,002.59	$4,988.66	$4,988.17	($0.49)	$4,986.19	$4,986.19	0.00	$4,715.92	$4,716.47	$0.56
Electricity Sector	4,239.51	4,222.70	4,224.34	1.64	4,079.16	4,080.91	$1.75	3,016.61	3,029.57	12.95
Oil Infrastructure	1,724.70	1,678.03	1,678.03	0.00	1,584.47	1,584.47	0.00	1,318.17	1,318.28	0.12
Justice, Public Safety and Civil Society	1,304.15	1,303.93	1,303.93	0.00	1,297.72	1,297.72	0.00	981.13	982.42	1.28
Democracy	1,001.85	1,001.71	1,001.74	0.03	1,001.71	1,001.74	0.03	893.05	893.61	0.55
Education, Refugees, Human Rights, Governance	401.50	401.33	401.26	(0.08)	401.33	401.26	(0.08)	343.90	354.55	10.65
Roads, Bridges and Construction	333.60	331.94	331.95	0.00	325.84	324.59	(1.26)	209.56	209.55	(0.01)
Health Care	818.90	817.57	817.61	0.04	801.69	801.76	0.07	614.47	621.37	6.90
Transportation and Communications	464.12	464.11	464.11	0.00	458.23	458.30	0.068	339.70	339.69	(0.01)
Water Resources and Sanitation	2,131.08	2,121.16	2,119.78	1.38	2,049.75	2,048.37	(1.38)	1,436.47	1,444.08	7.61
Private Sector Development	813.95	813.91	813.95	0.04	813.91	813.95	0.04	764.90	765.96	1.06
Admin. Expense (USAID, State)	213.00	212.45	212.45	0.00	212.45	212.45	0.00	164.05	164.24	0.19
Total	18,448.95	18,357.52	18,357.33	(0.19)	18,012.46	18,011.71	(0.74)	14,797.93	14,839.79	41.85
IRRF II Construction		10,573.40	10,573.21	(0.19)	10,250.09	10,249.35	(0.75)	8,027.37	8,053.62	26.25
IRRF II Non-Construction		6,782.41	6,782.38	(0.03)	6,760.65	6,760.62	(0.03)	5,877.51	5,892.56	15.05
IRRF II Democracy		1,001.71	1,001.75	0.03	1,001.71	1,001.75	0.03	893.05	893.61	0.55
IRRF I Total	2,473.30	2,473.30	2,473.30	0.00	2,232.30	2,232.30	0.00	2,139.00	2,139.00	0.00
Grand Total IRRF I & II	20,922.25	20,830.82	20,830.63	(0.19)	20,244.76	20,244.01	(0.74)	16,936.93	16,978.79	41.85

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM OTHER DONORS SUPPLIED BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, DC, February 1, 2007.

Hon. JOSEPH R. BIDEN, Jr.,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: In response to your question to Ambassador David Satterfield during his testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on January 25, we would like to provide you with the following information.

You asked about the latest information on non-United States international donor contributions to the reconstruction of Iraq. We are therefore including the most recently relevant edition of the October 2006, 2207 Report. As you will note, significant progress has been made on the International Compact for Iraq.

More recent and updated information will be included in the new 2207 Report set for release early this year.

We look forward to working with the committee to answer any further questions you may have on this or any other matter.

Sincerely,

JEFFREY BERGNER,
Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs.

Attachment: Appendix II

APPENDIX II

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM OTHER DONORS

INTERNATIONAL RESOURCES FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION OF IRAQ

During this past quarter, the United States has been continuing to work very closely with Iraq and international donors to broaden and deepen international assistance for Iraq. A major development was the launching on July 27 of work on a new International Compact for Iraq that is similar to the International Compact for Afghanistan that was adopted in January 2006. Iraq and the United Nations, in close cooperation with the World Bank, share the lead in developing this new agreement between Iraq and the international community. Under the Compact, the Iraqi Government will undertake a series of economic reforms and initiatives for good governance (for example, to combat corruption) in return for commitments of financial and other forms of foreign assistance. On September 18, 2006, at sessions held to inform about the Compact held alongside the U.N. General Assembly and IMF/World Bank Annual Meetings in New York and Singapore to inform the international community about the Compact, the Foreign and Finance Ministers of more than 35 countries and international organizations expressed their support for the Compact. Final work on the Compact is expected to be completed in time for formal adoption before the end of November 2006, by Iraq and an even larger group of countries and organizations. Deputy Secretary of the Treasury Robert Kimmitt and State Department Counselor Philip Zelikow are co-leads in USG efforts in support of the Compact.

At the October 2003 Madrid International Donors' Conference, donors other than the United States pledged over $13.5 billion in assistance for the reconstruction of Iraq. This includes $8 billion in assistance from foreign governments and $5.5 billion in lending from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF)—all to be disbursed between 2004 and 2007. In January 2006, $3.2 billion of the pledges of non-U.S. assistance had been disbursed. By August 2006, disbursements of non-U.S. assistance had increased significantly, to about $3.7 billion; approximately $3 billion of this was from other donor governments, either in bilateral projects, or through the World Bank and U.N.-administered International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRFFI). (Currently, United Nations and World Bank projects in water, electricity, education, health and other areas are in various stages of completion.) By the end of August 2006, of a total of $1.16 billion deposited in the U.N. Trust Fund, $861 million had been committed to specific projects and $534 million disbursed. Of the $456.8 billion pledged to the World Bank, $395 million had been committed and $67.5 million disbursed. The IMF approved $436 million in balance-of-payments support in September 2004 and an additional $685 million of such support in December 2005.

Since Madrid, donors have pledged an additional $652 million. A number of countries and institutions have disbursed assistance above and beyond what they

pledged at the 2003 Madrid Conference, including Australia, the European Commission, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, and Norway.

Donor government disbursements are defined here as funds that have left government treasuries. Because, however, much of the assistance is being channeled for implementation through trust funds, contractors, NGOs, international organizations and Iraqi institutions, there is normally some time between disbursement by the donor and impact on the ground in Iraq.

Donors committed an additional $235 million in new contributions to the IRFFI at the July 2005 meeting of the IRFFI Donors' Committee at the Dead Sea in Jordan. Most of this was new pledges since Madrid, and most has already been deposited in the IRFFI. The Islamic Development Bank agreed that it would make $300 million in new concessional financing available in November 2005. The World Bank and Iraq agreed in principle on an up to $500 million framework program for concessional IDA lending. The World Bank Board has approved two IDA loans under this program: A $100 million education project and a $135 million transportation project, approved in June 2006, that will help rehabilitate roads and bridges. In December 2005, the IMF agreed to a Stand-By Arrangement (SBA) with Iraq that makes $685 million available for balance-of-payment support.

THE INTERNATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION FUND FACILITY FOR IRAQ (IRFFI)

The Madrid Conference authorized the establishment of the IRFFI, which gives donors a multilateral channel for their Iraq assistance—in addition to their bilateral efforts. The IRFFI contains two primary trust funds, one managed by the World Bank, the other by the United Nations. Funds channeled through the IRFFI come from donors' pledges made at the Madrid Conference and those made subsequently. There are currently 116 IRFFI projects (103 United Nations, 13 World Bank) in various stages of completion. Details on the IRFFI can be found at www.irffi.org.

- Current donor commitments to the IRFFI total about $1.6 billion. Of this amount, $491 million is from Japan; $620 million from the European Commission; $127 million from the United Kingdom; $69 million from Canada; $40 million from Spain; $36 million from Australia, $29.8 million from Italy; $13.7 million from Norway; $12.9 million from the Netherlands; $16.4 million from Sweden; $15 million from the Republic of Korea; $10 million each from the United States, Denmark, Germany, India, Iran, Kuwait, and Qatar. Belgium, Finland, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, New Zealand, and Turkey have committed varying amounts under $10 million.
- Of the approximately $1.6 billion in commitments, donors (including the United States) have deposited $1.54 billion in the IRFFI trust funds as of August 31, 2006.
- The United Nations and World Bank submit their project proposals for approval to the Iraqi Strategic Review Board (ISRB). The ISRB is an Iraqi coordinating body chaired by the Minister of Planning and Development Cooperation that reviews requests for and offers of external donor assistance.
- The IRFFI Donors' Committee held its fourth meeting at the Dead Sea in Jordan, on July 18–19, 2005. The Donors' Committee consists of 18 countries that have committed at least $10 million to the fund facility and two rotating representatives (currently Finland and Turkey) from countries that have committed less than $10 million. As of the end of September 2006, the implementing U.N. agencies have legally committed $644 million and disbursed $546 million of total approved projects amounting to $861 million. So far in 2006, the IRFFI has received approximately $168 million in new commitments ($152 million from the European Union, $10 million from Germany, $2.4 million from Spain, $1.5 from Australia, $1.1 from Luxembourg, $1 million from New Zealand and smaller contributions from Finland, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, the Netherlands, and Norway). Canada continued its chairmanship of the IRFFI Donors' Committee, which it assumed from Japan in February, 2005.
- At the Dead Sea meeting, the Iraqi Transitional Government (ITG) assumed its central role in soliciting and coordinating international support for Iraqi reconstruction. It presented an updated National Development Strategy and a series of new donor coordination mechanisms on the ground in Iraq. Together these efforts represented an important shift toward an Iraq-led reconstruction process, strongly supported by the international community. Chaired by the ITG, but supported by the United Nations and World Bank, these new coordinating bodies, which include a "Baghdad Coordination Group" of all donors on the ground and "Sectoral Working Groups," have been holding meetings since Au-

gust 2005. So far, Sectoral Working Groups have been established for Health, Education, Rule of Law, and Electricity.

- The next IRFFI Donors' Committee meeting will be scheduled, after close consultation with the new Iraqi Government, and depending on developments with the International Compact with Iraq. The Donor Committee will discuss how to best align IRFFI with the Compact Process.

UPDATES ON SELECTED MAJOR DONORS

The January 2004 report to Congress included a table of pledges made at the Madrid International Donors Conference. Since that report, donors have begun disbursing and implementing their assistance. Below are major donor highlights:

Japan

Japan has pledged and disbursed more assistance to Iraq than any other country except the United States. By May 2005, Japan had entirely obligated the $1.5 billion of grant aid that it had pledged in Madrid. Japan is currently in discussions with Iraq on the first projects to be implemented from its $3.5 billion concessional loan program. Moreover, based on the agreement of the Paris Club concerning the treatment of Iraq's debt, the Government of Japan and the Government of Iraq agreed upon the details of the conditions for debt relief. Notes to this effect were exchanged on November 24, 2005, in Tokyo between both Ministers for Foreign Affairs.

The debt will be cancelled by 80 percent in three stages, which amounts to a reduction of approximately US$6 billion. In late March, Japan announced and notified the Iraqi side of its intention to provide yen loans up to the total amount of 76,489 million yen (approximately $655 million) toward three projects in Iraq. On June 18, Japan confirmed with the new Iraqi Government the decision to extend yen-loan up to 3,348 million yen (approximately $28 million) for implementing another project in Samawah. Exchange of Notes will be signed with the new Iraqi Government regarding the provision of these loans. The four projects are:

- *Umm-Qasr Port Sector Rehabilitation Project (*~$259 million): To dredge the port and surrounding shipping lanes, remove wrecked ships and rehabilitate the port facilities, as well as to provide equipment and materials such as dredgers and other items. This project aims to reconstruct the Port of Umm-Qasr and its function as the transportation and distribution network hub.
- *Irrigation Sector Loan (*~$81 million): To provide irrigation drainage pumps and equipment and materials for maintaining the operation of irrigation channels in some sites where agriculture is important, including in the Governorate of Al-Muthanna. This sector loan aims to improve the agricultural production and increase employment in Iraq.
- *Al-Mussaib Thermal Power Plant Rehabilitation Project (*~$315 million): To rehabilitate the existing Al-Mussaib thermal power plants (units 1 and 3), located in the Baghdad suburbs. This project aims to improve the power supply mainly targeting Baghdad.
- *Samawah Bridges and Roads Construction Project ($28 million):* To construct a new bridge (Samawah North Bridge), rebuild provisional bridges (Mandi Bridge and Hillal Bridge) to cross over the Euphrates and construct their connecting roads in Al-Samawah and its vicinity.

In December 2005, Japan decided to extend a grant of $14.4 million to UNDP for the Iraqi Reconstruction and Employment Program and Electricity Network enforcement Program in Al-Muthanna.

In earlier disbursements of its grants assistance, Japan deposited a total of $491 million to the IRFFI ($361 million to the U.N. fund and $130 million to the World Bank fund). Japan has also deposited $10 million to the International Finance Corporation's (IFC) Small Business Financing Facility. In addition, Japan has disbursed $116 million directly to international organizations to implement projects such as restoration of water and sewage systems, garbage collection and sanitation. The balance of Japan's disbursements, $938 million, have been in direct bilateral projects or channeled through Iraqi institutions and NGOs for implementation. Major Japanese contributions (in grants):

- *Electricity:* Rehabilitation of four electrical power stations (Taji Gas Turbine, Mosul Gas Turbine, Mosul Hydroelectric and Hartha Power), construction of a diesel power station and provision of generators in Samawah, rehabilitation of the National Dispatch Center and provision of 27 mobile electricity substations.
- *Water and Sanitation:* Provision of 38 water tankers, 311 water tanks and 6 water treatment units in the Al-Muthanna governorate. Provision of 30 compact water treatment units in Baghdad and rehabilitation of water and sewage facilities in schools in Baghdad and Nineveh.

- *Health:* Grant assistance for Japanese NGO projects to the Samawah Maternity and Children's Hospital, which have provided medical equipment, including infant incubators, phototherapy units for incubators and electrocardiographs to the only children's and maternity hospital in the Al-Muthanna Governorate. Medical supplies and equipment also have been provided to the Samawah General Hospital and Al-Rumaytha and Al-Khidhur hospitals and to 32 primary health centers in the Al-Muthanna governorate. Rehabilitation and equipping of four general hospitals (Nasiriyah, Najaf, Diwaniyah and Samawah) in southern Iraq, four more in northern Iraq (Kirkuk, Erbil, Mosul, and Dahuk) and three in Central Iraq (Baghdad, Amarah, and Kut).
- *Roads and Bridges:* The repair of roads between Al-Khidhur and Darraji and between Mandi and Sawa and other roads in Al-Muthanna governorate as well as the provision of construction equipment to restore damaged roads and bridges in the governorate. Rehabilitation of 90 kilometers of roads in Al-Muthanna governorate.
- *Education and Culture:* Contributions to UNESCO, which are building capacity at the Ministry of Education and restoring the Iraqi National Museum's restoration laboratory. Through HABITAT, assistance for rehabilitation of about 200 schools in Basrah, Samawah, Nashiria and Amra and of about 3,000 houses and community facilities in Baghdad, Samawah and Kirkuk.
- *Security:* Donation of 1,150 police vehicles, 150 police buses, 500 police motorcycles and 20 armored vehicles. Donation of 70 fire trucks to Baghdad, Basrah, and Al-Muthanna. Donation of 742 ambulances.
- *Capacity Building:* Training over 1,200 Iraqis, including Iraqi diplomats, staff of the Al-Muthanna TV station, museum officials, statisticians, election officials, medical staff, and hospital directors.

The United Kingdom

At Madrid, the United Kingdom pledged £296 million ($545 million) for the Iraq reconstruction effort for 2004 through 2006. This was included in the United Kingdom's total pledge of £544 million ($920 million), which counted the United Kingdom's previously announced assistance for the humanitarian effort and its assessed portion of the European Commission's assistance. As of September 2006, the United Kingdom had disbursed £277 million ($521 million) of its Madrid $545 million reconstruction pledge.

The United Kingdom has disbursed approximately £193 million ($360 million) for projects in support of reconstruction in southern Iraq, governance and economic capacity-building, the justice sector, independent media and civil society. The United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) is responsible for these projects. The United Kingdom also deposited $127 million in the IRFFI—$71 million to the World Bank Trust Fund and $56 million to the U.N. Trust Fund.

The DFID program in 2006–2007 is entirely bilateral and focuses on economic reform; infrastructure (improving power and water services in the south); governance and institutional-building in Baghdad and in the south; and support for civil society and political participation.

In southern Iraq, the United Kingdom has provided support to rehabilitate emergency infrastructure, working closely with the United Kingdom military; an infrastructure project to deliver improved power and water services; support to build the institutional capacity of the four southern governorates and private sector development; a team of technical specialists to advise local councils, U.K. military and other donors on infrastructure rehabilitation and construction; and support to strengthen independent broadcasting.

In central Iraq, the United Kingdom has supported the Iraqi Government on economic reform issues; supported the Center of Government Program to improve functions of government; supported the justice sector; provided funds for a Civil Society Fund (CSF) to develop legitimate and representative Iraqi NGOs; and provided funds for a Political Participation Fund (PPF) to encourage poor and marginalized sections of Iraqi society to engage in the constitutional process. Major U.K. contributions:

- *Electricity:* Repaired transmission lines from Hartha Power station to Basrah city, securing electricity supplies for 1.5 million residents; improved power distribution to 13 areas of Basrah. U.K. support will add or secure an additional 470 MW of power equivalent to a 24-hour supply to over 235,000 households.
- *Water and Sanitation:* Replaced 800 km of water mains, repaired over 5,000 leaks, cleared out 7,000 septic tanks and cleared over 40 kms of drains across the four southern governorates; constructed a water training center in Basra to increase the skills of Iraqi engineers in water treatment and leakage repair, and improved water supply to 60,000 people in Al Amtahiyah. Current activities in-

clude refurbishing a reverse osmosis unit, building water towers and reservoirs, and refurbishing a pump station. These will directly benefit up to 1 million people in Basra.

- *Capacity-Building:* Supported new Provincial Development Committees which produced Iraq-led draft Provincial Development Strategies, which included resource statements to bid for funding from the central government. Trained 216 Iraqi judges, lawyers, and prosecutors in human rights, international humanitarian law and independence of the judiciary. Trained 182 journalists, editors and media managers on humanitarian and independent reporting. New, independent TV and radio programs in southern Iraq went on air during summer 2005 through DFID funding.
- *Supporting Iraqi Humanitarian Response:* DFID consultants to the IIG Fallujah Core Coordination Group from December 2004 helped set up mechanisms for the Iraqi Government to respond to future crises.
- *Macroeconomic Reform:* Assisted the Iraqi Government in drawing up its 2006 budget, reaching agreement with the IMF on a $436 million Emergency Post-Conflict Assistance package, negotiating the Paris Club debt reduction deal and drafting a National Development Strategy.
- *Support to the Political Process:* Helped to promote the political process through support for the electoral commission ($10 million plus advisers on security and public information), civil society organizations (~$8.7 million) and public participation in the elections (~$12.6 million). Helped to set up the Prime Minister's office and the Cabinet and Committee system. Helped achieve continuity in the transition to the new elected administration.

Further information on the DFID program in Iraq, including quarterly updates, is available at http://www.dfid.gov.uk/countries/asia/iraq.asp.

Canada

Canada has pledged C$300 million (about $230 million) for Iraq's humanitarian relief and reconstruction, including C$245 million ($187 million) pledged at Madrid and C$55 million ($42 million) in urgent humanitarian relief disbursed through multilateral relief agencies in response to the U.N. Humanitarian Appeal. Canada became Chair of the IRFFI Donors' Committee in 2005. Canada has committed C$100 million (about $76 million) to the IRFFI, of which it initially deposited C$60 million ($44.7 million) equally divided between the United Nations and the World Bank trust funds. In September 2004, Canada deposited another C$20 million ($15.3 million) in the U.N. trust fund to be used to support Iraqi elections. In December 2005, an additional C$10 million (about $8.5 million) was deposited to support United Nations support to elections and human rights.

In addition to funding to IRFFI, Canada has allocated over C$100 million in other, non-IRFFI assistance. This includes C$40 million (about $34 million) to UNICEF for social sector funding and bilateral assistance through CARE Canada for reconstruction work to improve basic services in water and sanitation, basic health and education and child protection. CIDA also allocated C$3 million (about $2.6 million) to assist in the restoration and management of the ecological health of the "Mesopotamian Marshes."

In the area of governance, human rights and civil society capacity-building, Canada is supporting a number of projects including: C$15 million (about $12.8 million) for the Rapid Civilian Deployment Mechanism for capacity-building, including governance; C$10 million (about $8.5 million) for a civil society capacity-building fund, including media and human rights training; C$5 million (about $4.2 million) to the Middle East Good Governance Fund; $C2 million (about $1.7 million) for human rights and diversity management training; C$2 million (about $1.7 million) for support to the constitutional process and federal systems; C$700,000 million (about $600,000) to UNDP for research on governance questions; and a small fund for building a culture of human rights in Iraq and the Middle East. Canada also supported elections with an additional C$7 million (about $5.8 million) allocated to the International Mission for Iraq Elections. In the security sector, Canada allocated C$10 million (about $7.9 million) over 2 years for deployment of Canadian police instructors to assist in the training of Iraqi police at the Jordan International Police Training Center (JIPTIC) as well as funding to deploy senior police advisors to the Ministry of Interior. Since January, Canada has provided an additional C$7.5 million (about $6.4 million) to these activities. Total Canadian assistance to the security sector is now C$17.5 million (about $15 million). Canada plans to focus the remainder of its assistance on good governance and the promotion of human rights including women's rights.

More details on Canadian assistance to Iraq are available at www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/iraq.

The European Commission (EC)

There have been several notable developments in EC assistance to Iraq. Since April, the EC has prepared a communication entitled, "The EU and Iraq: A Framework for Engagement," which is intended to provide the basis for an EU-wide strategy and proposes EU support to the new Iraqi Government in five areas:

- To further an inclusive democracy;
- To strengthen rule of law and respect for human rights;
- To support basic services and job creation;
- To economic recovery and reform; and,
- To the development of a functioning administration.

Additional information on the EU Framework for Engagement can be found at: http://europa.eu.int.

Following discussions among member states, 120 million euros of the EC's €200m allocated for 2006, was designated for IRFFI, to support provision of basic services, as was previous financing. At the same meeting, a 6-million-euro proposal to provide a technical assistance facility was agreed upon. The EC will be entering into discussion with member states on the balance of the 200 million euro pledge for 2006 later in October 2006.

The Head of the EC Delegation has been in Baghdad for the past few months and the Commission is in the process of training and deploying additional staff. In addition, with the new Iraqi Government in place, the EC soon expects to launch negotiations for a Trade and Cooperation Agreement.

United Nations (U.N.)

As of August 31, 2006, donors had committed approximately $1.1 billion to the U.N. trust fund of the IRFFI. Of this, about $1 billion had been deposited. The United Nations has developed a strategic planning framework and organized their programs into "clusters" with various U.N. specialized agencies working together under a cluster lead agency in each. Originally comprised of 11 clusters, the United Nations reorganized the clusters into 7 lettered clusters adopted in July 2005. The clusters are:

A. Agriculture, Food Security, Environment and Natural Resource Management
B. Education and Culture
C. Governance and Human Development
D. Health and Nutrition
E. Infrastructure Rehabilitation
F. Refugees, IDPs and Durable Solutions
G. Support to Electoral Process

As of August 2006, the United Nations had developed 103 projects, valued at $861 million, all of which have been approved for implementation by the Iraqi Government. Among these projects, the United Nations has provided school supplies, rehabilitated schools, provided vaccines, supported internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees, conducted capacity-building training programs for Iraqi officials and assisted in the elections. In January 2006, the U.N. trust fund had legally committed $564 million and disbursed $430 million of the total approved funding. By the end of August 2006, the U.N. trust fund had obligated $644 million in binding contracts for implementation and had disbursed $546 million. A full list of the U.N.'s IRFFI projects is available at the www.irffi.org Web site.

World Bank

As of September 2006, donors had pledged approximately $457 million to the World Bank trust fund of the IRFFI, of which approximately $454 million had been deposited. With these deposits, the World Bank is implementing the following 13 projects amounting to US$401 million:

[In millions of dollars]

Operation	*Projected costs*
Emergency Textbooks	$40
Emergency School Rehabilitation	60
Emergency Baghdad Water Supply and Sanitation	65
Emergency Water Supply, Sanitation and Urban Reconstruction	90
Emergency Health Rehabilitation	25
Emergency Private Sector Development I	55
Capacity Building I	3.6
Capacity Building II	7
Emergency Community Infrastructure	20

Operation	*Projected costs*
Emergency Disabilities	19.5
Emergency Social Protection	8
Emergency Household Survey, Technical Assistance	1.5
Emergency Household Survey & Policies for Policy Reduction	5.1

Ten of the thirteen World Bank trust fund-financed projects, valued at US$388 million, are grants implemented directly by Iraqi governmental authorities. Three projects, amounting to US$12 million, are capacity-building and technical assistance activities implemented by the World Bank.

Through these projects, the World Bank has financed more than 79 million textbooks, rehabilitated or constructed more than a hundred schools, trained hundreds of Iraqi officials, and rehabilitated dozens of rural irrigation or drainage schemes. The World Bank is also rehabilitating and upgrading hospitals, centers for the disabled, and telecom and water supply systems in Iraq. The latest World Bank ITF-financed projects focus on helping Iraq develop strategic approaches to reducing poverty, protecting the vulnerable, and designing sustainable economic programs. These new projects support the Bank's core objective to help Iraq develop institutional frameworks, policies, and systems for more effective and transparent use of Iraq's resources.

The World Bank relies mainly on a cadre of high-level Iraqi staff providing daily support in Iraq to protect management teams. The Bank also has two contracted international staff in Baghdad's International Zone, and is in the process of further strengthening its presence in Baghdad. The Bank has several video-conferencing facilities in Baghdad and an office in Amman that supports the Iraqi program.

The World Bank places a major emphasis on capacity-building, policy advice, and economic and sector work, which are funded from the Bank's own budget. The Bank has prepared policy papers for the Iraqi Government on a wide range of topics, responding to urgent Iraqi Government requests for policy advice. In July 2006, the Bank provided the Iraqi Government with a Briefing Book on core reforms, which was prepared in close cooperation with Iraqi authorities. The Briefing Book gives priority to strengthening governance and institutions, modernizing social safety nets, and accelerating economic reforms. The Bank is currently providing technical support to the Iraqi Government in the formulation of the International Compact. In 2007, the Bank plans to undertake, in partnership with the Iraqis, a Public Institutional and Expenditure Assessment to outline the steps for strengthening the transparency and accountability of Iraq's public finance policies and institutions, and help Iraq meet the goals set in the Iraq Compact.

At Madrid, the World Bank announced an anticipated lending envelope of $3 to $5 billion, conditional on Iraq's creditworthiness. In December 2004, Iraq cleared its arrears to the World Bank, one of the requirements to resume lending. The World Bank provides a framework for up to $500 million of IDA (International Development Association) concessional lending. The strategy also provides for up to $500 million in IBRD (nonconcessional) lending, assuming Iraq makes critical progress regarding IBRD creditworthiness. In November 2005, the World Bank Executive Board approved the first $100 million IDA loan within the $500 million program. The $100 million Third Emergency Education Project (TEEP) will help the Government of Iraq alleviate school overcrowding and lay the groundwork for educational reform. In June 2006, the Bank approved a $135 million IDA transportation project that will help rehabilitate Iraqi roads and bridges.

IMF

At the Madrid Donors' Conference, the IMF pledged to provide over $2.55 billion in lending to Iraq. On September 29, 2004, the IMF Board approved an Emergency Post-Conflict Assistance (EPCA) package that provided Iraq SDR 297.1 million (about $430 million) in balance-of-payments support. The main goals under the EPCA were to maintain macroeconomic stability and lay the groundwork for a long-term development and reform program. On December 23, 2005, the IMF approved a Stand-by Arrangement (SBA) for Iraq that provides SDR 475 million (about $685 million) in balance-of-payments support. The 15-month SBA provides a comprehensive framework of policies for economic reform and growth in coming years. The first tranche of the SBA, worth $114 million, became available to the Iraqi Government at the time of SBA approval. To date, Iraq has not drawn against the funds in either the EPCA or SBA programs. The IMF was to do quarterly reviews of Iraq's progress under the SBA. The first such review, scheduled for March 2006, was postponed because of the lengthy Iraqi Government formation process. IMF Executive Board consideration of the combined first and second quarterly reviews is now scheduled for August 2.

Reaching the SBA also triggered the second 30 percent tranche of debt reduction under Iraq's agreement with the Paris Club. To obtain the final 20 percent tranche of Paris Club debt relief, Iraq must complete 3 years of successful performance under the SBA.

The IMF also provides technical assistance to Iraq, including training in such policy areas as public expenditure management, fiscal federalism, tax policy, tax and customs administration, monetary operations, banking supervision, payments system reform and statistics. Some of this training has been done jointly with the World Bank. The IMF has assisted in coordinating macroeconomic training with the other major providers: The World Bank, the United States, and the United Kingdom.

DEBT FORGIVENESS

Reduction of Iraq's external debt burden to sustainable levels, another top priority for Iraq's economic development, is a key component of U.S. donor coordination. In November 2004, the Paris Club group of creditors agreed to forgive, in phases, 80 percent of approximately $40 billion in Iraqi debt held by its members. As of July 2006, 17 of 18 Paris Club signatories of that agreement have signed bilateral debt agreements with the Iraqis implementing the 2004 agreement. Russia is the only remaining Paris Club signatory not to have signed a bilateral debt agreement with Iraq; Russia has indicated it could conclude an agreement soon. The United States itself went beyond Paris Club terms and has forgiven 100 percent of the $4.1 billion in U.S.-held Iraqi debt. In total, over $30 billion in Iraqi debt either has been forgiven, or will be, by Paris Club and several non-Paris Club countries, provided Iraq meets agreed-upon conditions, including 3 years of successful performance under the SBA. The United States continues to encourage non-Paris Club countries to provide debt reduction to Iraq at terms at least comparable to those offered by the Paris Club. The terms for forgiveness of what Iraq owes to non-Paris Club countries and commercial creditors are closely tied to the Paris Club deal. Iraq has completed a debt exchange with its commercial creditors on terms comparable to the Paris Club deal. One hundred percent of eligible large commercial creditors contacted accepted Iraq's offer. Iraq offered smaller creditors cash for debt, rather than new debt. Altogether, an overwhelming majority of commercial claimants has accepted Iraq's offer, covering about $20 billion in debt, which will result in approximately $16 billion in debt reduction over time.

OTHER MAJOR EFFORTS

With the help of U.S. advisors, the Ministry of Planning and Development Coordination has completed plans to eliminate the major hurdles faced by donors on the ground in Baghdad. Plans are being implemented to provide security, housing and office space to potential donors inside the International Zone. The accommodations, called "Donor Village," are inside the secure Army Corps of Engineers/PCO compound. Donors can occupy space, and they will reimburse the USG for billeting arrangements, office space, and meals. The cost-prohibitive nature of setting up individual offices and providing security for accommodations had previously been a major impediment to obtaining further donor assistance, and this integrated plan has been well received and coordinated.

USEFUL REFERENCES FOR INTERNATIONAL DONOR ASSISTANCE TO IRAQ

- The Donor Assistance Database: http://www.mop-iraq.org/dad.
- The UNDG Iraq Trust Fund and the World Bank Iraq Trust Fund Newsletters, updated every 2–3 months and both accessible at: http://www.irffi.org.

POLITICAL STRATEGY

THURSDAY, JANUARY 25, 2007 [P.M.]

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:47 p.m., in room SD–628, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Joseph R. Biden, Jr. (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Biden, Menendez, Casey, Webb, Lugar, Isakson.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR., U.S. SENATOR FROM DELAWARE

The CHAIRMAN. The hearing will come to order.

This afternoon's hearing may be one of the most important in the series of hearings we've had, and I'm not being solicitous to the witnesses that are here. We've heard repeatedly that there can be no stability in Iraq absent a political settlement. And I don't say what I'm about to say being critical of anyone particular. But, we are—find ourselves in a part of the world where our experience is not that deep. And where a lot of people formed opinions about what our policy should be in this capital without knowing, not just some of the basic history, but also the nuances based on religion, ethnicity, tribalism—very complicated. And although I'm sure everyone in this body and the press covering it was fully aware of the nature of the formation of what is now the Republic of Iraq and World War II, the panel we have before us today are eminently familiar with the intricacies of Iraqi politics. They are going to help us understand the likelihood of what everyone is saying is needed. We say it, everyone says there is no military solution, even those who are strongly supporting the President's new mission. And there's a need for a political solution.

We have asked the panel prior to their being here, to offer their assessment of the main elements of what any such political solution, assuming they believe one is possible, would look like. What compromises would be required and by whom. And what is a reasonable timeframe, if any, in which a settlement could be achieved, a political settlement.

What are likely to be the main sticking points? Has, as they say, too much water gone under the bridge to be able to get to the point where there is a possibility of a political solution? And we're very interested in their views on influence capacity and will of the main political actors to bring about national reconciliation. We also want to better understand the political objectives of the various actors,

such as the insurgents, the terrorists, the jihadis, the militia groups, some of the religious leaders, Sunni and Shia alike, Arab and Kurd.

And finally, we have asked the witnesses to comment on the role the United States and the international committee can play, if any, in facilitating a political settlement. And our witnesses are uniquely qualified to address these questions.

Not necessarily in this order, but first we will have the executive director of the Iraqi Foundation and senior fellow at the U.S. Institute of Peace, Ms. Rahim. The fact is she served as Iraq's representative to the United States. In 2003 and 2004 she testified before this committee, back in August 2002, and Madam, we welcome you back. It's a delight to have you here.

We also have the director for Middle East and North African Affairs of the National Endowment of Democracy, who has served as a spokesman for the Government of Iraq during the tenure of Prime Minister Jaafari. And we appreciate his interrupting his trip to London to fly. Doctor, thank you for literally having a little bit of a detour here. It's a significant detour to join us.

And, Mr. Talabani is the Washington representative of Kurdistan Regional Government, and we welcome you here today. You were kind enough to host Senator Hagel and me several years ago in Kurdistan, in what turned out to be a very bumpy ride for 7 hours through the mountains to get to that hospitality, and we appreciate it very much.

And Dr. Toby Dodge is a consulting senior fellow for the Middle East at the International Institute for Strategic Studies. He is the author of two similar books that I would strongly recommend to everyone. I'm not even asking for a share of the royalties. "Iraq's Future: The Aftermath of Regime Change," and "Inventing Iraq: The Failure of Nation Building and a History Denied." He has testified before this committee previously. He is articulate and insightful, and we want to thank him for coming today. It's not like he walked across the street. He had to come from London to do this and alter his schedule, and we truly appreciate it. So, I look forward to the testimony from all of you.

And I now yield to Senator Lugar.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD G. LUGAR, U.S. SENATOR FROM INDIANA

Senator LUGAR. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I thank you, again, for holding this hearing, and for the continuing series of hearings that we are enjoying on Iraq.

During the last several weeks, the Foreign Relations Committee has had the opportunity to engage policy experts and administration officials in a wide range of questions related to Iraq, including military strategy, economic reconstruction, regional dynamics. We have reviewed the President's current plan, and at least half a dozen alternatives. We have discussed what impact these plans might have on United States national security. We have examined our obligations to our troops, to the American people, and to our Iraqi allies.

Virtually all these inquiries have confirmed that the outcome in Iraq will hinge on whether a political reconciliation can be achieved

in that country. As I have said on many occasions during the last several years, it depends on whether Iraqis want to be Iraqis. Will various factions and subfactions within Iraq buy into a political compromise, and can such a political deal create stability and prevent violent fragmentation of the country? Can the Maliki government manage this process effectively and lead the nation, rather than act as representatives of the Shiite majority?

These questions are especially vital to our current policy discussions because the President's plan depends on the premise that reducing violence in Baghdad will create political stability that is a precondition for political reconciliation. In previous testimony, Secretary Richard Haass, highlighted the fundamental disconnect with which we are contending when he observed, and I quote from Secretary Haass, "The U.S. goal is to work with Iraqis to establish a functioning democracy in which the interests and right of minorities are protected. The goal of the Iraqi Government appears to be to establish a country in which the rights and interests of the Shia majority are protected above all else."

In such a situation, even if additional troops have a discernable impact on the violence in Baghdad, this progress in the streets may be immaterial to achieving political reconciliation. And if this is true, all we can gain from a troop surge is a temporary and partial reduction of violence in Baghdad. That would have some salutary benefits for some Iraqis, but it would not help us achieve our strategic objectives.

In the absence of a clear connection between additional troops and political reconciliation, we might be better served by a course in which United States forces in Iraq are redeployed outside urban areas. From such positions they would still be a source of stability in the region and a deterrent to terrorism, adventurism by Iraq's neighbors, or a broader regional war.

We are grateful to our panel for joining us to discuss these critical questions this afternoon. We look forward to a thoughtful discussion about whether a political reconciliation in Iraq is possible. Whether the United States can affect the chances for such a reconciliation and whether the President's plan, or other alternatives, offer the best hope for accelerating that process.

I welcome the witnesses and look forward to their comments.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. With such a distinguished panel I always—the Chairman is better than me at knowing what the protocol should be, but I think on two measures, Ms. Rahim, you should begin first, and then with your permission we'll move to Mr. Talabani, then to Dr. Kubba, and then to Dr. Dodge. And I still love your books and I like you best. Anyway, very seriously, thank you for being here, Ms. Rahim, and the floor is yours. We look forward to your testimony.

STATEMENT OF REND AL-RAHIM, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, THE IRAQ FOUNDATION, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Ms. RAHIM. Thank you Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before your committee and it's certainly a pleasure to see you, and Senator Lugar again. I want to say that the views I express here are mine alone, they are not the views of any of the

institutions with which I am affiliated. I was asked to speak for 8 minutes, which is an incredibly short period of time.

The CHAIRMAN. If you need to speak for more, you go ahead. Just try to——

Ms. RAHIM. I will make short remarks. A written statement is filed for the record and I——

The CHAIRMAN. It will be entered in—all of your written statements will be placed in the record.

Ms. RAHIM. And I'm hoping that in the question-and-answer period, we'll be able to elaborate on more issues and I can talk about it in my presented statement.

I want to focus on the Shia-Sunni relationship in Iraq because I believe that, at present, this is the nexus of the problem that we have.

The situation in Iraq is indeed bleak, and as General Batraiz said, dire. We have an insurgency that is composed of many groups with different agendas. We have sectarian violence in which the actors are shadowy and the motives are murky. We have a political structure that feeds on and strengthens sectarian and ethnic divisions. We have political deadlock and a national reconciliation process that is going absolutely nowhere, state institutions that are undercapacitated or downright dysfunctional and a government that is ineffective in its primary task of serving the people.

Despite this, we should not fall into the fallacy of post hoc ergo propter hoc. The situation we have now in Iraq is not the inestimable result of the collapse of Saddam Hussein's regime. Instead, it is my firm view, that the political structure that was adopted by the CPA, in the early days, along with policies that were flawed and decisions that were disastrous for the country taken by the CPA—and I might add with the support of many Iraqi actors made the outcome that we see today virtually certain.

The cardinal and root error committed by the CPA with Iraqi collusion was to place Iraqi politics along purely sectarian and ethnic lines. This was a gross oversimplification of Iraqi society, arising from ignorance and intellectual laziness. And it ignored the complex texture and weave of the Iraqi social fabric.

This reductionist model served certain vested interests amongst Iraqi political groups. And yet the structure also increased religious, sectarian, and ethnic fanaticism in the country. It has entrenched the groups in their positions and deepened the divides instead of bridging the gaps.

What should our goals be in Iraq now? There is some short-term goals and some medium-term goals and the short-term I would single out the following very broadly: The reduction of violence in Baghdad and in the surrounding five governorates is essential; a political settlement that can give confidence to all groups in Iraq is absolutely indispensable; and, the strengthening of Iraq's national institutions is an essential component of building a viable state. Those are our three broad goals.

There are some medium goals that I will not go into in my oral statement, but I want to point out here that the vast majority of Iraqis want coexistence. They want a national political agenda, as opposed to a sectarian agenda. However, as in most countries, the majority is disempowered and voiceless.

I also want to address a misconception common today in Washington, which is that Sunnis and Shias in Iraq have been fighting it out for centuries. That is not accurate. The incidents of sectarian violence in Iraq's history is rare. Certainly nothing like the religious wars that raged in Europe intermittently for many centuries. The fighting we see today in Iraq is absolutely the worst in Iraq's history.

While it's true that the solutions to Iraq's problems are political, the violence impedes the quest for a political settlement. The violence in Baghdad and surrounding areas exacerbates the political tensions and deepens the sectarian divide. This level of violence also blinds the politicians, and the public, and saps the national will for reconciliation and for compromise. We need to reduce the level of violence in order to move the reconciliation process forward. We need to break the vicious cycle that currently dominates Iraqi politics and turn it, if possible, into a virtuous cycle in which a reduction of violence leads to a step in the right direction in politics and a step in the right direction in politics reduces the violence and so on and so forth. This is the opposite of what we have now.

So, instead of thinking of ending the violence, I would like to speak about breaking the cycle of violence in order to give Iraqis the opportunity to address and implement political objective.

Moreover, the model of "Clear, Hold, and Rebuild," although frequently annunciated has never actually been implemented. This needs to be implemented now. And whenever possible, Iraqi troops should be in the forefront of the rebuild phase of the Clear, Hold, and Rebuild because Iraqi forces need to be seen rebuilding in order to gain the trust of the people and to build their own confidence in themselves.

Simultaneously, the Government of Iraq should substantially increase the size of the Iraqi Army, and with multinational assistance, improve training, equipment, and command and control structures.

Mr. Chairman, I do not believe that there is ever a possibility of handing over to the Iraqi forces unless there is a serious effort, and the accomplishment of a much larger, much better trained, much better equipped Iraqi Army. At present, it is my view that the Iraqi forces that we have are simply unable to take over.

I spoke about broad objectives and I want to single out some of the prerequisites for a successful dialog. Iraqi political leaders have to abandon the "winner takes all" concept of politics. And for the time being politicians must abandon majoritarian and minoritarian modes of thinking. The Shia must accept that—however large their majority—they must share the territory, the resources, and the State of Iraq with all the others. The Shia leaders must change their rhetoric, which currently swings between victimhood and triumphantism.

The Sunnis on the other hand must relinquish the power they have been accustomed to and accept that there is a new order in Iraq. And the Sunni leaders have to declare against the insurgency and condemn the violence in a way that they have failed to do so far. They need to be squarely within the political framework, and can not continue to straddle both sides of the fence.

In practice, there are several areas that will contribute to national reconciliation. The first one is a constitutional revision. The current Constitution, Mr. Chairman, is not conducive to a viable state. And furthermore, it enshrines many of the problems that plague the Iraqi political process right now, and that divide the communities from one another. The Constitution has to be redrafted, both in terms of individual articles, and in terms of the architecture of the state that it envisions. The Sunnis were not involved in the writing of this Constitution to any significant measure. They need to have a strong say in what kind of constitution they are going to be living under. So, a constitutional revision must be an important element of the political framework, and it has to be started as soon as possible.

There is a committee that was established to review the Constitution, but I know that there is a certain level of resistance to such a review, both from some Shia groups and to some extent by the Kurds. And I think if we have this resistance continue, we are going to be in serious problems.

Another element of national reconciliation is a legislative agenda. And within that there is a de-Baathification law that needs to be revised. There is a new draft, but that draft has not gone to Parliament, and has been languishing in the de-Baathification committee.

An amnesty law has been talked about, but to my knowledge an amnesty law has not been drafted. Both of these need to be drafted, voted on by Parliament, and they need to be very closely linked to a credible judicial process. These laws should not be an excuse either for scapegoating or for allowing Baathis criminals back into politics. So a judicial process that is linked to those laws is essential.

At the same time we ought to have laws against hate speech and incitement to violence. A further element of legislation is that the Constitution talks about a bicameral Parliament. Nothing has been done to create a Iraqi Senate so far. It is my view that an Iraqi Senate, which does not depend on proportionality, and does not depend on majorities and minorities can be an important element in creating national consensus and in creating a forum for dialog and for problemsolving. I would urge the Iraqi Government to move forward with legislation on a Senate as quickly as possible.

On the issue of disarming the militias, I think a great deal has been said about this, but I do not think that it's possible to disarm the militias at this stage. Operationally the Iraqi Government does not have the forces to disarm the militias. Much more seriously, the political parties, which are all important, don't have the will for disarming the militias. All the political parties have their own militias, and if we start disarming one we must disarm all. There is simply no appetite in Iraq for doing that at present.

I think the best thing that we can do, for the moment, is to go after the renegade elements of the militias, to go after the criminal elements, to seize those and to curtail their activities. And as far as the orderly militias that are actually answerable to political parties, we should put pressure on the political parties to reign in those militias, to keep them at home, and to put them under strict discipline. The eventual disbanding of militias is going to be essen-

tial in Iraq's future. However, that will have to wait until a time when we do have a political compact, when Iraqi institutions are credible and powerful, and furthermore, when we have an economic cycle that can ensure jobs and an economic life for the members of those militias.

A further point in national reconciliation is reaching out to Sunnis, and I mean here, those Sunni groups that have not entered into the political process yet. The Iraqi Government and different Iraqi political parties have, from time to time, made an effort to reach out to those groups of Sunnis who are perhaps part of the insurgency or who are certainly supportive of the insurgency.

This in itself is a very important undertaking, but it has yielded limited outcome so far. The contacts have not resulted in an abatement of insurgency activities and have not promoted a national dialog with those insurgent groups. The demands of militant groups are frequently unrealistic and they cause deep concern particularly to the Shia. We should certainly not make national dialog contingent on the participation of militant Sunni groups, but we must accept those Sunni groups if they voluntarily wish to participate in political dialog.

Very quickly, I want to address some of the impediments to a national reconciliation. First of all, we should say that the Prime Minister has expressed a national reconciliation plan. He presented one back in June and it was very laudable, but we haven't seen very much happen. We can only assume that the Iraqi Government has the desire to affect such a national reconciliation, but we are not sure as to its ability.

And I think here we should not think about Prime Minister Maliki, himself, and we should not personalize it. The will and the capability has to come from a much wider group of political leaders. They as a totality, as a collective, have to have a will for this national reconciliation.

However, as far as the Shia are concerned, they are reluctant to relinquish any of their newfound power, and they are intellectually still afraid of the return of the Baathis in any guise or form, and although they will not admit that, this really—they are afraid of the Sunnis as being a broad cover of a return of the Baath.

The Sunnis, on the other hand, approach the political process with great distrust. They can not reconcile themselves yet to their loss of status and they have watched their position erode in state institutions that are built on proportionality and ethnicity and sectarianism. As a consequence, the Sunni political groups tacitly, or even openly, support the insurgency as their ultimate insurance policy.

Another major problem is the way that these groups view the nature of the Iraqi State. The Sunnis wish to see a stronger national government, which has the ability to acquire income and distribute income. The Shia prefer a much weaker government in which they could have a strong southern federation and they can order their own affairs. They have access to huge oil resources, they have agricultural resources, and importantly, they have access to ports. The Shia also want to have their own social and religious system in the south, and they want minimal interference in the government. Unfortunately, the Sunnis view such a system of government as de-

priving them of all resources and relegating them to the poor cousins in the countryside.

Mr. Chairman and Senator Lugar, I do not want to take the time from my colleagues. I would like to stop here, but I will be very glad to answer questions on a host of other issues.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Rahim follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF REND AL-RAHIM, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, THE IRAQ FOUNDATION, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to appear before your committee. The views I express are mine only, and not those of any organization with which I am affiliated.

I will focus on the impact of Shia-Sunni relations on the situation in Iraq, as I believe this to be the nexus of the problems.

At present the situation in Iraq looks bleak. We have,

- An insurgency composed of many groups with different agendas.
- Sectarian violence in which the actors are shadowy and the motives are murky.
- A political structure that feeds on and strengthens sectarian and ethnic divisions.
- Political deadlock and a national reconciliation process that is going nowhere.
- State institutions that are undercapacitated or downright dysfunctional
- A government that is ineffective in its primary task of serving the people.

Despite this, we should not fall into the fallacy of post hoc ergo propter hoc: The situation we have now is not the inevitable result of the collapse of Saddam Hussein's regime. Instead, the political structure that was adopted by the CPA in the early days, along with flawed policies and decision on the part of the CPA and Iraqi political actors, made this outcome virtually certain. The cardinal, root error committed by the CPA was to define and build Iraqi politics along purely sectarian and ethnic lines. This was a gross oversimplification of Iraqi society arising from ignorance and intellectual laziness, and it ignored the complex texture and weave of the Iraqi social fabric. Unfortunately, this reductionist model was encouraged by some Iraqi political groups that had a vested interest in promoting a sectarian or ethnic agenda. This structure has in turn increased religious, sectarian, and ethnic fanaticism in the country. It has entrenched the groups in their positions and deepened the divides instead of bridging the gaps.

In this regard, I would like to quote from a report I wrote in September 26, 2003:

> [When] the CPA appointed the GC, it promoted a blueprint for sectarian and ethnic proportional representation, rather than political representation.
>
> The sectarian and ethnic basis of the political process in Iraq and the prevalence of a clientage system are contrary to the establishment of democracy in Iraq based on a common and equal Iraqi citizenship. This puts Iraq well on the road to Lebanonization, a prospect (allegedly condemned by Iraqi politicians) that carries with it the seeds for grave future dangers in Iraq. As in Lebanon, it paves the way for future friction and the interference of external influences, two dangers that a still vulnerable Iraq is ill-equipped to face. The constitutional process that is taking shape is likely to entrench the flawed nature of this political process. Unless this tendency is countered by the emergence of national, recognizable political parties, particularly from the democratic center, the prospects for a true democracy are limited.

What should our goals in Iraq be? In the short term, we should aim for:

1. Reduction of violence in Baghdad and the five central governorates;
2. A political settlement that can give confidence to all groups in Iraq;
3. Strengthening of national institutions.

For these short-term goals to be sustainable, we need to set medium-term goals:

4. An end to zero-sum politics;
5. The development of national political platforms in lieu of sectarian and ethnic platforms;
6. A rational system of devolution of power to provinces or federated regions.

I would like to underline that the vast majority of Iraqis want coexistence, want a national political agenda, and are opposed to sectarian violence. However, as in most countries, the majority is disempowered. May I also address the misperception

common today in Washington, that the Sunnis and the Shia in Iraq have been "fighting it out for centuries." That is not accurate. The incidence of sectarian violence in Iraq's history is rare: Certainly nothing like the religious wars that raged in Europe intermittently for many centuries. The fighting we see today is the worst it has ever been in Iraq's history.

BREAKING THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE

While it is true that the solution to Iraq's problems is political, the violence impedes the quest for a political settlement. The violence in Baghdad and surrounding areas exacerbates the political tensions and deepens the sectarian divide. Whether perpetrated by insurgents or death squads, every killing calls forth an act of revenge in an endless bloody cycle of retaliation and counterretaliation. Every bombing in a Shia market inflames the Shia community against the Sunnis. In the mayhem, a Shia backlash against innocent Sunnis is inevitable.

This level of violence blinds the politicians and the public and saps the national will for reconciliation and compromise. It is imperative to reduce the level of violence in order to ease sectarian tensions and launch a credible reconciliation process. We need to break the vicious cycle that currently dominates Iraq and turn it into a virtuous cycle, in which lower levels of violence encourage reconciliation efforts, and more compromises reduce the violence.

Instead of thinking in terms of "ending the violence," it may be more useful to think of "breaking the cycle of violence," especially in Baghdad, in order to provide an opportunity for Iraqis to address and implement political objectives. The model of "clear, hold, and rebuild" has never been fully implemented because of lack of assets, and needs to be implemented now. Whenever possible, Iraqi troops should be in the forefront of the "rebuild" phase, to gain the trust of the people and build up their own confidence.

Simultaneously, the GOI needs to substantially increase the size of the Iraqi Army and, with multinational assistance, improve training, equipment, and command and control structures. But operational improvements alone cannot do the job: The Iraqi Army has to be infused with a sense of national mission, determination, and pride. Such intangible buildup is best provided by Iraqi commanders.

ELEMENTS OF NATIONAL RECONCILIATION

National dialog in Iraq is overdue. Iraqi political actors need to enter into a meaningful national dialog aimed at national reconciliation and a political compact. So far, there have only been large conferences full of fanfare and feel-good speeches in full view of the media. The dialog must be sustained, serious, and far-reaching in confronting differences and resolving disagreements.

There are prerequisites for a successful dialog:

- Iraqi political leaders have to abandon the "winner takes all" and "loser loses all" mentality.
- For the time being, politicians must abandon "majoritarian" and "minoritarian" thinking.
- The Shia must accept that, however large their majority, they must share the territory, the resources, and the state of Iraq with others.
- Shia leaders must change their rhetoric, which currently swings between victimhood and triumphalism.
- The Sunnis must learn to relinquish the power they have been accustomed to and accept the new political order.
- Sunni leaders have to declare against the insurgency and condemn violence. They need to be squarely within the political framework, and cannot continue to straddle both sides of the fence.

Constitutional revision

More specifically, revision of the Constitution is a central component of national reconciliation. The present Constitution is not conducive to a viable state and it enshrines many of the problems that plague Iraqi politics now. It has to be redrafted in terms of individual articles and in terms of the structure of the state it projects. Additionally, the Constitution was written by the Shia and the Kurdish parties; the Sunnis were invited into the process late and did not have a significant input. The Sunnis have deep fears about aspects of the Constitution, and their concerns must be addressed.

Legislative agenda

Specific laws have to be revised or enacted that bolster confidence among the different social groups. Among these are the de-Baathification law and an amnesty

law, both of which should be tightly linked to a credible judicial process. There cannot be national reconciliation while Sunnis continue to be eyed with suspicion and stereotyped as covert Saddam loyalists. At the same time, laws against hate speech and incitement to violence must be enacted to reassure the Shia and ease their fears. The Constitution provides for a bicameral Parliament. An Upper House can serve as a forum for national dialog and provide a much needed counterweight to the sectarian and ethnic dynamics governing Iraqi politics today. The Iraqi Parliament should begin looking at models and drafting legislation for a second chamber that is not based on demographic proportionality or electoral majorities and minorities.

Disarming the militias

Most political groups in Iraq have militias. The political groups need the militias not only for protection; they are a means to political power, territorial control, and economic control. In addition, there are local gangs that have acquired the status of militias. The GOI should not pick and choose: If it disbands one, it must eventually disband all. This is the principle that only the state has the legitimate use of force.

Operationally, the Iraqi Government does not have adequate army forces; the troops are not sufficiently equipped and trained, and their resolve in such politically sensitive operations may waver. Shia army troops may be reluctant to seize and disarm Shia militias. Sunni troops may have the same problem. Far more important, the GOI needs the broad support, consensus, and cooperation of the political parties in order to disarm the militias. Although everyone pays lip service to the need to eliminate militias, currently there is no visible political support for disarming or disbanding them.

At present, it is perhaps a more realistic strategy to pursue and eliminate the renegade groups that are guilty of crimes rather than attempt a wholesale policy toward militias. This, in fact, is happening in Baghdad, Basra, and other cities. In the meantime, the more orderly militias should be contained. Eventually, the demobilization and disarming of militias will require a political compact, easing sectarian tensions, economic recovery, job-creation, and a number of other transformations in political and economic life that are not available now.

Broadening outreach to Sunnis

The GOI has made efforts to reach out to groups of Sunnis who have so far stayed out of the political process and who may be part of, or supportive of, the homegrown elements of the insurgency. This in itself is an important undertaking, but it has yielded limited outcomes. The depth of the problem is demonstrated by the nomenclature: The Sunnis call these groups "the honorable national resistance," while the Shia call them "terrorists."

In Anbar province, and to some extent in Diyala, local tribes have indeed been battling al-Qaeda, but this may be because of local conflicts of interest and tribal divisions rather than an outcome of national outreach. The insurgency has not abated as a result of dialog with Sunni militant groups. The demands of militant groups are frequently unrealistic and cause deep concern to the Shia. We should certainly not make national dialog contingent on the participation of militant Sunni groups, although they should be welcomed if they choose to join.

IMPEDIMENTS TO NATIONAL RECONCILIATION

Shortly after taking office, Prime Minister Maliki presented an ambitious national agenda which included a 24-point reconciliation plan, a proposal for a national amnesty law, a decision to disband the militias, and a commitment to reform the Ministry of Interior. To date, the national reconciliation project has been confined to the level of rhetoric; the revised de-Baathification law has not been presented to Parliament; the militias are still going strong; and the Ministry of Interior still has a long way to go.

Because of the PM's statements, we must assume that the Government of Iraq has the desire to achieve these objectives. The reality is that it is under severe constraints, some of which are operational but the more important ones are of political.

The phrase "Iraqi leadership" rightly refers to a collective that lies beyond the institutions of the state, and includes the leaders of the major political groups in Iraq, who may or may not be members of state institutions. The government's ability to execute policy is contingent upon the willingness of others to support and help implement policies. Without the support of this broader leadership, the Government of Iraq is seriously hampered.

Thus a national compact is not dependent solely on the will of the government. Political actors have to reach agreements, but at present even the parameters of a national dialog are in dispute.

After decades of disenfranchisement, the Shia are now enjoying the spoils of victory, and are reluctant to give up any of their new-found supremacy. Intellectually, the Shia concede that not every Sunni is a Baathi and Saddam supporter, but viscerally their suspicions linger. They are mortally afraid of the return of the Baathis to power, even under other names and other guises, and, therefore, the de-Baathfication law and the amnesty law present difficulties.

Sunnis approach the political process with distrust and misgivings. They cannot reconcile themselves to their loss of status, and they have watched their position erode in the institutions of the state under a system of sectarian and ethnic proportional representation. They fear that they will be the new underdog and will be subject to persecution and revenge measures by the Shia. As a consequence, they tacitly or openly support the insurgency as their insurance policy.

From these central reciprocal fears stem a host of subsidiary problems that impede national reconciliation. The Shia and the Sunnis do not agree on who should be included in the national dialog. Currently the Baath Party is banned in Iraq. Can a reformed Baath Party be part of the political process? Should any of the armed Sunni groups be included and on what conditions?

Another major problem is the nature of the Iraqi State. The Sunnis wish to see a stronger national government, whereas some Shia religious parties want a weak one. These Shia groups see an enormous advantage to a grand federated state in the south, with huge oil resources, agricultural opportunities, and access to ports. They also want to organize their social and civic affairs along religious lines, and want minimal interference by the national government. Should Iraq have loose federations in the north and south, with little national authority to earn income and distribute revenue, they will be bereft of resources.

Despite these difficulties, national reconciliation must proceed at full speed. The alternatives: Continued bloodshed, ethnic cleansing, civil war, are horrific and the spillover into the region is inevitable.

MEDIUM-TERM STRATEGIES

Iraq is too important to United States strategic interests to be allowed to descend into chaos. In order for a national compact to take root and for the state to function effectively, the nature of politics of Iraq must be changed from a sectarian/ethnic base to a base of cross-sectarian, multiethnic national parties. It will be essential to develop national institutions that have both capacity and credibility. The responsibility for carrying this out obviously lies, first and foremost, with this and successive Iraqi governments, but the United States, Iraq's neighbors, and the international community must recognize that they have a role to play if only for their own self-interest.

Senator LUGAR [presiding]. Thank you very much.

Mr. Talabani.

STATEMENT OF QUBAD TALABANI, REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED STATES, KURDISTAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. TALABANI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Senator Lugar, distinguished members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for the opportunity to testify on the topic of a political strategy for Iraq.

I'd also like to take the opportunity to thank the chairman and Senator Lugar for your leadership and support throughout the years, when we were in the opposition, and today.

I'd also like to take this chance to thank the chairman for introducing to the debate on Iraq, the modalities of a plan that I believe will work. A plan that is not too dissimilar from what most Iraqis actually want.

Key components of the so-called Biden-Gelb plan are viable, because there is in it an appreciation of history, and of modern-day reality. Let me also take this opportunity to thank all those—

whether civilian or military—that were, and are still part, of this noble effort to liberate and rebuild Iraq, as well as express the Kurdistan Regional Government's appreciation for the support and sacrifice of the American people and Government.

On that note, a special note must go out to the outgoing Ambassador, Zalmay Khalilzad. The Ambassador's work was as unique as it was effective. Many in the Iraqi leadership, including Iraq's President are sad that Ambassador Khalilzad will be leaving us at this critical time, and while everyone is looking forward to working with Ambassador Crocker, if he is approved, Zal—as we've all come to know him by—will be sorely missed.

Allow me to open by stating that, while many of you may know me as the son of Iraq's President, I'm in no way representing his, or the Government of Iraq's view, in this testimony. I am testifying in my official capacity as the representative of the Kurdistan Regional Government to the United States.

A political strategy for Iraq must be just that—political. We are still too focused on the military aspect of this strategy. The talk of a potential escalation, or deescalation in Iraq has overshadowed what really needs to be done in Iraq, and by whom. A successful strategy in Iraq that will alter Iraq's current, deteriorating situation, must come from within Iraq, and not Washington.

It is precisely for this reason that the Iraq Study Group report was met with such visceral opposition by Iraqis on the ground. An imposition of a policy from the outside, especially one that ignores the glaring realities on the ground, will always lead to failure. Only a sound political and economic strategy, combined with a military strategy, if implemented, will greatly improve Iraq's security situation.

There can be no successful strategy to resolve Iraq's problems, however, if Iraq's leaders themselves do not wish to reach a resolution. If they desire reaching a political settlement and wish to end the violence—and I believe that, at least some do—then they must begin to act as leaders, and come to the realization that they are on the brink to leading Iraq to failure. The failure of successive Iraqi regimes to rule justly has created irreparable divisions, and insurmountable insecurities within Iraq. It is precisely these insecurities that exacerbate the mistrust between Iraq's Sunni-Arab, and Shia-Arab communities. Iraq's Kurds, not lacking insecurities of our own, have gone to great lengths to attempt to ease the tension between these groups. We have led most, if not all, the negotiations between the conflicting parties, and continue to lead efforts to resolve the outstanding issues.

A sustainable political settlement in Iraq cannot be reached unless certain issues are tackled—swiftly, and by Iraqis. These include: Resolving and passing Iraq's national oil, revenue-sharing, and budget laws, all of which are critical to national reconciliation. Revising and implementing a sound de-Baathification policy that does not exclude all members of the outlawed party from public service, just those that, because of the crimes that they had committed, could never be accepted back into government.

Also, as Rend Rahim stated, that devising an amnesty program that separates terrorists from those that have legitimate grievances, and could be encouraged to return to a political process. We

must take necessary steps at disarming, and bringing to justice death squads and rogue militias that act outside of the law. We must also address, once and for all, the issue of Kirkuk and its future.

Rather than coming up with solutions to our problems, the United States should work harder to foster and nurture the ongoing negotiations on these issues. The United States must have a comprehensive strategy, that does not deal with the various communities in isolation. Simultaneous messages must be related to both Iraq's Sunni-Arab, and Shia communities. Sunni-Arab leaders must be warned that if they continue along this path of using both violence and politics, that they will lose, and that the United States will not be there to save them.

At the same time, it is critical to pressure Iraq's Shias to follow for a genuine, inclusive political process for a system of government that shares power, and the country's wealth, equitably.

International pressure can be applied to Iraq's unity government, by making assistance programs, and the World Bank and IMF assistance packages contingent on good governance. Iraq's leaders must be held accountable for the actions of their constituents. Their legitimacy, and that of the government's, in the eyes of the international community must hinge on a strong and tangible commitment to accountability.

There can be no political settlement without addressing the issue of federalism. Federalism as defined by Iraq's democratically ratified Constitution, and further put into law by Iraq's Parliament, should not be met with fear or suspicion in Washington. Although it will be initially met with skepticism, it will, over time, in my opinion, foster success stories similar to that which we see in the Kurdistan region.

Iraqi-Kurdistan stands today as a federal region with its own government, security structure, and development plan. Indeed, it is one of the few successes in Iraq.

In this instance, it is not about what the United States should do, but rather what the United States should not do. If other Iraqis want to federalize the rest of the country, providing that such steps are taken democratically, and with the support of the people who live in those regions, then we must stand on the side of the Constitution, and not obstruct democracy. As long as the political prize remains Baghdad, and all of the decisionmaking powers rest within a central authority that is not trusted, then there will remain violence.

No federal system can succeed without a sound natural resources policy. Cooperation on Iraqi oil production and revenue-sharing presents an opportunity to bring peace and stability to Iraq. Significant progress has been made in establishing a cooperative agreement on oil. A draft oil law was prepared in December last year, which includes the creation of an intergovernmental entity, the Federal Council for Oil and Gas, with both federal and regional membership. This will be the supreme body for establishment of petroleum policy in Iraq.

A revenue-sharing law will soon be prepared, that will ensure that all petroleum revenues in Iraq are forwarded, again, to this intergovernmental body, and shared equitably across Iraq, based

on population. We must guarantee that the flow of oil revenues to parts of Iraq that lack oil resources—including the so-called Sunni Triangle—which is the source of so much violence today.

These two laws will each constitute major achievements. I am proud to say that the KRG has been at the very forefront of these drafting efforts. Importantly, these two laws will contain major concessions by the Kurdistan Regional Government. Although the Constitution of Iraq gives us the sole authority to develop new fields, and receive revenues from those fields, we have agreed to share those revenues with the rest of Iraq.

It is—we have also agreed to share information with the central government about future petroleum contracts, and provide it with the ability to object to those contracts, based on economic or technical grounds.

However—and this is important—this cooperative agreement will depend on it respecting the right of the regions to make the final decision on petroleum contracting in the region, while at the same time, respecting the right of the regions to receive its proportionate share of the national revenue. Let me be very clear, that while we are prepared to cooperate fully, there will be no Iraqi law or revenue-sharing law that violates these rights.

The KRG very much looks forward of receiving the advice of international institutions on the creation of a transparent, corruption-free, Iraq revenue-sharing system that can guarantee the viability of the central government, and the right of regions to their proportionate share of the revenue.

A sound national development plan is also critical for Iraq's stability. Advancements in the political process and security will not, alone, bring peace and prosperity. Collectively, we must devise an approach that expands on the successes of the stable parts of the country, in order to isolate the trouble spots, and spread the circles of stability across the country.

If successful, citizens will see that the government is actually working to provide the basic services, and is putting money into development. In turn, the population will have more to lose by turning a blind eye to the terrorists. As part of national reconciliation, we must turn the Iraqi citizens against al-Qaeda, and other extremists.

National reconciliation can never be reached, unless the status of Kirkuk is resolved. Kirkuk, a governorate that underwent decades of ethnic cleansing of Kurds and Turkomans by Saddam's regime symbolizes Iraq's tragedy today. While we are bringing to justice the perpetrators of ethnic cleansing, their racist handiwork remains intact. Significantly, Iraqis themselves have devised a process to rectify this injustice, committed by the former regime.

It would be wise for the United States to allow this process to progress naturally, and according to a timetable that Iraq's leaders have agreed upon. Imposing a delay on the proposed referendum that determines whether Kirkuk will be administered by the Kurdistan Regional Government or by the central government, will only raise the risk of the situation erupting out of control. The grim reality is, that whether we tackle this issue now, or 10 years from now, the final outcome will still be messy. The longer we delay the

process, the greater the tensions will become, and the uglier the fallout will be.

To conclude, whether or not a political settlement in Iraq can be reached will depend largely on Iraq's leaders themselves, and not on a strategy imposed from the outside. If all sides involved can come to the realization—and most have—that a centralized system of governance cannot and will not work in Iraq, and that a sound federal system is set in place, then we can begin to take steps to reduce the people's insecurities.

The international community, and in particular, the United States can be helpful in managing and nurturing this dialog, not dictating it. We must be pressured to implement our own national reconciliation plan. All sides must make compromises: Sunnis must compromise on their demands for a unitary state, Shiites must compromise by loosening their grip on power, and we Kurds have to come to an agreement with a central government on certain mechanisms of governance and revenue-sharing, as has been done thus far.

Having just returned from a trip to my homeland, where I'm happy to say we no longer have to take the 7 bumpy hours' drive, we can fly directly from many European cities, I would like to take this opportunity to express some of the grievances of the people of Kurdistan. Most, if not all Kurds feel, that all of goodwill shown by the Kurdish side, and its proactive, positive engagement in the new Iraq have yielded limited gains for our people.

While clearly no longer fearing that Saddam Hussein or his regime cannot commit genocide against us is not insignificant, certain United States policies continue to irk the whole community in Iraq that most closely shares American values, and considers the United States a close friend and partner.

The United States development strategy for Iraq is a case in point. Of the $21 billion or so put aside for Iraq reconstruction, a comparatively small $600 million has been spent in the Kurdistan region, a figure of 3 percent, a figure that bemuses our citizens. While, in some areas, we are advanced, we still lack the critical infrastructure and the industries that exist elsewhere in Iraq.

During a talk that I gave at the University of Suleimani in Iraqi-Kurdistan last week, I was constantly asked this question, "When Iraq fails, and the United States leaves, what guarantee is there that they—the United States—will protect our hard-earned gains?" It is fair to say that both the Kurds in Iraq and the United States have put all our eggs in one basket, that is Baghdad. I fear that this basket will burn in the fire of that city, and all that we have accomplished together over the past 15 years will be in jeopardy.

Distinguished Senators, the Kurds will remain forever grateful for the protection provided under Operation Northern Watch, and for the ouster of Saddam and his regime. However, we still remember the American abandonment of 1975, and the miscalculation of 1991. And while we will continue to commit to do all that we can to ensure a viable, political solution for Iraq, including not breaking away from Iraq, we cannot guarantee that Iraq will not break away from us.

In such a scenario, resulting also in a likely American withdrawal, we seek a guarantee that our success story—one of the few

that the United States has helped with in the Middle East—will be protected. After all the Americans and the Kurds have been through, a relatively democratic and open Kurdistan in the heart of the Islamic Middle East, should be protected. It is in the United States interest, and should be the moral obligation.

I will end with four goals for which our people seek your support. And one is, to provide an American security guarantee to the people of Iraqi-Kurdistan no matter what happens in Iraq. And a commitment that the United States spend at least 17 percent of congressionally appropriated funds intended for Iraq's development in the Kurdistan region. This goes in line with the Government of Iraq's own economic policy, of allocating the Kurdistan region the 17 percent of revenues gleaned from sale of oil.

We also seek a commitment to assist in the development—developing greater public/private partnerships between the United States and the Kurdistan Region. We feel that our region has not—the United States has not used our region enough, to the fact that it's stable and secure, to promote greater business investment that could ultimately help all of Iraq, and not just the Kurdistan region.

And finally, I call on all Members of Congress visiting Iraq to move beyond the Green Zone, and come visit us up in the North, to see some of the successes that you've invested so much in.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Talabani follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF QUBAD TALABANI, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE KURDISTAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED STATES, WASHINGTON, DC

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Lugar, distinguished members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, for the opportunity to testify on the topic of a political strategy for Iraq. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the chairman and Senator Lugar for your leadership. Your support to Iraq goes back to the days when we were in the Iraqi Opposition. While I am grateful for the many visits committee members have taken to Iraq, I do hope that congressional delegations will visit Iraq's Kurdistan region as well. As you know, Mr. Chairman, an accurate analysis of Iraq requires visits to every region of the country.

I would also like to take this chance to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for introducing to the debate on Iraq the modalities of a plan that I believe will work. Key components of the so called "Biden-Gelb" plan are viable because there is in that plan an appreciation for history and modern day reality. Indeed, we must understand Iraq's faulty past to reach a political settlement that sticks in the future, while recognizing that Iraq has changed as a country and new realities have become facts on the ground. I commend you for offering an alternative approach.

Let me take this opportunity to thank the brave men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces who are serving or who have served in Iraq as well as the American diplomatic corps and civilian employees who labor tirelessly with Iraqi officials to ensure that the fruit of our partnership is a prosperous and peaceful Iraq. A special note must go to Ambassador Khalilzad. The Ambassador's work was as unique as it was effective. Many in the Iraqi leadership, including Iraq's President are unhappy that Ambassador Khalilzad is leaving at this critical time. While everyone is looking forward to working with Ambassador Crocker, Zal, as we have all come to know him, will be sorely missed.

Allow me to open by stating that while many of you may know me as the son of Iraqi President Jalal Talabani, I am in no way representing his, or the Government of Iraq's view in this testimony. I am testifying in my official capacity as the representative to the United States of the Iraqi Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). I was also asked by the committee staff to provide a quick description of my post. In my capacity, I work closely with the executive and legislative branches of the U.S. Government as well as the media and research institutions, providing analysis and up-to-date information about the situation in Iraq and the Kurdistan region. Finally, there may be instances during the question and answer segment when

it would be more advantageous to committee members that I speak in a closed session. I would be happy to do so.

Distinguished Senators, excuse me if I appear blunt in some of what I say today. There is a time for more diplomatic speeches, but given the gravity of the situation, and the fact that American and Iraqi lives are being lost every day, now is not such a time.

A political strategy for Iraq must be just that, political. We are still too focused on the military component of the Iraq debate. The talk of a potential escalation or deescalation in Iraq has overshadowed what really needs to be done in Iraq and by whom.

The reality is that upon handing over sovereignty in June 2004, the ability of the United States to effectively direct the situation on the ground has been reduced. This means that a successful strategy in Iraq, one that will alter Iraq's current deteriorating situation, must come from within Iraq, not Washington. It is precisely for this reason that the Iraq Study Group (ISG) report was met with such visceral opposition by Iraqis. An imposition of a policy from outside, especially one that ignores the glaring realities on the ground will lead to more failure and more bloodshed in Iraq.

There are, of course, aspects of any strategy for Iraq that must be coordinated between Baghdad and Washington, such as the roles and responsibilities of the U.S. Armed Forces in theater, and their interaction and coordination with Iraq's developing security forces. But in my honest opinion, it will be a sound political and economic strategy, not a military strategy alone, which, if developed and undertaken, will greatly improve Iraq's security situation.

There can be no successful strategy to resolve Iraq's problems if Iraqi leaders themselves do not wish to reach a resolution. If they desire reaching a political settlement and wish to end the violence, and I believe that at least some do, then they must begin to act as leaders and come to the realization that they are on the brink of leading Iraq to failure.

Iraq is a country, that in the eyes of many, was founded on faulty logic. It was founded on a principle that a representative of a minority can rule a multiethnic and multisectarian society. Such logic could have succeeded if Iraq's past rulers had ruled justly, treating all as equal. However, successive Iraqi regimes have failed to do just that, creating irreparable divisions and insurmountable insecurities within Iraqi society.

Today, insecurities run deep within all segments of Iraqi society. Indeed, it is precisely these insecurities that exacerbate the mistrust between Iraq's Sunni Arab and Shiite Arab communities; a mistrust that has resulted in the violence we see today. Iraq's Kurds, not lacking insecurities of our own, have gone to great lengths to attempt to ease the tension between these groups. We have led most, if not all, negotiations between the conflicting groups. We have and will continue to bridge the many significant and potentially damaging differences that exist within the Iraqi polity today, sometimes to the disadvantage of our interests and against the wishes of our own constituency.

A sustainable political settlement in Iraq cannot be reached unless certain issues are tackled swiftly, and by Iraqis. These include:

- Resolving and passing Iraq's national oil, revenue-sharing, and budget laws—all of which are critical to national reconciliation;
- Revising and implementing a sound de-Baathification policy that does not exclude all members of the outlawed party from public service, just those that, because of crimes they had committed, will never be accepted back into government;
- Devising an amnesty program that separates terrorists from those that have legitimate grievances and could be encouraged to return to a political process;
- Taking necessary steps to disarm and bring to justice death squads and rogue militias;
- Addressing, once and for all, the tense issue of Kirkuk and its future.

Rather than coming up with solutions to our problems, the United States should work harder to foster and nurture the ongoing negotiations on these key issues.

The United States must have a comprehensive strategy that does not deal with the various communities in isolation. Simultaneous messages must be related to both Iraq's Sunni Arab and Shiite communities.

Sunni Arab leaders must be warned that if they continue along this path of using both violence and politics, they will lose, and the United States will not be there to save them. A political settlement will more likely be reached if and when our Sunni Arab brothers come to the realization that they will no longer hold the ascendancy in Iraq. Our American friends must help to make Iraq's neighbors aware

of this reality. The days of a minority dominating all aspects of Iraqi politics are over. At the same time, it is critical to (1) alleviate the insecurities of Iraq's Shiites by clarifying that the United States and the West do not see them as Iranian proxies, and (2) pressure them to allow for a genuine inclusive political process through a system of governance that shares power and the country's wealth equitably.

International pressure can be applied to a Shiite-led unity government by limiting assistance programs and/or restricting World Bank and IMF assistance packages. Pressure must also be applied to the Shiite leadership to stand up to rogue militias and death squads that have fueled this ever-increasing sectarian bloodshed. Leaders of both Shiite and Sunni communities must be held accountable for the actions of their constituents. Their legitimacy, and that of the government's, in the eyes of the international community, must hinge on a strong and tangible commitment for accountability.

There can be no political settlement without addressing federalism. Federalism in Iraq will be key to ensuring a longer term, sustainable political settlement.

The creation of federal regions, as defined by Iraq's democratically ratified Constitution and further put into law by Iraq's Parliament, should not be met with fear or suspicion in Washington. Allowing Iraqis the right to determine their own future by devolving power to communities governing their own areas will most probably be met with skepticism at first. Over time, in my opinion, this approach will foster success stories similar to those that we see in Iraqi Kurdistan. Iraqi Kurdistan stands today as a federal region with its own government, security structure, and development plan. Indeed, it is one of the few successes in Iraq. As long as the political prize remains, Baghdad and all decisionmaking powers rest within a central authority, there will remain violence, especially as there exists today very little trust between the various communities in Iraq.

In this instance, it is not about what the United States should do, but rather what the United States should not do. If other Iraqis want to federalize the rest of the country, providing such steps are taken democratically and with support of the people who live in those regions, then we must stand on the side of the Constitution, and not obstruct democracy. Attempts to impose an unworkable unity, merely for the sake of addressing the concerns of Iraq's neighbors or for the purpose of creating an illusion against the will of its people, will lead to disaster.

No federal system can succeed without a sound natural resources policy. Cooperation on Iraqi oil production and revenue-sharing presents an opportunity to bring peace and stability to Iraq. This has been the constant message of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) leadership, and particularly its Minister for Natural Resources, Dr. Ashti Hawrami. It is excellent to see in Washington that others are reaching the same conclusion. Oil revenues, if managed well, can ensure both a viable federal government as well as strong, self-sustaining federal regions, as the Constitution of Iraq envisages. There is an opportunity to guarantee the flow of oil revenues to parts of Iraq that lack oil resources, including the so-called Sunni Triangle, which is the source of so much violence.

Significant progress has been made in establishing this cooperative agreement. A draft oil law was prepared in December last year that includes the creation of an intergovernmental entity, the "Federal Council for Oil and Gas," with both federal and regional membership. This will be the Supreme Body responsible for petroleum policy. Significantly, under that law there will be a role for private sector petroleum investment, to maximize the speed and size of the returns to the Iraqi people. A revenue-sharing law will soon be prepared that will ensure that all petroleum revenues in Iraq are forwarded—again to an intergovernmental body—and shared equitably across Iraq based on population. These two laws will each constitute major achievements. They are achievements, I might add, which are genuine Iraqi agreements, and not the product of outside influence or pressure. I am proud to say that the KRG has been at the very forefront of these drafting efforts. Indeed, it is Kurdistan's own investor-friendly legislation that is serving as a model for the Iraq-wide regime.

Importantly, these two laws will contain major concessions by the KRG. Although the Constitution of Iraq gives the KRG the sole authority to develop new fields and receive revenue from those fields, the KRG has agreed to share those revenues with the rest of Iraq. It has agreed to share information with the central government about future KRG petroleum contracts, and provide it the ability to object to those contracts on technical or economic grounds.

However—and this is important—this cooperative agreement will depend on two things. First, it must respect the right of regions to make the final decision on petroleum contracting in the region.

Second, it must respect the right of any region to receive its proportionate share of the national revenue. (These rights are contained in articles 110, 112, 115, and

141 of the Constitution.) Let me be very clear: While the KRG is prepared to cooperate fully, there will be no Iraq oil law or revenue-sharing law that violates these rights. Reports that arose last week that there will be a new oil law that "centralizes" control of Iraq's oil are incorrect. From now on, in Iraq, petroleum policy will be a cooperative agreement, not one that is imposed from Baghdad or anywhere else. The oil law that was prepared last December has not been altered and will hopefully be finalized as quickly as possible. And as we begin our talks on the revenue-sharing law, the KRG very much looks forward to receiving the advice of international institutions on the creation of a transparent, corruption-free Iraq revenue-sharing system that can guarantee the viability of the central government and the right of regions to their proportionate share of revenue.

A sound national development plan is also critical to Iraq's stability; advancements in the political process and security will not alone bring peace and prosperity. The Iraqi Government should work closely with the U.S. Government as well as other nations and international institutions to devise an approach that expands on the successes of the Kurdistan region as well as parts of the south and east. Working in areas of the country that are more stable and accommodating will isolate those in trouble spots that seek only to attack reconstruction projects and everyday services. Certainly, such an approach is a better use of U.S. taxpayer dollars. Successful development projects will increase the circles of stability and progress across the country. Indeed, citizens will see that the government both provides services and is putting money into development, and in turn the population will have more to lose by turning a blind eye to terrorists and criminals.

National reconciliation can never be reached unless the issue of Kirkuk is resolved once and for all. Kirkuk, a governorate that had been ethnically cleansed by Saddam's regime, where several hundreds of thousands of Kurds and many Turkomans had been evicted from their homes purely because of their identity, symbolizes Iraq's current tragedy. It is a tragedy because communities have been pitted against one another. While Baath leaders are facing trial in Baghdad, and the head architect of a policy of genocide in Kirkuk, Saddam Hussein, is no longer with us, his racist handiwork remains intact.

While we are bringing to justice the perpetrators of ethnic cleansing, Iraqis themselves have devised a process to rectify the injustices committed by the former, criminal regime. It would be wise for the United States to allow this process to move forward naturally and according to a timetable that Iraq's leaders agreed upon in the most important document: The nation's constitution. Imposing a delay on the proposed referendum that resolves the status of Kirkuk—i.e., whether it will be administered by the KRG or by the central government—will only lead to increasing, already high tensions and will raise the risk of the situation erupting into full-scale bloodshed. The grim reality is that whether we tackle this issue now or in 10 years, the final outcome will still be messy. However, the longer we delay the process, the greater the tensions will become, and the uglier the fallout will be. We have kicked this explosive can down the road for too long.

Finally, a word about Kirkuk's oil. In advance of the referendum on Kirkuk, the KRG has taken great care to ensure that tensions are not raised on Kirkuk's petroleum. Even at such time when Kirkuk becomes part of the Kurdistan region following the referendum, the KRG has confirmed, and here I will reaffirm, that it has no unilateral claim to the rights or revenues on the Kirkuk oil fields. Under the Iraq Constitution—which must always be our guide—the management of those fields is to be shared by the central government and the region, and the revenues shared throughout the country.

To conclude: Whether or not a political settlement in Iraq can be reached will depend largely on Iraq's leaders, and not a strategy imposed from outside. Iraq's leaders, except by and large the Kurds, have yet to demonstrate a true willingness to reach across ethnic or sectarian boundaries and offer compromises that will lead to a calming of the situation.

If all sides involved can come to the realization, and most have, that a centralized system of governance cannot and will not work in Iraq and a sound federal system is set in place, then we can begin to take steps to reduce the peoples' insecurities.

The international community, and in particular the United States, can be helpful in managing and nurturing this dialog, not dictating it.

All sides must also make compromises. All or nothing polices will inevitably lead to failure. Sunnis must compromise on their demands for a unitary state. Shiites must compromise on loosening their grip on power. And we Kurds have to come to an agreement with the central government on certain mechanisms of governance and revenue-sharing as has been done thus far.

Having just returned from Kurdistan, I would like to take this opportunity, as the KRG representative in the United States, to express the grievances of the people

of Kurdistan. Most, if not all, Kurds feel that time after time they have been taken for granted by the U.S. Government. All the good will shown by the Kurdish side in its proactive, positive engagement in the new Iraq has yielded limited gains for our people. It is significant that the fear of Saddam Hussein's regime and its genocide are gone. However, certain policies and statements by senior United States Government officials continue to irk an entire community in Iraq that most closely shares American values and considers the United States a close friend and partner.

The American development strategy for Iraq is a case in point. Of the $21 billion or so put aside for Iraq reconstruction, a very small $600 million has been earmarked or spent in the Kurdistan region. That is 3 percent, a figure that bemuses our citizens precisely because the Kurdish population in Iraq is closer to 20 percent. While in some areas we are advanced, we still lack the critical infrastructure and industries that exist elsewhere in Iraq. The U.S. Government's official line on Iraq reconstruction, of working by sector not region or province, has never sat well with the Kurdish leadership or our ever increasingly frustrated population.

We hope that with the opening of the Regional Reconstruction Team (RRT) in Erbil, thanks in great measure to the United States, we will begin to see a change in strategy that takes into account the efforts and the hard work of the Kurdish side and translates into significant improvements in the region's development. One stark example: After all that has been achieved, the Kurdistan region only gets 2–3 hours of electricity a day. The region is constantly touted as a success story and given Iraq's current predicament one can say that we are. However, we are a success because of, and I'm sorry to say sometimes despite of, U.S. foreign policy.

I will end by sharing a story. During a talk I gave at the University of Suleimani, in Kurdistan, I was constantly asked, "When Iraq fails, and the United States leaves, what guarantee is there that they—the United States—will protect our hard-earned gains?" It is fair to say that both the Kurds of Iraq and the United States have put all our eggs in one basket. That is, Baghdad. I fear that our basket will burn in the fire of that city, and all that we have accomplished together over the past 15 years will be in jeopardy. Distinguished Senators, the Kurds will remain forever grateful for the protection provided under Operation Northern Watch, and for the ouster of Saddam and his regime. However, we still remember the American abandonment of 1975, and the miscalculation of 1991. While we will continue to commit to do all that we can to ensure a viable political solution for Iraq including not breaking away from it, we cannot guarantee that Iraq will not break away from us. In such a scenario, resulting also in a likely American withdrawal, we seek a guarantee that our success story—one of the few that the United States has helped with in the Middle East—will be protected. After all that Americans and Kurds have been through, good and bad, a relatively democratic and open Kurdistan, in the heart of the Islamic Middle East, should be protected. It is in the U.S. strategic interest and should be your moral obligation.

Senator LUGAR. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Talabani.

The Chair will recognize now, Dr. Kubba.

STATEMENT OF DR. LAITH KUBBA, SENIOR DIRECTOR FOR THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA, NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR DEMOCRACY, WASHINGTON, DC

Dr. KUBBA. Thank you, Ranking Member Lugar, distinguished members of the committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to address the committee on Iraq at such a critical moment. And, I am aware of the difficulties facing decisionmakers who have to strike painful balances between so many conflicting demands.

Without repeating some of the views my colleague Rend Rahim had mentioned, I'd like to focus more on how to deal with the Iraqi politics, on the future rather than the past, and make, maybe one or two recommendations in view of the prognosis of Iraqi politics. I will be brief, for the record, I do not oversee the Iraq Program at the National Endowment for Democracy, and the views I express are mine, and not those of the endowment.

I want to start by emphasizing the obvious, and that is, failure in Iraq is not an option, that the essence of the problem is political,

and that the responsibility is mainly with the Iraqi Government and its elected politicians. My main remarks will be more, or mainly, on Arab-Iraq and, to a lesser extent, on the Kurdish-Iraq or Kurdistan.

Iraq faces multiple, interwined challenges, ranging from violence, sectarianism, terrorism, to developing the economy, expanding the job market, to controlling and influencing—controlling the influence of Iraq's neighbors. Most of these challenges have been complicated by one cause—the breakdown of the Iraqi State, and the continued absence of an effective government.

Iraqi politicians, and its government could and should do more. But under current circumstances, they will not. They are dug deep in a zero-sum survival game—survival struggle—and are prepared to go down, and take Iraq down with them. However, to leave Iraq or simply hand over the problem to the Iraqi Government will make it even worse.

There are huge hidden dangers, and suggestions to encourage dividing Iraq or pulling back troops to safe areas, where Arab Shias and Sunnis militias exhaust themselves and the country to death in their fights. Iraq's current mess has already happened on America's watch, and more should not be allowed to happen, as such.

Whatever the plans might be, the United States needs, in the Iraqi Government, a partner who is willing and capable to rebuild Iraq as a nation-state. The government currently lacks such a collective will, and/or vision on how to do it. It is yet to build its own effective army and democracy above communal loyalties and sectarian politics. Without such collective will and shared vision, Iraqi politicians and the government cannot build a strong, functioning institution.

Millions of Iraqis suffer the consequences of a dysfunctional state, controlled by ethnoreligious politics, with many regional ties. It is wishful thinking to assume that the threat of withdrawal—American withdrawal—or suspending financial aid to Iraq will pressure the Iraqi Government into the right course. Only through much closer and accurate diagnosis of the predicament of Iraq—of Iraqi politics—the United States can find the right pressure points that will force politicians into compromise.

It is unrealistic to expect the Prime Minister, the Iraqi Prime Minister, alone, to change the nature of the Iraqi Government or the politics behind it. Prime Minister Maliki, I think, is a willing partner who shares a vision of building a state above identity politics. Firm statements of U.S. support and troop surge, recent troop surges in Baghdad, have strengthened his hand. But this will not be sufficient to change the behavior of elected Iraqi politicians.

With the best of his will and ability, and with the maximum support the United States can afford, and maximum pressure the United States can put on Prime Minister Maliki, there is obviously a very clear limit to how far he, and his government, can go. By design, the Prime Minister's position is weak, and controlled by the politicians, who will not loosen their grip over the State, having tasted its privileges, and the power that comes with it.

I would like to sum the predicament of the Iraqi State Government and its politics. Since June 2003, the United States effort in Iraq focused on three tracks—delivering a political process, ensur-

ing security, and developing the economy. The political process was real and successful. It brought about important and valuable outcomes, an elected legitimate Parliament, and a coalition government. However, this successful political process took place while Iraq had no effective state institutions to deliver security and services to all citizens.

The state was dismantled in April 2003, and since then, all attempts to rebuild it took place parallel to formulating a democratic process. Nearly all Iraqi administrative and security problems branched out of an absent state. Without a functioning state, identity politics flourished.

There was a rapid emergence of communal, tribal, religious, and ethnic politics. The prolonged absence of the state led to the emergence of militias and alternative power centers. Identity politics today dominates Iraq.

Iraq's democratic political process is now seriously undermined by the weakness and absence of the state from citizens' lives. People left to their own devices, they rallied naturally behind their ethnic, tribal, and religious leaders. Today, a new class of politicians thrive, they play on identity politics, hating and fearing the other.

Elections, unfortunately, legitimized and empowered them. They control Iraq, its resources, and its people, and will continue to fight their own narrow agendas over turf and resources, and expose the whole country to the consequences.

Today, Iraq is in a vicious circle, where rebuilding the state requires national politics, but that in turn, requires the presence of a strong state. The past investment in rebuilding the state failed because of the ethnosectarian politics. More of the same will not work: More time, more trained Iraqi police and army, more resources—all of these previously tried measures may be necessary, but surely insufficient.

It is clear by now that Iraqi politics needs a fix, without which, a surge in security measures can bring temporary relief, but not a cure for the problem. It is unrealistic to assume that the threat of withdrawal from Iraq would pressure politicians into political compromise, cooperation, or better behavior. Some would welcome it.

Due to the geographical, historical, and political factors, I would suggest that the prospect of involving Iraq's neighbors, resolving Iraq's security problems, has the potential to force Iraqi politicians to make the necessary compromises, and take the right course. The Prime Minister needs United States support to lead a roundtable conference for Iraq's neighbors to agree a compact on security, to include border controls, the flow of cash and arms to communities, and rebuilding Iraq.

Only through the prospect of such a regional involvement, Iraqi politicians will compromise their positions, and work out a shared vision on future Iraq. Only a united Iraq, with an effective government, and an agreement with its neighbors can deny al-Qaeda its breeding grounds in lawless Iraqi cities, and end sectarian violence.

The stakes could not be higher for America, and hence domestic politics, regional concerns, and any other special interest must all be balanced to ensure success in Iraq.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Kubba follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LAITH KUBBA, SENIOR DIRECTOR FOR THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA, NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR DEMOCRACY, WASHINGTON, DC

Chairman Biden, Ranking Member Lugar, and distinguished members of the committee, let me begin by expressing my appreciation for the opportunity to address the committee on Iraq at such a critical time, and as an Iraqi American, to express my appreciation to you, Mr. Chairman, for your thoughtful insights and firm commitment to ensure that America succeeds in Iraq. In 2005, I took a leave of absence from the National Endowment for Democracy to become the spokesman for the former Iraqi Prime Minister, Ibrahim Jaafari. I had the pleasure of meeting you, Mr. Chairman, and many of your distinguished colleagues during your frequent visits to Baghdad. For the record, I do not oversee the Iraq program at the National Endowment for Democracy and the views I express today are mine and not those of the Endowment.

At the outset, I would like to express my respect, appreciation, and admiration to all the men and women, military and civilians, Iraqis and Americans, who are trying hard to make Iraq succeed. I have seen the difficulties facing decisionmakers who have to strike painful balances between so many conflicting demands. I would like to focus on the future rather than the past, and make recommendations in view of a prognosis of Iraqi politics.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to start my testimony by stating the obvious.

President Bush rightly reminds us that victory in Iraq is a vital U.S. interest and failure is not an option. Sustaining such message is critical. Leaving Iraq torn with violence and sectarianism is not an option. Al-Qaeda will expand in the ruins of Iraqi cities and torn communities. In a failed Iraq, al-Qaeda will become stronger, recruit more terrorists, advance its training and carry out more 9/11s. Simply put, Iraq is a zero-sum equation between the United States and al-Qaeda.

Iraq faces multiple intertwined challenges, ranging from violence and sectarianism to developing the economy and expanding the job market to controlling the influence of its neighbors. Most of these challenges originated from one cause, the breakdown of the Iraqi State, and they have become difficult to resolve because of the continued absence of an effective government.

Disarming the militias is a case in point. Shia militias filled the streets in districts left exposed to persistent al-Qaeda attacks. Under the watchful eyes of a dysfunctional government, the militias displayed their arms, exploited Shia needs for protection and grew unchallenged in most districts. Similarly, Sunni districts suffered the wrath of Shia militias revenge and were not protected by the Iraqi police. Local Sunni-armed groups saw the need to collaborate with insurgents in order to protect themselves in a brutal mad conflict. Not surprisingly, most Sunni politicians and some armed groups have welcomed the recent surge in American troops as means to disarm rival militias. Without expanding and elevating the Iraqi Army and police force above sectarian, ethnic, and political loyalties, all security measures remain short term and unsustainable.

Building modern state institutions transcending ethnoreligious lines has been the U.S. goal for the past 3 years. All opinion polls showed that throughout 2003, 2004, and 2005, Iraqis wanted a central government with strong national institutions controlling arms, intelligence, and borders and strong local administrations providing services and jobs. The United States has provided enormous technical assistance to build Iraqi ministries and bureaus. The United States acted on good faith that a legitimate political process would eventually bring peace and national unity. The political process successfully delivered a legitimate government but failed to bring either an effective government or a government of national unity. This failure lies today exclusively in the hands of post-Saddam Iraqi politicians, who have risen to power in deadly exceptional circumstances. It is dangerously misleading to assume that the problem is historically rooted in Iraqi communities or externally caused by rouge neighbors.

Iraq's predicament is found in its current electoral laws and in fundamental disagreement among its communal leaders over the concept of the state and the design of government. Under current electoral rules, Iraq will always have a weak executive and a fragile coalition government, where the Prime Minister cannot hire and fire incompetent or corrupt ministers without causing a political crisis. It took months to form a Cabinet whose success is not defined by services but by continuity. It is formed without a shared vision but with a complex quota system dividing ministries. Inevitably autonomous ministers are more accountable to their party bosses and less to the Prime Minister. Such a system will not deliver an effective government.

Changing the current system to bring about a strong government requires prior agreements and a high level of trust between its communities. There is little reason to believe that Iraqi politicians will reach agreement by themselves. Today there are two Iraqs, Kurdish and Arab, and three main parliamentary blocs with tens of political groups. Kurdish Iraq is stable, prosperous, and determined to expand and maximize its control to ethnically mixed areas beyond its current regional border. Arab Iraq is at war with itself and approaching a full-blown civil war. The Kurds can factor in this effort in as much as they may help or hinder rebuilding Arab Iraq. The key to bringing stability back to Iraq depends on Shia and Sunni agreement on how to govern Iraq. So far, there are no signs of any agreement.

Last June, Iraq's Prime Minister Maliki launched a reconciliation initiative to reach out to Sunni insurgents and consolidate his government of national unity. He solicited support from Gulf States, supported reconciliation conferences in Baghdad and Mecca, and pledged that only government forces will bear arms. His Ministries of Defense and Interior have no ties to armed political groups and militias and he started his campaign against the al-Mahdi Militias. However, such measures and gestures are helpful but dwarf in significance compared to the challenge of bringing unity of vision among the three main communities in Iraq (Sunnis, Shias, and Kurds) to agree on constitutional amendments.

Iraq passed the Constitution in a national referendum in October 2005 despite Sunnis' overwhelming rejection. Only the promise and hope of future constitutional amendments brought back the Sunnis to participate in December 2005 elections and Maliki's government. Since then, no progress has been made on constitutional amendments. Behind the political paralysis is a lack of clear ideas on how to reconcile differing views. Pushing amendments without prior agreements will escalate the political crisis and violence even further and deny Iraq its last chance to resolve constitutional differences. If the minimum of Sunni hopes in amendments are not realized, then the country will sink into more violence. Without accommodating Sunni grievances and fully engaging them in rebuilding the state and running the government, it would not be possible to separate al-Qaeda and criminal networks from the rest of the insurgency.

IS COMPROMISE POSSIBLE?

Differences run deep among the three major groups on nation-state-building. Behind their commitment to national unity are different visions on how to build Iraqi governing institutions, in particular on the nature of the state, the mandate of central government, and the control of security and natural recourses. Reconciliations are difficult because of hardened positions, zero-sum perspectives to politics, historical grievances, mistrust, inflated assumptions about negotiating positions, and lack of experience. A closer look at their differences suggests that not all can easily or quickly be resolved. Arab Sunnis, who are most experienced in administrating a central state and least in negotiating with local politicians, seek the return of a centralized Iraq with an autonomous Kurdish administrative region. Kurds, who secured a constitutionally recognized and highly empowered federal region with strong hold in Baghdad, will not accept any rollback from such position. Moreover, they expect to add Kirkuk to their region. Arab Shias, with least experience in government, have mixed positions about the return of a centralized state without the Kurdish region. Some groups are pushing toward a southern federal region, similar to the Kurdish one. The parliamentarian committee to be tasked with drafting amendments has not brought forward new ideas on how to proceed. The future of Kirkuk and the prospect of forming a southern region are perceived by Arab Sunnis as most problematic. At dispute are articles on the control of natural resources and the concept of citizenship and state institutions. If Iraqis fail to agree peacefully through parliamentary daytime debates, they will fight street battles outside Parliament at night.

Iraq's destiny is in the hands of elected politicians who have no incentive to compromise. They thrive on hard-line identity and communal politics. They are deeply linked to militias and illicit siphoning of Iraq's petro-dollars. They have adjusted to violence, established supply lines to a prolonged conflict, and shielded themselves from the suffering of ordinary people. Iraq awaits the move of these politicians to compromise and come to agreement on their differences, work toward a shared vision, and allow technocrats to rebuild the state. Without pressure, Iraqi politicians will not move. The United States can bring in additional leverage over Iraqi politics through Iraq's neighbors. The threats of bringing in the neighbors will change the dynamic and force compromises. Unlike the United States, Iraq's neighbors are there to stay and Iraqi politicians fear their intervention. Sunnis, Shias, and Kurds are all exposed to the influence of neighbors, who have legitimate concerns about

the deteriorating security conditions in Iraq. The alternative to direct discussions with the neighbors is war by proxy and indirect and unregulated competition over Iraq. This can provide sufficient deterrent and incentive to affect Iraqi politicians and community leaders. Iraq can call its neighbors to a conference on border security, disarming militias, and reconstruction.

The most important and urgent issue in such a conference is restoring the ability of the state to control all armed groups and exert authority all over Iraq. The government has to negotiate disarming militias whose loyalties—ethnic, religious, or political—to their leaders are above their loyalty to the state. The top three militias are the Kurdish Peshmerga, who are the best trained and disciplined; the Shia Bader Brigade with its extended networks of social organizations; and the least organized and most thuggish, the Mahdi Army. Integrating members of these groups into Iraqi units must come through rigorous selection and training procedures. Some Sunni armed groups are tribal but most are not affiliated with Sunni political leaders.

The United States should continue to be involved in security planning and leverage its political influence to ensure a buy-in from all parties to Iraq's national security policies. In confronting complex networks of kidnappers, smugglers, white collar criminals, and financers of armed groups and political parties, Iraq needs U.S. advanced technical support and expertise. Iraq also needs to revive its own security agencies and measures that were effective in fighting crime under the previous regime. For example, the previous regime ran successful undercover security agency to expose white collar corruption in all ministries.

THREATS OF CIVIL WAR

Fixing Iraqi politics is the most important challenge but putting down the rapidly spreading sectarian violence has become most urgent. Iraq did not have communal conflicts in its history, and until 2003, Iraqis prided themselves with the extent of mixed marriages and neighborhoods. For more than three decades, Saddam played communities against each other, elevated mistrust between citizens and caused communal tensions. Still Iraqis blamed the government but not each other for Saddam's repression of Shias and Kurds and refused sectarianism. Some Iraqi exile leaders with external influence fed ethnoreligious agendas into Iraqi politics and institutionalized sectarian quotas at all state levels. For obvious political gains, they, too, pushed sectarianism. That partially explains the passive slow reaction of some Iraqi political elites to growing sectarian conflicts.

Until recently, al-Qaeda was the number one threat to Iraq, followed by the other two deadly forces: Sunni insurgency and sectarianism. Although it exploited Sunni political isolation and dysfunctional government security agencies, al-Qaeda failed to block the political process and the emergence of an Iraqi national unity government. The killing of Zarqawi was a severe blow. As al-Qaeda and Saddam loyalists were running out of time, they unleashed their most devastating weapon: Sectarianism. For the past 3 years, they have been trying to stir up Arab Shia-Sunni violence. They brutally beheaded Shias, blew up their mosques, and destroyed their most holy shrine. Now, their fire of sectarian violence is spreading and threatening the whole process. Iraqi police and army units can easily get sucked into sectarian violence. Without agreement with Iraq's neighbors on ending sectarianism, Iraq's modest political progress and the unity of its Armed Forces may not survive long.

Within this fragile and problematic political setting, al-Qaeda succeeded in unleashing sectarian violence with far reaching consequences. Sectarian violence has seriously undermined the political process and changed Iraq's landscape. Persistent communal violence and politicians' failure to agree on constitutional amendments will bring about a de facto breakdown of Iraq along communal lines. Such an outcome will prolong the conflict and sew seeds of additional communal and regional violence

LOWERING EXPECTATIONS

This Iraqi Government has a long way to go before making any noticeable difference. The alternative to a national unity government is a full meltdown into violence and chaos. Iraq needs help in both tracks: Security and politics while the United States can no longer instruct the Iraqis on how to govern, the security of the government and the delicate balance among Shia, Sunni, and Kurdish parliamentary blocs still hinge on U.S. support. This gives the United States significant influence and leverage over the course of Iraqi politics and the development of its security.

Only a united Iraq with an effective government and in agreement with its neighbors can deny al-Qaeda its breeding grounds in lawless Iraqi cities and end sec-

tarian violence. The stakes cannot be higher for America and hence domestic politics, regional concerns, and special interests must all be balanced to ensure success in Iraq.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you very much, Dr. Kubba.

Let me mention that rollcall votes are anticipated at 3:45, and this is always an unfortunate occurrence as we proceed through hearings, but we'll have time for your testimony, Dr. Dodge, and then the chairman will probably return, and we will make some determination as to how to proceed so that we can ask questions of you, and continue the hearing.

Dr. Dodge.

STATEMENT OF DR. TOBY DODGE, CONSULTING SENIOR FELLOW FOR THE MIDDLE EAST, INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES, LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM

Dr. DODGE. Thank you.

First, can I say that it's an honor to be here today. Second, I've submitted a longer written testimony that I'd like to be placed on the record.

I think that the publication of the Iraq Study Group report in early December, and the President's major policy speech on Iraq on January 10, marked a decisive change in attitudes toward Iraq here in Washington. The acceptance in policy circles of clear-eyed, realistic, and necessarily pessimistic assessment is clearly to be welcomed.

However, acknowledgement that the situation is dire, and getting worse, conceals both disagreement and confusion about the underlying causes of the violent civil war, and how it dominates the country, and hence, possible solutions.

What I want to do this afternoon is run through the major drivers of the conflict, and suggest that neither the Baker-Hamilton report, nor President Bush's new policy, fully deal with the causes of the problem. To explain the evolution of violent instability in the wake of regime change, the collapse of the Iraqi State is of much greater importance than the existence of communal antipathies, or indeed, the ineptitude of Iraq's new ruling elite.

The entrance of U.S. troops into Baghdad triggered 3 weeks of violence and looting that destroyed the state's administrative capacity. As we know, 17 of Baghdad's 23 ministry buildings were completely gutted.

Finally, de-Baathification removed what was left—its institutional memory, and a large section of its skilled personnel. This, along with the disbanding of the Iraqi Army resulted in the acute security vacuum that we have today.

Second, the lack of the Iraqi Government capacity and coherence, has taken away the legitimacy that began to accrue to the government after the elections of 2005. The collapse of the state, and the resulting security vacuum that has driven Iraq into civil war has created—or at least empowered—three distinct sets of groups deploying violence for their own ends.

The first are the industrial-strength criminal gangs, who terrorize what is left of Iraq's middle class. The persistent reports of crime is as big a problem for the citizens as Basra, as Baghdad, indicates that the State's inability to impose and guarantee order

is a general problem across large swathes of southern and central Iraq, going well beyond the government's inability to increase electrical output, or stimulate the job market, the continued ability of criminals to operate is indicative of a failed state.

The second type of organization capitalizing on the collapse of the state are the myriad groups that make up the Iraqi insurgency, thought to have between 20–50,000 fighters in their ranks.

The violence that erupted following the destruction of the al-Askariya Mosque in the city of Samarra on February 22, 2006, saw a third group of who have capitalized on the failure to impose order. The militia is estimated to hold between 60 and 102,000 fighters in their ranks.

The militias themselves can be divided into three broad categories, depending on their organizational coherence and relation to national politics.

The first, including the most disciplined group, consists of the two Kurdish militias associated with the Kurdish Democratic Party, and the Party for the Union of Kurdistan.

The second set of those that were created in exile, and brought back to Iraq in the wake of Saddam's fall. The most powerful of these is the Badr Brigade, the military arm of the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, estimated to have roughly 15,000 fighters in its ranks. It is the Badr Brigade's colonization of large swathes of the security forces, notably the police and paramilitary units associated with the Ministry of Interior, which has done so much to delegitimize the already extremely limited power of state-controlled law and order.

Jawad al-Bulani, the Minister of Interior since May 2006, has clearly struggled to reform this Ministry. He has reportedly sacked more than 3,000 employees, but the Ministry is still dogged by repeated allegations that its forces and prisons are using murder and torture with impunity.

The third group of militias that dominate society are those that were created in Iraq since regime change. The largest and most coherent of this is the 50,000-strong Jaish al-Mahdi, set up by Muqtada al-Sadr.

Now, the speed with which the militia itself was built, and the two prolonged conflicts it's had with the U.S. military, has taken its toll on its coherence. Muqtada militia commanders have become more financially independent of Sadr through hostage-taking, ransom, and the smuggling of antiques and petroleum. In spite of Sadr's repeated calls for calm, it was the Muqtada army that was blamed for the majority of the violence in and around Baghdad, following the destruction of the al-Askariya Shrine in February.

The Badr Brigade and the Muqtada army are in competition to control Iraq's Shias. This has led to a low-level civil war between them. This struggle erupted in Basra in April and May 2006, and then again in Amarah in October. The fighting in April was not caused by religion, or even ideological differences, but money. Basra is the center of Iraq'a oil exports, and the conflict was primarily concerned with the division of the spoils.

The fighting in Amarah in October was again about the dominance of the town, once British forces had left. In each case, none of these groups involved were strong enough to win outright, and

so the conflict simmers on, erupting periodically, triggered either by competition, or Iranian interference.

The dominance of the militias was not an inevitable result of regime change, but a direct response to the collapse of the state. If Iraq is to be stabilized, if central government—a central government with a monopoly on coercion must be rebuilt with administrative capacity to give it legitimacy. Sadly, there's no shortcut to this end-state. If it's possible at all, it could take many years, and a great deal of resources to achieve.

Ever since 2003, when Paul Bremer signed a November the 15th agreement, the U.S. Government has subcontracted this complex job of rebuilding the state to a small group of inexperienced, formerly exiled Iraqis who were long absent from the country.

Two elections and a referendum in 2005, were meant to give Iraq's new political elite democratic legitimacy. However, the nature of the electoral system chosen, the way the parties decided to fight the elections, and the constitutional position of the Prime Minister in their aftermath, have all combined to break the political coherence and administrative efficiency of this government.

The Office of Prime Minister has become the main vehicle for delivering government coherence. However, the Prime Minister is in a very weak position, both constitutionally, and electorally. Real power is vested in the parties who fight the election.

For the parties, electoral success within larger coalitions is rewarded by dividing up the spoils of government, cabinet portfolios, and the jobs and resources they bring. Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki has acted as a broker, facilitating negotiations within his own coalition, the United Iraqi Alliance, between it, the American Ambassador, and the other coalitions. The Prime Minister's decisions are based on the comparative power of the parties, and the coalitions he's negotiating with, not on his own political vision, or agenda for rebuilding the Iraqi State.

The Cabinet, instead of acting as a vehicle for national unity and state-building, has become a mechanism for dividing up the spoils of electoral success. If government ministers are answerable to anyone, it's to their party bosses, not the Prime Minister, or beyond him, the electorate. The ministries these politicians now run have become personal and party fiefdoms. At best, and this is at best, scarce government resources are diverted to build party constituencies, with each minister clearing out the payrolls of their ministries to appoint friends, followers, and faction members. At worst, there is little or no Cabinet responsibility or administrative oversight. This system encourages both personal and political corruption to flourish.

Against this background of state collapse and the resultant civil war, both the Iraq Study Group, and President Bush argue that only Iraqis can end the sectarian violence and secure their people. However, once state capacity has collapsed, civil society's ability to positively influence events quickly disappears.

The Iraq Study Group's main suggestion is a dramatic empowerment of Iraq's current governing elite. However, the current governing elite is not coherent enough to fulfill this role. It does not act with anything approaching unity, and Prime Minister Maliki's position is not strong enough to impose his will, or indeed, the

United States will in this disparate group of, basically, squabbling politicians.

President Bush, on the other hand, favors a dramatic increase in United States troops to impose some order on Baghdad and northwest Iraq, adding a further 21,000 troops to the current, roughly, 132,000 American troops in the country. Even with a new total of 153,000 troops, U.S. troops, this number would be far short of the number needed to impose order on the country.

President Bush's new approach would see a total of 32,000 U.S. troops in Baghdad, a city of roughly 6 million. This gives commanders one American soldier for every 184 Baghdadians. This new, enlarged number of U.S. troops is still well below even the 50 per 1,000 that the new Army and Marines field manual on counterinsurgency recommends.

In addition, simply flooding one area of Iraq—in this case, Baghdad—with troops, neglects the subtler aspects of counterinsurgency doctrine. For a surge in troops to Baghdad to be sustainable, it has to be married with the second stage of the process. After areas have been cleared of insurgents, the government needs to reconstitute sustainable security, building up its administrative capacity, and then establishing the rule of law.

The Iraqi Government, I would argue, is neither willing nor able to follow up the "clear" phase of counterinsurgency with the "build" stage. First, in the aftermath of a successful U.S. counterinsurgency operation to gain control of the northern city of Tel-Afar, the Iraqi Government proved remarkably reluctant to secure this victory by employing enhanced government resources.

Second, in a country dominated by the collapse of the state, the ability of the government to build up its capacity across a sustained geographical area is highly limited. There is a distinct danger that neither President Bush nor the Iraq Study Group's proposals for extracting the United States from Iraq recognize the root cause of the violence.

The origins of the Iraqi civil war lie in the complete collapse of both the administrative and coercive capacity of the state. It is the United States inability to date to reconstruct them that lies at the heart of the Iraqi problem. If, and until, the state's capacity is substantially rebuilt, then Iraq will continue to be a wellspring of violence and instability.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Dodge follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. TOBY DODGE, CONSULTING SENIOR FELLOW FOR THE MIDDLE EAST, INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES, LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM

INTRODUCTION: STATE COLLAPSE IN IRAQ

The publication of the Iraq Study Group (ISG) report in early December 2006 and President George W. Bush's major policy speech on Iraq in January 2007, marked a decisive change in attitudes in Washington. The acceptance in policy circles of a clear-eyed, realistic, and necessarily pessimistic assessment of Iraq, is clearly to be welcomed. However, acknowledgement that the situation is dire and getting worse, may conceal both disagreement and confusion about the underlying causes of the violent civil war that now dominates the country.

To explain the evolution of violent instability in the wake of regime change, the collapse of the state is of much greater significance than the supposedly transhistorical existence of communal antipathies or indeed the ineptitude of Iraq's new

ruling elite. The entrance of U.S. troops into Baghdad in the first weeks of April 2003, resulted in the death of the Iraqi State. Faced with the widespread lawlessness that is common after violent regime change, the United States did not have the numbers of troops needed to control the situation. After 3 weeks of violence and looting, the state's administrative capacity was destroyed. Seventeen of Baghdad's twenty-three ministry buildings were completely gutted. Looters first took portable items of value such as computers, then furniture and fittings. By the time I reached Baghdad, a month after U.S. forces, they were systematically stripping the electric wiring from the walls of former government buildings, to sell for scrap. Following the destruction of government infrastructure across the country, de-Baathification purged the civil service of its top layer of management, making between 20,000 and 120,000 people unemployed. The administrational capacity of the state was shattered by over a decade of sanctions, three wars in 20 years and then 3 weeks of uncontrolled looting. Finally de-Baathification removed what was left: Its institutional memory and a large section of its skilled personnel.

Iraq today finds itself in a situation of state failure. Against this background instability is driven by two interlinked problems, which have caused the profound insecurity and violence that now dominates the country. The complete collapse of state capacity and the U.S. disbanding of the Iraqi Army resulted in an acute security vacuum. This was seized upon by myriad groups deploying violence for their own gain. Organized crime became a dominant source of insecurity for ordinary Iraqis. For coalition and Iraqi security forces, it is the diffuse groups fighting the insurgency in the name of Iraqi nationalism, increasingly fused with a militant Islamism, that have caused the highest loss of life. But in early 2006, a new crisis arose with even greater potential for destabilization: Civil war. The explosion that destroyed the al-Askariya Mosque in the Iraqi city of Samarra, on February 22, 2006, marked a watershed, exacerbating already mounting sectarian violence and the resultant population transfers.

The second problem that has dominated the politics of the country since the fall of Saddam Hussein, is the question who should rule? How to find Iraqis who after 35 years of dictatorship have both the technical capacity and national legitimacy to rule over a country of 26 million people? 2005 was dominated by the struggle to build a representative government that could act as a rallying point for the country; allowing the population to invest hope and legitimacy in a new ruling elite that could stabilize the nation and move toward rebuilding the state. For Iraq to stabilize a regime change to be a success, sustained progress will have to be made in two areas: The building of countrywide state capacity and the growth of a legitimate and competent governing elite.

STATE COLLAPSE LEADS TO CIVIL WAR

The collapse of the state and the resultant security vacuum that has driven Iraq into civil war has created, or at least empowered, three distinct sets of groups deploying violence for their own ends. The first are the "industrial strength" criminal gangs who terrorize what is left of Iraq's middle class. Although there is a clear overlap between simple criminality and politically motivated violence, especially where kidnapping is concerned, the continuing crime wave is a glaring example of state incapacity. The persistent reports that crime is as big a problem for the citizens of Basra as Baghdad, indicates that the state's inability to impose and guarantee order, is a general problem across large swathes of southern and central Iraq. The high levels of criminal activity indicates that violence is driven primarily by opportunity, springing from state weakness, not the antipathy of competing groups within Iraqi society. Crime is obviously instrumentally driven, primarily noncommunal and a key factor delegitimizing the new Iraqi ruling elite. Exceeding the government's inability to increase electrical output or stimulate the job market, the continued ability of criminal gangs to operate is indicative of a failed state.

The second type of organization capitalizing on the collapse of the state are the myriad groups that make up the Iraqi insurgency. In the aftermath of regime change, the insurgency was born in a reactive and highly localized fashion, as the U.S. military's inability to control Iraq became apparent. This process saw the creation of a number of small fighting groups built around personal ties of trust, cemented by family, locality, or many years of friendship. Disparate groups, formed to rid the country of U.S. forces are estimated to consist of between 50 and 74 separate autonomous units, with between 20,000 to 50,000 fighters in their ranks. Over the past 3 years they have been innovative in the technology they deploy and the tactics they use. Since 2005 however, the insurgency, has to some degree, consolidated around four or five main groups. These organizations include the Islamic Army in Iraq, the Partisans of the Sunna Army, the Mujahidin's Army,

Muhammad's Army, and Islamic Resistance Movement in Iraq. As their names suggest, political violence has been increasingly justified in religious terms. Over the last year these main insurgent groups have found ideological coherence by fusing a powerful appeal to Iraqi nationalism with an austere and extreme Sunni Salafism: The attraction of the Salalfist doctrine for the insurgents is that it allows a distinction to be drawn between those involved in the jihad or struggle (the true believers), and those who are not. Under Salafism those not backing the struggle can be branded nonbelievers and as such be killed. This Salafist approach has also lent itself to the increased use of sectarian violence. Shias can be murdered both because they do not follow the "true path of Islam" and because they form the majority of those staffing the security forces against whom the violence is directed.

The numbers and role played by Arabs from neighboring countries and beyond them the organizing capacity of al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia, is estimated by the U.S. military to be between 5 and 10 percent of the total. These foreign fighters have played a disproportionately large role in the insurgency's ideological coherence. It is al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia that has driven the rising influence of Salafist doctrine and has claimed responsibility or been blamed for the majority of the violence that has increased sectarian tensions in the country. This dynamic reached it peak with the destruction of the al-Askariya Mosque. Although the city of Samarra has long been dominated by the insurgency, the destruction of the mosque, one of Shia Islam's most important shrines, was an act calculated to outrage Shia opinion.

The violence that erupted following the Samarra bombing saw criminals and insurgents combine with a third group who have capitalized on the failure of occupation forces and the Iraqi Government to impose order. The plethora of independent militias is estimated to hold between 60,000 to 102,000 fighters in their ranks. The militias have overtly organized and legitimized themselves by reference to sectarian ideology. Their existence is testament to the inability of the Iraqi Government to guarantee the personal safety of Iraqis on the basis of equal citizenship, not sectarian identity.

The militias themselves can be divided into three broad groups, depending on their organizational coherence and relationship to national politics. The first and most disciplined group consists of the two Kurdish militias of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK). The second set are those that were created in exile and brought back to Iraq in the wake of Saddam's fall. The most powerful of these is the Badr Brigade, the military arm of Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), estimated to have 15,000 fighters in its ranks. The Badr Brigade along with SCIRI itself, was set up as a foreign policy vehicle for the Iranian Government. Indeed the Badr Brigade was trained and officered by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, at least until their return to Iraq. It remains comparatively disciplined and responsive to its senior commanders. However it is the Badr Brigade's colonization of large swathes of the security forces, notably the police and paramilitary units associated with the Ministry of Interior, which has done so much to delegitimize the already limited power of the state-controlled forces of law and order. Badr's dominance of the Ministry of Interior reached its peak when one of its former commanders, Bayan Jabr, served as a minister under the Jaafari government. The Ministry's Wolf Brigade commandos were repeatedly accused of acting as a death squad, frequently resorting to extra-judicial execution and torture. Complaints reached their peak in November 2005, when U.S. forces raided a Ministry of Interior detention facility and found 170 detainees "who had been held in appalling conditions." However SCIRI's dominance of government was such that Jabr was not removed until the end of May 2006. His replacement, Jawad al-Bulani, a nonaligned politician, has struggled to reform the Ministry. He has reportedly sacked more than 3,000 employees, but the Ministry is still dogged by repeated allegations that its forces and prisons are still using murder and torture with impunity.

The third group of militias that dominate society in the absence of a state are those that have been created in Iraq since regime change. They vary in size, organization, and discipline, from a few thugs with guns controlling a street or a neighborhood to militias capable of running whole towns. The largest and most coherent is the 50,000-strong Jaish al-Mahdi, set up by Muqtada al-Sadr. The core of the Mahdi militia is organized around the offices of Sadr's religious charity, the Martyr al-Sadr. Each office is run by a cleric appointed by Sadr's headquarters in Najaf, with full-time fighters paid as much as $300 a week. However, the speed with which the militia was built after regime change and the two prolonged conflicts with the U.S. military have taken a toll on its organizational coherence. Mahdi militia commanders have become more financially independent of Najaf through hostage-taking, ransom, and the smuggling of antiquities and petroleum. Sadr has repeatedly tried to instil discipline but, as one of his own commanders admitted, "Even when

Sadr fires the brigade commanders, their soldiers follow them and not Sadr. Now Sadr fires commanders every month, so their fighters will not become too loyal to them." In spite of Sadr's repeated calls for calm, it was the Mahdi Army that was blamed for the majority of violence in and around Baghdad following the destruction of the al-Askariya shrine in February.

The Badr Brigade and Mahdi Army both claim to represent the same constituency, urban Iraqi Shias. They have both tried to legitimize their coercive role in terms of defending this section of the population against violence and instability. However the instrumental basis to their actions, capitalizing on the absence of the state, as opposed to their alleged position as protectors of the Shia population, has been highlighted by the low-level civil war they have been fighting against each other. This struggle erupted in Basra in April and May 2006 and then again in Amarah in October. Basra has a very small Sunni population, the fighting in April that was responsible for the deaths of 174 Iraqis was not caused by religious or even ideological differences, but money. Basra is the centre of Iraq's oil exports and the conflict was primarily concerned with the division of the spoils. The fighting in Amarah in October was again about the dominance of the town once British forces had left. In each case, none of the groups involved were strong enough to win outright and so the conflict simmers on, erupting periodically, triggered by rival machinations and Iranian interference.

Once a state has failed, once its coercive and administrative capacity is removed from society, the population has to seek new local ways to survive, to gain some degree of day-to-day predictability. This is the quest that has haunted the majority of Iraq's population since regime change. The result has been the rise of the militias. The quality of an individual Iraqi's life depends on the discipline, organizational coherence and central control of the militias that dominate their streets, neighborhoods, and towns. In the areas of northern Iraq, the Kurdish militias of the KDP and PUK, since fighting a civil war against each other in the mid-1990s, have centralized and largely institutionalized their military forces. Elsewhere in Iraq, the militias who came into existence after regime change are far more unstable, prone to criminality and divided loyalties. Although the militias were formed as an instrumental response to the security vacuum, they have attempted to legitimize themselves by the deployment of hybrid ideologies; sectarian, religious, and nationalist. This has caused the ethnic and religious cleansing across the country from Kirkuk in the north, to Basra in the south, but most powerfully in Baghdad. This was not an inevitable result of regime change but a direct response to the collapse of the state. If Iraq is to be stabilized, a central government with a monopoly on coercion must be rebuilt with administrative capacity to give it legitimacy. Sadly there is no shortcut to this end-state, if it is possible, it could take many years and a great deal of resources to achieve.

IRAQ'S NEW POLITICAL ELITE: PART OF THE PROBLEM

Ever since 2003, when Paul Bremer, head of the Coalition Provisional Authority, signed the "November 15 agreement," the U.S. Government has subcontracted the complex job of rebuilding the state to a small group of inexperienced, formally exiled Iraqis who were long absent from the country. Their task was to erect a sustainable and legitimate post-regime change political order. This has been hampered by the two dominant facts of Iraqi politics today. The major political problem they face is the legacy left by 35 years of Baathist rule. Before the imposition of sanctions in 1990, Saddam Hussein used oil wealth and hitherto unheard of levels of state violence, to break any organizing capacity within Iraqi society. Those who were active in antiregime politics were murdered, imprisoned, tortured, or driven into exile. Those who stayed in the country increasingly realized that survival and economic well-being were directly linked to complete political passivity. Consequently indigenous political organization beyond the Baath did not exist in any measurable form. There was no civil society in Iraq before the U.S. military reached Baghdad. Iraqi politics began from scratch in April 2003.

The Iraqi politicians subcontracted by the Americans to rebuild the state have been active in indigenous politics for less than 4 years. The majority were also long absent from the country. Hence they have had to battle against indigenous hostility and suspicion since their return. The intense political process that stretched across 2005 was meant to overcome these two hurdles: Anointing Iraq's new political elite with the legitimacy of two electoral mandates and a constitution approved by popular referendum. However the nature of the electoral system chosen, the way the parties decided to fight the elections, and the constitutional position of the Prime Minister in the aftermath, all combined to break the political coherence and administrational efficiency of the government created by this process.

Iraq's new electoral system, based on large multiparty coalitions, is one of the major problems dominating the politics of government. Whilst the President fulfills a mainly ceremonial role, the office of Prime Minister has become the main vehicle for delivering governmental coherence. However the Prime Minister is in a weak position both constitutionally and electorally. Real political power is vested in the parties who fight the elections. For them, electoral success within larger coalitions is rewarded by dividing up the spoils of government, Cabinet portfolios, and the jobs and resources they bring. The Prime Minister does not dominate the Cabinet as first among equals. Instead Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki has to act as a broker, facilitating negotiations within his own coalition, the United Iraqi Alliance and between it, the American Ambassador and the other coalitions. The Prime Minister's decisions are based on the comparative power of the parties and coalitions he is negotiating with, not his own political vision or agenda for rebuilding the Iraqi State.

In the aftermath of the December 2005 elections Prime Minister al-Maliki's task was to build a government of national unity. This involved rewarding the main coalitions while also seeking to balance electoral achievement with the identity politics that the main parties claim to personify. In addition, al-Maliki had to move ministers who under his predecessor, Ibrahim al-Jaafari, were too inefficient, scandal ridden, or controversial to continue in office. The Cabinet that was created sacrificed the needs of a population traumatized by the invasion, occupation, collapse of the state, a crime wave, and the growing civil war, at the altar of party politics and electoral outcomes. An unintended consequence of this system was to prevent the Prime Minister sacking incompetent or corrupt ministers without the agreement of their party bosses. Even when this was possible, party, coalition, and sectarian mathematics meant that other senior party figures replaced them.

The limitations placed upon the Prime Minister's powers of appointment were personified by his relations with Bayan Jabr. Jabr is a key member of SCIRI and a former commander in its militia, the Badr Brigade. As Minister of Interior in the Jaafari government, he was the focus of sustained criticism for politicizing the Ministry of Interior, sacking longstanding members of staff, only to replace them with loyal lieutenants from his own militia and party. Maliki eventually succeeded in moving Jabr from the Interior Ministry, replacing him with the nonaligned Jawad al-Bulani. However the weakness of the Prime Minister's position meant that Jabr could not simply be sacked from the Cabinet, but was instead moved sideways, to become Minister of Finance. In his new job Jabr has been accused of obstructing reconstruction initiatives, designed to rebuild support for the government in the Sunni neighborhoods of Baghdad following the counterinsurgency operation Together Forward II, in the summer and autumn of 2006.

During 2005 Iraq did indeed hold two comparatively successful elections and a referendum for the new Constitution. However the government and Cabinet that this electoral process delivered are unfit for their purpose: Rebuilding the Iraqi State. The weakness of a Prime Minister in a system dominated by parties has directly undermined the coherence of the government. The Cabinet, instead of acting as a vehicle for national unity and state-building has become a mechanism for dividing up the spoils of electoral success. If the ministers that al-Maliki appointed are answerable to anyone it is to their party bosses, not the Prime Minister or the electorate. The ministries these politicians now run have become personal and party fiefdoms. At best, scarce government resources are diverted to build party constituencies, with each minister clearing out the payrolls of their ministries to appoint friends, followers, and faction members. At worst, with little or no Cabinet responsibility or administrational oversight, this system encourages both personal and political corruption to flourish.

Under the transition from regime change, 2005 was meant to give Iraq's new ruling elite the legitimacy to rule the country. However the way that electoral mandate was delivered, through large multiparty coalitions, has directly hindered the government's main and crucial task: The rebuilding of the Iraqi State. Instead the Cabinet has become highly fractured. Ministries have been turned into party fiefdoms directly breaking governmental coherence. In the aftermath of each election, politicians were locked away within the fortified Green Zone in the centre of Baghdad. They became quickly removed from the everyday concerns of a population struggling to survive in the midst of an increasingly bloody civil war. The new government has followed the path of its two predecessors; it has become mired in the incestuous politics of zero-sum party competition. The state, both coercively and administrationally, is still largely irrelevant to the Iraqi population's lives. As such, it is hastening Iraq's further descent into intercommunal strife and collapse.

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

Against a background of state collapse and the resultant civil war both the Iraq Study Group and President Bush argue, "Only Iraqis can end the sectarian violence and secure their people." However once state capacity has collapsed, civil society's ability to positively influence events quickly disappears. The Iraq Study Group's main suggestion is a dramatic empowerment of Iraq's current governing elite. They would be forced to take on the role of state-builders by the application of both carrots and sticks; greater and speedier devolution of power, increased funding but also the threat of reduced aid or complete U.S. withdrawal. Under these policy proposals the United States would exercise influence over the Iraqi Government in two ways. First, it would make Iraq's rulers understand that America's commitment to the country was not open-ended. U.S. troops would be reduced and eventually withdrawn from Iraq, irrespective of the progress made on the ground. The minds of those in the Iraqi Government would be focused by a clear and unambiguous time limit placed upon U.S. support for the country. They would have no American safety net. If the current ruling elite failed it would be their own lives that would be put at risk. More immediately the Iraq Study Group suggested the imposition of strict conditionality on further U.S. aid. If specific milestones were not reached by the Iraqi Government over the next 2 years, then U.S. troops and money would be reduced incrementally, until Iraqi Government policy was changed for the better.

Given that the Iraqi governing elite play such a central role in the ISG's recommendations, their response is instructive. The Iraqi President, Jalal Talabani, gave the government's most sustained and detailed reaction stating, "as a whole I reject this report." Talabani rejected the report's suggestion of embedding up to 17,000 U.S. advisers across the Iraqi Army and police force. This he claimed, "is not respecting the desire of the Iraqi people to control its army and to be able to rearm and train Iraqi forces under the leadership of the Iraqi Government." Talabani also minimized the potential for aid conditionality to influence the government. Overall, Iraq's President saw the ISG's recommendations as a negation of Iraq's hard-won sovereignty and thus unacceptable to his government.

Hoshyar Zebari, the Foreign Minister, and Mowaffak al-Rubaie, the National Security Adviser, developed a much more cautious critique of the report. Speaking at the International Institute for Strategic Studies' Manama Dialogue in Bahrain, al-Rubaie broadly agreed with the change in the U.S. military mission suggested by the ISG. The government, he argued, has been asking for the accelerated training and equipping of Iraqi security forces. Zebari claimed that on the military front the ISG recommendations were in line with the agreement recently reached between President Bush and Prime Minister al-Maliki at their meeting in Amman. This was to accelerate the transfer of security responsibilities to Iraqi troops in command and control, training, arming, and equipment.

However, the final response to the report was not at all positive. If the ISG's recommendations on national reconciliation were meant to be perceived as an olive branch to the insurgency then the reaction of the Baath Party cannot have given its author's much room for optimism. The Baath Party, in its official response, saw the ISG report as confirmation of America's dire position in Iraq, commenting that the United States had been defeated and "the Iraqi national resistance has achieved a practical victory. This much was clear from the Baker report. Now Bush has also admitted that America had failed."

The ISG's report selected the ruling elite of Iraq as the best tool available to the United States, to shape events on the ground. However the logic of two nationwide elections and a constitutional referendum since the invasion works against this strategy. It means that Iraqi politicians like Talabani feel they have developed a large degree of autonomy from the U.S. Government who originally put them in power. This explains why the ISG's call for conditionality was rejected in the name of Iraqi sovereignty and the government's electoral mandate. Amongst both American diplomats and Iraqi politicians working in the Green Zone, there is a recognition that the negative consequences of a precipitous American withdrawal from Iraq would be as great for the U.S. Government as it would be for the Iraqi ruling elite, many of whom are very lightly attached to their country. This gives Iraqi politicians a good deal of leverage over their American colleagues. Their response to the ISG report has been to call America's bluff, not taking seriously either its demands for conditionality or threats of withdrawal. This means Iraqi politicians will continue to squabble amongst themselves directly undermining the coherence of the government and the rebuilding of the state.

President Bush, on the other hand, favours a dramatic increase in U.S. troops to impose some order on Baghdad and the northwest of Iraq, adding a further 21,500 troops to the current 132,000 troops in the country. His desire for greater numbers

of U.S. troops in Iraq has been shaped by the military and political difficulties faced by the most recent attempt to control Baghdad, operation Together Forward II. This operation began in August 2006, with plans to deploy 7,000 extra U.S. troops in combination with a similar number of Iraqis. However the Iraqi Government found itself unable to deliver the troops or reconstruction assistance it had promised. Several battalions refused orders to deploy to Baghdad. In addition, U.S. commanders had to counter sustained political interference in their operations from the highest levels of the Iraqi Government.

President Bush's new proposals for a surge in troops may also suffer from logistical and strategic shortcomings. Even a new total of 153,500 U.S. troops would be far short of the numbers needed to impose order on the country. A technocratic study on state-building published just after the invasion concluded that occupying forces would need 20 security personnel, (both police and troops), per thousand people. It estimated that coalition forces should have had between 400,000 and 500,000 soldiers to impose order on Iraq. Even this figure compares unfavourably to the estimated 43 per 1,000 that sustained Saddam in power. President Bush's new approach would see a new total of 32,500 U.S. troops in Baghdad, a city of 6 million people. This gives commanders 1 American solider for every 184 Baghdadis. This new enlarged number of U.S. troops is still well below even the 50 per 1,000 that the new Army and Marines field manual on counterinsurgency recommends.

In addition, simply flooding one area of Iraq, in this case parts of Baghdad with troops, neglects the subtler aspects of counterinsurgency doctrine. A surge in troops to Baghdad may be understood as the beginning of an "oil spot" strategy. But to be sustainable this has to be married with the second stage of the process. After areas have been cleared of insurgents the government needs to reconstitute sustainable security (particularly police forces), build up its administrative capacity, establish the rule of law, and transform its despotic capacity for violence into an infrastructural power for governance. The Iraqi Government is neither willing nor able to follow up the clear phase of counterinsurgency with the infrastructural build stage. First, in the aftermath of a successful U.S. counterinsurgency operation to gain control of the northern city of Tel Afar, the Iraqi Government proved remarkably reluctant to secure this victory by deploying enhanced government resources. After the clear phase U.S. forces found themselves overtly cajoling the Iraqi Government, in an effort to get funds released for the area, while trying to stop covert attempts at undermining the whole operation. Second, in a country dominated by a collapsed state, the ability of the government to build up its capacity across a sustained geographical area is very limited.

CONCLUSIONS

There is a distinct danger that neither President Bush nor the Iraqi Study Group's proposals for extracting the United States from the debacle that Iraq has become have recognized the root causes of the violence and instability that has plagued the country since April 2003. The origins of the Iraqi civil war lie in the complete collapse of both the administrative and coercive capacity of the state. The Iraqi State, its ministries, civil servants, police force and army ceased to exist in a meaningful way in the aftermath of regime change. It is the United States inability to reconstruct them that lies at the heart of the Iraq problem. If and until the state's capacity is substantially rebuilt, then Iraq will continue to be a wellspring of violent instability, with the population dominated by the Hobbsian nightmare that their lives will be nasty, brutish, and short.

The CHAIRMAN [presiding]. Thank you very much, Doctor.

Let me explain and apologize to the two witnesses I didn't hear. I was on the phone with one of the former Secretaries of State who was supposed to testify—he will testify—trying to work out a scheduling problem, and I apologize for my absence during your testimony.

We've just been told that the vote that was supposed to take place at 2:45 has been pushed back a little bit, and again, since my colleagues are always so patient, I'm going to begin by yielding to the Senator from New Jersey, to give him a chance to ask questions first.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate it.

Let me say——

The CHAIRMAN. We'll do 8-minute rounds today.

Senator MENENDEZ. Let me say that, having sat through all of these hearings, and they've all been incredibly instructive, and I appreciate you and Senator Lugar bringing us together on this, I don't know which one has created a greater frustration for me.

Having listened to what you all had to say, which was very insightful, I'm trying to reconcile what you all had to say, and I think there's some elements that I heard that have a common thread. I was also reading as you gave your more concise statements, which are in conflict with what I've heard from other panels.

And that is—I've heard time and time again, particularly from the administration, that in essence, this government, the Maliki government, is now ready to deal with the substantive and political issues that are critical for the possibility of a government of national unity to be realized, if it can be realized—regarding the deployment of Iraqi troops, as it relates to the President's escalation of the war and seeking security in Baghdad, as it relates to the political issues, as it relates to the economic issues, on the oil revenues redistribution—all of these things. And yet, I listened to what I think was the one thread that unified your testimony—that the political players beyond the Maliki government that obviously have enormous impact here, are not quite at the table and have not been incentivized by either the inclusion of regional partners or by other ways, to come to the process of what is necessary to move forward on the possibility of a national agenda, and reconciliation, reconstruction, and moving forward.

If that is the case, then everything we hear from the administration about that the way in which we are going to achieve success is not possible because it depends on a government that you, Dr. Dodge, described as basically incapable, because of the structural way in which we took action after the invasion.

And then I listened to several of the other testimonies talk about how the political players are not there, or are not incentivized and have reaped the benefits of being in power through their party process and the powers of appointment, Cabinet positions, and what not. And then, listening to Mr. Talabani—tell me: How do we move this forward? Because we're being asked to send 22,000 of America's sons and daughters into a fight, an escalation of a fight, in which the political will doesn't seem to be there to accomplish what is—at least at this point in time—what is necessary on behalf of its own people, and possibility of its own nation? And yet, we are being told that's the very essence of what we should do. So that we can give them all the wherewithal to achieve that. I don't hear it, in all of your respective testimonies. So, I open it to whoever wants to comment.

Dr. DODGE. You've got my message exactly right, and I think Laith and at least two of my colleagues probably wouldn't disagree with the sentiment, if not the way it was delivered.

I think it is the electoral system, I think the electoral system has deliberately structured a weak Prime Minister, I think once the representatives of the parties get hold of their ministries, they do what they please with them. And the course of what—that the painful example of this is by in Jaabar, first in Interior, and now in Finance. There was a series of scandals in the Interior Ministry,

highlighted by the U.S. military in, I think, November 2005, finding detention centers which were truly horrific, but it was not until May 2006 that anyone could remove that minister from his post, and then he wasn't removed, he was shifted sideways into anything, a more important job in the Finance Ministry. What does that tell us about the government? It's not fit for purpose.

Now, I could explain it by detail I have in my testimony, what it is about the electoral system that's delivered this, but I think, if the surge has one positive aspect, it is in protecting—on a very flat terrain—the one institution of the Iraqi Government that is, at the moment, coherent, and is not politicized or sectarianized to the degree that the others are, the Iraqi Army. By pumping in these new troops to Baghdad, what you're doing is putting an American shield round the only institution that has the capacity to deliver services to the Iraqi population that it needs: Law and order.

So, I think, although I've criticized the surge for being too small, and actually, for neglecting the second phase of counterinsurgency, it may have, possibly the unintended consequence of protecting the Iraqi Army from the way that the rest of the institutions theoretically——

Senator MENENDEZ. This is an institution that is, at least at this stage, clearly not delivering on behalf of the Iraqi people. It doesn't seem to have the political will to do what is necessary to achieve real delivery service. How is it—as you answer these questions, I would ask, in my time that's left—tell me how is it that you would change the dynamics? What is it that we can do to change the dynamics, externally or internally, in order to move the political players to a much higher calling?

Dr. DODGE. Well, I think when you look at President's Talabani's response to Baker-Hamilton, all Baker-Hamilton was merely suggesting, and I think, on a misunderstanding of the Iraqi Government, the Iraqi Government must do specific things for the money that it's being given, and that it must accept large number of American trainers into the Iraqi Army. President Talabani said, "I reject this report. I won't have anything to do with this report."

So, you have a problem that those two elections and that referendum have given a degree of perceived autonomy and sovereignty to the Iraqi politicians who are not doing their job.

Dr. KUBBA. If I may, I just want to remark—irrespective of how we go there today, we have a reality, that political landscape that has its hold over the State, it's stagnant and we can spend the next 3 years going round and round. The country is rich enough, it's pumping oils, there are beneficiaries that are controlling this state, they will not let it go. Even if 4 million Iraqis are displaced as refugees and hundreds are killed every week, they will not let go.

In my understanding, the only way is to change the dynamic of the Iraqi politics. The only way I can see it, is something strong enough that will make them shift and seriously think about it, they know the neighbors are not going to go away, unlike American troops, which are bound to go away. They know that the neighbors have influences over them, and they do not want them in Iraq at all. Maybe that thing they fear most can be leveraged to bring a real change in dynamic, and force them—if they want their country, then work toward it, and do not run it down.

Ms. RAHIM. Mr. Chairman, may I add? I agree with my colleagues, but I want to add one or two points.

First of all, the Prime Minister is constrained both constitutionally, and also by the fact that he is head of a coalition government. As Prime Minister, in the Constitution, he already doesn't have very many powers. But as the head of a coalition government, he has even fewer powers.

I can tell you that the Prime Minister cannot fire any of his ministers. He has been talking about firing three ministers since last July, and has not been able to do so. So, that is a given. However, we also have a National Emergency Law, which in my view, we have not taken advantage of fully. And I think we ought to be looking at that law, and seeing whether the Iraqi Government, the Iraqi Cabinet and Prime Minister Maliki, specifically, can actually use that law to give himself some greater capacities than he already has.

That's one point. The second point is that we need to pressure—the United States needs to pressure—not just Prime Minister Maliki. The pressure has to be applied on all those recalcitrant political actors who are unwilling to make concessions and compromises. And, in order to do so, I think the United States needs to do something that we really have not done a good job of, and that is assess our leverage.

What is United States leverage in Iraq today? Where does it reside? Where are the points where the United States can actually make an impact on the political process? Now, it seems to me that there definitely has to be leverage with 150,000 troops there, but I do think we've done a very good job of identifying where it is, specifically, and we perhaps should be engaging in that kind of exercise.

Mr. TALABANI. I think, Senator, if I could just add. The problems are clear for all to see. There is a major mistrust between the people that are, today, sitting around the table, deciding the future of this country. It is not the fact that it's a faulty political system, or it's a faulty electoral system, or it's a faulty constitution that has got us to this. It is about bad leadership, politically immature leadership.

And this cannot, most of the people that are in government today were in the opposition. Few have had experience at administering, and one of the reasons of the Kurdistan region today is a little more stable than the rest is because we've had 15 years of administering our affairs. If you look back at the Kurdistan region in the early nineties, it was as bad as Iraqis today—the parties were fighting each other, there was mistrust, there were rivalries about money, about power.

Eventually, as we saw a larger goal, the mistrust began to go away, and it ultimately was a major role of the United States that brought the two Kurdish parties together, sat them down at the table and gradually—slowly but surely—trust began to develop.

Now, I don't think Iraq has 15 years to wait before the trust can begin to develop, and that just shows you what a major task we have ahead of us, to eliminate centuries of mistrust that has existed within Iraqi society, the mistrust between Sunni-Arab and Shia-Arab communities hasn't just been created since the removal

of Saddam's regime—these are deep-rooted insecurities. And you cannot address these people's insecurities with a policy or a strategy. It ultimately has to come about by leaders leading. And reaching beyond their ethnic and sectarian boundaries, and I don't know how we do it, to be honest with you, sir.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. There are about 5 minutes left of the vote. Senator Casey, I believe, is coming back, and possibly Senator Webb. I would like to come back and ask you some questions.

If you would like to continue for a few, if you have anything you want to finish up with, I——

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, sure.

The CHAIRMAN. Because I don't want to make you have to come back again.

Senator MENENDEZ. I would—you know, you spoke of, is it, Ms. al-Rahim? You spoke of us assessing what leverage we have, and making a decision to use it on the other political players within Iraq. Do you, would you have any suggestions in that regard?

Ms. RAHIM. Senator, it's not really up to me to make those decisions, I think that American policymakers ought to sit down and assess what kinds of leverage they can have.

But while I have the opportunity, I want to recall something, and that is, I believe way back when I testified before this committee in 2002, I spoke about a date in process that was required in Iraq, that we really need to bring the Iraqi players.

And I don't see, necessarily, just the United States bringing the players, but there has to be some way by which we can persuade, and put pressure on those players to come together and say, "OK, you've got, you know, we've got a week,"——

The CHAIRMAN. What do the rest of you think about that idea of a date in process?

Excuse me for interrupting.

Senator MENENDEZ. Sure, no, absolutely.

The CHAIRMAN. Because it wasn't the United States just bringing them together. Russia was there, France, I mean, there were other nations. It was a major effort—what do you all think about that notion?

Dr. DODGE. I think I've written at length about, and when I testified before this committee last time, spoke about the desperate need to multilateralize. But on two levels.

First, I think, undoubtedly, no one around this table would disagree that certain neighbors, and I think, increasingly more neighbors will start to play into Iraq with destabilizing effect. So, you need to put the neighbors in a multilateral framework that convinces them that collective cooperation as opposed to individual machinations will be to their benefit.

But you need, certainly, to bring the United Nations back in, maybe not for the structure of the United Nations, but for the resources that the Permanent Five can deploy, and also the diplomatic cover that it would give to the United States, it would be much more muscular in Iraq.

Over a period of 2 months I met three very senior Iraqi politicians who'd been in the first two governments, and then had left government, and they were the most haunted and profoundly de-

pressed individuals who said, "You know what you did? You gave us power back too soon." And I think the Iraqi people are reaping the hell of that mistake around the November 15, 2003.

So, I think the United Nations, or at least a multinational framework needs to be, Iraq needs to be inserted within that, to bear the burden of state-building.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Talabani, Dr. Kubba. Briefly, if you can, because I think we've got about a minute left in the vote with the time.

Mr. TALABANI. Sure, I think some sort of international process could be helpful, but only if it helps to alleviate, again, the concerns of the various players in the country. I'm skeptical of how much pressure could be applied by the United States, by an international body. It's not about pressure—it's about some sort of incentives that will ultimately help create some sort of rational thinking and wise judgment that doesn't exist today.

Dr. KUBBA. I clearly see that the pressure point that can come is from Iraq's neighbors for—on many grounds. They can contribute to security, they can assure the communities, or have the opposite effect on others. But more importantly, I think if the Iraqi Government takes the lead, with the support of the United States, the focus on bringing Iraq's neighbors would definitely bring the right change in the environment, and some results.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you, we're going to recess, with your permission, for about—it takes about 10 minutes to get over, and there's two votes in a row, but one vote is almost out, and the other we'll vote at the front end, so with a little bit of luck, we'll be back here at about a quarter after, OK?

We'll recess until the call of the Chair.

[Recess 4:05 p.m.]

[Reconvened at 4:28 p.m.]

The CHAIRMAN. The hearing will please come to order.

I thank the panel for their indulgence. Because of so much happening on the floor of the Senate now, I'm not sure who's going to be able to come back, but I do have some questions, with your forbearance here, if I may.

I'm going to ask some pretty broad questions, if I may, and they're going to sound—well, I won't characterize how those sound, you can make a judgment. What happens if the United States just gets up and leaves? What happens if the United States of America announces that over the next 6 months we're going to engage in an "early" withdrawal, we're leaving Iraq. What happens?

Rend, I'll start with you——

Ms. RAHIM. Mr. Chairman. Yes——

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. And work our way across.

Ms. RAHIM. Looking almost exclusively at U.S. interests in the region, I would say it would be catastrophic. There would be——

The CHAIRMAN. Catastrophic for U.S. interests?

Ms. RAHIM. For the—for the United—yes; for U.S. interests.

The CHAIRMAN. In what sense? How would it be catastrophic?

Ms. RAHIM. The——

The CHAIRMAN. I'm just being the Devil's advocate here. I like——

Ms. RAHIM. Yes, yes. And we'll parry here.

The situation in Iraq will deteriorate into total chaos and mayhem, there will be—if we're not now in civil war, we will be definitely in civil war. I believe that neighboring countries will not stand by, they will intervene in that civil war, either by sending in their own forces, or by funding and facilitating. I think the civil war——

The CHAIRMAN. A cynic would say that's already happening, funding and facilitating.

Ms. RAHIM. Well, even more so.

And I would also suggest that this civil war may actually spill over into some neighboring countries, particularly in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, perhaps Syria, Jordan, so on. So, I don't think we can contain what goes on in Iraq if it deteriorates.

Obviously, oil flows will be disrupted and——

The CHAIRMAN. In addition to Iraq, they'll be disrupted in other countries as well?

Ms. RAHIM. Yes; oh, absolutely.

Of course, we will also be giving major players that we are not necessarily friends with, such as Iran, the ability to manipulate Iraqi affairs, even, to an even greater degree than they are doing now. And I don't think that's a desirable outcome.

So, I think we need to think very, very carefully about consequences of withdrawal.

The CHAIRMAN. Dr. Dodge.

Dr. DODGE. I agree with President Bush on this, he said it would force a collapse of the Iraqi Government, tear the country apart, and result in mass killings, I think that, that's—I think he's spot on there.

I think the—if we look at the comparison with the Lebanese civil war, the region was comparatively successful in containing this struggle, but what resulted? As the region, and more importantly, the international community invariably turned its back on Lebanon, one state through murder, bribery or whatever, dominated Syria. So, I think the example would be as the United States draws out, pulls out, the Iranians will come in and dominate the terrain through nefarious means, and through violence. So, I think it would be disastrous for Iraq. It may not spread the civil war beyond the boundaries, but Iraq would then become a regional cockpit where Iran and Saudi Arabia, Jordan would then fight this so-called presence of crisis war for——

The CHAIRMAN. Including Kurdistan?

Dr. DODGE. Pardon?

The CHAIRMAN. Including Kurdistan?

Dr. DODGE. Well, I think it depends on the Turkish general staff there, doesn't it? And one hears two different arguments, one that the opinion in membership is a constraining factor, but two, all of the opinion poll data coming out of Turkey suggests that Turks have waited too long, and are turning away from the Holy Grail of Europe, which means Turkey then would, as it turns back to the region, have greater capacity to pursue its interests in the North.

Mr. TALABANI. I think——

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Talabani.

Mr. TALABANI. Mr. Chairman, the only thing I would add to my esteemed colleagues' comments, which I agree with in their en-

tirety, is the free access that would be given to al-Qaeda to come in a benefit from this failed state. And wreck havoc, really, from a failed state like Iraq.

The CHAIRMAN. How would that happen, since each of the major constituencies have no interest in al-Qaeda occupying any part of their territory?

Mr. TALABANI. I think they will most likely benefit the western part of the country. They will use their ability to move around in the western part of the country to impose on the people in that part of the country a rule of fear. They won't have success in Kurdistan, they won't be able to walk around freely in the southern part of the country, but I think we will see an emergence of an extreme Taliban-style way of life in western Iraq.

Dr. KUBBA. If I may, Senator, the—I think the communities are more or less prepared for that eventuality in the worst possible way, which is going to lead to, naturally—to suck in the neighbors into Iraq. Iraq's immediate neighbors have their own national interest tied with what happens in their country, if the United States was to abandon it, abandon a weak Iraq without a state to defend itself, it's basically inviting neighbors to step in, and the communities will rush to neighbors to find protection.

So, for sure we're going to have a much prolonged war within Iraq that involved the neighbors. And I think in the atmosphere of ruins and no government, al-Qaeda will flourish. They'll find fresh grounds for recruits, for training people, creating networks of murderers, it will just be ideal grounds for them.

The CHAIRMAN. Now, let me ask you a second question. Does the leadership among the Sunnis and the Shia and the Kurds understand that that's going to be an inevitability if things don't start to straighten up? Does anybody think that the United States of America, forget what I think, is going to, 18 months from now—there's a lovely woman in here with a shirt that said "3061" on her chest. Do they think they're going to let it go to 6058? With no maturation of the political system or circumstance? What do you think they think?

Dr. KUBBA. My belief is that they are prepared for it. They think they are in a survival game, very much as Euros fight, and they are prepared for it. The Sunnis have their strategic depth in other countries, they think the flow of money and volunteers will continue, the Shia have their strategic depth in Iran, and I think the Kurds are fairly strong in their region to face that eventuality if it comes.

The CHAIRMAN. So, then, we talked about earlier, Ms. Rahim, the notion that the United States has to figure out where its pressure point is, where its—I forget the exact phrase you used for Senator Menendez, and he asked you what that was, and you said, obviously, that's for us to determine as a country, not for you to presume. But it seems to me you all are painting—and I'm not taking issue, I'm just trying to understand, a fairly bleak picture here.

If, in fact, we do not stay and keep ourselves interposed as sort of "apartheid cops" keeping things from blowing out of control fully, we will reap the whirlwind. That, if we stay, there's very little prospect to think that any of the present actors who are the major players in determining outcomes, whether it's the militia, whether

it's the political parties they're attached to, whether it's the political leadership that exists in the so-called central government now, that they have no incentive to see things change. And, because of the reasons you've stated, Dr. Kubba. And so it is a bit of, as I say, a conundrum here.

And, one of the things I've observed is, and Dr. Dodge, you're a historian and you, and all of you may know better than I, but I can't think of a circumstance in the 20th century where a nation has been willing to continue to have its blood and treasure bled for the express mission of just keeping things from getting worse. I don't know when that's ever happened.

And so, I know you all fully understand, I mean, you've said things, and as you know—I'm not being solicitous, I have great respect for you all—you've all laid out the elements of what, if it occurred, would be the building blocks for the United States to be able to, over time, leave Iraq without leaving chaos behind, and having some sense of stability in a country that did not invite the neighbors in, was secure within its own borders, not a haven for al-Qaeda, and not a threat to its neighbors.

But all of the things you have stated, and all of you have used the same kind of terminology, and you've cited the same goals—you basically all say, with the exception of Mr. Talabani, that the system that was set up, the governmental system, is broken. It is not, it cannot carry the weight of the change that's required. Yes—and I happen to agree with your—some of your criticism about how we got to where we got to—but as an old bad, tried expression goes, "We are where we are." You have this overwhelming portion of Iraqis voting for a constitution, that everyone who comes and testifies before us says, basically, "Ignore it, ignore it."

That's—when you cut through all of the terminology with notable exceptions like Mr. Talabani, most people say, "Hey, the political vehicle that's in place, that's designed to bring about political accommodation, makes political accommodation impossible, so, therefore, ignore it." And the international community has put its stamp of approval on this thing called a constitution, and the Constitution calls for regionalism, and locks, Mr. Talabani, it locks the Kurds into a position—which they want—a position of regional autonomy. It says it straight out in the Constitution, and then it says, I forget, I think it's section 115, or article 115, and it says right below that, subsection—or part two of that—I should have it committed to memory like my own Constitution, I've read it enough—but it says that any other governorate can determine it should be a region, and it defines what the responsibility of a region is. What authority they have. And it says that it cannot contravene the laws of the national government, but the laws of the national government, as you point out, there's a weak Prime Minister, and a weak national government, the national government can't even tax. There's not even the power in Baghdad to tax.

And that's the system set up, and yet, every expert that comes before us, with notable exceptions says, "You can't have these regions, you allow these regions to occur and you have chaos, and you just increase the sectarian identity, and you increase the—" and you know, it goes on.

We have an expression that, I think, comes from you Brits: It's like pushing a rope. So, I mean, tell me, straight up—do we disavow the Constitution, say, "from this moment on, the United States of America does not think that implementing the terms of the Iraqi Constitution are in the interests of the Iraqis or the United States?" Do we say that?

Mr. TALABANI. Mr. Chairman, if I can.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

Mr. TALABANI. Iraq has been a failed state since its inception. It's been a failed state, because its been ruled by a minority from a center that has imposed its will, through fear and terror, on the majority of the country. This has created the situation that we have today. It wasn't Ambassador Bremer that created this situation.

The CHAIRMAN. No; I didn't say that, as you know.

Mr. TALABANI. The CPA made many mistakes, we made many mistakes, but it's the fact that Iraq's history has created the situation. The mistrust that exists between these communities.

So, people have come forward and have put forward a system—a proposed system of government, through a federal structure that takes away the insecurities. It tells the Sunni-Arab that no longer will the Shia dominate them. It tells the Shia that no longer will the Baathis dominate them. It tells the Kurds that no longer will we be deprived of our own oil. It puts in place sound mechanisms for coexistence. It is the only way that we can keep this country together.

The country today stands divided, Mr. Chairman. And through a federal structure, and through creating regions that can administer their own affairs, we can keep Iraq as one country.

The CHAIRMAN. As one of my friends says, "Let's get up to 30,000 feet here, and look down." It has been argued by some equally bright and dedicated people who have been before this committee in the past 3 weeks, with regard to a failed state, if it is, and was, there's generally only two prescriptions. One is a strong man, and/or an empire being able to govern it, or two, federalization. Federalize it. That there is very little prospect of transitioning from a strong-man/empire-dominated country constructed by an Englishman drawing a pen along a piece of paper representing the map of the world—there's no way to get from here to there. There's no way to get to a strong, central government that does not rely on ethnic and/or religious blocks as the instruments of political accommodation, that allows you to have a unified, central government. So, the transition, if there is any, has to be to an imperfect regional government—not necessarily a Balkanization, not necessarily. Not necessarily splitting up the country. But at a minimum, a very loosely federated government. What's the alternative?

Ms. RAHIM. Mr. Chairman, I think that Iraqis have accepted the principle of federalism. I don't think there are many Iraqis that will oppose federalism, it is what kind of federalism, and at what pace, and what are the residual——

The CHAIRMAN. Let me define it so we can get into it, OK?

Ms. RAHIM. OK.

The CHAIRMAN. What the Constitution says is: If you seek to participate and become a player in the federal system, any governorate

on its own or joining another can become a region, a term of art in the Constitution, and it's very explicit about the powers of the region.

One of those powers, I think it's section 5, if anybody has a Constitution, section 5 says—let me make sure, he just handed me the whole Constitution here, but let me find the exact part. I'm looking at it—section 6, article 109, subsection—is this right? I'm sorry, I beg your pardon. Article 113, subsection, it's listed sixth: "To formulate public," excuse me, let me find the right section here, because I've got this backward.

Where's that section about control over security? Oh, here it is. I unfortunately know more about this than my staff, which worries me.

Article 120, they talk about having the responsibility if you choose to be a region. And the fifth section says, "The regional government shall have responsibility for all administrative requirements in the region, particularly the establishment and organization of internal security forces for the region, such as police, security forces, and guards of the region." Now that's pretty basic stuff. Article 120 lists a total of six, excuse me, five powers that inure to a region if a governorate chooses to become a region or part of a region.

Article 119 says, "the region shall adopt a constitution that defines the structure of the regional government, it's authorities and mechanisms for exercising those authorities, provided they do not contradict with the constitution."

Article 120 says, first, "regional authorities shall have the right to exercise executive, legislative," and it defines them. But the fifth one is pretty profound. Every expert and every historian we've had here said, "Whoa, you can't do that. You can't let these guys have control over, like you do, with the pesh merga, the total security of your country." We all act like we're, you know, we're in Alice in Wonderland here.

These guys are up there saying, "By the way, you can't even put the Iraqi Army in my neighborhood, unless we agree. The Constitution says, they can say, your dad can say, "Nobody; forget it. General so-and-so, you cannot." You can't even fly the Iraqi flag if you all don't want them to fly it in your territory. And you all are talking about a united Iraq, like somehow there's going to be a strong, central government, where we pretend there isn't anything having to do with these sectarian and regional, ethnic, and tribal differences. So, what are we talking about here?

Dr. DODGE. Mr. Chairman, if you'd let me blunt——

The CHAIRMAN. I'd like you to be, believe me. I need bluntness right now.

Dr. DODGE. The Constitution is irrelevant to Iraq.

The CHAIRMAN. All right.

Dr. DODGE. It's like rearranging the deck chairs of the Titanic as it slips between the icy waves of chaos and violence.

But basically, we have a representative from the Syrians in the audience, apparently the Syrians have been promised Ninewa. Who is going to protect them when they're given Ninewa. What are they going to do with Ninewa?

And the point that I—in my testimony about the——

The CHAIRMAN. I'll tell you one thing. Americans don't want to die over Ninewa, while you all are figuring it out.

Dr. DODGE. The point about Badr and Sadr's low-level civil war, it goes straight to your point. You divide the country up, you give the South to who? The Iraqi people don't care about a constitution, what they care about is the day-to-day struggle to survive, which is getting more and more difficult in the chaos that's Iraq.

The CHAIRMAN. Let me play Devil's advocate. Let's assume that the law passed by the Parliament, suspended for 18 months now, what, 10 months left?

Mr. TALABANI. Ten months, yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Or 12 or whatever months left, allowing these regions to be set up. You come along and what happens is two, three, five, seven governorates in the south made up of a Shia coalition that's at odds with itself, becomes a region. Well, if I'm sitting in Kurdistan, and if I'm sitting in the Sunni province, I think, "You know, the good thing is, Sadr's going to have to go kill somebody in that outfit that I don't like anyway, that the SCIRI part that was trained by the Iranians, the Badr Brigade. At least they're not in my neighborhood killing me."

Dr. DODGE. But they will be as well, won't they?

The CHAIRMAN. Why?

Dr. DODGE. Because Baghdad is 6 million people, the most ethnically mixed city in Iraq.

The CHAIRMAN. Again, being the Devil's advocate, you've got a million, 200,000 people already headed out. You've got ethnic cleansing already occurring in a race. I mean, it is a deluge that's occurring without any regional government being set up except Kurdistan. And so, again, I'm trying to figure out—I agree with you, the ideal thing is to have a Democratic central government that has figured out a mechanism for sharing the oil, for controlling the militia, from allowing the neighbors to interfere in internal affairs. That is what I'd like to see.

Now I sit here and say—and I'll end with this and yield to my colleague—I sit here and say, "Do I continue to vote to keep somewhere between 135,000 and 160,000 forces, while all you Brits are heading home real quick?" You're packing up and leaving, no one else is in the deal. I mean, if you notice, no one talks about the coalition forces anymore. At least they have the good grace to drop the facade, that there's a coalition force.

And I say, "But I tell you what, I'm going to send my son, who is in the National Guard, let him go on over there, and let him take care of helping you guys from killing each other, even though we may have been the reason you started killing each other. And we're going to do this for awhile, and we have no real hope that you all are going to get together, but we're going to do this, because we think a central government is a good idea."

Mr. TALABANI. Mr. Chairman.

Ms. RAHIM. Mr. Chairman, may I——

Mr. TALABANI. Please.

Ms. RAHIM. May I say a couple of things about this?

First of all, I have two problems with this scenario, or three.

The CHAIRMAN. I got a bunch.

Ms. RAHIM. One of them is that the—if the National Government has dysfunctional institutions, I can assure you that with the exception of Kurdistan the other provincial governments are nonexistent. They are——

The. CHAIRMAN. I agree.

Ms. RAHIM [continuing]. Even more dysfunctional, if that were possible. And so what is there to federate to? I am a proponent of federation in Iraq, and not only of Arab-Kurdish federalism, but a more complex federal system. It is just that I think this is not the way to go about it because those provinces simply are not ready. There is nothing there, there.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you agree with Dr. Dodge that the Constitution that exists in Iraq is really, you know—someone told me there's a famous phrase that a paper can hold anything that's written upon it, or some phrase like that—do you think it means anything?

Ms. RAHIM. I think this Constitution does not make for a viable state.

The CHAIRMAN. So does the United States come along and say, "We're changing your Constitution?"

Ms. RAHIM. No.

The CHAIRMAN. So what do we do to change the Constitution?

Ms. RAHIM. But I think we ought to have a constitutional convention in Iraq. And this must be, ours must be, or the Iraqi Constitution——

The CHAIRMAN. Now who's going to do that? I apologize for being precise here. You say we should have a constitutional convention; don't disagree with you.

Mr. TALABANI. We've already had that, though.

The CHAIRMAN. That's my point.

Mr. TALABANI. We've already been through this.

The CHAIRMAN. Who's going to show up? Who's going to call it?

Mr. TALABANI. The Constitution today is a compromise, it's a compromise by those that sat there and fought for days to try to get something out of this. It's not that we haven't tried this. It's not that we haven't tried to create a central government. It's the fact that central governments have failed in Iraq. It's failed because Iraq is a multiethnic, multisectarian society, which has complete and immense mistrust within it.

And I think that in 1992 when we came down from the mountains into Kurdistan, we had nothing. There were no administrative structures in Kurdistan. The Iraqi regime had pulled out completely. We encountered a completely decimated region. And it took us time to develop the political institutions. We held elections, they weren't the best. We had a government, it wasn't the most competent. But in time, after even some skirmishes, we built what we have today.

And I don't think that this can't be done in the south. I don't think this can't be done in other parts of the country, but all I can tell you is centralized governments have failed in Iraq. And I think they'll continue to fail, and will lead to more bloodshed the more we try to create something for the sake of illusions over the sake of pleasing the Iraq's neighbors.

The CHAIRMAN. I yield to Senator Casey, but Dr. Kubba, you wanted to say something and the floor is yours, sir.

Dr. KUBBA. Mr. Chairman, Iraq today is two Iraqs. There is Kurdish Iraq, which is stable, prosperous running itself in a very good position. And there is the rest of Iraq, Arab Iraq, which is very much on fire. And I can understand every reason for the Kurdish region absolutely to try consolidate what has been achieved after a long period of struggle.

Putting that out of the equation, we need to focus on where the problem is. And the problem is very much in Arab Iraq. The current Constitution allows all the 15 remaining provinces, even to come up and be one region if they want to. The real problem is political, it's not to do with the Constitution. And the way the politics is set at the moment, unless we push that—change the dynamic that governs the politicians—they're going to drag Iraq and the rest of the region down with them.

My own assessment, left to the Iraqis alone, they will not do it. The United States can not brighten open chat and do it indefinitely. I do firmly believe time has come to call up for a roundtable conference where Iraq's neighbors who have genuine interest in the stability of their neighborhood, be participants and they pull the rug from underneath the players who think they have the strategic depth and can play neighbors to their advantage. I believe if we do not do this now, we will be forced to do it at much worse conditions later.

The CHAIRMAN. I happen to agree with you, but—Senator Casey.

Senator CASEY. Mr. Chairman, thank you for this opportunity again.

This is, as the panelists may know and the audience knows, one of many great hearings we've had in this committee and I appreciate the chairman's work on that, putting these together.

This is a rare opportunity because we have probably more time than I'd get otherwise, but I'll try not to press too long.

The CHAIRMAN. But take your time.

Senator CASEY. He's been very generous with our time.

My first question, I guess, Doctor, is I want to pick up on where you just left off. In terms of this, we've heard and we read in American newspapers all the time, the need for—obviously to get the military strategy right, the political strategy, and the diplomatic initiatives right. I think the administration has fallen short on all three in one way or another. We've heard a lot about, in the last couple of weeks now about, and experts have sat at a similar table talking about military aspects.

You're here talking mostly about the politics and governance, and that's why it's important we're here listening. But pick up where you just left off from two vantage points. One, and I'd also open this up to other panelists, when you talk about getting the politics right on the ground and having an effort in the region. (A) How should that work? If you had a magic wand, so to speak, if you could charter a course that would be, in your judgment, the best.

And then second, how has this Government, the Government of the United States, done or not done things in the last couple of, certainly the last 2 years, to move that forward? Just the political

effort. Start with the ideal, and then move to an evaluation of what our Government has done or not done effectively to make that happen.

Dr. KUBBA. Well on the realistic——

Senator CASEY. I know it's broad, but——

Dr. KUBBA [continuing]. On the realistic ideal, I wouldn't say just abstract ideal, I think what can be done now is for the Iraqi Prime Minister, with the clear support from the United States, calls for a roundtable for Iraq's neighbors directly to discuss security, not only control over borders, but political, financial, and other forms of interaction taking place between the different players in Iraq and the neighbors. The United States ought to be clearly present in that meeting, and I do believe if we can reach a compact with Iraq neighbors on these issues, this will put a ceiling to how far Iraqi politicians can indulge while the country is on fire.

So, I think this is something feasible—doable—it takes, including Iran and Syria, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Kuwait, Jordan, all these countries, six of them must be involved to very much the displeasure of the Iraqi politicians, but to the need to save Iraq. I think this ought to take place.

Senator CASEY. I just want to interrupt you for one second just so I'm hearing you right. You called that a roundtable. Is that the term you used?

Dr. KUBBA. Yes.

Senator CASEY. And you think that should be called by whom?

Dr. KUBBA. The Iraqi Prime Minister, the Iraqi Government.

Senator CASEY. OK; so let's say Prime Minister Maliki calls that kind of a roundtable. You're saying at that table should be which countries.

Dr. KUBBA. I think America and Britain because of——

Senator CASEY. Right.

Dr. KUBBA [continuing]. The size of their involvement. Of course, not only the Iraqi Government led by the Prime Minister, but the six of Iraq's neighbors, all of them.

Senator CASEY. OK. So that's a specific step that could be taken.

Dr. KUBBA. Yes.

Senator CASEY. Let me, and I don't want to press too hard on the details, but I think it's important. The American people pick up their newspaper everyday, they turn on the television set, and they see something very specific on the military part of this. They see that the President has proposed having a surge, what I and many others call an escalation of troops. So, it's something specific and it's got a number on it. It's very easy to understand that, right?

But then they hear all this, it's kind of murky when it gets to these others steps that are diplomatic and political. That's very helpful just to identify that step that you just pointed out.

So, let's say in this ideal situation that the Prime Minister calls that kind of a roundtable, that's one. What else do you think you'd put on your list in terms of a next—let's say it's reasonably successful, and try to play this out as best you can. And I know this is hypothetical, but believe me, it helps. Because we don't have enough of this.

Dr. KUBBA. Well, I believe if that takes place, of course that will be step one to create a mechanism to build not only trust, but to

look at specific measures, maybe and building a confidence, working issues on security, which is a collective interest shared by everybody, all of——

Senator CASEY. Right.

Dr. KUBBA [continuing]. Iraq's neighbors. This can happen. It can start a process. And I am certain if this was to be triggered then Iraqi politicians, themselves, would rush against the clock to try to come up with their own visions because they all will be threatened by the prospect of losing control of the situation at the moment. I believe this can take place.

The issues on constitutional amendments, how to resolve other issues, I do have specific proposals, but I believe it's not for the United States to do it for the Iraqis. It must come from the Iraqis themselves. What the United States can do is create a better environment and help change the dynamic of Iraqi politics. This is something doable and the United States not only has an interest in seeing it done—the alternative if it's not done, I think the United States can not simply pack and leave.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator, would you tell me, specifically, how would the United States do that?

Senator CASEY. Yes.

Dr. KUBBA. I think, again, to be specific, there are two channels. Publicly, I think the United States ought to make it clear to Prime Minister Maliki that it is important to hold a conference with Iraq's neighbors, specifically on the issues——

The CHAIRMAN. And if he says no?

Dr. KUBBA. My own information; he is for the idea.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, let's just assume, like most other things we've suggested, he says no. Now you may have inside information and I'm not being facetious, You may very well. I don't doubt that.

Dr. KUBBA. I think, Mr. Chairman, the next best step is for the United States to talk directly to Iraq's neighbors and that will then send a clearer and louder message. If you're not going to fix your country, we'll bring others to fix it for you.

The CHAIRMAN. Now we asked for that, and the others say, "You're on your own. We like it the way it is." Iran says, "It's kind of nice. You're there and you're spending $8.5 billion a month. You're losing thousands of Americans. You're not able to rally any military capacity to threaten us, and we kind of like it just the way it is."

Dr. KUBBA. If that fails, I have no answers.

Dr. DODGE. Mr. Chairman, if I can just add——

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you for your honesty. I'm sorry, Senator, go ahead.

Senator CASEY. I want to get other reactions too, but often when we, in America, when people out there who aren't sitting through hearings and don't have, frankly, the luxury that we all have up here to listen and to ask a lot of questions.

When they hear that someone says in order for the Iraqis to do what they must do politically, the Americans must create—and you used these words, Doctor; everyone has used similar words—but create a better environment, OK?

Now most people hearing that—when I hear it as well—this is how it's translated to me, "create a better environment" means

boots on the ground, so you can stabilize things. It's the foundation of the President's escalation, OK? But let's set that aside for a moment.

Creating a better environment, because it seems like nothing's going to happen unless Americans take the lead on something like this, even if it's in the political sphere. What do we have to do, other than having the President of the United States call Prime Minister al-Maliki and saying, "Please convene a roundtable," or "I'm directing you," or "I'm urging you," whatever way he conveys that. Other than that kind of a communication of the Prime Minister, what does the Government of the United States have to do, or if not directly, how else do you create a better environment?

Should we have an envoy there who has sustained involvement, or do you need an envoy just to do diplomacy and then another person, pick the term, envoy or assistant to the President who's on the ground every day pushing and pushing and pushing relentlessly on the politics? I'm just trying to get a sense of very specific things we can recommend here.

Dr. KUBBA. Senator, I served nearly 1 year at the Prime Minister's office in Baghdad. I think the American Embassy is one of the largest in the world. I know for sure, not only through the Embassy, but through so many other channels, America has a lot of influence over Iraqi politicians. I know that many Iraqi groups acknowledge that influence and know that in the long term they need to keep good relationship with the United States. I believe all these assets can be put in an effective way if there was a strategy that is mainly political that looks at the big picture, and, of course, not only at troop level.

Senator CASEY. I want to give others a chance, but I'm, I'll ask another question later. I want to go down the list so you don't——

Mr. TALABANI. Thank you Senator.

Senator CASEY [continuing]. I don't dominate here.

Mr. TALABANI. Senator, I think that we tried something collectively with the United States and the Iraqis and to try to bring in the region and that was the International Compact for Iraq. This was a, quite and ingenious idea that Iraq would receive certain economic assistance or debt relief and positive engagement from the region and the international community, only if Iraq met certain benchmarks, certain criteria, economic criteria, governance criterias, economic reforms.

And it was, it created quite a bit of excitement. And a lot of the region were interested. The United States did a major diplomatic offensive to try to get Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, some European countries interested in this. And there was quite a bit of interest. And I think certain actions by the Government of Iraq over the last 4 or 5 months have caused that situation, the way that Saddam was executed, for example, made many of the countries in the region kind of back off this idea. And this idea is somewhat dead in the waters now, as we speak.

I think that we have to be strategic in the way we think about how we include the region, and our neighbors. We have to be realistic to think that many of our neighbors are strong today because Iraq is weak. And deep in their minds they may not want Iraq to

one day regain the strength that it had in the region. So we have to be somewhat cynical of the motives of some of our neighbors.

Not to say we shouldn't rule out some sort of international dialog. I wouldn't limit it just to our neighbors. I would bring in other major powers. Japan has major influence, and has donated a lot of funds to Iraq, for example. Korea has made a significant investment. And I think if we do have some sort of forum, it's got to be along the lines and the thinking that existed with the international compact where it's not just assistance given to Iraq, it's assistance given to Iraq, only if Iraq meets certain benchmarks and certain standards.

Senator CASEY. Thank you.

Doctor.

Dr. DODGE. I think Laith's suggestion is explicitly designed to scare the politicians of Iraq into some constructive dialog, constructive movement and I think that we've got to this, that it needs to be external to do that. And I think that's right. So if there is a future for Iraq, it's external, it's not in the Green Zone amongst those squabbling politicians.

Now, two things need to be done. First, I would agree exactly with calling not a roundtable, but a regional conference. And, you know, Iraq is, the United States major foreign policy issue for a generation. Their regional policy, Iraq, regional United States policy should tie Iraq into the wider region and a regional conference should say to Iran, "Yes, we'll talk to you, but on the basis of a quid pro quo that you give us cooperation on Iraq," same with Turkey, Saudi, and especially Syria.

So there needs to—Hamilton was right on that basis, that Iraq needs to be the primary issue for the United States in the region, and the United States needs to get behind a major regional conference.

Second, conditionality, I think, my colleague has said that—that money, troops, advisors should be delivered with specific demands tied to them. And if that means riding rough-shod over the Constitution or the precious, but largely irrelevant sovereignty of the Iraqis, that should be done. Because Iraq doesn't exist without United States forces and United States money and those forces and money should be deployed to some positive end, which they're not being done at the moment.

Ms. RAHIM. Senator.

Senator CASEY. I have more, but——

The CHAIRMAN. Take your time, you keep going.

Ms. RAHIM. May I address——

Senator CASEY. Sure.

Ms. RAHIM. First of all you mentioned, should the United States take the lead? Indeed the United States must take the lead. Nobody else will and we need that. The other thing is about this roundtable, regional, or whatever. Remember we not only have had the meeting called "Iraq's Compact," which was an international meeting. Before that we also had Arab League meetings——

Senator CASEY. Right.

Ms. RAHIM [continuing]. About Iraq. Unfortunately, none of these meetings have yielded anything and although I am not against a regional meeting, I am in favor of one, but it has to be used as a

tool toward another end. And what we need to use that regional meeting for, is to pressure the Iraqi political leaders to then talk to each other and solve their problems.

I think it is much more useful to force the Iraqi politicians to sit together and solve their problems. If we can do that without a regional meeting, so be it. If we think that the regional meeting is a good vehicle, good pressure point, in order to force the Iraqis to sit together, then by all means let's do it through this regional meeting. But that is not going to solve the problem. Unless the Iraqi politicians sit down together and resolve their differences, they will, they are likely to ignore all those meetings.

They have ignored the Iraq compact, they have ignored Arab League meetings, they've ignored the Conference of Islamic State meetings on Iraq, and so on and so on. They have entrenched, vested, interests that they are finding it very hard to overcome.

So this is, the other thing that I want to caution against and please don't misunderstand me, I'm in favor of a regional roundtable. I am highly doubtful that our neighbors, and particularly Iran, will be willing to help—let's forget about the United States—I am doubtful that they are willing to help Iraqis resolve their differences. I think many countries in the region are just very happy to see where Iraq is now, provided it stays where it is now. In other words, they've got us exactly where they want us. Both the United States, and in terms of Iraq, it's just what they want to see. So, let us not overestimate the willingness of our neighbors and particularly Iran, to step forth and make concessions or come up with solutions and provide assistance. I think that is a little bit of a Pollyannaish approach. However, I want to insist, I think we should also take that tact and see what it yields and use it as a vehicle and a point of pressure if possible.

Senator CASEY. Well let's assume that that won't happen or they try and it doesn't work. What's plan B? Because I think a lot of people in this country have had the patience of, it's almost Biblical—Joab, pick your figure—tremendous patience and, with an awful lot of sacrifice. And you know the story, I don't have to repeat it, about the sacrifice of this country, not to mention the horror that the people of Iraq have suffered.

But let's, I think what people expect is, OK, if A's not going to work we want to see plan B. If B's not going to work we want to see C, D, E, and F. They want to go down, somewhat down the alphabet, so to speak, but they're getting pretty desperate now, I think, in terms of their willingness to allow this to go on much longer. They've kind of reached their boiling point.

So say that doesn't work, what's plan B in terms of getting the Iraqis to get it right politically? What can this country do to incentivize that, to nudge it along, to push it along? Give us some ideas.

Ms. RAHIM. Well——

Senator CASEY. Which you've already given by the way, I know.

Ms. RAHIM. If I may say that, we have to assume that our goal is to get the Iraqis to reach a political settlement amongst themselves. That's the goal.

Senator CASEY. Right.

Ms. RAHIM. And then we say, OK, what are the tools, what are the mechanisms that are most likely to get us to that point. Now one tool could be this regional conference. Another tool could be an international conference. Conditionality of aid, and so on could be other tools. I have mentioned possible points of pressure that the United States can apply in different ways other than money, and so on that could be applied. All of these are different ways that we can try.

Also none of these are mutually exclusive. We could use several of them at the same time. And I think we should, in fact, not be trying one item at a time and going down the list. This is no time to work consecutively. We need to work simultaneously.

Senator CASEY. And I know you have those in your testimony. Dr. Dodge, any?

Dr. DODGE. I think plan C will come into action when the next President of the United States comes into power. He will be, he or she, sorry, will be greeted with a sigh of relief in Europe and, to be frank, in the Security Council in the United Nations. She or he will then say, as you've said, "the patience of Joab is ending. We've suffered enough. Last time we looked Iraq is on the edge of Europe, not on the edge of the United States, and we need to multilateralize because we can't do it anymore." And then we'd be seeing a tipping point, one would hope, in Europe and in the Security Council and we'd step forward.

Now one of the many things Senator Biden said that I didn't have time to pick up on was, failed states are rebuilt by strong men or empires. What I would be describing then is a temporary multilateral empire under the legal agreement of the United Nations. I think that's the only way to go.

Now plan D, by the way, if that fails and I'm not very optimistic, is not emirates or regional fragmentation, it's fragmentation down to streets and house level. It's the complete fracturing of Iraq. This won't fall into easy pieces; it will fall into a vicious war against all, all against all.

Now, to a certain extent, the North because of the strides it's made and the fact that it's finished its own civil war in the nineties can, to some extent, immunize itself from that. But the rest is an absolute—is absolute chaos at the heart of the most strategic and economically important area in the world. Now the tipping point may happen in Washington, but one would hope it would happen Paris and New York at the same time. If we get that out of sequence, as Laith has said, then we will revisit Iraq, but 10 years down the line when the situation is much, much worse and there's no stomach whatsoever for doing anything about it. Somalia or Afghanistan is then the comparative example I have in mind.

The CHAIRMAN. Someone suggested to the Senator, that Kurdistan is the example. They had their civil war. They exhausted that. They figured out that—some very smart people here, people you know, not in this Chamber, but foreign policy gurus, as they say here in town, have suggested that until they exhaust—the civil war is exhausted, there's not much that's going to happen, and they point to Kurdistan. I remember going into Kurdistan, as I said, before the war began.

Mr. TALABANI. Two thousand and two.

The CHAIRMAN. The reason I went was, quite frankly, we didn't know whether or not the Talabani and Brazani were going to, in fact, join us, whether they really wanted us to overthrow Saddam, and whether or not they had reached an accommodation, because 2 years earlier it wasn't so sure.

Ms. RAHIM. Senator, in 1998, as I recall, and my colleague Qubad can correct me, the war amongst the Kurdish parties was actually ended by very strong U.S. intervention and at the time the, Secretary Albright, asked those—the parties to come to Washington and, in a sense, the United States, I won't say enforced, but——

Mr. TALABANI. Brokered.

Ms. RAHIM [continuing]. Brokered a peace agreement between the two.

The CHAIRMAN. We had an incredible incentive. There was a thing called no-fly zone. You didn't come, we wouldn't fly.

Ms. RAHIM. So I want to say that——

The CHAIRMAN. So there was an overwhelming incentive. So I think it's totally irrelevant, the example you just gave, with all due respect. Totally completely irrelevant, because we had what you were talking about now; leverage. There was overwhelming leverage. So we didn't fly, you had a problem. So guess what? There's nothing like a hanging to focus one's attention, as Ben Johnson said, or some version of that.

Anyway, I apologize. I truly am not being dismissive of your suggestions, but you understand the frustration, and it's getting very hard to convince the American people that other major investments in what is—by any stretch of the imagination. Let me ask you another way: Do any of you think there's going to be a national police force in Iraq that patrols the streets of Ramadi in your lifetime? Raise your hand.

Dr. KUBBA. Mr. Chairman, police is always local and I can not see it other than being local.

The CHAIRMAN. It is not now.

Dr. KUBBA. It's not now. I can not envisage Iraq, for example, not having a national intelligence agency, but I can——

The CHAIRMAN. That's a different issue.

Dr. KUBBA. I can't envision Iraq having local police, not necessarily all under one administration.

The CHAIRMAN. You all agree with that?

Ms. RAHIM. Senator——

Mr. TALABANI. Yes.

Ms. RAHIM [continuing]. Actually we do have local police now, and not just in Kurdistan. If I may say something here. We do have local police, and we have a national police force. But local police is the way to go and that is part of the federalism and evolution of power that we all believe in fervently.

But, if I could just say something here that hasn't been said. Eventually, Iraq can not survive unless we change the course of politics. If we continue on the path of ethnic, sectarian politics the end result is civil war inevitably, just as happened in Lebanon. This always ends in the same way.

We must, in the medium term, and the reason I didn't raise this is because we're looking at a very short window of time, but in the medium term we must foster a brand of national politics, national

agendas, national platforms. And if that can take root in Iraq, then indeed some of the police force could be a national police force. It may not be necessary, but it would be possible. But we have to work——

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Casey, I will not interrupt again. Why don't you finish up.

Senator CASEY. He didn't interrupt, I stopped. I was trying to think of some other questions. One question I had, and this is a question that some of you may have a sense of or maybe it's very hard to determine the answer to this question, but let me try.

We've had an ambassador there and he's gotten pretty good reviews and my sense of him is that he's had a significant amount of respect. I know that's in transition now, but answer me this question: Do you think that the normal structure we have in place—meaning this government has an ambassador in this country, in this case Iraq—do you think that's enough? And do you think that more traditional structure works?

In other words, do you think that the Prime Minister or any significant leader in Iraq thinks that that ambassador is vested with real power or has a direct line to the President? And if that's not the case, is there some other—in other words, do you think the Iraqi Government looks upon that structure as something that really isn't connected to the reality of how decisions are made in the White House or by the President? In other words, do we need someone, even if you have an effective ambassador in place, do you need yet another person that has, I don't know, the perception of a more stature, or more experience, or more clout? I just throw that out as a—because you know what it's like in the halls of the government over there.

Dr. KUBBA. Senator, I can tell you that the chronic problem of Iraq that is branching out and mushrooming into other problems, is we do not have effective government institutions. Including one which is the Foreign Office and the other embassies, including the day to day running of all these missions.

The reason why we have spent so much money and put so much effort in the last 3 years, yet we do not have an effective government, because the block of politicians who are controlling Parliament, who are running government by coalition do not share a vision on what sort of state they want to build.

So, everything is on—ongoing mode and more or less every minister is a government, or every minister is an island on its own. And there is really no coherent effective government. And the main cause why we don't have that, because the politicians are not really interested in doing that. They are interested in other benefits they are getting.

Senator CASEY. And you are talking the Iraqi ministries, the governorates.

Dr. KUBBA. Correct.

Senator CASEY. And I guess I'm thinking more along the lines of what our Government can do to foster a political settlement, even apart from what the ministries do day-to-day. Just in terms of the Ambassador, our State Department, which I think is something that doesn't get enough attention, but, I'm sorry.

Talabani.

Mr. TALABANI. Senator, I think, obviously Ambassador Khalilzad, when he was there, was treated with much respect and people knew that when they were speaking with him, they were speaking with the U.S. Government. I think he fostered a very good relationship with everybody and earned the trust of a lot of people, as well.

I can say that something that, if I'm allowed to be a little critical, and that is that sometimes the—especially in the past—the interagency battles that took place in Washington have had a very negative impact on the situation on the ground. We do see that less these days, but certainly in the early part of post-Saddam Iraq that kind of interagency tension was quite prevalent and was quite visible to the Iraqis on the ground.

Senator CASEY. Doctor, anything?

The CHAIRMAN. Senator, I think maybe we should——

Senator CASEY. We have to vote again.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Begin to wind up. We're going to vote, and let the witnesses go. So, I'm not, I don't want to cut you off, but if you have additional questions I think it would be a good time, but we'll promise we'll have you out of here at 5:30 or thereabouts, OK? I know we trespass on your time a lot and it's important to us that we hear what you have to say and we appreciate it.

Senator CASEY. No, Mr. Chairman, I thank you and I thank the panel. I appreciate your scholarship and what you contributed here today.

The CHAIRMAN. Let me conclude by thanking you all. It's hard to disagree with the aspirational notions you've all put forward. It's a lot harder to figure out the means to accomplish those aspirational goals. And, but that's the nature of what we do, and as one of my colleagues said the other day, "If you don't want to make difficult decisions, sell shoes." Well, that sounds like there's some difficult decisions there, too.

But let me conclude by reading from today's New York Times. And I know you know it, but it's important to get a sense of why so many Americans are wary of the new proposal of the President to provide this breathing space by establishing security in order to allow a political settlement, a germination of a political settlement.

"Baghdad, January 24: In the battle for Baghdad, Haifa Street has changed hands so often that it has taken on the feel of a no-man's land, the deadly space between opposing trenches.

"On Wednesday, as American and Iraqi troops poured in, the street showed why it was a sensitive gauge of an American, of an urban conflict marked by front lines that melted into confusion. Enemies with no clear identity, and allies who disappear or do not show up at all. In a miniature version of the troop increase, the United States hopes to secure the city. American soldiers in armored vehicles raced into Haifa Street before dawn to dislodge Sunni insurgents and Shia militia who've been battling for a stretch of the ragged slums and most abandoned high rises.

"But as the sun rose, many of the Iraqi units who were supposed to do the actual searches of the buildings did not arrive on time, surprise. Forcing the American's to start the job on their own. When the Iraqi units finally did show up, it was with the air of a class outing. Cheering and laughing, as the Americans blew locks

off the doors with shotguns. As the morning wore on, and the troops came under fire from all directions another apparent flaw in this strategy became clear. As empty apartments became lairs for gunmen who flitted from window to window and killed at least one American soldier with a shot in the head.

"Whether the gunfire was coming from the Sunni or Shia insurgents, or the militia fighters, or some of the Iraqi soldiers themselves who had disappeared into the Gotham-like cityscape, no one could say. 'Who in the hell is shooting at us?' shouted Sergeant First Class Marc Biletski, whose platoon was jammed into a small room off an alley that was being swept by sniper bullets. 'Who's shooting at us? Do we know who they are?'

"Just before the platoon tossed smoke bombs and sprinted through the alley to a more secure position, Sergeant Biletski had a moment to reflect on his spot, which the United States has now fought to regain from a mysterious enemy at least three times in the last 2 years. 'This place is a failure. Every time we come here we have to come back.' He paused there and said, 'Well, maybe not a total failure, since American troops have smashed opposition in Haifa Street each time they have come in.'"

Hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 5:31 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ALTERNATIVE PLANS: THE IRAQ STUDY GROUP

TUESDAY, JANUARY 30, 2007

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 1:05 p.m., in room SH–216, Hart Senate Office Building, Hon. Joseph R. Biden, Jr. (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Biden, Dodd, Menendez, Cardin, Casey, Webb, Lugar, Hagel, Coleman, Sununu, and Voinovich.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR., U.S. SENATOR FROM DELAWARE

The CHAIRMAN. The hearing will come to order.

First of all, I want to thank you, Mr. Secretary, for being here, and thank you, Congressman Hamilton.

I want to say, from the outset, both of these gentlemen were prepared to be here. The problem is, they have very, very busy schedules. And I want to thank the Secretary for extending his schedule here in Washington, and Congressman Hamilton for adjusting his and changing the timing. Last week, the Secretary was just not able to be here. And so, it's very important you're both here, and we thank you.

I also want to explain to you, as you both know this place well, there will be people coming in and out in order to accommodate their schedules. We are starting the afternoon session earlier than we usually would, because it's so important to have both these distinguished men before us. So, Senator Lugar, for example, is required to be in his leadership caucus, party luncheon that's going on now, as others are. And so, there will be a little bit of in and out.

I'm going to urge my colleagues, as they come in, and their staffs to let them know, that I told the witnesses, again, we would try to see that they're out of here by 3 o'clock. They have planes and trains and commitments to meet, and this is not their first testimony before the U.S. Congress.

But having said all of that, we'll try our best—Lee, you know how the place works but, so far, we've had some considerable cooperation.

We begin the fourth and final week of the hearings on the remaining options for the United States in Iraq. And these will not be the last hearings we hold, because we're going to be engaged in

vigorous oversight for the remainder of this Congress, which I think everyone expects.

But we're privileged today to be joined by Secretary James Baker and Chairman Lee Hamilton, who are cochairs of the Iraq Study Group, and the country owes both of you an enormous debt. Your willingness to seek a bipartisan solution, which is a dangerous thing to do in this town, to take on that responsibility, to our most urgent and vexing national security problem is appreciated by everyone, and your statesmanship has been obvious.

The bipartisan commission produced a very worthwhile document. Bipartisan commissions are often criticized for producing the lowest common denominator, but your report broke new ground and changed the debate in this country. I don't agree with every detail of it, and I have proposed a different plan for Iraq, but I am in total agreement with your central recommendations.

To quote the report, "The most important recommendations call for new and enhanced diplomatic and political efforts in Iraq and the region and a change in the primary mission of forces that will enable the United States to begin to move combat forces out of Iraq responsibly. We believe that these two recommendations are equally important and reinforce one another."

The report goes on to recommend that, "By the first quarter of 2008, subject to unexpected developments in the security situation on the ground, all combat brigades not necessary for force protection could be out of Iraq."

You also state, "The recommendations should not be separated or carried out in isolation." As you said, Mr. Secretary, "This report should not be treated as a fruit salad."

Unfortunately, it appears to be exactly what's happening here, and I hope we get a chance to pursue some of the debate that is now swirling around the report and the President's present posture relative to Iraq.

We're very anxious to hear your thoughts, as well, on how we can contain Iraq's civil war in the event your recommendations are not implemented and the situation continues to deteriorate, which we hope it won't, but we have to be prepared.

So, I thank you.

In the absence of the distinguished ranking member, Senator Lugar, I would like to invite Senator Hagel, if he wishes to make any opening comments.

Senator HAGEL. Mr. Chairman, thank you. I would just add my welcome to our distinguished witnesses and to say, again, how much we appreciate your continued service to our country and important contributions at, I believe, one of the most critically important and defining times in our history. So, thank you. I look forward to your comments.

The CHAIRMAN. By the way, I should add as they say, a housekeeping measure. On Wednesday, we will hear from former Secretaries Kissinger and Albright, who will testify separately. And on Thursday, we'll hear from National Security Advisors Brent Scowcroft and Zbigniew Brzezinski, who will also testify separately. So, there will be two more days of hearings.

Mr. Secretary, the floor is yours. And, again, thank you for accommodating the schedule.

STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES A. BAKER III, COCHAIR, IRAQ STUDY GROUP; PARTNER, BAKER-BOTTS LLP, HOUSTON, TX

Mr. BAKER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you, Senator Hagel and distinguished members of the Committee on Foreign Relations. It's an honor for me to be before you this afternoon, as I'm sure it is for cochairman, Lee Hamilton.

I'll take the first part of our written statement, Mr. Chairman, and Lee will take the second part.

I'll begin by thanking you for the opportunity to appear and to discuss our recommendations. We'd like to begin, I think, by noting some common elements in the Study Group Report and the President's speech of January 10. For example, we agree with President Bush that the situation in Iraq is unacceptable to the American people, that the consequences of failure would be severe, that it is clear that we need to change our strategy in Iraq, and that only Iraqis can end the sectarian violence and secure their people.

We support increasing the number of American advisors embedded in the Iraqi Army, with the goal that the Iraqi Government will assume control of security in all provinces in Iraq by November 2007, as the President stated.

We support the benchmarks President Bush outlined for Iraq, and we agree that now is the time for the Iraqi Government to act.

As part of our testimony, we've attached a joint statement that we released right after the President's speech on January 10.

Now, the report of our Study Group, Mr. Chairman, has been analyzed at length, so we would like to be fairly brief, and we will concentrate on a few points: First, the security mission; second, benchmark performance; third, diplomacy; fourth, economic assistance; and fifth, the Iraqi Government.

There are some very important points of similarity between the Study Group's Report and the President's plan for security. Both of them keep rapid-reaction and special-operations forces available to undertake force protection and strike missions against al-Qaeda in Iraq, as well as for other missions considered vital by the United States commander in Iraq. Both increase the number of United States personnel embedded with Iraqi Army units, and both emphasize the mission of training Iraqi troops.

The President said, "We will accelerate the training of Iraqi forces, which remains the essential U.S. security mission in Iraq." To accomplish that goal, the President intends to double the number of advisors that are embedded with Iraqi Army units.

The Study Group Report stated, "The primary mission of U.S. forces in Iraq should evolve to one of supporting the Iraqi Army, which would take over primary responsibility for combat operations." The Study Group suggested that such a mission could involve 10,000 to 20,000 American troops.

The Study Group stated that the United States should not make an open-ended commitment to keep large numbers of American troops in Iraq. We rejected an immediate withdrawal, because we believe that so much is at stake.

The Study Group further stated, "While these training and supporting efforts are building up, and as additional Iraqi brigades are being deployed, U.S. combat brigades could begin to move out of Iraq." And we said, "By the first quarter of 2008, subject to unex-

pected developments in the security situation on the ground, all combat brigades not necessary for force protection could be out of Iraq."

But the Study Group set no timetables, and we set no deadlines. We believe that military commanders must have the flexibility to respond to events on the ground. We also believe, however, that if the important recommendations of the study group are implemented, it will enable the United States to begin to move its combat forces out of Iraq responsibly.

The Study Group Report recognizes that even after the United States has moved all combat brigades out of Iraq, we would maintain a considerable military presence in the region with our still-significant force in Iraq and with our powerful air, ground, and naval deployments in Kuwait, Bahrain, and Qatar, as well as an increased presence in Afghanistan. These forces would be sufficiently robust to permit the United States, working with the Iraqi Government, to avoid the Iraqi Government's collapse and the disintegration of the country. They would be sufficiently robust to fight al-Qaeda and other terrorist organizations in Iraq using special-operations teams and to train, equip, and support the Iraqi security forces, and sufficiently robust to deter even more destructive interference in Iraq by Syria and Iran.

With regard to the military planning of the United States and Iraq and the region, the Study Group said, "The United States must make it clear to the Iraqi Government that the United States could carry out its plans, including planned redeployments, even if Iraq does not implement its planned changes." And we further said, "America's other security needs and the future of our military cannot be made hostage to the actions or the inactions of the Iraqi Government."

The President's plan does not mention the possibility of combat troops moving out of Iraq as the training mission proceeds. The President's plan makes clear that United States forces will be sent to Baghdad to help Iraqis clear and secure neighborhoods. That means combat operations, including, possibly, door-to-door sweeps.

The Study Group made the assessment that the security of Baghdad is crucial to security in Iraq, more generally. And while we were in Baghdad at the end of the summer, Iraqi and American leaders told us that, "as Baghdad goes, so goes Iraq." We state in our report that there is no action the American military can take that, by itself, can bring success in Iraq. To reduce the violence in Baghdad and in Iraq, national reconciliation is essential.

To provide for the long-term security of the Iraqi people, the Iraqi Government must step up and take responsibility for the security of its citizens. The Study Group, however, did state that it could support a short-term redeployment or surge of American combat forces to stabilize Baghdad or to speed up the training-and-equipping mission, if the United States commander in Iraq determines that such steps would be effective. Our soldiers have the ability to undertake both missions. It is critically important, however, that the training mission not suffer while the United States military is engaged in a surge for Baghdad.

The Study Group believes the training mission should be the primary mission. Otherwise, United States risks delays in the comple-

tion of the training mission, in the handover of responsibility to the Iraqis, and thereby in the departure of United States forces from Iraq. No security plan can work, however, in the absence of national reconciliation.

The Study Group Report stated that the United States forces cannot stop the violence, or even contain it, if there is no underlying political agreement among Iraqis about the future of their country.

The Study Group, the President, and Prime Minister Maliki agree on key measures that the Iraqis need to take, and they include: Legislation to share oil revenues among all Iraqis; provincial elections later this year; reform of the de-Baathification laws; and a fair process for considering amendments to Iraqi's Constitution.

The Study Group Report calls on the United States to consult closely with the Iraqi Government to develop additional milestones which are tied to calendar dates. The Iraqi Government's words on behalf of these measures have been good, Mr. Chairman, but its performance has been weak.

We commend the President's statement in which he made clear to the Prime Minister and Iraq's other leaders that America's commitment is not open-ended. If the Iraqi Government does not follow through on its promises, it will lose the support of the American people and it will lose the support of the Iraqi people. Now is the time to act.

We believe the administration must hold Iraqi leaders to those specific benchmarks and those specific dates for performance. The United States needs to use its leverage to get Iraqi leaders to perform. We use conditionality, Mr. Chairman, with many other recipients of United States assistance, and we should do so with Iraq.

The Study Group stated in its recommendation No. 21, "If the Iraqi Government does not make substantial progress toward the achievement of milestones on national reconciliation, security, and governance, the United States should reduce its political, military, or economic support for the Iraqi Government. Conditionality is necessary to press the Iraqi Government to perform. Conditionality is necessary to press for national reconciliation. In the absence of national reconciliation, there will be sectarian violence without end."

And now, Mr. Chairman, Chairman Hamilton will present the balance of our joint statement.

But, before he does, let me just say to you and other members of the committee that it has been a great pleasure for me to work with Lee on this matter. I need not tell this committee that passions in this country on Iraq understandably run very, very high. But, thanks to Lee Hamilton's broad-gauged and steady commitment to our effort, we have been able to maintain/sustain a bipartisan approach from the beginning of our efforts.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

STATEMENT OF HON. LEE H. HAMILTON, COCHAIR, IRAQ STUDY GROUP; DIRECTOR, WOODROW WILSON INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR SCHOLARS, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Chairman Biden, Senator Hagel, and other distinguished members of the committee, thank you very much for letting us appear before your committee this afternoon to talk about the recommendations of the Iraq Study Group.

Chairman Biden, I remember that you were instrumental in the rollout of the Iraq Study Group, way back, early last year, and we deeply appreciated that.

Let me also say what a great privilege it has been for me to work with Secretary Baker. He is easily one of the most distinguished public servants of our generation, and I found, in every respect, at times when we agreed and at times when we disagreed, that it was a genuine pleasure to work with him.

But both Jim and I would say that we were merely the chairmen, and that each of the members of the group made very important contributions to the report.

I take up with diplomatic recommendations.

We were encouraged by the President's statement that we will use America's full diplomatic resources to rally support for Iraq from nations throughout the Middle East. We believe there are additional steps, specific steps, that should be taken.

The President did not endorse a diplomatic effort including all of Iraq's neighbors. The Study Group took the view that the United States should engage directly with Iran and Syria in order to try to obtain their commitment to constructive policies toward Iraq and other regional issues. We recognize, of course, that dealing with Iran and Syria is controversial, but it is clear that Iran and Syria have influence in Iraq. They are part of the problem. It is also our assessment that neither Syria nor Iran have a long-term interest in a chaotic Iraq which could negatively affect their own national security interests. Accordingly, it was our view that the United States should try to make them a part of the solution.

Sometimes, the argument is made that Iran has momentum in the region, and the United States should not negotiate until it has more leverage over Iran. We disagree. We negotiated with the Soviet Union during the cold war. We can negotiate with Iran on behalf of stability and our interests in Iraq. The United States and Iraq cooperated in Afghanistan, and they should explore replicating that model.

The Study Group also calls for a renewed and sustained commitment by the United States to an Arab-Israeli peace on all fronts. The group laid out specific and detailed steps that should be undertaken in order to achieve a comprehensive peace on all fronts, including Israeli-Palestinian, Israeli-Lebanese, and Israeli-Syrian.

Secretary of State Rice has been traveling in the region. Her efforts to launch informal talks between Palestinian and Israelis are a positive development, but they do not yet include the Israeli-Lebanese and the Israeli-Syrian tracks of a comprehensive peace. We feel particularly strong that the United States is missing an opportunity to promote its goals in Iraq and the broader region by not talking to Syria.

Some have asked us: What does the Arab-Israeli conflict have to do with the war in Iraq? Why make one problem harder by taking on two? The answer is simple. It is difficult to establish regional stability in the Middle East without addressing the Arab-Israeli issue. We want other countries, especially the Sunni Arab countries, to help us. When we go to talk to them about Iraq, they will want to talk about the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The United States says it wants to empower moderate Muslims, yet the only way to empower the moderates is to take away the most potent grievance of the extremists, that the United States does not care about the Palestinians. A comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace would deal the extremists a blow in Baghdad, Beirut, the Palestinian territories, and elsewhere. It would certainly bolster America's prestige. And, above all, it would guarantee the long-term security of America's ally: Israel.

All of us understand that the peace process is difficult, that results will be measured in years, not months, but a sustained and comprehensive effort counts. A sustained effort will help us with Iraq and will win us important diplomatic leverage across the board in the Middle East and elsewhere.

The President asked for over $1.1 billion in additional economic assistance for Iraq. That, too, is a step in the right direction. The Study Group believes the commitment should be substantially larger, $5 billion per year. We need to do many things right in Iraq if we're going to succeed. We certainly need to devote resources to job creation and capacity-building.

The President has stated that Iraq will spend $10 billion of its own money on reconstruction and infrastructure projects that will create new jobs. We agree that job creation is necessary to give some hope and purpose to young Iraqis. Too many of them are frustrated and cannot provide for their families. Too many have turned to militias and the insurgency. Our commitment to job creation should include the Commander's Emergency Response Program, but it must be broader; we need to help Iraqis restart their many idle factories.

Capacity-building is also necessary, because the Iraqi Government is weak. It cannot deliver the basic services of government. It falls short in providing electricity and water, it falls short in providing security. The current Government of Iraq can succeed only if it starts to win the confidence of those it governs. Capacity-building means technical assistance and advice, it means better procedures in government agencies, including a greater delegation of authority and better internal controls.

The Secretary of State has named a reconstruction coordinator in Baghdad. That will be helpful, but that will not address another problem we described in our report. The problem of coordination is interagency. It is most acute in Washington. The new coordinator is capable, but he is the Secretary of State's appointee, not the President's appointee. He cannot make other agencies do what he tells them to do.

Mr. Chairman, the President has decided on a new strategy. Much of the attention right now is on the troop surge. To some degree, that is understandable. We are all concerned when more of our young men and women are put in harm's way. The political,

diplomatic, and economic pieces of our policy are just as important as the military piece.

The Study Group was explicit on the importance of a comprehensive approach. All elements of our policy should be pursued at the same time. National reconciliation cannot wait. Make no mistake, the violence in Baghdad will not end without national reconciliation. The violence will not end unless Iraq's leaders step up and make difficult decisions about the future of their country.

The President correctly stated that only the Iraqis can end the sectarian violence. We are placing all of our bets on the performance of the Iraqi Government. The rhetoric of the Iraqi Government has been good. Its performance has been disappointing. Too often, Iraqi leaders have acted in their sectarian interests, not the national interests.

The Study Group believes in a comprehensive military, diplomatic, economic, and political approach: Training as the primary United States military mission in Iraq; engaging Iraq's neighbors and the international community on behalf of stability in Iraq and the region; building the capacity of the Iraqi Government, and focusing on job creation as a part of a robust economic program; and, of course, holding the Iraqi Government to performance benchmarks, particularly on national reconciliation.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for your attention. We would be pleased to respond to your questions.

[The prepared joint statement of Mr. Baker and Mr. Hamilton follows:]

PREPARED JOINT STATEMENT BY HON. JAMES A. BAKER III AND HON. LEE H. HAMILTON, COCHAIRS OF THE IRAQ STUDY GROUP

Chairman Biden, Ranking Member Lugar, distinguished members of the Committee on Foreign Relations, it is a distinct honor to appear before you this afternoon. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the recommendations of the Iraq Study Group report.

INTRODUCTION

We would like to begin by noting some common elements in the Study Group report and the President's recent speech. We agree with President Bush:

- The situation in Iraq is unacceptable to the American people;
- The consequences of failure would be severe;
- It is clear that we need to change our strategy in Iraq; and
- Only the Iraqis can end the sectarian violence and secure their people.

We support increasing the number of American advisors embedded in Iraqi Army units with the goal that the Iraq Government will assume control of security in all provinces in Iraq by November 2007, as the President has stated.

We support the benchmarks President Bush outlined for Iraq, and agree that now is the time for the Iraqi Government to act.

As part of our testimony, we have attached a joint statement that we released after the President's speech on January 10.

The report of the Study Group already has been analyzed at length. So, we would like to be fairly brief in our opening remarks and concentrate on a few points:

- The security mission;
- Benchmark performance;
- Diplomacy;
- Economic assistance; and
- The Iraqi Government.

THE SECURITY MISSION

There are important points of similarity between the Study Group report and the President's plan for security. Both keep rapid reaction and special operations forces

available to undertake force protection and strike missions against al-Qaeda in Iraq, as well as for other missions considered vital by the U.S. commander in Iraq. Both increase the number of U.S. personnel embedded with Iraqi Army units. Both emphasize the mission of training Iraqi troops.

Training. The President stated: ". . . we will accelerate the training of Iraqi forces, which remains the essential U.S. security mission in Iraq." To accomplish that goal, the President intends to double the number of advisors embedded with Iraqi Army units.

The Study Group stated: "The primary mission of U.S. forces in Iraq should evolve to one of supporting the Iraqi Army, which would take over primary responsibility for combat operations." The Study Group suggested that "such a mission could involve 10,000 to 20,000 American troops."

Troop Levels. The Study Group stated that "the United States should not make an open-ended commitment to keep large numbers of American troops in Iraq." We rejected an immediate withdrawal because we believe that so much is at stake.

The Study Group stated: "While these (training and supporting) efforts are building up, and as additional Iraqi brigades are being deployed, U.S. combat brigades could begin to move out of Iraq. By the first quarter of 2008, subject to unexpected developments in the security situation on the ground, all combat brigades not necessary for force protection could be out of Iraq."

The Study Group set no timetable and set no deadlines. We believe that military commanders must have the flexibility to respond to events on the ground. We believe, however, that if the important recommendations of the Iraq Study Group are implemented, it "will enable the United States to begin to move its combat forces out of Iraq responsibly."

The Study Group recognizes that "even after the United States has moved all combat brigades out if Iraq, we would maintain a considerable military presence in the region, with our still significant force in Iraq and with our powerful air, ground, and naval deployments in Kuwait, Bahrain, and Qatar, as well as an increased presence in Afghanistan. These forces would be sufficiently robust to permit the United States, working with the Iraqi Government, to avoid the Iraqi Government's collapse and the disintegration of the country; fight al-Qaeda and other terrorist organizations in Iraq, using special operations teams; train, equip, and support the Iraqi security forces; and deter even more destructive interference in Iraq by Syria and Iran."

With regard to the military planning of the United States in Iraq and the region, the Study Group recommended, "The United States must make it clear to the Iraqi Government that the United States could carry out its plans, including planned redeployments, even if Iraq does not implement its planned changes. America's other security needs and the future of our military cannot be made hostage to the actions or inactions of the Iraqi Government."

The President's plan does not mention the possibility of combat troops moving out of Iraq as the training mission proceeds.

Troop Surge. The President's plan makes clear that U.S. forces will be sent to Baghdad to "help Iraqis clear and secure neighborhoods." That means combat operations, including possibly door-to-door sweeps.

The Study Group made the assessment that "the security of Baghdad is crucial to security in Iraq more generally." While we were in Baghdad at the end of the summer, Iraqi and American leaders told us that as Baghdad goes, so goes Iraq.

We state in our report that, "there is no action the American military can take that, by itself, can bring about success in Iraq." To reduce the violence in Baghdad and in Iraq, national reconciliation is essential. To provide for the long-term security of the Iraqi people, the Iraqi Government must step up and take responsibility for the security of its citizens.

The Study Group did state that it could "support a short-term redeployment or surge of American combat forces to stabilize Baghdad, or to speed up the training and equipping mission, if the U.S. commander in Iraq determines that such steps would be effective."

Our soldiers have the ability to undertake both missions. It is critically important, however, that the training mission not suffer while the U.S. military is engaged in a surge for Baghdad. The Study Group believes the training mission should be the primary mission. Otherwise, the United States risks delays in the completion of the training mission, in the handover of responsibility to the Iraqis, and thereby in the departure of U.S. forces from Iraq.

PERFORMANCE ON BENCHMARKS

No security plan can work in the absence of national reconciliation. The Study Group report stated that U.S. forces "cannot stop the violence—or even contain it—if there is no underlying political agreement among Iraqis about the future of their country."

The Study Group, the President, and Prime Minister Maliki agree on key measures the Iraqis need to take. Those measures include: Legislation to share oil revenues among all Iraqis; provincial elections later this year; reform of the de-Baathification laws; and a fair process for considering amendments to Iraq's Constitution. The Study Group calls on the United States to consult closely with the Iraqi Government to develop additional milestones tied to calendar dates.

The Iraqi Government's words on behalf of these measures have been good, but its performance has been weak. We commend the President's statement: "I have made clear to the Prime Minister and Iraq's other leaders that America's commitment is not open-ended. If the Iraqi Government does not follow through on its promises, it will lose the support of the American people and it will lose the support of the Iraqi people. Now is the time to act."

We believe the administration must hold Iraqi leaders to those specific benchmarks and specific dates for performance. The United States needs to use its leverage to get Iraqi leaders to perform. We use conditionality with many other recipients of U.S. assistance. We should do so with Iraq. The Study Group stated in its Recommendation 21: "If the Iraqi Government does not make substantial progress toward the achievement of milestones on national reconciliation, security, and governance, the United States should reduce its political, military, or economic support for the Iraqi Government."

Conditionality is necessary to press the Iraqi Government to perform. Conditionality is necessary to press for national reconciliation. In the absence of national reconciliation, there will be sectarian violence without end.

DIPLOMACY

We were encouraged by the President's statement that "We will use America's full diplomatic resources to rally support for Iraq from nations throughout the Middle East."

We believe there are additional specific steps he should take. The President did not endorse a diplomatic effort including all of Iraq's neighbors. The Study Group took the view that "the United States should engage directly with Iran and Syria in order to try to obtain their commitment to constructive policies toward Iraq and other regional issues."

We recognize that dealing with Iran and Syria is controversial. But it is clear that Iran and Syria have influence in Iraq. They are part of the problem. It is also our assessment that neither Syria nor Iran have a long-term interest in a chaotic Iraq which could negatively affect their own national security interests. Accordingly, it is the view of the Study Group that the United States should try to make them part of the solution.

Sometimes the argument is made that Iran has momentum in the region, and the United States should not negotiate until it has more leverage over Iran. We disagree. We negotiated with the Soviet Union during the cold war. We can negotiate with Iran on behalf of stability and our interests in Iraq. The United States and Iran cooperated in Afghanistan, and they should explore replicating this model.

The Study Group also calls for a renewed and sustained commitment by the United States to an Arab-Israeli peace on all fronts. The Study Group laid out specific and detailed steps that should be undertaken in order to achieve a comprehensive peace on all fronts, including Israeli-Palestinian, Israeli-Lebanese, and Israeli-Syrian. Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, has been traveling in the region. Her efforts to launch informal talks between Palestinians and Israelis are a positive development, but they do not yet include the Israeli-Lebanese and Israeli-Syrian tracks of a comprehensive peace. We feel particularly strongly that the United States is missing an opportunity to promote its goals in Iraq and the broader region by not talking to Syria.

Some have asked us: What does the Arab-Israeli conflict have to do with the war in Iraq? Why make one problem harder by taking on two?

The answer is simple. It is difficult to establish regional stability in the Middle East without addressing the Arab-Israeli issue. We want other countries, especially the Sunni Arab countries, to help us. When we go to talk to them about Iraq, they will want to talk about the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The United States says it wants to empower "moderate Muslims." Yet the only way to empower the moderates is to take away the most potent grievance of the extremists: That the United States does not care about the Palestinians.

A comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace would deal the extremists a blow in Baghdad, Beirut, the Palestinian territories, and elsewhere. It would bolster America's prestige. And, above all, it would guarantee the long-term security of America's ally: Israel.

All of us understand that the peace process is difficult, and that results will be measured in years, not months. But a sustained and comprehensive effort counts. A sustained effort will help us with Iraq and will win us important diplomatic leverage across the board in the Middle East and elsewhere.

ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE

The President asked for over $1.1 billion in additional economic assistance for Iraq. That is a step in the right direction. The Study Group believes the commitment should be substantially larger—$5 billion per year. We need to do many things right in Iraq if we are going to succeed. We need to devote resources to job creation and capacity-building.

The President has stated that Iraq will spend $10 billion of its own money on reconstruction and infrastructure projects that will create new jobs. The Study Group agrees that job creation is necessary to give some hope and purpose to young Iraqis. Too many of them are frustrated and cannot provide for their families. Too many have turned to militias and the insurgency. Our commitment to job creation should include the Commander's Emergency Response Program, but it must be broader. We need to help Iraqis restart their many idle factories.

Capacity-building is necessary because the Iraqi Government is weak. It cannot deliver the basic services of government. It falls short in providing electricity and water. It falls short in providing security. The current Government of Iraq can succeed only if it starts to win the confidence of those it governs. Capacity-building means technical assistance and advice. It means better procedures in government agencies, including a greater delegation of authority and better internal controls.

The Secretary of State has named a reconstruction coordinator in Baghdad. That will be helpful, but that will not address another problem we described in our report. The problem of coordination is interagency. It is most acute in Washington. The new coordinator is capable, but he is the Secretary of State's appointee, not the President's appointee. He cannot make other agencies do what he tells them to do.

CONCLUSIONS

Mr. Chairman, the President has decided on a new strategy.

Much of the attention right now is on the troop surge. To some degree, that is understandable. We are all concerned when more of our young men and women are put in harm's way.

The political, diplomatic, and economic pieces of our policy are just as important as the military piece. The Study Group was explicit on the importance of a comprehensive approach. All elements of our policy should be pursued at the same time.

National reconciliation cannot wait. Make no mistake: The violence in Baghdad will not end without national reconciliation. The violence will not end unless Iraq's leaders step up and make difficult decisions about the future of their country.

The President correctly stated that only the Iraqis can end the sectarian violence. We are placing all of our bets on the performance of the Iraqi Government. The rhetoric of the Iraqi Government has been good. Its performance has been disappointing. Too often, Iraqi leaders have acted in their sectarian interest, not the national interest.

The Study Group believes in a comprehensive military, diplomatic, economic, and political approach:

- Training as the primary U.S. military mission in Iraq;
- Engaging Iraq's neighbors—and the international community—on behalf of stability in Iraq and the region;
- Building the capacity of the Iraqi Government and focusing on job creation as part of a robust economic program; and
- Holding the Iraqi Government to performance benchmarks, particularly on national reconciliation.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, we would be pleased to respond to your questions.

APPENDIX NO. 1

STATEMENT OF THE COCHAIRS OF THE IRAQ STUDY GROUP, JAMES A. BAKER III AND LEE HAMILTON, JANUARY 11, 2007

We are pleased that the President reviewed the report of the Iraq Study Group carefully and seriously. Some of our recommendations are reflected in the new approach that he outlined Wednesday, while others have not been adopted.

We agree with President Bush that, "the situation in Iraq is unacceptable to the American people," the consequences of failure are severe, and "only the Iraqis can end the sectarian violence and secure their people." As the President said, "the essential U.S. security mission" in Iraq is the training of Iraqi forces. We support increasing the number of American advisors embedded in Iraqi Army units with the goal that the Iraq Government will assume control of security in all provinces in Iraq by November 2007. We recommended many of the benchmarks President Bush outlined for Iraq, and agree that now is the time for the Iraqi Government to act.

We hope the President and his administration will further consider other recommendations of the Iraq Study Group. The President did not suggest the possibility of a transition that could enable U.S. combat forces to begin to leave Iraq. The President did not state that political, military, or economic support for Iraq would be conditional on the Iraqi Government's ability to meet benchmarks. Within the region, the President did not announce an international support group for Iraq including all of Iraq's neighbors, nor mention measures we suggested to reach a comprehensive Arab-Israeli settlement.

The Iraq Study Group indicated that it could "support a short-term redeployment or surge of American combat forces to stabilize Baghdad" complemented by comprehensive political, economic, and diplomatic efforts. Questions, of course, remain about the nature of the surge. We are encouraged by the President's statement that "America's commitment is not open-ended" and Secretary Gates' statement that the addition of 21,000 troops would be viewed as a temporary surge. The violence in Baghdad will not end without national reconciliation.

America's political leaders have a responsibility to seek a bipartisan consensus on issues of war and peace. We want to be helpful in forging that unity of effort. We welcome President Bush's commitment to form a working group with congressional leaders that will work across party lines in pursuit of a common policy.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

We'll go 8-minute rounds.

And let me begin by asking either, or both, of you to expand on what is throughout the report, that it is not in the interest of Iran for there to be chaos in Iraq. That has met with overwhelming skepticism by the administration and many others. Could you be more specific? Why is it that Iran would not be interested, "in more chaos in Iraq"?

Mr. BAKER. Well, Mr. Chairman, I'll take a shot at that, and then Lee can add to it.

Iran has many disparate elements in its polity, and they have differing views among those elements. If there were absolute chaos in Iraq, Iran could be expected to be overrun by literally thousands of refugees, in our opinion. With respect to Iraq—and so, I think that's the main reason that they would not have an interest in a chaotic Iraq. Having said that, there's no doubt but what they are—they take great pleasure in seeing the United States tied down there and the United States facing difficulties there.

And with respect to Iran, generally, may I just say that the recommendation in our report regarding talking to Iran is really a recommendation about talking to them in the context of the formation of an international Iraq support group. That is, a group of nations—a coalition, if you will—that would help us with some of the difficulties we have in Iraq, including all of Iraq's neighbors.

I was authorized by the President to approach the Government of Iran as we were conducting our Study Group's efforts. We did

so. We broached this possibility to them that you've heard us articulate here this afternoon—that is, they helped us in Afghanistan when we approached them, it was to the joint benefit of both Iran and the United States that they did so; and our view is, we ought to try to replicate that situation. But we make—we take great pains to point out we should not—we are not talking about a broad-based dialog with Iran that would, for instance, include her nuclear efforts, which we specifically say in the report, should remain in the United States—in the U.N. Security Council.

When I approached a representative of the Government of Iran, the answer came back that they would have little interest in participating to help because of the attitude of our Government. We say, however, in our report, we still think we ought ask them, and, when they refuse, alone, we think, among all of Iraq's neighbors, we can hold them up for—to be the rejectionist government or state that they really are.

The CHAIRMAN. We heard today from the——

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Chairman, let me just——

The CHAIRMAN. I'm sorry.

Mr. HAMILTON [continuing]. If I may, add to that.

The CHAIRMAN. Sure.

Mr. HAMILTON. Of course, I agree with what Jim has said. We tend to look at Iran as a very monolithic state, which it is not. A little under 50 percent of the Iranian population is Persian, but about 24–25 percent of the population is Azeri. There are a lot of Kurds in that country. All you have to do is read the press in the last 2 or 3 days to see that there are a lot of centrifugal forces operating inside Iraq today.

If you had a territorial disintegration in Iraq, if you had chaos there, you could certainly inflame sectarian tensions in that region, which would be very, very adverse to Iran. So, we——

The CHAIRMAN. In what way? Again, I know—I believe—I share your view, and I think I know the answer, but we use those phrases, because we're involved in this foreign-policy-speak a lot. The administration made it clear today, and has made it clear throughout, that merely having them part of a support group would enhance their influence in the region. We don't want to enhance their influence. So, when you say this disintegration would cause great difficulty, beyond population flows of refugees, what other aspect with——

Mr. BAKER. Regional—the possibility of regional conflagration, I think, Mr. Chairman. I mean, if you had a chaotic situation in Iraq, you're much more likely to have Iraq's neighbors move in there to—each to protect its own particular interest.

The CHAIRMAN. The argument that is made again by administration supporters, is that's exactly what Iraq would want, to allow them to essentially annex the Shia territories, which make up 60 percent of the population and a considerable part of the territory.

Mr. HAMILTON. Let's take a look at present policy today, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Make it clear, I agree with you guys, but it's——

Mr. HAMILTON. I understand that, but——

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Important that this be discussed.

Mr. HAMILTON [continuing]. Let's make it clear that the current policy is not working. There's a big article on the front page of the Washington Post about that today. We've tried to isolate Iran, we've tried to isolate Syria, and it simply hasn't worked. What's happened? Iran has become the most powerful country in the region. It continues to support terrorist organizations, it's continuing to develop its nuclear potential. How can anyone say, today, that our policy toward Iran is working? It is not.

Likewise, Syria—Syria has certainly been a negative force in Iraq. It continues to support terrorist organizations in Lebanon and the Palestinian territories.

But our policy of isolation is not working. We don't have a lot to lose, frankly, by engaging these countries. Now, Jim and I are not starry-eyed about this. We don't think you sit down with these folks and immediately come to solutions. There isn't any country on the face of the Earth that has caused us more heartburn over the last several decades than Iran has. So, these solutions are going to come hard.

We do not view talking as appeasement. And the argument you mentioned a moment ago is that we enhance their influence when we sit down with them.

The CHAIRMAN. That's what is being stated by——

Mr. HAMILTON. I understand that. But, my goodness, surely we have enough confidence in American diplomats to know, or to think, that if they sit down with Iran, we are not putting our stamp of approval on Iran, nor are we agreeing to concessions. Look, you sit down to talk to people for a lot of different reasons, and among those is to collect intelligence, to dispel misunderstandings, and to explain our policies and a lot of other reasons. The Iranians have a lot of influence in Iraq today. And they are certainly part of the problem, but they also have to be part of the solution, as well.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. BAKER. Mr. Chairman, we don't think they'll help us, as I indicated. We say that in our report. On the other hand, the engagement we're talking about is a very limited engagement, it's to do the same thing with us that they did in Afghanistan. And, as you probably know, the Iranians were—are members of the so-called "compact." They attended the meetings in New York, the Iranian Foreign Minister and our Secretary of State. So, we're not——

The CHAIRMAN. I——

Mr. BAKER [continuing]. Going much——

The CHAIRMAN. Gentlemen——

Mr. BAKER [continuing]. Beyond where we are.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. I agree with you completely. My time is almost up.

Let me just conclude by asking you—you point out that you would support a short-term redeployment or surge of American combat forces to stabilize Baghdad, but you condition it in two ways. The remainder of that sentence says, "complemented by a comprehensive political, economic, and diplomatic effort and if the commanding officers ask for it." When you write the report, the commanding officers were explicit that they did not want it. General Abizaid and General Casey were explicit that they did not

want the surge. Did that in any way color your recommendation? And do you think there is the necessary complementary, comprehensive economic and political effort going on? Obviously, the diplomatic is not. What about the other two?

Mr. HAMILTON. Well, Mr. Chairman, it makes all the difference, when you talk about a surge, how it is done, for how long it is done, for what purpose it is done, and in what context it is done. And where we clearly say that we can support a surge for Baghdad, or, we put it in the alternative, for training, we also put it in the context that there must be an effort at national reconciliation at the same time.

Now, one of the major differences we have here with the administration, at this point, is highlighted in Mr. Hadley's article this morning. He has this——

Mr. BAKER. Yesterday.

Mr. HAMILTON. Yesterday, thank you. He says, "Ultimately, a strategy for success must present a realistic plan for bringing security to the people of Baghdad." Then, this is the key sentence, "This is a precondition to advancing other goals." In other words, he is saying that you must have security before you can advance other goals.

Our approach in the Iraq Study Group was that you've got to deal with these problems comprehensively, and that if you are focused solely on the question of security, you're not going to get there, because you cannot isolate that security from the other aspects of the——

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you for making——

Mr. HAMILTON [continuing]. Problem.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. That very, very important statement.

Mr. BAKER. But let me add to that, Mr. Chairman, if I might, the comment that I think I made in my portion of our formal statement, and that is, when we were in Baghdad, everybody told us—everybody told us that, "As Baghdad goes, so goes Iraq." And we believe that our forces are able to undertake both a surge in Baghdad, under the conditions we laid out—short term, and provided the commander on the ground authorizes it—and the training of Iraqi forces. Our report, I think, makes that clear, and I need to say that, because——

The CHAIRMAN. Well, it doesn't sound like that's what Congressman Hamilton is saying.

Mr. HAMILTON. Well, there's another point here that's very important, Mr. Chairman. I'm sorry to go on and——

The CHAIRMAN. No, this is—this is the key distinction, and it's worth you——

Mr. HAMILTON. We say——

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Taking time——

Mr. HAMILTON [continuing]. That the training of the Iraqi forces must be the primary mission. By "primary mission," we mean we have to put the highest priority on training the Iraqi forces. The sooner you get to that, the sooner you do it, the sooner you are able to withdraw American forces. I don't think you're going to be able to withdraw American forces until you train the Iraqis. So, the highest priority is training Iraqi forces.

Now, if your focus is all on the surge, as it has been, frankly, up to this date—if it's all on the surge, you make secondary the training of Iraqi forces. And we said the primary mission has to be the Iraqi forces.

Now, I think it's a positive thing that, in Mr. Hadley's article, he uses the words "training and supporting Iraqi troops will remain our military's essential"—that's what the President said—"and primary mission. My concern about this article, frankly, is that he then goes on to talk in some detail about the surge and what you do to get the security of Baghdad. He does not give us any detail about what he means by "the primary function of training."

Mr. BAKER. At the same time, we do know that the President's plan contemplates doubling the number of our combat forces engaged in the training mission, so there has been an enhancement of the training function, as we recommended. Excuse me.

Mr. HAMILTON. That was for embedding forces, I think.

The CHAIRMAN. I would love to continue this, but my time is up.

Senator Hagel.

Senator HAGEL. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

And, again, gentlemen, we are grateful, this country is grateful, for the contributions that you and your eight distinguished colleagues made, and continue to make, who served on the Iraqi Study Commission.

In pursuing the conversation that the two of you are having with Chairman Biden, the question of: Well, why would Iraq be interested in cooperating?—and you both have answered it, I think, clearly. And I would be remiss if I didn't say, which I have a number of times, that I am strongly supportive of what your commission has recommended.

There's an old saying, that you all are both aware of, because you are practitioners of this business, and that is, "Nations respond in their own self-interest." There is something rather reassuring about that. That means that there's some consistency and continuity. As you both know, what is most dangerous is the unpredictable. And we have that, I think, in a constant state of play with North Korea.

Now, if, as you have both articulated, that it would be in the interest of Iran to find some solution, resolution for their interest—not that they would like to help us out, necessarily, we know that's not the case; and, as Secretary Baker said, you both come at this, as your commission, very clear-eyed; I don't think anyone would ever accuse Ed Meese, for example, of being a squishy person on these kinds of things—and, as you have each said, as has been framed in the commission's report, that a comprehensive Middle East peace deal must be part of this—you've used, a number of times, "comprehensive"—your 79 recommendations, "comprehensive"—you talk about maybe a surge of troops, training, primary mission—but what, in my opinion, has been dangerously missing from what the President laid out the other day is that I see no new diplomatic initiatives. I see no diplomatic focus or efforts. Take the Hadley piece that Chairman Hamilton has just referred to; it is all military, it is all surge. There is training, but where is the diplomatic focus and effort?

I find it almost incomprehensible, when you talk about Iraq and Iran and America's policy, that we won't talk with them, we won't engage them, when, in fact, our allies, the sovereign Government of Iraq, is engaging the Iranians. The Prime Minister of Iraq, the President of Iraq, in and out of Tehran, meeting. You all saw this piece in the New York Times a couple of days ago regarding the Iranian Ambassador to Iraq saying that the Iranians are going to deepen their political, economic, and security ties with Iraq. But yet, the contradiction, at least in my mind, is our Government, that we are supportive of, in Iraq, is going down one path with the Iranians and we're going down another.

Now, you have said, both of you today and in—again in your report, that the outcome in Iraq is not going to come from the military, it's going to come from a comprehensive policy, which you've articulated rather clearly. But, again, what I heard from the President—another carrier battle group in the Persian Gulf, Patriot antimissile batteries going in, more troops—as well as the Hadley piece. And I think there's rather significant evidence of further focus on this administration's policy.

So, my question is, then: If all of this is playing out, as the two of you have noted today and is articulated quite clearly in your commission report, then what do you believe is the outcome? It seems to me folly to believe, as Chairman Hamilton has said—the Iranians are already in there, they already have an immense amount of influence—that we can't stop that. That is part of it. I mean, let's be real here. Many of the senior Iraqi Government officials were exiled in Iran during Saddam Hussein's time. So, I think we somehow are getting a foggy sense of this.

So, my question to each of you is: If all these dynamics are in play, as you have just noted, then where is this going? Where is this going without any American diplomatic effort here, or initiative, to try to frame up the very things that you have all focused on in your 79 recommendations?

Mr. BAKER. Well, Senator, there are diplomatic efforts. That's mentioned, of course, in Steve Hadley's piece. And, by the way, before we say that that piece only deals with surge, let's remember that there are resolutions pending up here to, in effect, say the surge is not a national interest, so, quite naturally, he's going to concentrate on the surge in his piece.

The President has said that the training is the essential mission for our—us in Iraq. And Steve has said that training and supporting Iraqi troops will remain our military's essential and primary mission. Now, I think we ought to take that—take them at their word, and we ought to be glad that they are, in effect, reiterating one of the principal recommendations of our Iraq Study Group.

But, you know, when we talk about "talking to Iran"—and neither Lee nor I are suggesting that you just talk to them about incentives. We say, in fact, in here, that when we contemplate talking to Syria or Iran, we talk about using incentives and disincentives. I think, to some extent, that's what you're seeing happening now, when you talk about carrier battle groups and so forth.

And our report also makes clear, Senator Hagel, that we don't think Iran will talk to us about helping in Iraq, the way they did

in Afghanistan, even though they might fear a chaotic Iraq. We don't think it's going to happen. But we still think we ought to make the proffer. And, as I indicated earlier, we have sat down with Iran, in the compact group, at the level of Foreign Minister, so it's not as if nothing's being done.

Where I think we're missing the boat, if I might jump ahead a little bit—and I know Lee probably has comment on this, too—where I think we're really missing the boat is Syria. I think we have tremendous opportunity here to perhaps move them away from a marriage of convenience with Iran. And in our report, on page—let me refer you to page 56 and 57—we lay out, in specific detail there, Senator Hagel, what we ought to be talking to Syria about. And it's—there are a lot of issues. But they're things that Syria is—has to deal with. We lay it all out there. And I really hope that, if you haven't focused on that—the committee—that you'll focus on it. I think there's a real opportunity there to move them away from Iran without giving up anything, where—you know, as Lee said, we're not talking about starry-eyed naive—talking to them about giving them this or that without getting something that's really important for us. But if we were able to flip Syria away from Iran and back toward where I think they would like to be, based on a 2½- to 3-hour discussion I had at the—with the President's approval—with the Syrian Foreign Minister, I think they're ready to come back. And what could we do? We could get them to get Hamas, which is headquartered in Damascus, to recognize Israel's right to exist. Boy, would that be a step in the right direction. You'd give Israel a negotiating partner on the Palestinian track. I think we could cut off the flow of arms to Hezbollah, because Syria is the transit point for all of those. And I'm not—we're not suggesting you give up anything. Certainly you hold their feet to the fire on the investigations going on with the assassinations in Lebanon; you get them to stop screwing around in Lebanon, to the degree and extent that they have been; you get them to do a better job of closing their borders.

So, that's a long-winded answer to your question, and I know Lee wants to add to all of it.

Mr. HAMILTON. Let me just——

Senator HAGEL. Before I ask the chairman to respond, Mr. Secretary, you still didn't answer the question. But what's interesting about your point is, you used the term "if" more than once—"if Syria"—and I—by the way, I agree with everything you've just said. But that isn't the case, that's not reality, unless this administration changes, rather significantly, its direction. So, your "ifs, ifs, ifs" are not the reality of what we're dealing with.

Mr. BAKER. The "ifs" relate—that's why we have to talk to them, Senator.

Senator HAGEL. I'm a—I agree with you. Is the President listening to this? He—as of today at 1 o'clock, what you have just talked about—"if, if, if"—that isn't where the administration is going.

Mr. HAMILTON. Senator——

Mr. BAKER. Well, I didn't suggest that it was. I——

Senator HAGEL. I asked you——

Mr. BAKER. I know that.

Senator HAGEL [continuing]. What you thought was the outcome of the reality of where we're going. And—but that isn't reality, when you say, "Well, if we would do this, if we would do this."

Mr. BAKER. Well, they aren't—the administration is—they are pursuing a diplomatic approach, not the one, necessarily, that we lay out in here, perhaps——

Senator HAGEL. Well, can you——

Mr. BAKER [continuing]. Not as——

Senator HAGEL [continuing]. Define that diplomatic approach?

Mr. BAKER. Yes. They're lining up our historic allies in the region to enlist them in adopting the same policy toward Iran that we have, which is a policy of isolation. Now, they are doing that. And they are also doing—Secretary Rice has lined up—I think it's confirmed—a meeting between President Abbas of the Palestinian National Authority, and Prime Minister Olmert, so she's working the Israeli-Palestinian track, not working the Israeli-Syrian or -Lebanese track right now, but they are—they are pursuing diplomacy, it's just not as broad and extensive as what we recommend.

Senator HAGEL. Well, thank you. And I know I'm over my time, but I do want to get the chairman's point on this.

Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Mr. HAMILTON. Well, let me make one point, very quickly, about talking with Iran. In today's context, part of the reason for talks with Iran is to prevent the unnecessary inadvertent escalation of tensions. That can become hugely important in the days ahead.

Now, in listening to your question, Senator, I think you've got it right when you understand that in order to be effective in Iraq, you have to integrate all of the tools of American power. You cannot just emphasize the military and expect to succeed. You cannot just emphasize diplomatic. You cannot just emphasize political and economic. You have to integrate. And this is the tough challenge in Iraq.

Now, part of the use of the tools of American power is the tool that Secretary Baker—Jim—has been talking about, and that is the diplomatic offensive. I want you to take a careful look if—you've probably already done it—at our recommendations on the new diplomatic offensive. We recommended that it be launched in December; in other words, immediately. We believe there is a genuine urgency about it. And then, look at the countries that we talked about. All of the attention, of course, has been on Iran and Syria, for understandable reasons. But when we're talking about this new diplomatic initiative, we're talking about engaging the Arab League, we're talking about engaging all of the key regional states, we're talking about the states bordering Iraq, we're talking about the European Union, possibly Germany, Japan, South Korea. In other words, we need a lot of help in stabilizing things in Iraq. And we think there is a high degree of urgency needed on a diplomatic offensive.

I take the initial steps by Secretary Rice to be positive. I think they're very modest, but they're positive. But we certainly need to build on them, and we need to build on them with a much, much greater sense of urgency than I see.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

Senator DODD [presiding]. Thank you.

Senator Biden's out of the room momentarily, so I'm now in command here. I'm going to deal myself several hours, here, of questioning. [Laughter.]

Well, thank you both. And you've heard this repeatedly from others, and I'm sure you'll convey this to your colleagues who did the work over these 9 or 10 months, it was a tremendous effort, and I think all of us in the country are grateful to both of you for putting your time and effort.

I've read this so many times, I can almost quote it without reading it, but it just deserves being repeated over again. The opening sentence in your executive summary in December, "The situation in Iraq is grave and deteriorating." That sentence is a compelling sentence. And, skipping down to the next paragraph, "Our most important recommendations call for new and enhanced diplomatic and political efforts in Iraq and the region and a change in the primary mission of U.S. forces in Iraq that will enable the United States to begin to move its combat forces out of Iraq responsibly. These recommendations, the two recommendations, are equally important and reinforce one another."

I'd want you to—to come back to Syria in a minute, and I want to thank Secretary Baker for talking about it. We were in Syria, Senator Kerry and I, in December, and we were in Lebanon, as well as Jordan and Israel, and in Iraq. And we had Embassy people in the room there. This was obviously a conversation, but, as I said, what went on there, the offer to really work with the United States and others—the first time in 24 years you have an exchange of ambassadors between Baghdad and Damascus. Maliki, the Prime Minister, was in exile in Damascus during much of that period of Saddam Hussein's rule. They were exchanging ministers back and forth. And I don't want to exaggerate the point, but when asked, to Assad, what his goals were in Iraq, his answer was, "I want a pluralistic Arab State. We're not interested in having an Iranian Shia-dominated fundamentalist state." Now, it was said in English in a private meeting. I'm repeating what he said to us in that room, and it was reported in cable traffic back. I'm not going to verify for the voracity of the statement, but it seems to me if two United States Senators, in the presence of Embassy personnel, have a President of Syria saying this is what he's interested in, why wouldn't you pursue that, in my view? I called the State Department when I got back, and repeated privately what the answer was. This was now 2½ months ago. You could prove me wrong. Maybe he was just saying that for our consumption, maybe it was a political trick. I don't know what the purpose was. It also may have been true, in which case, it seems to me, we are wasting valuable time to get someone with whom we have significant disagreements on a variety of issues, but who may agree with us on this issue, to play a constructive role.

And so, I, at some point, would like both of you to respond to whether or not you believe the situation is still as you describe it in the first sentence, or maybe worse, today, as we approach the month of February; and, second, as a practical matter, on the surge question, putting 17,000 young men and women in a city of 6 million people where there are 23 militias operating, not to mention Baathist insurgents, maybe some al-Qaeda elements—how is this

in any way going to enhance the recommendations you make here, given the goal would be to either arrest or engage Shia or Sunni militias, which, in an article written by Fareed Zakaria, it talks about failing or succeeding absolutely makes the goal of political reconciliation maybe that much more difficult, even if it succeeds, because, once we've engaged these elements, rather than figure out ways to bring them together, you get further away from the strong recommendation you make about internal reconciliation, political reconciliation.

So, I'd like you to respond to how, in any way, you can see this surge contributing to the very recommendations, the most serious recommendations you make in your report.

So, on Syria—and, Secretary Baker, you might just, for the purpose of discussion here, share with us your experience back in October—it was—1991, the gulf war. I know I've heard you talk about 15 trips to Syria. I think you said it was the 15th trip.

Mr. BAKER. I made 16 trips.

Senator DODD. Well, it might be——

Mr. BAKER [continuing]. Senator——

Senator DODD [continuing]. Constructive just to talk about that and how long it took and why you did it.

Mr. BAKER. Let me just say that, at the time, it was not particularly popular to talk to Syria. On the 16th trip, Syria changed 25 years of policy refusing to sit down to negotiate peace with Israel, and they came to the Madrid Conference and sat down and negotiated peace with Israel. Syria, at that time, was on our list of states that sponsored terrorism, but we talked to them, we spent a lot of time, we practiced diplomacy full time, and it paid off.

Senator DODD. On the 16th trip.

Mr. BAKER. On the 16th trip. Now, let me just say, with respect—one other thing with respect to Syria and your comment about it—their exchanging ambassadors with Iraq——

Senator DODD. Yes.

Mr. BAKER [continuing]. And that they—and that Assad wants a secular Iraq, which is quite true. But Syria, if we could—if we could—and I believe we can—move them away from their—again, their marriage of convenience with Iran, that would do a lot—that would do a lot more than, I think, we are able to do right now to marginalize Iran.

Senator DODD. Right.

Mr. BAKER. And it would—and it would really help us with Hezbollah and Hamas. If the Syrian Foreign Minister—and I have no reason to think he is not right—if he's right that Hamas officers are in Damascus, if they could get Hamas to come—to recognize Israel's right to exist, maybe they could get a unity government with Fatah, and then you'd have a negotiating partner for Israel with the Palestinians. It would be a huge step in the right direction.

Senator DODD. He also added, by the way—and I just say this to you—we asked about a direct negotiation between Syria and Israel. In the past, the Golan has been the precondition.

Mr. BAKER. That's right.

Senator DODD. He said, "I'm dropping the precondition. I'd negotiate without—I want the Golan back," he said, "but I'm not going to make it a precondition."

Mr. BAKER. That is the key, of course, to an ultimate peace. There—someday—and hopefully in my, and in your, lifetime, Senator—there will be peace between Israel and Syria. I believe there will be. That will be the key. We mention that in our report, but we go further—further, I think, than any other—than any administration has gone to date—and we suggest that we give Israel a United States security guarantee in order to assuage their concern—their security concerns in the event that they were to trade the Golan for a full, complete, and secure peace with Syria.

Mr. HAMILTON. Senator, let me make a few comments, if I may, first of all on the Syrian matter. I think there are a lot of indications coming out of Syria today, including your conversations, which indicate that they're very, very interested in engagement with the United States. Not all of those are official contacts, like yours, but there are many, many contacts in the nonofficial private sector. They are sending signals to us.

Now, when you stop to think about it, the alliance between Syria and Iran is an unnatural one. Syria is Sunni, Iran is Shia. And it's not something that is bound to stay permanent. And we ought to be, as Jim has said, ready to exploit that.

You also asked about the trend line since the Iraqi report——

Senator DODD. Right.

Mr. HAMILTON [continuing]. Was issued. I don't think the trends have gotten much better. December was the deadliest month of the year for 2006. We had 108 fatalities in that month. The United Nations reported, recently, 3.7 million refugees since we issued our report. That's one in eight Iraqis. Saddam Hussein's execution made him a martyr in the Arab world, in the manner in which it was handled. Oil production is still down below prewar levels. General Petraeus testified before one of your committees the other day, that life is a daily struggle to survive in Iraq. And the end of the year passed and the Iraqi Government hasn't met—still hasn't met any of these benchmarks. These benchmarks are all agreed upon, they've been known for months, but still have not met those benchmarks. What's happening? Why are they not acting to meet those benchmarks? And weeks have passed since our report came out. And, of course, the American people, the polls show very clearly they continue to sour on this war. So, the trend lines are not positive with regard to Iraq since the report came out. They continue to be negative.

Senator DODD. But to go back to the first question I asked: As a practical matter, given the number of troops we're going to place on the ground in Baghdad, given the size of that city, the number of militias operating, given your strong recommendations here, the two strong recommendations, how does that in any way contribute to achieving the goals that you two have outlined, along with your colleagues, in this report in December?

Mr. HAMILTON. Well, it——

Senator DODD. Putting 17,000 kids——

Mr. HAMILTON. I know——

Senator DODD [continuing]. In a cauldron like Baghdad.

Mr. HAMILTON. I understand. It is possible, Senator, that the infusion of 20,000 additional troops will bring about—as the Generals said to us, and they didn't recommend it, it is possible, if you put in a lot of additional troops into a fairly localized area, you can bring about a temporary improvement in the situation there. That could happen with the surge. We hope it does happen. But—I'm not predicting it, but it could happen.

Senator DODD. But even if it does succeed, don't you run the risk of keeping the Shia and Sunni further apart, given the policing role they'll function, which runs directly contrary to exactly what we're trying to achieve here, and that is political reconciliation.

Mr. BAKER. I don't think so, Senator. I don't think you run the risk of—you can't—you couldn't get them much further apart today than they are in Baghdad. And let me say, one more time, everybody we talk to says that, "As Baghdad goes, so goes Iraq." And one of our first tentative conclusions was that we needed to put even more forces into Baghdad, but we concluded we didn't have them available. Now, that was not a conclusion of the Iraq Study Group, it was an informal discussion we had among ourselves.

So, I guess the bottom line—my bottom line on the surge is, look, the President's plan ought to be given a chance. Give it a chance. Because we heard all of this. The general that you confirmed, 81 to nothing, day before yesterday, this is his idea. He's the supporter of it. He's now the commander on the ground in Iraq. Give it a chance.

The CHAIRMAN [presiding]. Senator Sununu.

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

Welcome, to both of you. Congressman Hamilton, I well remember serving in the House with you, and, while I'm sure you don't remember it—there's no reason that you should—I always found it extremely helpful, whether I was voting with you or against you, to ask you why you were voting the way you were. And it always seemed to be revealing of some aspect of the debate that I didn't have the opportunity to consider. So, I very much appreciate you both being here.

And I enjoyed, to the extent that anyone could, reading the Study Group Report, and I will make the observation, as I've made to a number of people who asked me about it, some of them being in the press, it was very clearly written. I mean, it wasn't—it was a dark assessment, in many ways, but it was clear, it was direct, and it was to the point, which makes it especially ironic that, over the last 3 or 4 weeks, everyone has looked at that report and walked away with it perceiving, in some ways, what they wanted to perceive, that they used it to reinforce preconceptions rather than to engage in a discussion of how best to implement as many of the recommendations in the report, the vast majority of which I agree with. And, in fact, to that end, some of my colleagues probably read the benchmarks that come out every week about what's happening, and, you know, we've mentioned electricity and the performance—our performance and the Iraqi performance on electricity has been an absolute disaster. But I noted that, last week, the oil output, the exports of oil, plummeted, I mean, to the lowest level, perhaps, in 3 or 4 years. And, fortunately—I didn't have to make too much of a commotion—there was a footnote; the reason

for that was that they finally installed meters. They went to the port, and they installed meters, so that they could actually measure throughput, which is, you know, one of the recommendations, in the oil sector, that you made. And it is a shame, in some ways, that it's taken so long. I've talked a great deal in this committee about the importance of distribution of oil revenues and actually measuring economic performance, because you want to enfranchise people economically, and that's the way to do it. So, there is a recommendation that I think we've made progress on. Unfortunately, in other areas, perhaps not so much.

Secretary Baker, I want to ask a question about conditionality. You mentioned conditionality. First, what specific conditions should we look at and consider most strongly? And, second, on conditions, or on encouraging Iraqis to take the various steps, measures that we've encouraged them to do on oil and elections and in reconciliation, are there other methods to facilitate their active engagement on these issues, or are hard conditions the best way to do it?

Mr. BAKER. Well, we—Senator, we call for, in our report, additional benchmarks to be worked out with the Iraqi Government, in addition to those benchmarks that the administration has already come up with. We suggest that they be tied to specific dates. We do not—we do not spell out, in exquisite detail, the conditionality, but we have that one sentence that I read in my part of the prepared statement that says if they don't meet these benchmarks, the United States should either make it clear or reduce—I guess we said "should reduce its political, military, or economic support." And we wrote it that way intentionally. It's general, it's a bit vague, but the administration would then have, we think, all the flexibility they need to say, "If you don't do this, we're going to take this away or do this. If you don't do that, we're going to take that away or do that." I mean, there's a lot of flexibility in there, but we make it very clear that there ought to be conditionality.

Senator SUNUNU. Understood that you don't want to be more specific. Let me ask you a question, though, about approaching the Iraqis on conditions. Simply put, there are two ways to do it. You can do it publicly and make it known what you expect them to do, and, in return, what conditions you're going to impose on it. Or you can ask—or you can make the point privately.

Mr. BAKER. Well, let me just——

Senator SUNUNU. Two questions. One, which is more effective? And, or two, what do you—what factors do you use to determine whether you're private in your setting conditions——

Mr. BAKER. I was just whispering——

Senator SUNUNU [continuing]. Or public?

Mr. BAKER. I was just whispering to Lee, this is the very debate that we had, on any many occasions, in—during the preparation of this report, because Lee wanted us to be—to say that the President should lay it all out there publicly, and, in effect, make a public statement or a threat. And maybe it was because I was a former Secretary of State, I thought it might be better done privately.

Senator SUNUNU. I'm sorry to have driven such a sharp wedge——

Mr. BAKER. Well——

Senator SUNUNU [continuing]. Between the two of you.

Mr. BAKER [continuing]. You didn't—no; you didn't. The wedge was there, but we worked it out. And I think sometimes publicly it might work better. Generally speaking, I think that it—sometimes when you do it publicly, you put a government in a position to where it can't take the action you want them to take.

Mr. HAMILTON. Senator, first of all, I want to say that neither Jim nor I can claim credit for the clear writing. The people that did it are sitting behind us here——

Mr. BAKER. That's right.

Mr. HAMILTON. Chris Kojm and John Williams and Ben Rhodes. They're the gentlemen who deserve the credit for that.

I was amused by your comment that everybody reads the report and sees something in it they can support. I suppose that's the result of a bipartisan effort. And there isn't any doubt that we tried to deal pragmatically and realistically with the political situation in two countries—Baghdad and Washington—and to reach an agreement—and, as you know, that's not easy to do.

I think Jim's expressed my view on conditionality. I—quite frankly, I've lost my patience with Maliki. He has known what he needs to do for a long time. I would give preference to an approach that deals with it privately, but we've used that approach for better than a half a year now, and it hasn't worked. And I think we've got to put the screws on this fellow.

Senator SUNUNU. I want to ask a question, next, about discussions, not necessarily negotiations, but involved discussions with those in the region—in particular, Syria and Iran—but it could apply to any adversary. When those countries come up, there are two specific concerns that are raised, or at least that I've heard raised over again. And I want you to respond to both of them. One concern is that we're reluctant to engage in discussions because the counterpart might insist on something that we're not prepared to agree to or that we may find unacceptable. The second concern that's often raised, or point that's often made, is that the adversary understands what they need to do and what we want them to do, so there's no point in speaking with them. Can you address both of those concerns?

Mr. HAMILTON. Well, on the first point, if they will insist on us doing something that we object to, we just tell them no. Do we have no confidence in American diplomats? Do we assume that, if the American diplomats sit down at the table with them, they're just going to agree to everything? My goodness, no. So, all you've got to do is say no. And, believe you me, there would be plenty of things they'd ask us to do that we'd say no to.

On the second point, the adversaries——

Senator SUNUNU. That they know everything they need——

Mr. HAMILTON. They know——

Senator SUNUNU [continuing]. To do, we've already instructed or——

Mr. HAMILTON. Well, look——

Senator SUNUNU [continuing]. Given an indication of what our objectives are.

Mr. HAMILTON. It's very easy to sit in Washington and speculate about the intentions and the motivations of the other side. And you can—you know, every op-ed is filled with these guesses. They're

guesses. We don't really know. Now, we can make an educated guess, but we don't really know. The only way you really know is to put them down at the table and test them. And you may not get it the first time, either, but you may get it the 50th time when you talk to them.

I just find rather disconcerting the speculation that we enter into about the intent of the other side with such assurance. Now, we may be right, and we may also be wrong.

Senator SUNUNU. Thank you both very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Menendez.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, and Congressman Hamilton, who I had the privilege of serving with in the House and under your leadership as the chairman of the International Relations Committee, I appreciate both of your work. And I appreciate a lot of what you put in the Iraq Study Report.

My sense—and I've tried to pursue this with Secretary Rice when she was here earlier today with Ambassador Negroponte in his confirmation hearing—is that, while our focus has been, obviously on the President's escalation, it seems to me that everything I read from your report, the whole assessment part of it, for starters, speaks volumes on the urgency of the moment. And second, that that urgency is overwhelmingly in the context of having a diplomatic surge. When I look at the assessments that you made about how Iraq has an elected government that acts in a sectarian context; at the corruption that is involved; at the lack of capacity that is involved, by virtue of de-Baathification; of an Iraqi Army where the equal-number divisions sign up only to serve in certain parts of the country, unwilling to respond to a national context, and a whole host of other things—it just seems to me that when I see the President's response, which I personally disagree with, I don't understand how we have not seen a surge in all of the diplomacy and the actions necessary to achieve all those other elements that are really about success. When we speak about success in Iraq, in my mind that's what success is.

So, my question is: Is there not a real sense of urgency? Has much changed since you issued your report, in the context of that assessment? Third, you refer to benchmarks in the report, but is it not necessary to have benchmarks with some form of conditionality? Whether it is timeframe or consequential, or for not meeting in some way? Because we've had benchmarks, and those benchmarks have, many times, not been achieved. So, at the end of the day, benchmarks without consequences are aspirations, nothing else. I'd like to hear some of your responses in those three areas: Sense of urgency, a sense of having the surge be more diplomatic than anything else, and the consequences—the necessity to have benchmarks with real consequences, combination deadlines and/or actual consequences that are invoked for not meeting them, when we believe that they're not being met.

Mr. BAKER. Senator, we just had a—we just had a colloquy here about conditionality on the benchmarks, and we think there should be conditionality. There should be consequences. I don't want to speak for Lee, but I believe he would agree with the statement that

I think there's a sense of urgency here in our report with respect to all of our recommendations because of the grave and deteriorating situation we found in Iraq as we studied this problem. And so, I don't know that you can say that there's no sense of urgency with respect to military, but there is with respect to diplomatic—I think there's a sense of urgency with respect to both.

Do you want to add anything?

Mr. HAMILTON. Well, Senator, as you correctly note, in the report there is a sense of urgency almost with every recommendation, whether it's diplomatic or changing the mission of American forces or conditionality, or other aspects of the report. So, the urgency is clearly there. We do not believe we have a lot of time. We've got to get this right, and we've got to get it right pretty quickly, because events are continuing to move against us. I spelled out those events a moment ago, I think before you were in the room, that are moving against us since we issued our report. And so, all of us have a great sense of urgency.

And with regard to the surge, we say in the report that we can support a surge but that is in the context of doing a lot of other things at the same time, including political, diplomatic, and economic action.

Senator MENENDEZ. But, with all due respect——

Mr. HAMILTON. You have to integrate all of these things.

Senator MENENDEZ. With all due respect, do you sense that this administration has captured that same sense of urgency on these other matters?

Mr. HAMILTON. No; I do not. I think that, for example, on the conditionality question, the President's approach has been, "I must try to give Mr. Maliki confidence." And he has been unwilling to be critical of Mr. Maliki. Now, maybe that's the approach by which you would begin. I think you're at a point now where you have to bear down on the Maliki government because of their nonperformance over a period of time. And if they don't perform, and if they don't perform pretty quickly, then we will lose it. I don't care how many troops you put in there, we're going to lose it. They must begin to perform, and they must begin to perform promptly.

Senator MENENDEZ. We've heard about the escalation of the war, and what we've heard, starting with Secretary Rice and others, is that the Iraqis will be at the forefront of this and we'll be assisting them. And then we've heard testimony quite to the contrary of that. I looked at your report, and clearly, based upon that report's assessment of Iraqi troop strength, capability, preparedness, and willingness to fight in a national context, and surge is just simply not there at this time.

Mr. HAMILTON. Well, you're correct. The surge is not a new idea. We've had several surges there. And what has been very clear is that the Iraqi forces have not performed. They didn't show up, on some occasions, or they showed up much fewer in strength than we had anticipated. Now, the argument is made that things have changed, that they're ready to go. I hope that's the case. But we certainly haven't seen solid evidence of that up to this point.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, it seems to me we're rolling the dice on putting 20-some-odd-thousand extra troops up first, in the hope and expectation of a quantity that has been proven to date not to

meet the obligations that we would want to see, and that, therefore, if the troop strength isn't there, their ability to fight in a national context isn't there. If we're told that that's what's necessary and they're going to lead the way and we're going to follow them, and if all of the diplomatic efforts necessary, and conditionality on benchmarks necessary are not being pursued with the urgency that is needed, I don't understand how we are moving forward, in this context, to success.

Mr. HAMILTON. What we said was, "If you do the things we recommend, we have a chance, and we——

Senator MENENDEZ. But the clock is ticking.

Mr. HAMILTON [continuing]. "And we believe there is a chance, at this point." In other words, we did not, in the Iraq Study Group Report, come to the conclusion that it was hopeless, and, therefore, we should just pull out immediately. We believe, if a lot of things happen, quickly, there is a chance we can succeed. Now, you can get into some dispute as to definitions of "success," but we can reasonably succeed. But we recognize that that is a very, very daunting challenge, and we recognize that you've got to get at it with a great sense of urgency.

The questions you are raising relate to the competence of the Iraqi Government. Can they perform? There isn't any doubt, in the President's proposals and in ours, that we are depending on—very heavily—an improvement in the performance of the Iraqi Government. Will it happen? I don't know. If it doesn't happen, then the result will be very, very bad. But if we can put this together, there's a chance we can reasonably succeed.

We do believe that we have a lot of interests in this region that need to be protected, and we think that we have to behave very carefully and very responsibly in order to protect those interests. And we, therefore, rejected the idea of just pulling out immediately.

But it does make you uneasy—there is no doubt it—it makes you uneasy when you have to depend on this government, which, as you say, hasn't performed very well in the past. But what other alternative do you have?

Mr. BAKER. One of the purposes——

Mr. HAMILTON. You can't go out on the street of Baghdad and pick 10 people and put your confidence in them. This is a duly elected government, it is a democratically elected government. It has a lot of problems, but it does have a basic legitimacy. Therefore, you have to deal with it.

Mr. BAKER. Senator, one of the purposes of the surge, as I'm sure you heard from General Petraeus when you confirmed him, is to give the Iraqi Government a little more running room in order to help it achieve national reconciliation by tamping down the violence, or pacifying, if you will, Baghdad.

Let me, if I might, Mr. Chairman, read from the report with respect to this issue of a surge, because there are only two conditions upon our support for a surge. One is that it be short term, and the other is that it be—is that it be called for by the commander in Iraq. President Bush said this is not an open-ended commitment. Secretary Gates said this is a temporary surge. And, of course, General Petraeus is the guy that's to carry it out, and he was the person that originally recommended it. This is the—this is the lan-

guage, and all of the language, of the report with respect to a surge, "We could, however, support a short-term redeployment or surge of American combat forces to stabilize Baghdad or to speed up the training-and-equipping mission if the United States commander in Iraq determines that such steps would be effective." The only two conditions are: Short term, commander in Iraq determines it would be effective. Both of those conditions have been met, unless you disbelieve the President and his National Security Advisor and General Petraeus.

Mr. HAMILTON. I do think, Senator, in addition to what Secretary Baker said, is that we recommended the surge but we believe that that surge has to take place in the context of a lot of other things happening, including political action, diplomatic action, and economic action. And that sentence that is quoted about the surge—that sentence that is quoted in the report—is in a section that talks about the importance of national reconciliation.

Senator MENENDEZ. Mr. Chairman, my time is up. I just would note that giving the Iraqis running room suggests that they're ready to run the race. And, second, I know the temporary nature, Mr. Secretary, that you cited in the report. A problem is that, as presented to us, there's no timeframe here whatsoever. So, it may be suggested that it is temporary, but there's no clear timeframe as to how long these troops would be committed.

Mr. BAKER. The Secretary of Defense says it's going to be a temporary surge, and the President says it's not going to be open-ended, and then there have been some suggestions from some quarters—and, again, I don't know whether this came up in General Petraeus's hearing in the—before Armed Services—but there were some suggestions that we would pretty well know whether this works by the summer or early fall. I don't know exactly who said it, but I know it's out there.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Secretary, I want to make it clear what I read—your statement—was the appendix 1 on your July 11, 2007, statement that you and——

Mr. BAKER. You mean January 11?

The CHAIRMAN. January 11, 2007. It says "Statement of Co-Chairs, January 11, 2007, Appendix 1, James Baker, Lee Hamilton." I'm not in any way contradicting what you're saying. I wanted you to understand where I got the phrase——

Mr. BAKER. Yes; I see it there.

The CHAIRMAN. The phrase I got was "complemented by"—it says "The Iraq Study Group indicated it could support a short-term redeployment or surge of American combat forces to stabilize Baghdad complemented by comprehensive political, economic, and diplomatic——

Mr. BAKER. That's right.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. "Efforts." I assume that's the context that——

Mr. BAKER. That's the——

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Secretary Baker——

Mr. BAKER [continuing]. Context.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Was talking about. I didn't mean to imply, if you thought I did, that the actual page 72 said that.

Mr. BAKER. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Now, everyone's being very generous. The ranking member is here, as is Senator Coleman, and they both had indicated that, since Senator Voinovich has been here, they would be prepared to yield to him to go next.

I want to make it clear, I'm going to be stepping out of the room, and, in my absence, I'd ask Senator Dodd to chair this, but we're going to promise, we're going to try to get you out of here around 3 o'clock. So, lots of luck in your senior year. But, at any rate, all kidding aside, I appreciate your patience.

Senator Voinovich.

Senator VOINOVICH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank both of you for your service to your country. Lee, you have been involved in numerous public service projects and committees. And, Secretary Baker, we are fortunate to have you contribute your insight and best judgment on the Iraq issue. You have certainly been through the mill over the years.

When the President's new plan for a troop surge in Iraq was announced, I indicated that I was skeptical of it because, first of all, Generals Casey and Abizaid—whom we have long relied upon—were not enthusiastic about it, and many other experts and witnesses believed a surge might exacerbate the situation and make America a greater target for attacks in Iraq.

I also considered the hearings that we had earlier in the war. And, Mr. Chairman, at that time, we were given the impression that certain critical activities needed to accompany our invasion. We discussed political issues, security, infrastructure, economy, and we believed the administration was sufficiently planning for these things. Jay Garner was sent to Iraq as the post-war administrator and had begun to implement some of his plans, but then suddenly Garner was replaced by L. Paul Bremer, who pulled the plug on much of the progress and existing structure in the Iraqi society. So, my confidence in the fastidiousness necessary to our current work is a little low.

You said that you support both the surge and "comprehensive political, economic, and diplomatic efforts." Deputy Secretary Negroponte was here today and we asked him whether or not the diplomatic issue had been carried as far as possible. Of course, Secretary Rice has been out talking with other nations, but it seems to me that at this stage of the game I don't think that we have made the diplomatic efforts that we need to make. I'd like your comment on that.

Second, concerning economic issues, some officials were here discussing Provisional Reconstruction Teams, and we found out that they have about $11 billion in their treasury but don't know how to spend it properly.

So it seems these conditions that you laid out as part of the surge have not been met. I would like your opinion on that.

You also mentioned that America's commitment is not open-ended, but when does it end? What does that mean? How do you determine that? Are there measures in place that we can use to determine whether conditions warranting America's continued support have actually been met?

I'd like you to comment on that.

Mr. BAKER. Senator, I'll comment on the first part, because it was the same discussion we just had with the chairman.

The diplomatic, economic, and so forth, complementary issues are not conditions to the surge. The surge is conditioned—our approval of a surge is conditioned only by the fact that it be short term and, second, that it be approved by the commander in Iraq.

Senator VOINOVICH. When you said "short term," what do you mean?

Mr. BAKER. Yes; OK. "Short term," I've already set out the—you have to look at Secretary Gates's comment, "this is a temporary surge." Now, does that mean 2 months? Does that mean 12 months? I can't answer that. The President said it's not going to be open-ended. Now, has there been a specific date put on there? No; there hasn't. The commander on the ground, we think—and I think the President obviously feels—has to have the flexibility to conduct the surge in the best manner possible to pacify Baghdad, so you don't have a date put on it. But the language that you read is context language as to—as Chairman Hamilton has indicated. Those are not conditions to our approval of a surge.

Mr. HAMILTON. Well, Senator, I agree with your observation. The diplomatic effort has not been full enough. I said, earlier, that I thought Secretary Rice's trip was a positive step. But if you look at the recommendations we make, we really make recommendations for a very, very comprehensive diplomatic offensive in which we engage all of the countries in the region, the Perm 5, the Arab League, and a lot of others, not all at once, but in stages. And we see that diplomatic effort as a very important reinforcing mechanism, along with the other steps you take internally in Iraq, in order to bring stability to Iraq. And we think there is a real urgency to that diplomatic effort, that we cannot proceed with "business as usual" here. We think it's terribly important——

Senator VOINOVICH. But do you think it would be easier to begin that urgent diplomatic effort in the region now or later? Do you think that now is the time to clearly state that ultimately we are leaving Iraq?

Mr. HAMILTON. Look, I think things in Iraq continue to go down. We don't have the time to wait on any of the recommendations we made. I feel a real sense of urgency on all of these recommendations. We recommended that the diplomatic offensive that we spell out start in December 2006. And here we are, almost February 2007, and a very modest step, I think, has been taken.

Senator VOINOVICH. Well I——

Mr. HAMILTON. Now, on the——

Senator VOINOVICH [continuing]. I think that the American people probably would feel a whole lot better if we had already started the diplomatic effort recommended by the Iraq Study Group or had announced that we are aggressively going to do it, or at least if we got Iraqi Prime Minister Maliki to say that he needs help from his neighbors and then have him convene them.

Mr. HAMILTON. I agree with that. You asked about "not an open-ended commitment." We're quite specific here about what the Iraqis must do, and we are demanding that they make, in the phrase of the report, "substantial progress" toward very specific goals that are broadly agreed upon, and that if they do not make

substantial progress, then we are going to reduce our commitment. Now, how much time do you give them to make substantial progress? Well, I guess people would vary in their judgment about that, and, at the end of the day, it's going to be the President's call what constitutes "substantial progress," and how quickly. The point we make is that you set out these benchmarks, they have to make substantial progress in hitting those benchmarks pretty soon, in our judgment, or we're going to reduce our commitment. If you do not get a bona fide effort by the Iraqi Government to perform—in governance, in national reconciliation, and in carrying their share of the load on security, recognizing they're going to need some United States help—then there is no way that the United States is going to succeed there, no matter what we do. The Iraqi Government has to perform.

Mr. BAKER. Senator, if you look at the President's speech of January 10—and I mentioned this in my opening remarks—he says—he talks about increasing the number of American advisors embedded in Iraqi Army units, "with the goal that the Iraqi Government will assume control of security in all provinces in Iraq by November 2007." Now, that's further out than the summer that I mentioned in my answer to Senator Menendez.

Mr. HAMILTON. I might just say, on this surge question, that there isn't any doubt in my mind that the United States forces are going to win every battle. That's not the problem. I'm not suggesting that it's easy, but it's not the problem. We can clear out any neighborhood we want to clear out. We did it, last summer. The question is: Can you hold it, and can you build it after you've cleared it out? And that has to be primarily, it seems to me, up to the Iraqis, not up to us to do that. And, to date, no one can claim that their performance has been very good.

I want to point out, on this surge question, which keeps coming up here, the surge was not one of our 79 recommendations; it was a part of a discussion of the military options that are available to us there; and we continued to say throughout the report, that the primary mission of U.S. forces, as I said earlier in the testimony, should be to train Iraqis. The question in my mind, frankly, is not whether you should train Iraqis, but when. We're going to have to do it. We've been working at it for several years. We didn't do a very good job of it, to be blunt about it, for several years. I think we've improved. I think we're much better today at training the Iraqis than we were 3 or 4 years ago. But we've still got a long way to go. And I think that has to be the primary mission, and it has to be accelerated. And the more you talk about the surge and the details of the surge, the less likely it is that you are to focus on what we consider the primary mission, which is training those Iraqis. If you want to get out of Iraq, the best way, most feasible way, to get out of Iraq is to train those forces.

Senator DODD [presiding]. Thank you.

Senator Cardin.

Senator CARDIN. Secretary Baker and Congressman Hamilton, I want to thank both of you for your service.

The Iraq Study Group was created by Congress to help us and the American people better understand our options in Iraq. Now, I'm going to be—as you probably know, I voted against the war 4

years ago—I want us to win in Iraq. I want us to succeed in our mission. And, Congressman Hamilton, I appreciate the manner in which you have presented the options that we have available—and Secretary Baker.

My concern is—I go back to the original justification for entering Iraq. The President talked about the attack on our country on September 11, talked about weapons of mass destruction. And now I'm trying to figure out the justification for the escalation of our military presence as the President talks about benchmarks and talks about diplomatic efforts. And I'm concerned that that's liable to get lost in the President's desire to win a military victory in Iraq, where, as your report underscores, a military victory in Iraq is not possible, that it needs to be—it needs to have the diplomacy and the economic reforms and all the other issues that are spelled out in your report.

So, I guess my question to you, particularly to Congressman Hamilton—you served this Nation with great distinction, not as a Member of Congress, but in the 9/11 Commission. And the thing that impressed me the most is that, when that commission issued its report, it didn't go out of existence. Some may have thought it would, but it didn't. And it's helped us, and assisted us, to stay on track to try to accomplish an objective to make this Nation safer.

I would like to solicit your help, as we go forward in Iraq, as to whether, in fact, we have effective and enforceable benchmarks. I must tell you, I am somewhat confused as to what the benchmarks are. I've listened to the Secretary of State, I've listened to the President, I've heard what they've said about the Iraqis standing up and taking responsibility for their own country and doing all these other things. But I also could find that, a couple of months from now, the President said, "Well, they're doing better here, they're doing—there," and that the benchmarks are certainly not very definitive as to what they have to do by certain dates, and the consequences if they don't.

As far as diplomatic efforts are concerned, I've listened very carefully to this administration, and I have yet to see them engage all-out effort in the region or internationally for effective diplomacy. It still appears to be America, rather than looking at the region and an international community for an effective solution to the political problems in Iraq and the region.

So, I welcome your thoughts as to whether—going forward. I certainly hope the President will change his policies in Iraq, but I do think that this Study Group Report and your recommendations gives us a comprehensive plan that could succeed in Iraq. And I think it would be very helpful to us to get your continued involvement as to—you pointed out, in the last 2½ months, very little has happened, and your report talked about the urgency of the situation—but I would find it helpful if you would continue to give your views as to whether the recommendations that have been made by the Study Group are, in fact, being followed by the players.

Mr. HAMILTON. Senator, I think our view is that many of the recommendations have been partially accepted, not totally accepted. Some have been totally accepted. One or two, three maybe, have been outright rejected. But there isn't the view, in the Iraq Study

Group, to engage in the kind of a followup effort that we had in the 9/11 Commission.

Now, I am doing quite a bit of testifying and speaking with regard to the Iraq Study Group. I think other members of the Iraq Study Group, including Secretary Baker, are doing likewise. But it is not—we no longer meet, we're out of existence, and there isn't any followup taking place as a group. There is followup on an individual basis. I have seen statements, for example, by several of the members of the Study Group as they have spoken to press around the country and to groups around the country.

I do want to say a word about these benchmarks. I think the benchmarks, where we're asking the Iraqi Government to perform, are very clear. And we're asking them to be more inclusive in that constitution, to include the Sunnis. We're asking them to put in a program of de-Baathification that requires the reintegration of the Baathists, except those at the very top level of Saddam Hussein's regime, to get them into the national life of the country. We're asking for an oil revenue-sharing program that is fair.

Senator CARDIN. But oil revenue, I think we've seen some action. But on the other——

Mr. HAMILTON. Well, not much.

Senator CARDIN. Are you comfortable that there's a reasonable timeframe that would have consequences?

Mr. HAMILTON. Well—no, I'm not comfortable on the timeframe. I think these things need to be done urgently. And I'm very impatient.

Senator CARDIN. Well, I—let me put it a different way. Are you—do you believe that the Iraqis are under the impression—the current government—of consequences and a timeframe in which they have to perform?

Mr. HAMILTON. I do not believe they are sufficiently alert to that. Now, I think our administration has talked to them about it. I think they've agreed on benchmarks. I think they even now have dates. We've put out a lot of the dates in our report. They have to achieve certain things by certain dates. But these dates have slipped in the past, and they are not performing on time, in my judgment about it.

How do you change that? Well, you change it, I think, by putting more leverage on Maliki through conditionality, and perhaps some opportunities would arise on the diplomatic track, as well. It is not an easy thing to do. But it is key.

Mr. BAKER. Senator Cardin, I think they are much more aware of it today, let's say, than they were 4 or 5 months ago. And I think that—without doing it publicly, that the President and the administration have made it pretty clear to that government that we need to see performance on these benchmarks. Now, I can't tell you that for a fact, because I wasn't in any of the meetings or anything else, but I think—I think they're much more focused on it today than they have been in the past.

Just here, the other day, they arrested 40—as I understand, 40 followers of Muqtada al-Sadr. That—they got an oil law. They've done a few other things like that, that looked like things are finally beginning, maybe, to happen. Time will tell. We'll just have to see. But I think the President—and I don't know this for a fact, and I

don't mean to be suggesting that I do know it for a fact, but I'm—I think he had to come to you-know-what meeting with the Prime Minister when he last met with him—pretty well made it clear that—you know, and he—as he said in his speech, the patience of the American people is not unending, "If you don't perform, you're going to lose the support of the American people," and if you read that carefully, I think that means you'll lose the support of the administration.

Senator CARDIN. I just want to compliment the bipartisan leadership of our committee and Congress, because I think it's also helped get the message out. We'll see whether there is accountability.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DODD. Thank you, Senator Cardin.

Senator Lugar.

Senator LUGAR. Thanks very much for coming. I'm going to make a comment, and I would like for your reflections on this idea.

Secretary Rice has recently outlined what appears to be a shift in emphasis in United States policy toward countering the challenges posed by Iran. Under this new approach, the United States would apparently organize regional players—Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, Turkey, the Gulf States, and others—behind a program of containing Iran's disruptive agenda in the region. Such a realignment has relevance for stabilizing Iraq and bringing security to other areas of conflict, such as Lebanon and the Palestinian territories. Moderate states in the Middle East are concerned by Iran's aggressiveness and the possibility of sectarian conflict beyond Iraq's borders. They recognize the United States as indispensable counterweight to Iran and a source of stability in the region. The United States has the leverage to enlist greater support for our objectives inside Iraq and throughout the region.

Now, quite apart from the military-diplomatic surge in Iraq that's been the focus of our attention, we're now seeing the outlines of a new United States regional approach, more assertive stance by our military toward Iranian interference in Iraq, a renewed diplomatic effort on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, substantial U.S. security assistance to Palestinian President Abbas, and a United States-led effort to bolster the Lebanese Government against Hezbollah.

In the Washington Post today, I noted that the United States should recalibrate our reference points on Iraq. We should not see the President's current Iraq plan as an endgame, but rather as one element in a larger Middle East struggle that is in the early stages.

The President's Baghdad strategy is still aimed at an optimal outcome, the creation of a democratic pluralist society that would cooperate with us to achieve regional security. But, at this state, that is a goal we're pursuing, but our strategy in Iraq must be flexible enough to allow for changing circumstances. And even as the President's Baghdad strategy proceeds, we need to be preparing for how we will array U.S. forces in the region to defend oil assets, target terrorist enclaves, deter adventures by Iran, provide a buffer against regional sectarian conflict, and generally reassure friendly governments the United States is committed to the Middle East security.

Such a redeployment might well involve bases inside Iraq that would allow us to continue training Iraqi troops and delivering economic assistance, but would not require us to interpose American soldiers between Iraqi sectarian factions.

One of the ironies of the highly contentious debate over President Bush's new Iraq plan is that it is focused on the strategically narrow issue of what United States troops do in a limited number of multiethnic neighborhoods in Baghdad that contain only about 7 percent of the Iraqi population, what GEN Jack Keane has called the "key terrain." Undoubtedly, what happens in those Baghdad neighborhoods is important, but it is unlikely that this mission will determine our fate in the Middle East. And, remaking Iraq, in and of itself, does not constitute a strategic objective. The risk is that we will define success and failure in Iraq so rigidly that our Iraq policy will become disconnected or even contradictory to broader regional goals.

Do either of you have a comment on that outlook?

Mr. BAKER. I don't think anything that I heard in there, Senator—and I don't—you read it fairly quickly, but nothing that I heard in there is inconsistent in any way with the call we made in the Iraq Study Group Report for a new diplomatic offensive and an international Iraqi support group. I think it's complementary of it. What we suggest would be complementary of those efforts, and vice versa.

Mr. HAMILTON. Senator, I think the diplomatic initiatives that you mentioned are all worthy. I guess I'm a little impatient. I want to see them proceed more quickly and with a greater sense of urgency than I have, thus far, seen.

But what really interested me about your excellent piece this morning in the Post was the so-called plan B. We were urged, on occasion, in the Iraq Study Group, to go beyond what we recommended and develop a plan B. We rejected that idea, because we reasoned that if you're going to make a proposal, you ought to advocate it and ought not to immediately begin thinking about a second plan. But there is, very clearly, need for policymakers, including yourself, to be thinking about a plan B. And you call for a redeployment of forces in the region to defend the oil and target the terrorist enclaves, deter adventurism. We would certainly agree to all of that.

So, I react positively to your statements here, with the caveat, I guess, that full speed ahead is necessary on the diplomatic side.

Mr. BAKER. And may I add to that, Senator Lugar, that when Lee says "we were urged to take a look at a plan B," I suppose I was the primary urger, because I was, and still am, interested in the proposal that Senator Biden and Les Gelb put forward with respect to the idea that ultimately you may end up with three autonomous regions in Iraq, because I was worried that there's—that there are indications that that might be happening, in fact, on the ground anyway, and, if it is, we ought to be prepared to try and manage the situation. So, we have a sentence in our report that says, "If events were to move irreversibly in this direction, the United States should manage the situation to ameliorate humanitarian consequences, contain the violence, and minimize regional

stability." That's, of course, with respect to the Biden-Gelb proposal.

But, again, let me repeat, there's nothing in your proposal that I heard that would be in any way inconsistent with, and would, in fact, be complementary of, the new diplomatic offensive that we call for in the Iraq Study Group Report.

Senator LUGAR. Well, the reason I shamelessly cite the Washington Post editorial I wrote for this morning's paper, and repeat it here, is that I hear, both on the Republican and Democratic sides, that people are formulating resolutions that they might offer next week in our debate. They are using such terms as "last chance." In other words, a number of people are saying the surge is the last chance, or, second, that there have to be rigid benchmarks, or that we've got to tell the Iraqis, "By golly, this is your last chance. Either you pass the oil law, you get the devolution of authority or the provinces done, or all the rest of it, or," the thought is, "we're out of there."

Now, that is my worry. In other words, if we come into a debate in which we—I characterize the situation today in football terms—this is like 3rd down and 20, and you call a draw play. Well, it turns out you can get 6 yards, and you punt on 4th down. It is in the first quarter, and so you are now in more favorable territory to try another strategy. What I fear we are heading toward, on both sides, is a situation in which we say, we are either tired of it, stop the funds, bring home the troops, or, maybe some on the Republican side are saying this is it, this is the surge, these are the benchmarks. An interesting pretense, when, in my judgment, there's not a scintilla of hope that the Iraq Government, could fulfill all of this. And so, then you—as suggested, I think, by Senator Cardin—get some fudging, "Well, there was progress made," and we note a little headway here and there, and, once again, we're back into the same debate.

What I would hope is that the diplomatic side, which I think Secretary Rice is now beginning to put together, offers several years of evolving activities not only focused on Iraq, but, likewise, involving the entire Middle East.

Thank you, Mr.——

Mr. BAKER. You didn't ask this question, Senator, but I—and I don't mean to speak for my cochairman—I think we're going to be there a long, long time, and that's why, in my formal remarks, I mentioned the continuing presence—large, substantial, robust presence—of the U.S. military in the region, in the area.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you.

Senator DODD. Senator Webb.

Senator WEBB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Baker, Chairman Hamilton, this is my first opportunity to publicly thank you for the work that you did on this Iraq Study Group. It's been enormously valuable to the country, for people who have had strong concerns. And everybody said all this to you before, but I want you to know that you've set an example here for a lot of people, showing that we can work across party divides and other divides, and try to come to some sort of a solution.

I want to associate myself with the views that both of you expressed with respect to Syria. We tend to focus on Iran, and rightly

so, but, as you've said, as I've tried to say a number of times, Iran and Syria are not natural allies, and it's very much in our strategy interest that we should be dealing with these two countries rather than causing them to be working together largely because they're on the other side of the diplomatic fence. I can't say it any more clearly than the two of you did. I think it's vitally important that we do that.

With respect to this discussion now about the surge and, quite frankly, how this is going to be used in our debate that will be coming up on the floor, I would like to start off, first, by saying we had Admiral Fallon at a confirmation hearing this morning on the Armed Services Committee, and he gave some very nuanced answers, which encouraged me a great deal. One of the points that he made was that it's not particularly the number of troops that are involved in any of these endeavors, it's how they're used. And one of the concerns that I have had with where we are right now is that I don't see anything that's been proposed over the last month as truly a change in strategy, I see it as more an adjustment, a tactical adjustment, without changing our national strategy. And, in that respect, what we're doing is moving forward on one area without having implemented the other key recommendations in your Iraq Study Group. There is not a robust diplomatic effort that, as Chairman Hamilton has mentioned several times, should have begun a month or so ago.

And so, the down side of that, from people like myself who have a concern about how our Army and Marine Corps have been used on the ground there, is that we may end up, just through momentum, continuing the same practices, which is going to have an impact on the force-structure issues in the Army and the Marine Corps, on troop rotations and these sorts of things, without a change in strategy.

And, just for the record, I want to say that I voted for General Petraeus. I listened to him in the Armed Services Committee hearings, and I did not vote on him because I believe in his strategy, I voted for him because I believe he is a person who is eminently capable of assuming that command. And he has told us, in clear terms, that he is going to be candid with us about his operational matters as they go forward.

What I really have a concern on here—and this is a great opportunity for me, just sitting, listening—I know it's never particularly fun to testify like this, as has been intimated a few times, but it's a great opportunity for me to sit and listen to your views. And the question I really have is: How do we get to the end of this? You know? And that's a substantive question that we've been kicking around. But, Secretary Baker, you've got as much experience as anyone in the country, in terms of dealing with these issues in a procedural way, and I know there are a broad range of diplomatic efforts that are mentioned in your report, but what would be the best procedural format for us to be able to create this international support structure that we've been talking about? How do we get there from here?

Mr. BAKER. Well, Senator, we—we're fairly specific in the diplomatic portion of our report, in laying out the steps we think need to be taken. We call for a new diplomatic offensive. We call for the

creation of an international Iraq support group. We call for the convening of various meetings. We mentioned the countries we think ought to be in that international support group, including all of Iraq's neighbors, which, of course, would include Iran and Syria. We go further with respect to Syria, because we see that as a distinctly different case than Iran, and that it has—it has fundamental application with respect to the issue of Arab-Israeli peace. So, it's pretty much all laid out there.

You say: How do we get to the end of this? Let me make—let me throw something out here that maybe nobody will stand up and salute, and I haven't talked to anybody downtown about this, and I don't speak for the administration, and—but, look, neither the administration nor the Congress has adopted all of the recommendations of our report, or all of the conclusions of our report. The administration has—as Lee put it earlier, has—and as you've just put it, Senator—has not gone as far, diplomatically, as we proposed. The Congress is not in favor—or at least it looks like there may be a majority of the Congress that is opposed to the surge and is preparing to vote a resolution of disapproval.

Back in 1983, when I was Ronald Reagan's Chief of Staff, we decided we wanted to try to do something with Social Security, if we could. Social Security was the third rail of American politics, and still is today, in my view. We concluded we weren't going to ever be able to do anything with Social Security unless we got the leadership of both parties together. And they sat down—I'm talking, now, about—at the level of the Senate majority leader and the Speaker of the House and the President of the United States—and they sit down, and they decide, "This problem is of such fundamental importance to our country that we need to take it out of politics, we need to give each other cover in a way that would permit us to deal with this and to move forward."

And I know the chairman is, I guess, gone to another appointment, but I have to tell you, I look at this situation today a little bit in those same terms. And we were able, in 1983, to come up with a—with an agreed solution, a bipartisan solution, Republicans and Democrats, that made Social Security whole for at least 30 years. And this issue of Iraq is every bit as emotional, and certainly every bit as important to the country, as what we were dealing with back then.

So, I guess what I would like to throw out here for people to consider is whether or not there couldn't be some sort of a grand negotiation between the executive and the legislative branches of our Government to come together on a way forward in Iraq. There are things that the majority up here on the Hill think should be undertaken by the administration that are laid out in this report, and there are things that the President, as Commander in Chief, and his military advisors, think ought to be done; specifically, the surge. Why not get together and agree that both sides are going to do some or all of those things so we can move forward together on Iraq in a bipartisan way? Wouldn't that be better than what we have now?

Again, that's not something I've even ever discussed with my cochairman. He may disagree with me on that. But it ought—we ought to be able to work across party lines on something as impor-

tant as this. So, how about at least giving it some thought? That's, maybe, not really a direct answer to your question, Senator.

Senator WEBB. If I may clarify, procedurally, here. I mean, this is—and I—by the way, I think that's what you all have been doing—you know, that's what your Study Group has been doing, is a first step in that direction.

Procedurally, the United States has lost so much esteem in that part of the world as a result of this Iraq endeavor. It would be an awkward thing for the United States to step forward and say, "OK, we are going to convene an Iraq Study Group, and we want Iran and Syria to the table." Procedurally, how do we—where do we go to get that issue on the table? It doesn't have to be a long answer. I've—it's a question I've had for some time.

Mr. HAMILTON. We put the responsibility on the President and the Secretary of State. They've got to take the action.

Senator WEBB. Wouldn't you think that the United Nations——

Mr. HAMILTON. Well, OK, the——

Senator WEBB [continuing]. Would be——

Mr. HAMILTON [continuing]. They have to launch this effort. We were not all that specific as how to launch it, but you are dealing with a sovereign country here—Iraq. You are dealing in an environment where the United States has lost standing and prestige. But, at the same time, there is a recognition that nothing is going to happen in that region if the United States doesn't lead. So, I think we have to step forward. And we recommend a very, very comprehensive effort, multilaterally, bilaterally, with the establishment of the support group as a principal objective, and involving many, many countries in the region and outside the region. We can't tell exactly how that would proceed. I'm hoping that's what Secretary Rice was doing while she was out there.

Senator WEBB. Well, my time is expired, but—Mr. Chairman, just if I can nail this down. From my perspective, this is the key issue here, because, on the one hand, we have lost so much standing in the region, and, on the other, this administration refuses to negotiate with Iran and Syria, and yet, there has to be a vehicle in order to bring this forward. And that's the concern that I have. And I'll——

Mr. BAKER. Well, Senator Webb, there is—the administration has, ongoing, the compact for Iraq, which is essentially a collection of the same countries. That was organized, procedurally, by Iraq and the United Nations. It was called for by Iraq. It contains Iran, it contains Syria. We attend, and they attend. And so, something like that. But we did specifically, as Lee said, avoid the difficult question of exactly how to call this, leaving it up to the President. And we didn't have a specific suggestion on that point, but that you could do it the way the administration did the compact for Iraq.

Senator WEBB. Well, I would hope they would consider doing that. I appreciate your testimony.

Mr. HAMILTON. Senator, I'll make one other comment here. You folks are headed for some rough patches in your relationship with the executive branch. And they probably begin next week, if I understand your schedule. My hope is that, as you go through this process—and I don't think it'll be an easy one for you—resolutions that are nonbinding, a supplemental, then the appropriation bills,

down the line—you're going to have all kinds of amendments and clashes in that process. And, maybe it's being a little Pollyannaish, I hope not, but, in that process, I hope, at the end of the day, we come to a little better unity of effort in this country on Iraq.

I wouldn't, for a minute, think it'll be unanimous. I think the divisions are just too deep. But everybody in this room understands the importance of unity of effort in foreign policy if you're going to have an effective foreign policy. So, it's not an easy process for you, and you're going to have some tough debates, and there are going to be some hard edges to it, and maybe some bad feelings now and then, but it is the process we have to work toward a greater unity of effort.

Senator DODD. Let me just say, Jim Baker—before I turn to Senator Coleman—the case you cited, the Social Security case—I remember another case. I remember you walking into my office in 1989 and saying to me, "We're not going to spend all day in the White House debating Central America. We're going to sit down and figure what has to be done on this. We're going to come up with some common answers." We went through some difficult negotiations back and forth, but, under your leadership, we came up with a common plan and a common idea that got us out of the daily quagmire of dealing, in Central America, with all the other issues we had to grapple with.

The point I want to make is, I think the United States has to lead, but leadership in this country begins at the executive branch. Asking 535 Members of Congress with disparate districts and constituencies to lead on this issue is—we can play an important role—and we will, in a vacuum, otherwise—but the real leadership has to come from the President and that office. That's what you did, and I'll never forget it. Because you said, "Enough of this stuff, we're going to work together and find some answers here." That has to start at the White House.

Mr. BAKER. In those days, Senator, you remember very well, that the war in Central America was the Holy Grail of the left in this country and the Holy Grail——

Senator DODD. Right.

Mr. BAKER [continuing]. Of the right in this country. And I tell people, even to this day, many years later, that my first serious negotiation as Secretary of State was not with a foreign power——

Senator DODD. No.

Mr. BAKER [continuing]. It was with the Congress of the United States. And we got it done.

Senator DODD. Got it done.

Mr. BAKER. And I'm—and all I'm saying is, we ought to be thinking about something like that here. This—these issues are tough, as Lee says, and they're very emotional, as I mentioned in my opening comments, but there are some things here that you oppose that the President wants, and there are some things here that you want that the President opposes, and rather than just doing this for a couple of years, why don't we see if there's not a way—the country has a huge interest in a successful conclusion of this problem.

Senator DODD. Well, again——

Mr. BAKER. Why not find out if there's not a way to do it? And——

Senator DODD. Again, I'll make the point, it was the guy who was going through a confirmation process to be Secretary of the State, who took the leadership—with the approval and support of the President, I might add——

Mr. BAKER. Yes, yes.

Senator DODD [continuing]. To get that ball moving. And that's missing today, I must tell you, must in candor, in this hearing room.

Senator Coleman.

Senator COLEMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would say, first of all, gentlemen, thank you for your service. Thank you for your service on this and so many other issues. We're certainly very, very appreciative.

Mr. Congressman—I don't think there is any lack of appetite for clashing with the executive in both parties right now. I think there is a common understanding that a lot of things have gone wrong in Iraq. I think the real challenge is not about a willingness to clash with the executive, but I would like to share at least two concerns that I have as we move forward. The most important one is the impact of our actions on the troops on the ground. Things that we do and we say have consequences. They are young men and women in harm's way. Many of us have visited them on a number of occasions. We've been to Walter Reed.

The second concern I'll share—where perhaps there isn't a common ground right now, and maybe we have to get to that point—is regarding an understanding of the long-term consequences of failure in Iraq. The ISG report itself, on page 37 as I recall, discusses the consequences of failure. And we've had a number of hearings that have discussed the near-term results associated with a precipitous withdrawal from Iraq. The report uses words such as "precipitate" and "premature."

Mr. HAMILTON. Yes.

Senator COLEMAN. I'm going to ask, in a second, what you mean by the terms used in the report. Talk about the significant power vacuum, greater human suffering, regional destabilization, and the threat to the global economy; talk about al-Qaeda declaring our withdrawal as a victory, Iraq descending into chaos, and how the long-term consequences could eventually require the United States to return.

And as we've had a number of hearings, I have observed that people have different perspectives on the consequences of failure. Some folks have said, "Well, Iraq's a mess." They say so as if it can't get any worse. My sense is that it could get worse if we take the wrong steps.

Mr. HAMILTON. Yes. It clearly is. And we think that the emphasis you're making in your second point, on the consequences of failure, are terribly important to focus on. We want to try to avoid the expansion of Iranian influence in the region. We don't want to jeopardize the energy resources. We don't want to abandon our Arab friends, the so-called moderates. We don't want America to have a strategic defeat in the region. We don't want to have the stability of Iraq jeopardized. We don't want to see Sunni and Shia clashes

across the region. We don't want to see chaos in the region. We don't want to see terrorism grow, and al-Qaeda. There are a lot of very, very important consequences here, that people who favor a precipitate withdrawal just, I don't think, have encountered.

On the first point, incidentally, the impact on U.S. troops, you brought us to the right point there, I believe. The section in our report about restoring U.S. military is in a very important section. It begins on page 76. And we are deeply concerned about resetting the American military as a result of the drain in Iraq.

Senator COLEMAN. And I think the one area on which there is a bipartisan vision is on that issue——

Mr. HAMILTON. Yes; I think so, too.

Senator COLEMAN [continuing]. And I think——

Mr. HAMILTON. Yes.

Senator COLEMAN [continuing]. That's a good thing.

The other issue where I see a divergence of views—and I'm trying to figure out if we can reconcile them—is on the issue of the loss of esteem of the United States in connection to its actions in Iraq. We tend to reflect mainly upon the loss of esteem for the United States that is related to what we currently see in Iraq. On the other hand, I look at this issue of consequences of failure again. The President has talked about this. If we were to withdraw precipitously, if we were to leave without finishing the mission, what does that do to the esteem of America abroad? Mr. Secretary, you've been in this business a long time. What does that do?

Mr. BAKER. It destroys—well, it would destroy our credibility, not just in the region, but around the world. And, of course, as Lee pointed out, we are strongly against a precipitate withdrawal. I mean, we think the consequences, as we say, would be severe. I think they would be catastrophic. You'd see a regional war in the Middle East.

Senator COLEMAN. OK, I'm going to try to tie these different perspectives together in the time I have remaining. Mr. Secretary, you reflected that we're going to be in Iraq a long time.

Mr. BAKER. Yes; we are.

Senator COLEMAN. We're going to be there a long time. On the other hand, Mr. Congressman, you used the phrase that "nothing's going to happen" in the Middle East, until we leave. Can you help me understand the seeming discrepancy between these statements? Is there a difference in views between the two of you?

Mr. BAKER. I don't think so.

Senator COLEMAN. Can you please help me reconcile the idea that we're going to be in Iraq a long time with the idea that we can't get things moving forward until we leave?

Mr. BAKER. Well, let me explain what I meant when I said we're going to be there a long time. In addition to being in Kuwait, Bahrain, and Qatar to protect our interests in the region, we're going to have a fairly large residual presence in Iraq itself, as our report says. We don't spell out the numbers. They're going to be significant. We talk about leaving special operations forces. We talk about leaving rapid-reaction forces to go after al-Qaeda and for other missions that the commander on the ground thinks is important, particularly with respect to the war on terror. And we talk about force protection units that would be left there.

So, when I say we're going to have a presence for a long time in the region, we're going to have a presence in Iraq, for those purposes, and in the region, in my opinion, for a long time.

Mr. HAMILTON. I'd simply emphasize, Senator, in response, that I just don't think things will happen in that region unless the United States leaves.

Senator COLEMAN. Does your use of the term "leave" have a different sense than the way the Secretary has used it?

Mr. HAMILTON. Well, he's talking about a military presence in Iraq, but also a military presence in the region. We're going to have a large military presence in that region for a very, very long time to come. I agree with that part of it. Will we have a large military presence in Iraq? I don't know. But I can certainly see, if you're going to be embedding troops, if you're going to be training troops, if you're going to be going after al-Qaeda, if you're going to be protecting the United States troops who are embedded with the Iraqi troops, you're going to have to have substantial American combat power in Iraq for a period of time. I don't know how long that is, but it's an extended period of time. But in the region itself, there has to be—will be for a long, long time to come—substantial American military and diplomatic and political presence.

Senator COLEMAN. If I can, I'd like to ask two other questions.

One question is that some of us see a qualitative difference between the battle that's being waged, in, let's say, the Anbar province—against al-Qaeda, against the foreign fighters, against the insurgents—and what we've seen in Baghdad, where there is a sectarian battle going on between the Sunni extremists and the Shia extremists—and I was there about a month ago. And the concern I have is, at this point, putting Americans in the center of the sectarian battle in Baghdad before the Iraqis have met the benchmarks that you've talked about, and that some of us here in Congress have talked about.

Did you at all, either in the Study Group Report or through your own reflections, see that kind of distinction between the type of violence that is seen in places like Anbar versus that which is seen in Baghdad?

Mr. BAKER. We did see that difference, when we were there. I think it's valid. I think there is a difference.

Mr. HAMILTON. Yes; I agree with Jim on it. We did not make any recommendation with regard to Anbar province. We did, as Jim has pointed out, with regard to Baghdad, but we did not make it with regard to Anbar.

Senator COLEMAN. Senator Nelson——

Mr. BAKER. But the difference in function of our troops is something we recognized.

Mr. HAMILTON. Oh, yes. Al-Qaeda has much more of a presence there.

Mr. BAKER. That's right. And sectarian violence in Baghdad.

Senator COLEMAN. Very last question, then. Mr. Secretary, you talked about your experience in addressing the Social Security issue and about resolving things here with the Congress, and the chairman talked about leadership. But, on this issue, it's the American public that clearly does not have any sense of confidence of where we're at in Iraq. The American public has clearly lost the ap-

petite for the long-term commitment in Iraq, of whatever level, particularly if we continue to suffer loss of life. How do you get the American public to understand the consequences of failure?

Mr. BAKER. If you have——

Senator COLEMAN. How do we do that?

Mr. BAKER [continuing]. If you have a truly bipartisan policy, and you have the executive branch and the legislative branch pulling together on the same oar, I dare say you're going to see the numbers on the public perception change.

Senator DODD. Officer.

Senator COLEMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[Pause.]

Senator DODD. Senator Coleman.

Senator COLEMAN. I think my time is up, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you very much.

Senator COLEMAN. Senator Casey.

Senator CASEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'm the last questioner, and I know that's good news to both of you. And I'll stay within my time.

I want to focus and try to direct your attention to a very important aspect of what you've already testified to. And, of course, before doing that, I want to thank you for your contribution, your public service already, prior to this work, your ongoing scholarship and work that has gone into this, and the questions you've been asked and the way you've dealt with them. We're in your debt for that. And I'm certainly grateful, as a first-year Senator.

I want to direct your attention at the training aspect of what you testified to today. And I think both of you, in one way or another, said that training is the primary mission, or must be the primary mission. And I think we've heard about training for a long time now—many, many years, since 2003, when this engagement started. And we've heard it over and over again, how important it is. I appreciate the fact that you highlighted it today as the primary mission. I think, Congressman Hamilton, you not only have it in the report, but you've enunciated it as the foundation of how we get American sons and daughters home from Iraq.

Here's the question. What, in your judgment, based upon what you know up to this moment, the work that went into the Iraq Study Group conclusions, all of the testimony you've heard, everything you've read—based upon all of that, what do you think is the problem with this mission of training of these Iraqi security forces? What's the——

Mr. HAMILTON. I think the problem, Senator, is, we just haven't given it enough priority. And—or, to put it another way—and I don't mean to disparage anyone here, but we have not put our best people into training. If you look at it in terms of a career path in the military, that's not the way you get to be a general. That mindset has to change. And we have to understand, in this situation we're confronted with in Iraq, that we have to put our very best people in there to train these forces. So, it's a question of resources. It's also a question of priorities.

Now, I want to repeat what I said earlier. I think we didn't do a very good job of this for about 3 years because of that. And I really do think there's been improvement in the training of the

Iraqi Army—I have a lot of doubt, still, about the police—but the training of the Iraqi Army is better. And we are saying that the military priorities in Iraq must change. That's one of the recommendations. They must change. And we have to give highest priority to this effort.

Senator CASEY. So that those who are training have elevated status. Is that what you mean? In other words, they're recognized as important as any other——

Mr. HAMILTON. The Iraqi——

Senator CASEY [continuing]. Military——

Mr. HAMILTON. I'm no expert on all the incentives that can be offered. Maybe it's financial. But I think, more important even than the financial, is status and a career path for promotion within the services, because these people all are ambitious, and we encourage that.

Mr. BAKER. Senator Casey, the President's plan calls for doubling the number of troops we have embedded with Iraqi forces and engaged in training, as I understand it. And the President himself said that training is the essential mission of our forces. And I think it was Steve Hadley's op-ed piece yesterday in which he said that training and supporting Iraqi troops will remain our military's essential and primary mission.

So, at least—I mean, there's not a lot of daylight between what we call for in this report and where the President—where the President's plan is, assuming that those comments are true. And I, for one, take them at their word.

Senator CASEY. Well, I appreciate that highlight of his plan. But, I'll tell you, in your report, very early in your report, first of all, you talk about the Iraqi Army, and said the police are a lot worse. But when you're——

Mr. BAKER. They are.

Senator CASEY [continuing]. Talking about the army, you're saying they lack leadership, equipment, personnel, logistics, and support.

Mr. BAKER. Yes; well, that's what Lee said, that we—that we did a bad job for a number of years.

Senator CASEY. Well, it's been going on for several years, and I'm glad you pointed it out, but when you—here's my problem. All right? I come from a State—we lost 140 lives already. You know that. I mean, we're third on the death toll. Hundreds and hundreds of kids have lost their lives there. And we've been hearing about this for years now. And it should never have taken the administration all these years—and it, frankly, should not have taken your report for them to get the message about training. They've had this problem for years. People have had it up to here. Their patience is gone, virtually, on this, because of the sacrifices they've made.

And then, you pick up the New York Times, last week—and this is a predicate of the whole escalation—you pick up the New York Times, and they talk about the main mission, they call it a miniature version of what the troops will be doing in the so-called surge, "As the sun rose, many of the Iraqi Army units, who were supposed to do the actual searches of the buildings, did not arrive on time, forcing the Americans to start to doing the job on their own. When the Iraqi units finally did show up, it was the air of a class outing,

cheering and laughing as the Americans blew locks off the doors with shotguns. An American soldier is shot in the head." And then, it goes on later, "Many of the Iraqi units that showed up late never seemed to take the task seriously. At one point, Iraqis completely disappeared, leaving the American units working with them flabbergasted." It goes on and on and on.

So, my question is—and you've done the hard work already. I just wish the President would read and internalize and act upon what you have already found is a major problem. But he doesn't seem to want to do that. And so, you pick up the paper, and you read that, and families out there, who—every one of those families who lost someone in Iraq, I think, today would stand up and say, "We support this mission. We support this President." Most of them would say that. But they have the right to expect that, when American sons and daughters are going into those dangerous neighborhoods, that some of what you have pointed out becomes a real priority. I have seen no evidence of that. And the whole escalation is based upon the fact that these Iraqi Army units and soldiers are going to be up to a certain level to take the lead. And there's no evidence that I can see that that is happening. It's more commentary than question, but there doesn't seem to be any evidence, in your report and in recent reporting right on the ground in real time, that this thing is getting any better when it comes to training. And I leave that for——

Mr. HAMILTON. Senator——

Senator CASEY [continuing]. For comment.

Mr. HAMILTON. Well, one thing, in the Iraq Study Group we did not look back——

Senator DODD. Please.

[Pause.]

Senator DODD. The hearing will come to order.

Congressman.

Mr. HAMILTON. We did not look back, and we did not criticize mistakes that have been made. That was one point. But the second point you make, I personally agree with. In other words, I see some positive movement in Steve Hadley's statement here, where he says that training and supporting will remain our military's essential and primary mission. I do not yet see enough action to support that. And I am concerned about it. I am pleased that Mr. Hadley has recognized training as a primary mission. The President did not mention that as a primary mission in the State of the Union Address, he did not use the word "primary" in his comments in his speech on Iraq. But the National Security Advisor's statement is encouraging. I hope the President repeats it. And I hope that we are now in a position to really put the highest priority on training. Now, one of the risks of a surge is that you lose emphasis and priority on the training mission. You've got to keep them both, I guess.

Senator CASEY. Mr. Secretary.

Mr. BAKER. I would agree with that. I—well, but let me just say, I take the President at his word when he said, in that speech, that this will be "the essential mission." I don't see the difference between if it's "the essential" and "primary." He didn't say "one essential mission," he didn't say "an essential mission," he said train-

ing will be "the essential mission." That means, to me, that it'll be the primary mission. He didn't use the word "primary." Lee's right about that. But Steve Hadley has.

Senator CASEY. I think that's progress. Let me make one more point. Not enough progress, but they're moving in the right direction. But they've got a long way to go.

I was heartened by—and I want to commend you, not only for your report and your testimony today, but this statement on January 11, which I didn't focus on at the time. I'm glad you included it. What you talked about here with regard to what the President had said, in respect to his policy, you say the following, in the third paragraph—you say—and I quote from the January 11 statement—"The President did not suggest the possibility of a transition that could enable U.S. combat forces to begin to leave Iraq." That's No. 1. "The President did not state that political, military, or economic support for Iraq would be conditional on the Iraqi Government's ability to meet benchmarks." No. 2 thing; he didn't say. And third, you say, "Within the region, the President did not announce an international support group for Iraq," and it goes on from there.

And I appreciate the fact that you carefully examined what he said, and highlighted that, because I think that kind of accountability, or oversight, in a sense, has been missing for the last couple of years.

Thank you very much.

Senator DODD. Thank you, Senator Casey.

I just have a couple of quick points.

I was impressed, in the report, on page 39, the—paragraph 4, the devolution into three regions, which the commission, or the committee, the group, was pretty firm, in pretty good language, I thought—and a position I share with you—about trying to keep this country together, not—the idea of spreading it up into three loose federated states—may end up there, but it should be our position to do what's possible to keep this country together.

I was disturbed to hear, the other day, that there was apparently a secret meeting of the Turkish Parliament, debating whether or not to send Turkish troops into northern Iraq—on the border with northern Iraq. One of the points you raise in concern—why this ought to concern all of us—Secretary Baker, I—in talking about the proposal has been made by some, to actually have this become a part of policy. I'll be curious as to whether or not you're in any way retreating from the recommendations here in the report, in light of—that was December, this is almost February. Are there events now that would cause you to feel less certain about that conclusion?

Mr. BAKER. No.

Senator DODD. OK.

Mr. BAKER. We stand by the report, and particularly that conclusion. I mentioned, earlier, Senator Dodd, the sentence on that page 39 that says, "If events were to move irreversibly in this direction, we ought to jump in there and manage it."

Senator DODD. And it——

Mr. BAKER. But, no, we still feel that there's serious questions about that approach, having to do with such things as: Where do you draw the boundaries between Sunni areas and Shia areas?

What do you do about the major cities? Wouldn't this encourage regional players to come in to begin to protect their interests more so than they're even doing today, if they thought there were going to be three semiautonomous regions, or three autonomous regions?

Senator DODD. So, your concerns expressed then are the same today. In fact——

Mr. BAKER. Same today as they were——

Senator DODD. Do you agree with that, Lee?

Mr. BAKER. Yes.

Mr. HAMILTON. I do agree with it. I think our concerns about that devolution plan is that it goes against a unified Iraq——

Senator DODD. I agree with that.

Mr. HAMILTON [continuing]. Fundamentally. And then, for the other reasons we state in the report.

Senator DODD. Let me ask you two other quick questions, if I can.

One is on—and I'm picking up with Jim Webb's questions here in the—I think Dick Lugar raised the—in his points, too—we've talked a lot about Syria and Iran, and I think many of us here agree with the points that have been raised by the—both of you this afternoon, as well as the comments made by our colleagues here about how we ought to approach those two. But you point out, as well, that there's almost as much of an emphasis on the so-called moderate Arab States. Answer, if you can, the question—I've been surprised there hasn't been at least more of an expression of concern from the moderate Arab States about events in Iraq and the growing concerns of Iranian influence. And there are a lot of ways of doing this. I realize they're not societies that have a lot of forums such as we're having here today, but this has gone on now for 4 years, where they have some very immediate threats. I know there are things going on quietly, but I'm a little mystified as to why there has not been a more outspoken support for the efforts to achieve some success in Iraq and bring about some stability, given the immediately implications to many of these countries, if this situation continues to crater, as it is. We, obviously, are concerned about it, for all the reasons you've outlined. But if I were sitting in Riyadh or sitting in a Amman, Jordan, or Cairo or Beirut, I'd be a lot more concerned, in the shorter term, about my conditions and what's apt to happen here as a result of what goes on. Why aren't we hearing more from these countries? Why doesn't there seem to be more of a willingness to participate in some solution here, despite the outcry from you and others about being involved in a political-diplomatic solution here?

Mr. HAMILTON. Well, first of all, we share your concern. I think one of the things that has marked the response of these regimes is passivity, in all respects. They haven't helped us on the money side, with resources, and they haven't been very helpful diplomatically. They've done some training, they've done some things that are mildly helpful, but they haven't really been engaged on it.

I'm not sure I know the answer to your question, except I think they're still waiting to see how this thing comes out.

Senator DODD. Well, doesn't it—I mean, that's kind of a—"wait til you see how it comes out."

Mr. HAMILTON. They're hanging back. There is a strong feeling in the region there that America is losing and that Iran may emerge as the winner.

Senator DODD. I've also heard the concern——

Mr. HAMILTON. If that's the case——

Senator DODD [continuing]. Expressed there that——

Mr. HAMILTON [continuing]. That's a very different environment. Now, I'm——

Senator DODD [continuing]. I'm going to be——

Mr. HAMILTON. Let me be——

Senator DODD [continuing]. One head of state——

Mr. HAMILTON [continuing]. Clear here, I'm speculating. I don't know this.

Senator DODD. One head of state said to me—and I'm going back about 4 or 5 months ago, when I was there—said, "My great concern is that the United States is going to cut its own deal with Iran at our expense."

Mr. HAMILTON. Yes. Yes.

Mr. BAKER. There is concern about that. There is concern about that on the part of these countries. I mentioned—if you'll look on page 44, Senator, we mention the efforts under—with the "Gulf-plus-Two"——

Senator DODD. Yes.

Mr. BAKER [continuing]. That the Secretary of State is—has been engaged in. These are very beneficial, in my opinion. We indicated in our report that it didn't—maybe it didn't go as far as it should, in terms of creating an Iraq international support group. But nothing but positive, I don't think, can come from those efforts. So, it's a good thing to be doing, but that maybe that it would be good to fold those into a broader effort.

Senator DODD. Uh-huh.

Mr. BAKER. Same with the compact for Iraq. These countries do participate in the compact for Iraq.

Senator DODD. Uh-huh.

Mr. BAKER. The countries you're talking about, the Gulf-plus-Two.

Senator DODD. Last, at some point, you might want to expound on this further. And, Secretary Baker, you've had years of experience dealing very directly with some of these folks as to why there isn't a more aggressive approach on being active in the diplomatic front.

One of the problems I hear all the time from people—and it sort of underscores the point that my colleague from Pennsylvania has raised here this afternoon. I don't know how accurate, again, polling data is in these matters. I'm not sure how you do a good poll in a place like Iraq today, given the circumstances. The number we hear bandied around quite a bit is: Something in the neighborhood of 60 percent of the Iraqi people are hostile to the notion of us even being there. One number has 61 percent suggesting that they were not opposed to attacks on American forces in Iraq. It's a pretty difficult deal to explain to anyone why you're here sending your sons and daughters to this situation, when a majority—not an insignificant majority of these people, if these numbers are even remotely close—are hostile to the very presence of the people who are there

for the purposes of providing them a better opportunity. How do you make a case when people here—

Could I please just finish the thought here? Thank you.

[Pause.]

Senator DODD. My point being, here, is it's one thing about the polling data here—and there's, obviously, numbers that think we ought to be removing troops—but the polling data in Iraq suggesting that they're opposed and hostile to use being there makes it very difficult for us to sustain the kind of support in this country and elsewhere, if, in fact, people are cheering when American soldiers are being shot at, wounded, or killed. I don't know how we sustain a policy with that kind of activity going on in a country where we talk about giving them some hope for the future.

Mr. BAKER. Very true. I can't quarrel with the conclusion. It makes it very difficult. That doesn't mean we ought not to try. We have a lot at stake. We've talked here today about the consequences of failure. And they're severe. Catastrophic, in my view.

Senator DODD. Lee, any final point on that?

Mr. HAMILTON. Well, the perceptions that we have of what we're trying to do, and the perceptions they have of what we're trying to do, are just miles and miles apart. And bridging those perceptions will just be exceedingly difficult to do, but, you know, these people today are living a miserable life. And anybody who visits Baghdad gets a sense of the hopelessness of life there for these people. And when you're in that circumstance, you blame somebody. And we happen to be the foreign power that's present, and I guess a lot of them blame us.

Senator DODD. Well, I thank you both. We've kept you a little longer than we promised, and I apologize to that.

Do any of my colleagues have any final comments?

We've kept you beyond 3 o'clock. Again, I think all of us have deep appreciation for the amount of effort you've put into your staffs—they were here, as well, should be recognized, and other members of the group. So, we thank you immensely for your effort.

Senator DODD. Thank you for your presence, and this committee will stand adjourned until further call of the Chair.

[Whereupon, at 3:43 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL STATEMENT SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD G. LUGAR, U.S. SENATOR FROM INDIANA

I thank Senator Biden for holding this hearing, and I welcome two good friends to the committee. It is a privilege to have the benefit of their long experience and the impressive study that went into their report.

This hearing is timely because the Iraq Study Group Report represents the only comprehensive policy prescription for Iraq undertaken by a bipartisan group of experienced decisionmakers under time pressure. The process that led to its conclusions, therefore, bears some resemblance to the task before the President and Congress. For this reason, as well as the insight of the group's members, the report is especially relevant to our own decisionmaking process.

Although the report offered many recommendations, it underscored that there are no foolproof options in Iraq. It stated: "During the past 9 months, we have considered a full range of approaches for moving forward. All have flaws." Our experience on this committee during the last 3 weeks of hearings has been similar. We are seeking the best course, while knowing that we are choosing from among imperfect options.

A key point that requires much greater clarification is how expanded, continued, or reduced U.S. military presence can be used to stimulate Iraqi political reconciliation. There is wide, though not unanimous, agreement that our military presence in Iraq represents leverage either because it can be expanded or because it can be withdrawn. But there is little clarity on how to translate this leverage into action by the Iraqi Government. Many commentators talk of "creating space" for the Iraqi Government to establish itself, but it is far from clar that the government can or will take advantage of such space.

Thus, as the administration increases troops, it becomes even more imperative to develop a backup plan and aggressively seek a framework for a political solution. It is not enough to set benchmarks to measure the progress of the Iraqi Government. If the Iraqi Government has different timetables and objectives than us, such benchmarks will not be met in a way that transforms the politics of the nation.

If we undertake the tremendous investment that sending more American soldiers to Iraq represents, it should be in support of a clear strategy for achieving a negotiated reconciliation. We should not depend on theories or hopes that something good may happen if we dampen violence in Baghdad.

The Iraq Study Group has been one of the most definitive advocates for a broader regional dialog accompanying our efforts inside Iraq. We need frank policy discussions in this country about our vital interests in the region. The difficulties we have had in Iraq make a strong presence in the Middle East more imperative, not less. Our nation must understand that if and when withdrawal or redeployment from Iraq occurs, it will not mean that our interests in the Middle East have diminished. In fact, it may mean that we will need to bolster our military, diplomatic, and economic presence elsewhere in the Middle East.

I have urged the Bush administration to be aggressive and creative in pursuing a regional dialog that is not limited to our friends. If we lack the flexibility to communicate with unfriendly regimes, we increase the chances of miscalculations, undercut our ability to take advantage of any favorable situations, and potentially limit the regional leverage with which we can confront Iran and Syria.

Again, I welcome our distinguished guests and look forward to a thoughtful hearing.

IRAQ IN THE STRATEGIC CONTEXT, SESSION 1

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 31, 2007

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:30 a.m., in room SH–216, Hart Senate Office Building, Hon. Joseph R. Biden, Jr. (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Biden, Kerry, Feingold, Boxer, Bill Nelson, Obama, Menendez, Casey, Lugar, Coleman, Corker, Voinovich, Murkowski, and Isakson.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR., U.S. SENATOR FROM DELAWARE

The CHAIRMAN. The hearing will please come to order.

This morning, we are privileged to have with us former Secretary of State, Dr. Henry Kissinger, whose name is synonymous with effective diplomacy, effective American diplomacy, and, I think few would argue with the fact, one of the best strategic minds in the country.

Before we begin, I'd like to take a moment to present some of the key findings, in my view, that we've found in the last 4 weeks, where there is consensus. While no unanimous prescription has emerged thus far from our hearings, there is remarkably broad consensus, in my view, on three points. First, our troops can't stop the sectarian warfare in Iraq, only a political settlement can do that. Second, we should be engaging in intensive regional diplomacy to support such a settlement among the Iraqis. And third, the United States military should focus on combating terrorist—i.e., jihadists and al-Qaeda; keeping Iraq's neighbors honest, and training Iraqis, not policing a civil war. Indeed, combat troops should start to redeploy, and redeploy soon.

Since a political settlement is so critical, we've examined some of the likely components. We've discussed the benchmarks the President has proposed—the oil law, de-Baathification reform, constitutional reform, and provincial elections. But the divisions are so deep and the passions are so high within Iraq that I believe that we are well past the point of implementing such modest measures in order to make a meaningful difference in stabilizing Iraq. I believe some bolder moves are necessary.

A colleague of our witness and our next witness, the former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Les Gelb, put forward such a proposal with me 9 months ago. It is premised on our conviction

that the heart of the administration's strategy—building a strong central government—cannot succeed. There is not enough trust within the government, no trust of the government by the people, and no capacity of the present government to deliver services and security. Instead, we must bring Iraqis' problems and the responsibilities for managing them, in our view, down to the local and regional level, where it can help the Iraqis build trust and capacity more quickly and more efficiently.

We have proposed that Iraqis create three or more regions, consistent with what their Constitution calls for, and we call for oil to be shared equitably, with a guaranteed share going to the Sunnis enshrined in their Constitution. We also call for aggressive diplomacy and the creation of a contact group consisting of Iraqis' neighbors—Iraq's neighbors and the other major powers necessary for a political settlement, not unlike we did, I might add, when we went into Afghanistan.

We believe that we can redeploy most, if not all, of our troops in Iraq within 18 months under this plan, leaving behind a small force in the region to strike at terrorists and keep the neighbors honest while training Iraqis. I believe this plan is more relevant than ever. It takes into account the harsh realities of self-sustaining sectarian violence. I believe it's consistent—I know it's consistent with the Iraqi Constitution. And it can help produce, I hope, a soft landing for Iraq and prevent a full-blown civil war that tears the country apart and spreads beyond the region.

I found it interesting that one of the leading columnists in the New York Times, David Brooks, referred to it as "soft partition." I never thought of it. His words, not mine.

It may be too late for our plan, or any other plan, to work, I have to acknowledge. Iraqis may be too blinded by their sectarian hatred and revenge to see their own self-interest. And if that's the case, then we need to consider, more rapidly, how we disengage and contain the war within Iraq. And that will not be easy. But we have—we don't have the luxury—we don't have the luxury, as you've heard the chairman and others say, of walking away. Confining the violence to Iraq and preventing a regional war, proxies or otherwise, is going to require an awful lot of heavy lifting if we don't get it right inside Iraq.

I hope that you will share with us what you think we need to be doing now to put in place such a strategy, if you agree that that may come to pass, Mr. Secretary—and I'm not suggesting you do—if all our efforts within Iraq fail. One of the things I've noticed in my long years of having an opportunity to learn from you is, we should always have alternative plans. Whether they're announced or not, we should always be prepared to deal with the possibility that the present strategy may not work. And I am absolutely convinced that the present strategy of this administration is not going to work.

So, I'm eager to hear your testimony, Mr. Secretary. Again, I know you had to go way out of your way to be here. You're kind to do this. You will find a receptive and friendly audience here. We're anxious to hear what you have to say. And I now yield to my colleague, Senator Lugar.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD G. LUGAR, U.S. SENATOR FROM INDIANA

Senator LUGAR. Well, I thank Chairman Biden for holding this hearing. I welcome our distinguished former Secretaries of State.

The United States has vital and enduring interests in the Middle East, including preventing terrorism and proliferation, protecting the free flow of oil and commerce, ensuring the security of our friends and our allies. Our intervention in Iraq has dramatically changed the geopolitical landscape of the Middle East, with unpredictable consequences. Today, we'll explore our strategic options for advancing our interests in this evolving region.

Secretary Rice has recently outlined what appears to be a shift in emphasis in United States policy toward countering the challenges posed by Iran. Under this new approach, the United States would organize regional players—Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, Turkey, the Gulf States, and others—behind a program of containing Iran's disruptive agenda in the region.

Such a realignment has relevance for stabilizing Iraq and bringing security to other areas of conflict in the region, such as Lebanon and the Palestinian territories. Moderate states in the Middle East are concerned by Iran's aggressiveness and by the possibility of sectarian conflict beyond Iraq's borders. They recognize the United States is an indispensable counterweight to Iran and a source of stability in the region. The United States has leverage to enlist greater support for our objectives inside Iraq and throughout the Middle East.

Quite apart from the military-diplomatic "surge" in Iraq that has been the focus of so much attention, we are now seeing the outlines of a new, United States regional approach: A more assertive stance by our military toward Iranian interference in Iraq, a renewed diplomatic effort on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, substantial United States security assistance to Palestinian President Abbas, and a United States-led effort to bolster the Lebanese Government against Hezbollah.

Writing in the Washington Post yesterday, I noted that the United States should recalibrate our reference points on Iraq. We should not see the President's current Iraq plan as an endgame, but rather as one element in a larger Middle East struggle that is in early stages. The President's Baghdad strategy is still aimed at an optimal outcome: The creation of a democratic pluralist society that will cooperate with us in achieving regional stability. At this stage, that is a goal worth pursuing, but our strategy in Iraq must be flexible enough to allow for changing circumstances.

Even as the President's Baghdad strategy proceeds, we need to be preparing for how we will array United States forces in the region to defend oil assets, target terrorist enclaves, deter adventurism by Iran, provide a buffer against regional sectarian conflict, and generally reassure friendly governments that the United States is committed to Middle East security. Such a redeployment might well involve bases inside Iraq that would allow us to continue training Iraqi troops and delivering economic assistance, but would not require us to interpose American soldiers between Iraqi sectarian factions.

One of the ironies of the highly contentious debate over President Bush's new Iraq plan is that it's focused on the strategically narrow issue of what United States troops do in a limited number of multiethnic neighborhoods in Baghdad that contain only about 7 percent of the Iraqi population, what General Jack Keane has called the "key terrain." Undoubtedly, what happens in those Baghdad neighborhoods is important, but it's unlikely that this mission will determine our fate in the Middle East. Remaking Iraq, in and of itself, does not constitute a strategic objective. The risk is that we will define success and failure in Iraq so rigidly that our Iraq policy will become disconnected, or even contradictory, to broader regional goals.

It is important that the Congress and the public fully understand any strategic shift in our policy. The President should be reaching out to the Congress in an effort to construct a consensus on how we will protect our broader strategic interests, regardless of what happens in Baghdad during the next several months.

The worst outcome would be a wholesale exit from vital areas and missions in the Middle East precipitated by United States domestic political conflict and, simply, fatigue over an unsustainable Iraq policy.

We look forward, Dr. Kissinger, to your thoughts on these questions, your advice and counsel on the best way forward for the United States in this important part of the world.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Secretary——

Senator KERRY. Mr. Chairman, if I could just have 1 minute, I'd appreciate it.

The CHAIRMAN. Just 1 minute, Senator, or we'll have everybody else——

Senator KERRY. Oh, no, no, no, I just wanted to make my excuses to the Secretary——

The CHAIRMAN. Oh——

Senator KERRY [continuing]. Because I have——

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Please.

Senator KERRY [continuing]. To go chair another hearing, and I wanted to apologize for not being able to be here to listen to your testimony. I'm going to take it with me, read it. I hope to get back before the end of it, but I just wanted to welcome you here and thank you for taking time to be with us, and we really look forward to the advice and counsel you'll give us.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator, that's——

Dr. KISSINGER. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. That is necessary. And I—in a moment, Mr. Secretary, I will—I'll wait until your testimony is finished. Senator Hagel is not here, because he's attending the funeral of a young lieutenant who was recently killed in Iraq, whom he appointed to the Academy, and whose younger brother is at the Academy. But I want to honor the young man, I want his name in the record. It is Army First Lieutenant Jacob Fritz of Verdon, Nebraska, Senator Lugar wanted me to express his apologies as to why he is not here.

Please proceed, Mr. Secretary.

STATEMENT OF HON. HENRY A. KISSINGER, FORMER SECRETARY OF STATE; CHAIRMAN, KISSINGER McLARTY ASSOCIATES, NEW YORK, NY

Dr. KISSINGER. Mr. Chairman, I have submitted an article I wrote a week ago in lieu of a statement. But I will make a few extemporaneous remarks to begin this discussion.

The fundamental issue in the region is not the tactical issue that we—that's received so much of attention—namely, the specific deployments inside Baghdad; the fundamental issue is the one that has been identified by you and by Senator Lugar about the long-term role of the United States in the region and the basic challenges that it faces.

The United States has been involved in military actions in the region now since the 1950s—in Lebanon in 1958; in the alert over Jordan in 1970; an alert over the Middle East war, or the conclusion of the Middle East war, in 1973; over the evacuation of Lebanon in 1975; in the—with a military force in Lebanon in the 1980s; military action over Iraq and Kuwait in 1991; in several air attacks on Iraq in the late 1990s; and then again in the war in which we face. This must reflect the judgment of a succession of Presidents of the vital importance of Middle East—the Middle East, and of stability in the Middle East, to the United States.

Now, the current situation in the Middle East has some features that are relatively unique. Most of the crises that I described earlier were between states and arose out of the conflict of states or out of the Palestinian issue. The current crisis arises out of the fact that the state, which we take for granted as the organization of international affairs, is weakening all over the region, because in most countries it is a product of the post-World War I period that was introduced into the area by Western nations. And, in many countries, it is not tied to the nation as it is in Europe, the United States, and many other parts of the world. The borders were artificially drawn. And, indeed, this is one of the dilemmas of Iraq, that Iraq was created out of three provinces of the Ottoman Empire in order to provide a strategic buffer between French and British zones that, themselves, were artificially created. So, the disintegration of that system is one of the factors of the region.

One of the attributes of such a disintegration is that ideologies trump traditional loyalties, and so that the Islamic religion, and the radical aspect of the Islamic religion, is—goes across borders. One result is the existence—on the territory of what we consider sovereign states and what international law has considered sovereign states—of units that have the character of states but are not really states, like the Hezbollah, like the Hamas, like the Mahdi Army in Baghdad, organizations that, on the one hand, participate in the government, but, on the other, are tied to loyalties that go beyond the national borders, and whose outcome is—cannot be defined by national interests as it has been, heretofore, conceived. So, we are dealing with an upheaval that goes across the whole region.

And, given the fact that much of it receives its impetus from the Islamic religion and from the attempt to restore the significance of the Islamic methods, the impact of what occurs in that region will

be not confined to the region, it will go from Indonesia, which is a Muslim—which is the largest Muslim state, to Malaysia, to India, which has—it's the second largest Muslim state, even though its 160 million Muslims are a minority, to the suburbs of Paris, where there are large Islamic populations. So, this is what is at stake in that region and in terms of which the impact must be considered.

Now, the United States has been attempting, for 50 years, to contribute to stability and progress and peace in the region by leading negotiations, by intervening militarily. And it's in this context, Mr. Chairman, that I look at what we are now facing in Iraq.

Major mistakes have been made. We have reached a very difficult situation, because we have not found it easy to bring the—some traditional American premises in line with cultural and regional realities. But I will confine myself to where we are—where we are today.

In Iraq, we face a number of only partially connected problems. We face the impact of neighbors from across the border: Iran, with respect to the Shia south; Turkey, indirectly, with respect to the Kurdish north; Syria, with respect to the Sunni west; and others that have an interest, partly because Iraq is also the tipping point for a Shia-Sunni confrontation that is taking its most acute form precisely on the territory of Iraq.

Second, we have the insurrection of the Sunni population against the shift in power from its traditional dominance to a democratic principle of majority rule, which empowers the Shiites and the—and, to some extent, the Kurds.

Third, we have the al-Qaeda influence that—it's a cross-border assault, but—not on a national basis, but on an ideological basis. And then, we have the Shia-Sunni conflict. And they're all merging together in a sort of amorphous explosion of violence. The American interest is in preventing the radical Islamic element from achieving a domination that will then infect the other regions that I have already discussed. The—America has no interest in the outcome of a Sunni-Shia rivalry, as long as it is not achieved by ethnic cleansing and genocidal practices.

So, I would say that if we are talking about long-range strategy, we should move into a position from which our forces can intervene against the threats to the regional security that I have identified and becomes a lesser and lesser element in the purely Shia-Sunni struggle.

The only—the principal relevance of the current debate about Baghdad is the judgment whether suppressing the militias in Baghdad can make a contribution to this process. And this is where opinions divide. I lean toward the fact that they—that it is something that should be attempted.

There will be two possible outcomes: That it succeeds, in which case, the government could pursue preferred policies of reconciliation, if it is able to, and we concentrate in the strategic issues that I have mentioned before. If it fails, our strategic mission will still be the same, except we will then have to take care to separate ourselves from the sectarian civil war that will emerge.

Now, all this needs to be conducted within the framework of a diplomacy that permits other nations to participate increasingly in

the political future of the region. And I would—I have to define my perception of diplomacy, which is not always identical with others.

I very often hear the statement that something should be left to a political solution rather than a military solution. In my view, diplomacy is an amalgam of penalties and rewards, and it cannot be segmented into a political phase, into a military phase. But, by the same token, the military actions—just as the political actions require some understanding of the military element, so the military element has to be geared to a possible political outcome.

There has been much discussion about whether to negotiate with Iran and Syria. I would separate those two countries. The Iranian issue is—the Syrian concern is primarily one of national interest. Its primary concern is Lebanon and the Golan, and its influence in Iraq is relatively marginal. The Iranian problem is one that will beset us for many administrations, because it is not only the strongest country in the region, but it is also, at this precise moment, developing nuclear weapons, in defiance of the Security Council plus Germany. And if one—if an outcome emerges in which Iran has nuclear weapons and a vacuum in front of it in Iraq, that would be a potentially disastrous outcome for the peace in the region.

I have always had the view that the issue of whether one should negotiate is—should not be a central issue. We should always be prepared to negotiate. The fundamental issue is what to negotiate about and what the purpose of the negotiation should be. I see little incentive Iran has to help us solve the Iraqi problem unless it occurs in a constellation in which there can also—in which they cannot achieve their maximum objective by themselves. And, therefore, a diplomacy has to include, as Senator Lugar pointed out, a creation of a group of states that have their own interest in preventing Iranian domination. And, to make the matter more complex, all of this has to be in the context of a willingness to talk to Iran.

Now—but that has to take into—but that has to be based, in my opinion, on the following theme. I don't think Iran will help us in Iraq, as such. And, therefore, we cannot avoid creating conditions in Iran that make it unattractive for them. But the challenge that Iraqi leaders will have—Iranian leaders will have to face at some point is this: We have no quarrel with Iran as a nation. We can respect Iran as a major player in the region with a significant role in the region. What we cannot accept is an Iran that seeks to dominate the region on the basis of a religious ideology and using the Shia base in other countries to undermine stability in a region on which the economic well-being of such a large part of the world depends.

Under the previous Iranian Government, the United States had excellent relations with Iran. And they were not tied to the personality of the ruler, but to the importance of the country. So, the question before our diplomacy and before the Iranian diplomacy is: Can we define objectives that bring peace and progress to the region? And that gets me to my final point.

If all of what I've said is correct, or most of it is correct, then the United States must be present in the region for a foreseeable future. It cannot be ended in one administration, because even

total withdrawal will have consequences that the next administration will have to live with.

This is—so, the key question is: What kind of a presence, in what manner, and for what outcome, in Iraq? And it's in this spirit, Mr. Chairman, that I've taken the liberty of stating some semiphilosophical points, in anticipation of your questions.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Kissinger follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. HENRY KISSINGER, FORMER SECRETARY OF STATE; CHAIRMAN, KISSINGER MCLARTY ASSOCIATES, NEW YORK, NY

[From the International Herald Tribune, Jan. 18, 2007]

WITHDRAWAL IS NOT AN OPTION

(By Henry A. Kissinger)

President Bush's bold decision to order a "surge" of some 20,000 American troops for Iraq has brought the debate over the war to a defining stage. There will not be an opportunity for another reassessment.

The Baker-Hamilton commission powerfully described the impasse on the ground. It is the result of cumulative choices—some enumerated by the President—in which worthy objectives and fundamental American values clashed with regional and cultural realities.

The important goal of modernizing U.S. Armed Forces led to inadequate troop levels for the military occupation of Iraq. The reliance on early elections as the key to political evolution, in a country lacking a sense of national identity, caused the newly enfranchised to vote almost exclusively for sectarian parties, deepening historic divisions into chasms. The understandable—but, in retrospect, premature—strategy of replacing American troops with indigenous forces deflected U.S. forces from a military mission, and it could not deal with the most flagrant shortcoming of Iraqi forces, which is to define what the Iraqi forces are supposed to fight for and under what banner.

These circumstances have merged into an almost perfect storm of mutually reinforcing crises: Within Iraq, the sectarian militias are engaged in civil war or something so close to it as to make little practical difference. The conflict between Shiites and Sunnis goes back 1,400 years. In most Middle Eastern countries, Shiite minorities coexist precariously with Sunni majorities. The civil war in Iraq threatens to usher in a cycle of domestic upheavals and a war between Shiite and Sunni states, with a high potential of drawing in countries from outside the region. In addition, Iraqi Kurds seek full autonomy from Sunnis and Shiites; their independence would raise the prospect of intervention from Turkey and Iran.

The war in Iraq is part of another war that cuts across the Shiite-Sunni issue: The assault on the international order conducted by radical groups in both Islamic sects. Functioning as states within states and by brutal demonstrations of the inability of established governments to protect their populations, such organizations as Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Mahdi Army in Iraq, and the al-Qaeda groups all over the Middle East seek to reassert an Islamic identity submerged, in their view, by Western values. Any enhancement of radical Islamist self-confidence, therefore, threatens all the traditional states of the region, as well as others with significant Islamic populations, from Indonesia through India to Western Europe. The most important target is the United States, as the most powerful Western country and the indispensable component of any attempt to build a new world order.

The disenchantment of the American public with the burdens it has borne largely alone for nearly 4 years has generated growing demands for some type of unilateral withdrawal, usually expressed as benchmarks to be put to the Baghdad government that, if not fulfilled in specific timeframes, would trigger American disengagement.

But under present conditions, withdrawal is not an option. American forces are indispensable. They are in Iraq not as a favor to its government or as a reward for its conduct. They are there as an expression of the American national interest to prevent the Iranian combination of imperialism and fundamentalist ideology from dominating a region on which the energy supplies of the industrial democracies depend. An abrupt American departure would greatly complicate efforts to stem the terrorist tide far beyond Iraq; fragile governments from Lebanon to the Persian Gulf would be tempted into preemptive concessions. It might drive the sectarian conflict in Iraq to genocidal dimensions beyond levels that impelled U.S. intervention in the

Balkans. Graduated withdrawal would not ease these dangers until a different strategy was in place and showed progress. For now, it would be treated within Iraq and in the region as the forerunner of a total withdrawal, and all parties would make their dispositions on that basis.

President Bush's decision should, therefore, not be debated in terms of the "stay the course" strategy he has repeatedly disavowed in recent days. Rather, it should be seen as the first step toward a new grand strategy relating power to diplomacy for the entire region, ideally on a nonpartisan basis.

The purpose of the new strategy should be to demonstrate that the United States is determined to remain relevant to the outcome in the region; to adjust American military deployments and numbers to emerging realities; and to provide the maneuvering room for a major diplomatic effort to stabilize the Middle East.

Of the current security threats in Iraq—the intervention of outside countries, the presence of al-Qaeda fighters, an extraordinarily large criminal element, the sectarian conflict—the United States has a national interest in defeating the first two; it must not involve itself in the sectarian conflict for any extended period, much less let itself be used by one side for its sectarian goals.

The sectarian conflict confines the Iraqi Government's unchallenged writ to the sector of Baghdad defined as the Green Zone. In many areas the militias exceed the strength of the Iraqi national army. Appeals to the Iraqi Government to undertake reconciliation and economic reforms are not implemented, partly because the will to do so is absent but essentially because it lacks the power to put such policies in place, even if the will to do so could suddenly be mobilized. If the influence of the militias could be eliminated—or greatly reduced—the Baghdad government would have a better opportunity to pursue a national policy.

The new strategy has begun with attempts to clear the insurrectional Sunni parts of Baghdad. But it must not turn into ethnic cleansing or the emergence of another tyrannical state, only with a different sectarian allegiance. Side by side with disarming the Sunni militias and death squads, the Baghdad government must show comparable willingness to disarm Shiite militias and death squads. American policy should not deviate from the goal of a civil state whose political process is available to all citizens.

As the comprehensive strategy evolves, a repositioning of American forces from the cities into enclaves should be undertaken so that they can separate themselves from the civil war and concentrate on the threats to international security described above. The principal mission would be to protect the borders against infiltration and to prevent the establishment of terrorist training areas or Taliban-type control over significant regions. At that point, too, significant reductions of U.S. forces should be possible. Such a strategy would make withdrawals depend on conditions on the ground instead of the other way around. It could also provide the time to elaborate a cooperative diplomacy for rebuilding the region, including progress toward a settlement of the Palestine issue.

For such a strategy, it is not possible to jettison the military instrument and rely, as some argue, on purely political means. A free-standing diplomacy is an ancient American illusion. History offers few examples of it. The attempt to separate diplomacy and power results in power-lacking direction and diplomacy being deprived of incentives.

Diplomacy is the attempt to persuade another party to pursue a course compatible with a society's strategic interests. Obviously this involves the ability to create a calculus that impels or rewards the desired direction. The outcome, by definition, is rarely the ability to impose one's will but a compromise that gives each party a stake in maintaining it.

Few diplomatic challenges are as complex as that surrounding Iraq.

Diplomacy must mediate between Iraqi sects that, though in many respects mortal enemies, are assembled in a common governmental structure. It needs to relate that process to an international concept involving Iraq's neighbors and other countries that have a significant interest in the outcome.

Two levels of diplomatic effort are necessary:

- A contact group should be created, assembling neighboring countries whose interests are directly affected and which rely on American support. This group should include Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Jordan. Its function should be to advise on ending the internal conflict and to create a united front against outside domination.
- Parallel negotiations should be conducted with Syria and Iran, which now appear as adversaries, to give them an opportunity to participate in a peaceful regional order. Both categories of consultations should lead to an international conference including all countries that have to play a stabilizing role in the out-

come, specifically the permanent members of the U.N. Security Council as well as such countries as Indonesia, India, and Pakistan.

Too much of the current discussion focuses on the procedural aspect of starting a dialogue with adversaries. In fact, a balance of risks and opportunities needs to be created so that Iran is obliged to choose between a significant but not dominant role or riding the crest of Shiite fundamentalism. In the latter case, it must pay a serious, not rhetorical, price for choosing the militant option. An outcome in which Iran is approaching nuclear status because of hesitant and timid nonproliferation policies in the Security Council, coupled with a political vacuum in the region, must lead to catastrophic consequences.

Similar principles apply to the prospects for settlement in Palestine.

Moderates in Israel and the neighboring Arab countries are evolving compromises unimaginable a decade ago. But if the necessary outcomes are perceived as the result of panic by moderates and an exit from the region by the United States, radicals could raise unfulfillable demands and turn the peace process against the moderates.

In all this, the United States cannot indefinitely bear alone the burden for both the military outcome and the political structure. At some point, Iraq has to be restored to the international community, and other countries must be prepared to share responsibilities for regional peace. Some of America's allies and other countries seek to escape the upheavals around them by disassociating from the United States. But just as it is impossible for America to deal with these trends unilaterally, sooner or later a common effort to rebuild the international order will be imposed on all the potential targets. The time has come for an effort to define the shoals within which diplomacy is obliged to navigate and to anchor any outcome in some broader understanding that accommodates the interests of the affected parties.

[From the Washington Post, Nov. 24, 2006]

DEAL WITH TEHRAN, NOT ITS CRUSADE

(By Henry A. Kissinger)

Iran's nuclear program and considerable resources enable it to strive for strategic dominance in its region. With the impetus of a radical Shiite ideology and the symbolism of defiance of the U.N. Security Council's resolution, Iran challenges the established order in the Middle East and perhaps wherever Islamic populations face dominant, non-Islamic majorities.

The appeal for diplomacy to overcome these dangers has so far proved futile. The negotiating forum the world has put in place for the nuclear issue is heading for a deadlock. Divisions among the negotiating partners inhibit a clear sense of direction.

The five permanent members of the Security Council plus Germany—known as the "Six"—have submitted a package of incentives to get Tehran to end enrichment of uranium as a key step toward putting an end to the weapons program. They have threatened sanctions if their proposal is rejected. Iran has insisted on its "right" to proceed with enrichment, triggering an allied debate about the nature of the sanctions to which the Six have committed themselves. Even the minimal sanctions proposed by Europe's "E3" (Britain, France, and Germany) have been rejected by Russia.

Reluctant to negotiate directly with a member of the "axis of evil," the United States has not participated in the negotiations. But recently Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, has announced a reversal of policy. The United States—and she herself—will participate in the nuclear talks, provided Iran suspends its enrichment program while discussions take place.

Tehran, however, has so far shown no interest in negotiating with the United States, either in the multilateral forum or separately. This is because Iran sees no compelling national interest in giving up its claim to nuclear power status, and strong domestic political reasons to persist. Pursuing the nuclear weapons program is a way of appealing to national pride, and it shores up otherwise shaky domestic support. The proposed incentives, even if they were believed, would increase Iran's dependence on the international system that Iran's current leaders reject.

The European negotiators accept the importance of preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. But they govern societies increasingly loath to make immediate sacrifices for the sake of the future—witness the difficulty of passing legislation on domestic reform. Europe's leaders know that their publics wouldn't support military action against Iran and would probably prove very shaky in a prolonged political crisis over sanctions.

America's European allies have decided to opt for minimum sanctions because they hope that the mere fact of united action by the Six will give Iran's leaders pause. The conviction expressed by some European diplomats that Iran will not wish to be a pariah nation indefinitely, and will, therefore, come to an agreement, is probably wishful thinking. As this becomes apparent, the European allies will probably move reluctantly toward escalation of sanctions, up to a point where Iran undertakes a confrontational response. Then they will have to choose between the immediate crisis and the permanent crisis of letting the Iranian nuclear program run free.

The dilemma is inherent in any gradual escalation. If initial steps are minimal, they are presumably endurable (and are indeed chosen for that reason). The adversary may be tempted to wait for the next increment. Thus gradualism may, in the end, promote escalation and make inevitable the very decision being evaded.

Russia's position is more complex. Probably no country—not even the United States—fears an Iranian nuclear capability more than Russia, whose large Islamic population lies just north of the Iranian border. No country is more exposed to the seepage of Iranian nuclear capabilities into terrorist hands or to the jihadist ideological wave that the Iranian President, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, encourages. For that reason, Russia does not want to unleash Iranian hostility on itself without a prospect of probable success.

In addition, Russian attitudes toward the United States have undergone a significant change. There is a lessened commitment to strategic partnership. Suspicion has grown on both sides. The United States fears that Russia is striving to rebuild its imperial influence in what Russia calls the "near-abroad"; Russia believes that America is seeking to pressure the Kremlin to change its domestic policies and to reduce Russia's international influence.

Because of its conviction that Iran will be a formidable adversary and its low assessment of the American effort in Iraq, the Kremlin doubts that the United States has the staying power for a prolonged confrontation with Iran and chooses to avoid manning barricades on which it might be left alone. In consequence, Moscow has shifted its emphasis toward Europe and, on Iran, shares Europe's hesitation. The difference is that if matters reach a final crunch, Russia is more likely to take a stand, especially when an Iranian nuclear capability begins to look inevitable and even more so when it emerges as imminent.

The nuclear negotiations with Iran are moving toward an inconclusive outcome. The Six eventually will have to choose either effective sanctions or the consequences of an Iranian military nuclear capability and the world of proliferation that implies. Military action by the United States is extremely improbable in the final 2 years of a presidency facing a hostile Congress—though it may be taken more seriously in Tehran. Tehran surely cannot ignore the possibility of a unilateral Israeli strike if all negotiation options close.

More likely, the nuclear issue will be absorbed into a more comprehensive negotiation based on geopolitical factors. It is important, however, to be clear as to what this increasingly fashionable term implies. The argument has become widespread that Iran (and Syria) should be drawn into a negotiating process in the hope of bringing about a change of their attitudes, as happened, for example, in the opening to China a generation ago. This, it is said, would facilitate a retreat by the United States to more strategically sustainable positions.

A diplomacy that excludes adversaries is a contradiction in terms. But the argument on behalf of negotiating focuses too often on the opening of talks rather than on their substance. The fact of talks is assumed to represent a psychological breakthrough. However, the relief supplied by a change of atmosphere is bound to be temporary. Diplomacy—especially with an adversary—can succeed only if it brings about a balance of interests. Failing that, it runs the risk of turning into an alibi for procrastination or a palliative to ease the process of defeat without, however, eliminating the consequences of defeat.

The opening to China was facilitated by Soviet military pressures on China's northern borders; rapprochement between the United States and China implemented an existing common interest in preventing Soviet hegemony. Similarly, the shuttle diplomacy in the Middle East made progress because it was built on a preexisting equilibrium that neither side was able to alter unilaterally.

To the extent that talk becomes its own objective, there will emerge forums without progress and incentives for stonewalling. If, at the end of such a diplomacy, stands an Iranian nuclear capability and a political vacuum being filled by Iran, the impact on order in the Middle East will be catastrophic.

Understanding the way Tehran views the world is crucial in assessing the prospects of a dialogue. The school of thought represented by President Ahmadinejad may well perceive Iranian prospects as more promising than they have been in cen-

turies. Iraq has collapsed as a counterweight; within Iraq, Shiite forces are led by men who were trained in Tehran and spent decades there. Democratic institutions in Iraq favor dominance by the majority Shiite groups. In Lebanon, Hezbollah, trained and guided by Iran, is the strongest military force.

In the face of this looming Shiite belt and its appeal to the Shiite population in northeast Saudi Arabia and along the Persian Gulf, attitudes in the Sunni states—Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia—and the Gulf States range from unease to incipient panic. This may explain Ahmadinejad's insolent behavior during his visit to New York. His theme seemed to be: "Don't talk to me about your world order, whose rules we did not participate in making and which we disdain. From now on, jihad will define the rules or at least participate in shaping them."

These attitudes will not be changed simply for the opportunity of talking to the United States. The self-confident Iranian leaders may facilitate a local American retreat but, in their present mood, only for the purpose of turning it into a long-term rout. The argument that Iran has an interest in negotiating over Iraq to avoid chaos along its borders is valid only as long as the United States retains a capacity to help control the chaos. There are only two incentives for Iran to negotiate: The emergence of a regional structure that makes imperialist policies unattractive and the concern that, if matters are pushed too far, America might yet strike out.

So long as Iran views itself as a crusade rather than a nation, a common interest will not emerge from negotiations. To evoke a more balanced view should be an important goal for U.S. diplomacy. Iran may come to understand sooner or later that, for the foreseeable future, it is a relatively poor developing country in no position to challenge all the industrialized nations. But such an evolution presupposes the development of a precise and concrete strategic and negotiating program by the United States and its associates.

With the Sunni states of the region terrified by the Shiite wave, negotiation between Iran and the United States could generate a stampede toward preemptive concessions, unless preceded, or at least accompanied, by a significant effort to rally those states to a policy of equilibrium. In such a policy, Iran must find a respected, but not dominant, place. A restarted Palestinian peace process should play a significant role in that design, which presupposes close cooperation among the United States, Europe, and the moderate Arab States. What must not happen is to trade relief from geopolitical pressures for acquiescence in an Iranian military nuclear program. That would mortgage the future, not only for the region but for the entire global order.

Iran needs to be encouraged to act as a nation, not a cause. It has no incentive to appear as a deus ex machina to enable America to escape its embarrassments, unless the United States retains an ability to fill the vacuum or at least be a factor in filling it. America will need to reposition its strategic deployments, but if such actions are viewed as the prelude to an exit from the region, a collapse of existing structures is probable.

A purposeful and creative diplomacy toward Iran is important for building a more promising region—but only if Iran does not, in the process, come to believe that it is able to shape the future on its own or if the potential building blocks of a new order disintegrate while America sorts out its purposes.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Secretary, thank you very much. Quite frankly, that's the very reason why we wanted you and Secretary Albright and two former National Security Advisors to close this first, initial set of hearings.

Mr. Secretary, I had the opportunity to speak to you in private over the last couple of months, and you've always been available to all of us, I know, for your counsel. And it seems to me that the case you make is a fairly compelling philosophic case, as well as a reality check of what's happened on the ground. You have, essentially, a nontraditional state, where ideology is the dominant competing unifying element within it—that is, it's causing it to split the country, as well. You point out that, in Iraq, the impact of the neighbors, the Sunni insurrection they're dealing with, their lack of dominance, the al-Qaeda, ideologically driven nonstate actors; and the Shia difficulty in coming to grips with their now being in the ascendancy. And you said these all merge together, and the greatest concern is, they create an explosion that could result in

radical domination, a radical notion dominating the region, and it's then spreading.

What that adds up to, to me—and I don't disagree with what you've said, and I also don't disagree that there is a need that there—military force is necessary, but not sufficient, to solve this, and we're going to have to be in the region a long time. That leads me—if I understood you correctly—to this question. A number of witnesses have testified that in nontraditional states that are infected by this ideology and this competition, one of two things works. You either have a strongman or a dominant power, an imperial power, dominating, or you have federation, where, in order to keep these—this country intact, although it was an artificial construct, you have to give breathing room to those elements that you've outlined—Sunni, Shia, et cetera—to prevent the very explosion.

So, why is it—why does it not make sense, consistent with our military presence, to be accommodating what history seems to dictate, as well as what their Constitution calls for, and that is allowing more local control over the physical security and safety of their ideologically defined and/or tribally defined areas, while, at the same time, promoting a central government that has broad responsibilities, instead of insisting on a strong central government, which seems to me to be, to use a slang expression, like pushing a rope right now?

Dr. KISSINGER. I'm sympathetic to an outcome that permits large regional autonomy. In fact, I think it is very likely that this will emerge out of the conflict that we are now witnessing. Now, the conventional wisdom of many experts in the region is that we must not be perceived as bringing that about, because doing so would have—would inflame the Shia community and enhance Iranian influence, and also because of the danger of Turkish intervention in the Kurdish area. And I think that's an opinion we should take seriously.

I neglected to mention one thought I have, which—actually, I think it's fairly central; I got carried away, I didn't get to it—which is this: Somewhere along this process in which we're now engaged, there is the need for an international conference on Iraq, because Iraq has to be reintegrated into the international system, and because other nations have to be brought into assuming the responsibility for the political future of the region. It may be premature at this moment, but in the process that we foresee over, say, the rest of this year, there should be some such concept. And, in my view, that should include the neighbors, the Security Council, and countries like Indonesia, India, possibly Pakistan. And that would be a rather large and unwieldy body that could then form subgroups for certain regional issues.

But the importance is that only in such a framework can you really deal with the issue of autonomy, because you have then to create a wider legitimacy for what is emerging and against intervention from outside countries.

The CHAIRMAN. I would argue it's the only thing that will lead the bordering countries to conclude that intervention is not in their interest. But I fully agree with you.

I have a minute left of my time, but I will yield to my friend, Senator Lugar.

I thank you very much, Mr. Secretary.

Senator LUGAR. Well, thank you much, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Kissinger, I appreciate your opening comments about the importance of the region, the continuity, in a way, of American foreign policy, and its interest in the area over a long period of time, and now your suggestion that there be an international conference, is something, in my judgment, that would strengthen Secretary Rice's attempts to make certain that other countries know of our continuing interest in the area and might be prepared, under various circumstances, to work with us. For the moment, out of fear of Iranian domination of Iraq, but, more importantly, because there are conflicting interests among the group, and we have been a stabilizer.

With regard to the current situation in Iraq, what are the possibilities for the Iraqi Parliament, or its government, as constituted now, to reach an oil agreement that, in essence parses out the revenues and the development rights? And, secondarily, what are the possibilities for autonomous regions; for that idea to proceed, there may be some agreement among Shiite to come together; likewise, the Kurds, who have moved out strongly to set up their region, will there be an acceptance then by the Sunnis? Is that predicated on their sharing the oil wealth? I ask those two questions, because very frequently, as Senators and Members of the House discuss this problem, they talk about so-called benchmarks for Prime Minister, Mr. Maliki, or his government. The suggestion is that they need to get on with this rather swiftly, that the United States is losing patience in their inability to come together, to get a quorum in the Parliament, for example, and to act. But as a practical political matter, what is your prediction on the potential for their making these solutions? And, even if they make them, how does that fit into the overall testimony you have given about Iraq being reintegrated with the rest of the countries in the region?

Dr. KISSINGER. The difficulty of the democratic process in multiethnic societies is that the democratic process is predicated on the possibility of a minority becoming a majority; and, therefore, the minority can accept the decisions of the majority, in the hope of reversing it later on. The essence of multiethnic societies is that minorities are permanent and that, therefore, the democratic process, to the minority, appears like a—like just another form of domination. Therefore, it is, first, difficult to come to an agreement; and, second, difficult to implement the agreement, even if it should be made, because the Parliament does not have the same legitimate quality in the whole country that the American Congress or British Parliament have in our country or in Britain. That is the inherent problem.

Usually, civil wars are ended with the victory of one side or the other, or with exhaustion. I know no civil war that has been ended—well, I may be wrong—by a—it's, in any rate, very rare, or it takes a dominating figure like Mandela in South Africa, who rises to spiritual heights.

I'm not very optimistic, even if this is achieved in Iraq as a parliament. It's a worthy goal. We are right to support it. It would be

the best outcome, if it could be achieved. But—there may be a thousand years of history against it, but it has to be our objective.

Senator LUGAR. You are somewhat pessimistic about this outcome. What I fear in the current argument some of us are having is that some would say if this is not achieved, if certain benchmarks are not arrived at by the current government, then this is the last chance; we're out of there. This is one reason why I appreciate so much your statement this morning. And I've made an opening comment which indicates that we are—we cannot be in a situation in which we say we're out of there. Rather, we are talking about 50 years of history in which we have been in there. Maybe not in Baghdad, in nine police districts, but in the region where we could be effective in terms of American security and American interest.

In talking about the war against terrorism, it's very important to be effective and to be working with these other nations who, otherwise, might have some terrorist tendencies of their own or be subverted by such persons. So, I think we're on the same page, but I just take advantage of your testimony to make these comments and to ask for your comment.

Dr. KISSINGER. I believe very strongly that we cannot withdraw from the region, and we should not conduct a debate with the expectation of a total withdrawal of American forces from the region. We can discuss, and should discuss, the deployment of our forces in such a way that it can serve the strategic objectives that we have discussed earlier, or other strategic objectives that might be defined.

And with respect to the Government in Iraq, I think one should distinguish two aspects. Is it as efficient as it can be within its capabilities? Probably not. But will its capabilities ever be up to, in the foreseeable future, for what we would consider adequate, by American standards? Also probably not, because it is, after all, a collection of ministers. The Prime Minister doesn't have a militia of his own. Others have access to militias. So, it's a balance of forces without the authority that we associate with government. And, therefore, one has to have some understanding for what it is possible to do.

But, to sum up my answer, I do not believe we should set benchmarks, the penalty for which is our withdrawal. There may be other penalties, but withdrawal should not be one of them.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. The committee will stand in recess until the police please remove the demonstrator.

[Recess.]

The CHAIRMAN. The committee will come back to order.

I'd just like to ask one point of clarification in taking advantage of the minute I didn't use. Do you make a distinction between the region and Iraq, Mr. Secretary? Can you picture the circumstance where we may have to have most of our troops out of Iraq, but still in the region? Or do you make that distinction?

Dr. KISSINGER. I would have difficulty defining exactly where in the region they could be in substantial numbers, especially if we withdraw from Iraq in a way that is considered a major withdrawal. But I would put this in relation to time. There's certainly

no magic number of American forces that must be in Iraq forever or for a long period. We should be flexible about this.

The CHAIRMAN. Almost every plan that's been put forward contemplates some American forces being left in Iraq, in a totally different—with a totally different mission. But I thank you.

Senator Feingold.

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

And, Dr. Kissinger, it's always good to hear your views.

I want to, sort of, follow on what both Senator Lugar and the chairman were getting at, this question of not so much whether we withdraw from the region—I certainly agree with you that we cannot disengage from the region—but what about redeployment from Iraq? Leaving aside the question of whether it's a good idea, whether—when it should begin or end, maybe you can help us with, what are some of the key diplomatic steps in the region that we have to do to ensure that Iraq's neighbors are sufficiently engaged to deal with Iraq's challenges, and how can we best prepare that aspect of whatever kind of withdrawal we will ultimately engage in?

Dr. KISSINGER. Of course, an important step would be if the militias in Iraq could be eliminated or sharply reduced, because they constrict the ability of the government to take actions that we have identified with government. Second, the development of a national Iraqi Army that can deal with some of the problems that I have described, like cross-border incursions, acts by al-Qaeda. Third, the development of—we have, up to now, carried the political responsibility for the future of Iraq, entirely by ourselves. I believe the time has come to engage the international community, to some degree, and to an increasing degree, in the political future of Iraq, without raising the question of what participation they might have in military actions.

And, therefore, I believe that a diplomacy should start, and probably it's been started, to begin consultation on the manner in which this—it can be brought about in such a framework.

Of course, significant American forces can be withdrawn. What we should avoid is a redeployment of a nature that creates the perception that America separates itself from the region and from its interests that we have defined here. And so, the staging of these measures is of great importance.

Senator FEINGOLD. I understand the answer with regard to the international community, as a whole. What I was especially interested in is Iraq's neighbors. How do we engage Jordan, Kuwait, others, in a more serious way in the steps that need to occur?

Dr. KISSINGER. Of course, one of the great dangers when we talk about Iran's neighbors is that—Iraq's neighbors—is that Iran pursues its objectives, and that then the Sunni states will organize to create a counterweight, and then we'll see a reoccurrence of the Sunni-Shia wars, traditional Sunni-Shia wars, on Iraqi soil, and that would have extraordinary consequences for the whole region.

So, it's—but, the question of how to engage Iran, one of the unfortunate aspects of a concentration on Iraq is that the issue of proliferation of nuclear weapons to Iran is sort of being swept under the table, and yet, for the peace of the world, nuclear proliferation to Iran could be an—much greater—of an even greater significance,

because it may really be the country which will then trigger a whole series of other countries. And, after that, the calculations of deterrence, as we have known it, will no longer be operational.

Senator FEINGOLD. Well, Dr. Kissinger, that really relates to my next question. What you've just, sort of, indicated, a problem with a great emphasis on Iraq, vis-a-vis our attention to Iran—a lot—many observers, in my view, even some very good ones, tend to make the mistake of looking at Iraq in isolation. Obviously, this doesn't apply to you. But many will say, "What will happen to Iraq if we redeploy our troops?" But I don't hear them asking, very often, "What will happen in Somalia or Afghanistan or many other trouble spots in the world, if we remain bogged down in Iraq?" Do you share my concern that we're devoting too many of our resources to Iraq and not enough to other areas, or to the, clearly, global fight against al-Qaeda?

Dr. KISSINGER. We should not be bogged down in an inconclusive operation in Iraq. I supported the original decision. It has taken forms that went beyond many expectations. But we should deal with that new situation in a way that does not accentuate the dangers that you mention, because we have to balance our presence in Iraq against the impetus to radical self-confidence that might be achieved if we suddenly withdrew from Iraq. So, a staged withdrawal geared to specific criteria, along the lines we have discussed here—that is, a strengthening of the central government, some relationship to the outside world—would, of course, be helpful.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Dr. Kissinger.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator.

Senator Coleman.

Senator COLEMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Dr. Kissinger.

The CHAIRMAN. And, again, I want to emphasize—excuse me; don't start the clock yet—that it was very important to Senator Hagel that you know that it's—that this young man, First Lieutenant Fritz, who was killed in the Karbala action recently, he is flying to his home State to attend the funeral.

I thank you for the interruption.

Senator COLEMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

A key point, Mr. Secretary, that you keep referring to is the danger of Iran obtaining a nuclear weapon. We could tie in that point with another point where I think there's bipartisan agreement, which is that what we do in Iraq has an impact not just on Iraq, but upon the region. And you used the phrase "radical self-confidence." People talk a lot about American standing and how it's being impacted by what we're doing in Iraq. Is it your belief that a precipitate withdrawal, which the Iraq Study Group warned against, and that would generate a radical self-confidence would have a greater negative long-term impact on the U.S. standing in the region and peace and stability in the region?

Dr. KISSINGER. That is my conviction. A withdrawal geared to American internal debates and not to the local situation would have some of these consequences.

Senator COLEMAN. I'd like to raise another issue so I can get a clear understanding of it, and maybe, again, it is one where there

is some agreement. There is a lot of talk about redeployment. And my understanding of what I heard the chairman say is that redeployment doesn't mean moving all of our troops outside of Iraq, but perhaps reposition them in a way that doesn't lead them into the middle of sectarian civil wars. My question, just so I can be clear, relates to a statement made by Secretary Baker yesterday—he said that we're going to be in Iraq for a long time. Is it your belief that we're going to be in Iraq—not just in the region, but in Iraq, in some capacity, for a long time?

Dr. KISSINGER. I agree with Senator Baker—with Secretary Baker.

Senator COLEMAN. And another issue where I think there is agreement on is reintegrating Iraq into the international community, but here's my question. One way to phrase it might be, "What is Iraq?" In other words, if Iraq is seen as simply being a tool for protecting the Shia militia—rather than a civic Iraqi State encompassing all groups, but instead as a religious state dominated by the Shia majority—my sense is that countries such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia and others, where the Sunni population is dominant, will have less of an interest in being involved in an ultimate solution, because of their fear that the Iranians are really in control. So my question is: Does there have to be a clear sense from the Iraqi Government that it represents an inclusive national government that is not being directed by Iran, or dictated to by Muqtada al-Sadr, in order to get anything out of this international conference on Iraq that you've talked about?

Dr. KISSINGER. The best outcome would, of course, be if the Shia government that is now dominant in Baghdad created a truly national government, and if the Sunni part of the population felt that there is such a thing as an Iraqi nationality and they are being dealt with fairly. And when you look at what Mandela has done in South Africa, something along that line would, of course, be—with all the shortcomings that one might see in South Africa, would be an—very desirable outcome. The likelihood of this is not great, but we should certainly encourage it. And it may come about if the Shia realize that they will not be able, by themselves, to impose a theocratic state over the whole country. And if we do not participate in an effort to create a theocratic state, we have to walk a fine line. On the one hand, there is the danger you describe, that we do not want to demoralize our Sunni potential allies, and we want to have them in a position where they are willing—where they want to resist Iranian domination. On the other hand, we want to leave open the possibility of an ultimate settlement with Iran if it can put its nuclear program into some framework that the international community can accept, and if it confines itself to objectives of a national state. So, we have to maneuver between those two extremes. The Sunni states must know that we will back them against Iranian domination, but not on a jihad of their own. And the same is true for the theocratic Shia part.

Senator COLEMAN. But if the Iraqis themselves are either not ready, or not able, to do that right now, what is it that we can do that we're not doing? This whole discussion of benchmarks, I think, is to say to the Iraqis, "We need you to show us that you're doing this," because of the consequences we're talking about.

Dr. KISSINGER. I do not believe that American withdrawal is a way of enforcing benchmarks. There may be—there must be other ways of the degree of aid we give, and it may be that there is nothing we can do, beyond a certain point. From some of the verbal things that I've seen, it seems to me that the Iraqi Prime Minister at least has taken aboard some of the principles that we have put forward. We have, now, to see whether he will execute them.

Senator COLEMAN. We have talked about a regional conference for Iraq. Should there be a regional conference about Iran? In other words, if we don't deal with the Iran issue, how will we achieve stability in that part of the world?

Dr. KISSINGER. In a way, there is a regional conference. There's an international conference about the nuclear program of Iran. And I believe that if that ever makes progress, as it should, it could merge into a discussion of the political role of Iran in the region, because if Iran is really interested in security, and not in fulfilling old imperial order that it dreams, then this ought to be an element of the discussion with respect to nuclear weapons.

Senator COLEMAN. And the consequence of Iran getting a nuclear weapon would be disastrous, not just for the region, but for the world.

Dr. KISSINGER. The consequence of Iran getting nuclear weapons is disastrous, and we must keep the diplomacy focused on that.

Senator COLEMAN. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator.

Senator Boxer.

Senator BOXER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, welcome. And I do agree with your call for a regional conference. It's long overdue. And I think one of the most disappointing things for me is that the Iraq Study Group was so clear in their call. They issued an urgent call, they said by the end of last year, right now. And it never happened. And what happened is, the American people went to the polls, they voted for, in my opinion, a new strategy to end the war in Iraq—to end the war in Iraq—and, instead, what they're getting is a military strategy to have a surge. And many Americans believe—and I agree with them—that it's time for a political solution.

Now, I want to probe what you said to my chairman, because if I heard you right—I want to make sure I heard you right, because it's hard to hear you. So, tell me if I heard you right. Senator——

Dr. KISSINGER. Which one?

Senator BOXER [continuing]. Biden has been working—the chairman of the committee, Senator Biden—is working with Leslie Gelb, and they have come up with a proposal, which has been out there for quite a while now, to have semiautonomous regions—Kurds, Shia, Sunni—and a—not three separate countries, but one country with semiautonomous regions, to essentially separate the warring parties, and have a—still have, of course, a national government be involved in redistributing the oil, and tax policy, and other very important functions. Now, when he asked you about it—I think I heard you say this, so please tell me if I heard you right—"that may well be the outcome, at the end of the day." Is that approximately what you said?

Dr. KISSINGER. That's correct.

Senator BOXER. OK. Now—but then, you went on to say, "But we shouldn't be perceived as pushing this forward." Is that correct?

Dr. KISSINGER. That's correct.

Senator BOXER. OK. Well, I'd like to challenge that, because, as I see it, you know, every option has its drawbacks, but it seems to me either we're in the middle of a solution or in—we're in the middle of a civil war. And what Senator Biden, I think, has been pushing is, yes; let's get in the middle of a political solution and out of the civil war. So, I know that diplomats—because I've been around here a long time, and, as you know, I could never be a diplomat——

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. Oh, don't say——

Senator BOXER. Admit it.

The CHAIRMAN. Madam Chairman, I'm not sure——

Senator BOXER. I admit it.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. That's true. [Laughter.]

Senator BOXER. I——

The CHAIRMAN. You got Fritz Hollings to want you on this committee.

Senator BOXER. Right.

The CHAIRMAN. You surely could be a diplomat.

Senator BOXER. Well, all I could tell you is, I respectfully admit that.

But I think what happens is, sometimes diplomats get stuck in a kind of a "think." And their "think" is, "Well, we have to be careful, we have to sit back in this case, not go out there with a political solution." I think, given events on the ground—and I would urge you—you don't have to even respond to this, but I want to urge you to please break free from this diplomatic "think." Because I think, at this stage, all you have to do is read the details of what's coming out of Iraq on the ground, for our beautiful men and women thrust in the middle of a civil war, I don't think anyone who voted for that resolution—and I thank God, every day, I didn't—ever dreamed that that would be the end result, that our troops would be in the middle of this civil war, there would be 3,080 dead, 22,000 wounded, half of those never come back to the military again, many, many more with post-traumatic stress and all these problems. And so, it seems to me, at this stage of what a lot of people are saying have been a failure, including people in this administration admitting it, that we shouldn't worry so much that we may be perceived as pushing one political solution or another. And I think if just one establishment diplomat came out and said, "You know, normally I wouldn't say this, but, given where we are"—I hope you'll think about that.

Mr. Secretary, you said—you were quoted in State of Denial here—and I'm assuming it's an accurate quote; it's in quotation marks—"In early September 2005, Mike Gerson went to see Kissinger in New York. 'Why did you support the Iraq war?' Gerson asked him. 'Because Afghanistan wasn't enough,' Kissinger answered. 'In the conflict with radical Islam,' he said, 'they want to humiliate us, and we need to humiliate them.'" And that's a quote.

Now, a year before that, Peter Bergen, CNN analyst, said, "What we have done in Iraq is what bin Laden could not have hoped for in his wildest dreams. We invaded an oil-rich Muslim nation in the heart of the Middle East, the very type of imperial adventure that bin Laden had long predicted was the United States long-term goal in the region. We deposed the secular socialist Saddam, whom bin Laden had long despised, ignited Sunni and Shia fundamentalist fervor in Iraq, and have now provoked a defensive jihad that has galvanized jihad-minded Muslims around the world." And this is what he said, "It's hard to imagine a set of policies better designed to sabotage the war on terrorism."

So, I juxtapose these things. This is terrorist—terrorism analyst Peter Bergen in 2004. And in 2005, you say you supported the war in Iraq because we need to humiliate radical Islam.

So, could you please—I mean, I think what we see here is—what Peter Bergen said looks to be happening. And I wonder if you could comment on: Who do you think is right, at the end of the day, at this stage?

Dr. KISSINGER. Well, it's alleged quotation. It's a kind of journalism that uses a quotation that somebody may have made, and then spins a whole theory about—around it. It grew out of a conversation I had with Mr. Gerson, a speechwriter of President Bush, who then reported his version of the conversation to Woodward. I've written a lot of articles on the subject, and I've never said anything like this.

Senator BOXER. OK.

Dr. KISSINGER. And so, whether phrases like this floated through the conversation—I wrote an article in August 2002, prior to the war, in which I stated my view on the subject. I did believe there was a geostrategic reason for doing it, based on the fact that here was a country, with the second largest oil revenues, that had violated the U.N. cease-fire 16 times, that was believed to have weapons of mass destruction. And I thought, if those resources would be put at the service of a terrorist, or even of a regime that was undermining our interests, it would be too dangerous, and the American Senate had voted for regime change. But what I also said in that article was that if we did it, we should move it to international control as quickly as possible, and not try to run it on a unilateral basis. So, those two have to be put together. And those are my views, not what Woodward reports having heard from Mr. Gerson, even if fragments of the—of such sentences floated through a conversation. I've only met Mr. Gerson once, for less than half an hour.

The CHAIRMAN. Last time you'll help him write a speech, huh? [Laughter.]

Dr. KISSINGER. He wrote a good speech on it. [Laughter.]

If I may make a point on your first thing—your first observation, which—I mean, it's an important observation. The hesitancy one has in pushing for the solution is that one has to think of the impact on Turkey of a Kurdish independent state——

Senator BOXER. Undependent? On an independent state.

Dr. KISSINGER [continuing]. On the temptation it may create for an Iranian push into—so, one has to stage it in such a way that a significant Iraqi support for it exists, and where we are not per-

ceived as doing this in order to break up an Arab State for our own purposes. But if the Iraqis cannot solve the problems that have been described, I've told the chairman privately that I thought that this was a possible outcome, and, at the right moment, we should work in the direction that—for maximum stability and for maximum chances of peace. But it's—unfortunately, everything in that region is so fraught with implications that one has to move with care and thoughtfulness.

Senator BOXER. Mr. Chairman, I know my time is up. Could I have just 10 seconds to wrap up?

What I think we heard here is good, because I think that when you look at what our chairman is talking about, it's not three separate countries, it's semiautonomous regions within Iraq. So, I think that he and Mr. Gelb have looked at that. But I do appreciate—because I think even what you just said now moves us a little bit more toward maybe pushing harder for a specific diplomatic solution.

Thank you.

Dr. KISSINGER. I also think it would occur more naturally if part of an international conference——

The CHAIRMAN. That was the point.

Senator BOXER. Yes.

Dr. KISSINGER [continuing]. Than as an American national policy.

Senator BOXER. I think you're right

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Chairman, I apologize for speaking, since the plan has been discussed over—I'm glad this—the Secretary added the last point of our private conversations. I think if there were—and that's what we call for, an international conference—that if it's in the context of that, it doesn't appear to be us enforcing it. I think we should start to call this the Boxer Plan, because you're more articulate than I am about pushing it. And I really——

Senator BOXER. I'm not the diplomat.

The CHAIRMAN. No, no, well, you're doing pretty well. I—and I thank you for it.

Senator BOXER. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Senator.

Senator CORKER. Mr. Secretary, thank you for your testimony. And I think what I'm seeing here is someone testifying, and almost everyone on this committee agreeing with much of what you have to say. And it's an interesting thing to watch here.

You've talked a lot about the long-term issues that we're going to be dealing with, the fact that we've been there for 50 years, and that we're going to be there for many more years down the road.

One of the concerns that I hear debated a lot privately is that so much focus has been placed on this surge, which is really not a strategy, but a tactic, something that you said you even lean toward. But the fact that we've focused so much on this surge that many people, who do believe we're going to be in Iraq for many, many years, and in the Middle East for many years, are concerned that, with so much focus on it, so much discussion on it, that if nothing good comes out of that in the next 5 or 6 months, that what's going to happen is going to be a reaction, an adverse reac-

tion, if you will, that really does affect our actions in the Middle East for many, many years down the road. And I think there's a concern that if something—if no positive comes out of this, there's going to be a greater push, if you will, to withdraw from the region—and I wonder if you could respond to that—in ways that would not be beneficial to our national interests down the road.

Dr. KISSINGER. Well, under present conditions, as I have said, I would—I think the surge is the better option, but we have to keep in mind that at whatever point we decide whether it has succeeded or failed, we—it's a tactical move to give us the maneuvering room to move to the strategy on which, it seems to me, a considerable consensus has emerged, to me, out of what I have heard in front of this committee and of what I believe needs to be done.

I do not believe we can withdraw from Iraq. That is the key question. We can discuss the kind of deployment, size of the deployment, but it should be done in relation to the conditions on the ground and to our national objectives, and not to abstract timetables.

Senator CORKER. This may not be the kind of question to ask someone coming before our committee, but, because you do feel sort of a consensus around much of your testimony, and because you see a sense of the Senate wanting to express itself out of frustration, and because you have said that you don't think benchmarks predicated on not being met, or benchmarks not being met, causing withdrawal, that that's the penalty, what would be a resolution, if one has to be—if the Senate has to express itself on this matter—what would be some of the components of a resolution that you think might be sensible?

Dr. KISSINGER. I'm very flattered. That's not the sort of question I'm usually asked. And I would think that a resolution that states a concept of national objectives, that's not ambiguous, but indicates a direction around which the country could rally, I think would be important, because I don't think we can go on with the appearance of such basic divisions, because whichever way it is interpreted abroad, it's not helpful. And so, if it were possible to—I would not have recommended it to begin with, but I think a resolution that states a direction, which hopefully the administration would join, too, would then create a benchmark for everybody.

And on the substance, when we—if we separate the surge from it—on where to go afterward, I think there is a—more of a coming together than there is on the surge option itself, at least from what I've read. But it's my strong view that it cannot include a time limit for withdrawal or a withdrawal geared to our domestic calendar.

Senator CORKER. Would you state the last phrase again? Or—withdrawal based on?

Dr. KISSINGER. Our domestic calendar.

Senator CORKER. Would you want to expand a little bit on who the audience really is as it relates to these resolutions, the audience that really matters most as it relates to these resolutions?

Dr. KISSINGER. Well, of course, you all are running for election at some point. Some of you know your audiences well, at least those of you who are here. But I would say, of course, a principal audience has to be the American people, and one has to keep in

mind there, not only what the American people think today, but what they will think 2 years, 3 years from now, when the consequences of some decisions become apparent, and when it could happen that they will not approve of decisions, even if those decisions seem to reflect the mood of a moment, which has happened before. So, of course one has to think of the American people first, but one also has to think of the actors internationally who gear their action to their expectation of an American performance, and how they interpret actions in terms of their own judgments. And that, I think, is a major responsibility, as well, in drafting a resolution.

Senator CORKER. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Obama.

Senator OBAMA. I'm going to defer to——

The CHAIRMAN. You're going to yield to Senator Menendez.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank my colleague from Illinois. Mr. Secretary, I appreciate your testimony, and I just want to explore some areas with you. Let me ask you: Would you agree that every course of action, at this point of time, every alternative, carries with it some rather grave risks and the potential for even deeper and wider strife?

Dr. KISSINGER. Absolutely.

Senator MENENDEZ. Would you also agree that success—or, should I say not success but that each of those alternatives for success depends far more on what others are going to do, or can do, than what we can do by ourselves?

Dr. KISSINGER. I'm not sure I would agree completely with that. I think it depends on what others can do. But that will be heavily influenced by our——

Senator MENENDEZ. Well——

Dr. KISSINGER [continuing]. Actions.

Senator MENENDEZ [continuing]. Listening to Secretary Baker and Congressman Hamilton yesterday, among others, and listening to the administration talk about how the Iraqis themselves have to make some hard choices, compromises, negotiations for a government of national unity, security forces have to be built up in a way that they can respond and stand up for their own country, the context of regional partners and some of your own testimony, it seems to me that, while we may lead, at the end of the day success in Iraq depends, to a great deal, upon what others—the Maliki government, the Iraqis, the regional partners—will or will not do than what we will do just by ourselves.

Dr. KISSINGER. I would turn it around. We cannot do it all by ourselves, but we can act in such a way as to evoke actions from others that create the maximum chance for success.

Senator MENENDEZ. Now, let me ask you—you say, in the testimony, that the United States, "must not involve itself in the sectarian conflict for any extended period, much less let itself be used by one side for its own sectarian goals."

Dr. KISSINGER. Right.

Senator MENENDEZ. Now, I listen to that, and I say, isn't that, in essence, what we're doing? Aren't we largely involved in a sectarian conflict? The Sunnis want us to protect them from the Shi-

ites. The Shiites want us on the sidelines so they can consolidate power. Both are divided among themselves. I've heard some of my colleagues here talk about the escalation and sending a very significant amount into Anbar province, where the Sunnis and the concerns about al-Qaeda are. But it seems to me that we, and I've heard other testimony from other witnesses who suggest similarily, need to break the back of the Sunnis so that they stop their insurgency and come to a realization that they need a political process. At the end of the day, though, isn't that taking sides?

Dr. KISSINGER. Well, of course we're taking sides against some of the groups that I have mentioned. And, to some extent, what you say is quite valid, in the sense that if the government is a primarily Shia government, and it wants to extend its authority, that will not be appreciated by the Sunnis. So, what we should attempt to do, and what I think we are attempting to do, is to make this attempt to break the back or reduce the impact of the militias, both the Sunni militias and the Shia militias. Now, at that point, the national government could then perform the police functions with its own forces, and our effort will be directed against terrorism and outside forces, recognizing that the dividing line is not absolute. If the effort does not succeed in reducing the militias, then we have to draw the dividing line between sectarian violence and the American participation much more sharply, because—and then, our deployments should reflect that.

Senator MENENDEZ. Mr. Secretary, let me ask you this. I've listened to you talk about withdrawal. But is there not a difference between withdrawal from Iraq at a certain point of time, taking in consideration even under your own statement that we cannot involve ourselves in a sectarian conflict for an extended period—and a withdrawal from the region? One can, over time, withdraw from Iraq, but not withdraw from the region, if it doesn't go in a certain way that we believe that our success there would not be better transformed by having a phased withdrawal. And how do we get the Iraqis to come to the conclusion that they have to make the hard choices, compromises, and negotiations necessary, if it's possible, for a government of national unity, if they believe that we are there in an open-ended commitment? And, last, how do we get the regional partners, and I appreciate you yourself describing this as desirable to participate in, when, in fact—there's no real incentive from some of them? We know that an unstable Iraq is an incentive, but there's been some testimony here that it hasn't gotten so bad that other regional partners are willing to participate at this time because they believe that, in fact, we will continue to stay there with our blood and our national treasure. And, therefore, it's not necessary for them, at this time to engage. How would you respond to that?

Dr. KISSINGER. With respect to your first point, of course, the danger is that withdrawal from Iraq of a certain type could trigger withdrawal from the region, because everybody will then accommodate, or might—may accommodate to the dominant trends. In addition, it's not easy to see where one would deploy in the region after a debacle—after a debacle in Iraq.

Now, I've forgotten your second point.

Senator MENENDEZ. How do we get the Iraqis——

Dr. KISSINGER. Oh, how do we get—yeah.

Senator MENENDEZ [continuing]. And the regional partners to understand that they have to move——

Dr. KISSINGER. Now——

Senator MENENDEZ [continuing]. In a different direction; and move, in the case of the regional partners?

Dr. KISSINGER. Much of the discussion around the table here is of a regional conference. I differ somewhat with—I prefer an international conference in which countries that have broader interests, and that ought to have a direct experience of the Islamic challenge, participate, because if you take the countries of the region only, they are either threatened, some of them, or aggressive, some of them, or potentially aggressive, some of them, so their conflicting interests may be so great that it is difficult to distill them into some kind of consensus, while I think a wider international conference might create some criteria which then can be guideposts to the more immediately involved countries. But that, of course, would require careful exploration by the Secretary of State and others. But, how do we get them to do it? That's, of course, our challenge.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator, I apologize, but we promised this—the Secretary that we'd have him out of here by 11:30, because he's got to catch a flight, and if we do it, we can——

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. We can try to get that done, I'd—try to keep——

Senator VOINOVICH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Voinovich.

Senator VOINOVICH. Secretary Kissinger, I would like to say that the testimony you have submitted for this hearing is the best paper that I have seen in all of the hearings the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has had with various people that have come before us. It is concise, relevant, comprehensive, and it explains how important the state of Iraq is to world peace, to peace in the region, and to our national and economic security. What I really like is that although we have been talking about a plan B, we have not really defined what plan B is, but your paper does.

Starting on page 2 of your paper, you state, "The purpose of the new strategy should be to demonstrate that the United States is determined to remain relevant to the outcome in the region, to adjust American military deployments and numbers to emerging realities, and provide the maneuvering room for a major diplomatic effort to stabilize the Middle East." That effectively summarizes the plan.

I would like you to comment on two things. First of all, do you believe that the President of the United States has done a sufficient job explaining to the American people how strategic our involvement in the Middle East is to our national security and to our economic security? Second, if you were the Secretary of State or the President, how would you go about speaking to the Arab League, to the U.N. Security Council, or the international community, to say, "Here are the important reasons why you should be interested in what has happened in Iraq, and why it is in your best interest to come together to help us try to stabilize that region?"

Dr. KISSINGER. I've seen the President on television, on many talk shows on which one normally hasn't seen Presidents before, in recent weeks, making a major attempt to explain his position to the American public. And I don't—I think it would be presumptuous for me to tell somebody who's been elected twice by the American public in what form he should present his case. He's certainly doing it in a dedicated and serious manner, and he should be listened to carefully.

Senator VOINOVICH. Pardon me, but would you agree that we have not done an adequate job talking about plan B, in concert with what we are now doing in Baghdad and the surge, putting it in context with the big picture about how we would like to proceed in the region?

Dr. KISSINGER. I think the focus has been on the surge. My focus, it's the other way around, to explain the surge in terms of the strategy to which we should go. Whatever we—happens in the surge, I look at the surge as giving us maneuvering room to go do what you call plan B and what I call the necessary strategy.

Senator VOINOVICH. How would you convince other nations to attend an international conference or regional conference? What would you say to the Saudis?

Dr. KISSINGER. Well, I think the Secretary of State is extremely articulate, and she should certainly—I mean, once the concept is established, I have every confidence in her being able to do this.

Senator VOINOVICH. When would we engage these other nations? Lee Hamilton was here before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee yesterday with the Iraq Task Force. The task force said that we should begin diplomacy and engage our partners in the region immediately. When will we do this? Tomorrow? Next week? Six months from now?

Dr. KISSINGER. No; now.

Senator VOINOVICH. Well——

Dr. KISSINGER. I think you cannot segment policy. If you have a concept where to go, you ought to start preparing the ground for it as soon as you have agreed on what you're going to do.

Senator VOINOVICH. I think we have a big public relations problem with the American people, because I don't think we are effectively communicating what we are really doing in Iraq and how important the entire region is to our future. I think that is part of the reason why so many people are taking the position that we should pull our troops out of Iraq. For example, I don't think we have made it clear that we have been protecting American oil interests in that area for years. I did not know, until I joined this committee how many billions of dollars we spend every year to protect American oil interests in the region, which are crucial to the economic security of the United States. This starts back from President Roosevelt's administration. I did not know that prior to serving on the Foreign Relations Committee, and many Americans are not aware of that. We have been spending money in the Middle East for years to protect oil. If Iraq and the region disintegrate, our economy could come to its knees.

Dr. KISSINGER. We have permanent interests there. The situation is changing rapidly in directions which are unfamiliar to Americans, because we are not used to dealing with people who are will-

ing to kill themselves for—in this manner. And we have to understand conditions in this area and not act impulsively at a moment that will affect the next decade.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator.

Senator Obama.

Senator OBAMA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, thank you for your testimony. I have to ask just a couple of questions based on, sort of, the interaction here, because I—from what I understand, the implication of your testimony and some of the responses to your questions is that you think the only way to express our understanding that there are permanent interests in the Middle East is to maintain our troop levels in Iraq or, in fact, increase them, and that if we did not maintain current troop levels or increase them, that somehow that would be abdicating responsibility and suggesting that we didn't have permanent interests in the region. Is that my understanding of your testimony, or did I misunderstand it?

Dr. KISSINGER. No; I believe that, at this moment, if the option proposed by the administration is the best way to get the maneuvering room to the changes in deployment and strategy that will be required by the evolving situation. At that point, we can decide what levels we should have and in what mix. But it should not be debated, in terms of, "Are you for withdrawal or for an increase in the present situation?" You have correctly characterized my view, but not as a permanent view of that.

Senator OBAMA. Well, let's focus on this. I mean, the—because I completely agree with you that the argument about an additional 20,000 troops, in and of itself, is not the central issue. The central issue: What is this grand strategy in Iraq?

Dr. KISSINGER. Right.

Senator OBAMA. Now, you suggest that this is a precursor to a grand strategy. You indicate that this will provide us maneuvering room to pursue this strategy. Do you know what the strategy is? Has the President articulated what this strategy is, this grand new strategy? Because, as far as I can tell, nobody on this committee knows what this grand strategy is.

Dr. KISSINGER. No; I'm speaking here——

Senator OBAMA. And the American public doesn't seem to understand what it is. So——

Dr. KISSINGER. I'm speaking here on my own behalf.

Senator OBAMA. No; I understand, but I'm—it was—I just want to establish, for the record, is there—because the notion is, is that this is a precursor—this lays the groundwork, the foundation provides us the maneuvering room, for a grand strategy that will stabilize the situation there. Is there any place that you're familiar with where the administration has articulated this strategy?

Dr. KISSINGER. I don't know anyplace where the administration has articulated this particular strategy. From my acquaintance with some of the people, I think it is possible that they will come to this strategy, but I'm not here as their spokesman.

Senator OBAMA. Well, I understand. But I think it's important, I guess. Obviously, Mr. Secretary, you know, you have enormous experience in this field, and are very well respected. What I gather, then, is you're presuming that there's a grand strategy in which—

would justify the escalation of troop levels, or at least preclude withdrawal. And yet, what I'm hearing is, is that, in fact, there is no articulation of that strategy, that you're aware of right now, and you're presuming that somebody, somewhere, must have one.

Dr. KISSINGER. No; I'm making two points. I'm saying that if we now act out of frustration——

Senator OBAMA. Right.

Dr. KISSINGER [continuing]. We may set—we may start a process that prevents a grand strategy and that will drive us into an outcome that nobody wants. If we do this, we should do it in the expectation of a grand strategy. And, as I've said before, I would not object to a statement that outlines a grand strategy that—especially if it were done on a bipartisan basis the——

Senator OBAMA. Well, let me suggest that, within your——

Dr. KISSINGER [continuing]. Administration would then join.

Senator OBAMA. I'm sorry. Let me suggest that, within your—the papers that you provided us, I think your approach, in terms of a regional diplomatic strategy makes perfect sense. I think that the Baker-Hamilton Commission recommended this, as well. As far as we can see—and I think your interaction with Senator Voinovich indicates this—the administration doesn't seem to be embarking on this particular strategy. It's not clear to me that we could not pursue that strategy, even as we were initiating a phased redeployment, as opposed to a precipitous one, and which brings me, I guess, to a critical point. In your estimation, is there anything that can get the Iraqi factions to change their behavior, other than ongoing occupation with perhaps increased forces—U.S. forces for an indeterminate period of time? What would change the political dynamic on the ground where the Shia, the Sunni, the Kurds, to a lesser extent, have a different set of calculations that they would be making?

Dr. KISSINGER. I—look, the Sunni-Shia conflict has lasted 1,400 years——

Senator OBAMA. Right.

Dr. KISSINGER [continuing]. And has been bloody and brutal. So, one should not pretend that one can solve it——

Senator OBAMA. It won't be——

Dr. KISSINGER [continuing]. In any——

Senator OBAMA [continuing]. Be easy in any event, right.

Dr. KISSINGER. For any American polity or quickly. We can only do what we think is right and most likely to produce a desirable result. Now, it is clear that there is a limit to what the American public can support, or will support. And all of these issues that we're discussing are based on assessments you cannot prove when you make them. That's what makes them so difficult. My assessment is that the debate of this—about the surge exaggerates an essentially tactical move. The real issue is the long-term roll of the United States. I agree with Secretary Baker that we are likely to be in Iraq for a long period. But that does not mean it has to be, or should be, at the present level or in the present deployment.

This is what our next discussion should be about. And whatever happens, it will go on for the next few administrations, the impact of what we are deciding now. It can't end with one administration, no matter what we do. I think that the best course is to attempt

to deal with the militias, and whatever else happens—whatever happens in that; and while that happens, prepare ourselves for what I describe as the grand strategy. I hope that it's done in accord between the executive and the Congress, because that will be best for the long-term health of the American public, no matter what happens in the future.

Senator OBAMA. Mr. Chairman——

Dr. KISSINGER. And that is what I'm trying to contribute to—I cannot—I can't speak for the administration, but I would be disappointed and surprised if they did not accept some of the elements of what has been discussed here.

Senator OBAMA. Well, but—let me just close—and I know I'm out of time——

The CHAIRMAN. That's OK, you're making a very salient point here.

Senator OBAMA [continuing]. By simply saying this. I think the American people are disappointed. I'm disappointed with the manner in which, over the last several years, we have proceeded in Iraq. And I just—I want to dispute this notion, somehow, that the American people aren't clear about interests in the Middle East. I think the majority of the American people understand that we have significant interests there. That is the reason that they were willing to authorize—or at least a number of the Members of the Senate were willing to authorize going in. I think they perfectly understand the severity of the Islamic threat. What they don't understand is how, after all the commitments that we have made, all the lives that have been lost, and the billions of dollars that have been sent, the situation seems to deteriorate, and we are actually less safe, and the region is less stable, and we have less leverage with the players in the region. That's what they don't understand. That's what they're frustrated with, is the fact that they've made an enormous investment in blood and treasure, and the outcome is worse than when we started.

And so, I just think it's important, Mr. Chairman, for the record to indicate that if, in fact—I completely agree with the Secretary that the surge, or escalation, whatever you want to call it, in and of itself, is not the salient issue. The issue is: Is there a strategy to stabilize Iraq that prevents us from establishing a permanent occupation in that region that further destabilizes it and further inflames anti-American sentiment? And that strategy has not been forthcoming from this administration.

And I don't—I understand, Mr. Secretary, you don't speak for the administration, but I—to the extent that you are suggesting that they have some secret strategy that we have not been made privy to, and that's why we should not speak out against it, I would strongly differ with you, recognizing that you have far more experience in this field than I do.

Dr. KISSINGER. Well, I think——

The CHAIRMAN. Senator——

Dr. KISSINGER. I'm not saying you shouldn't speak out on behalf of the strategy that should be pursued.

Senator OBAMA. Well, I think the concern you expressed was——

Dr. KISSINGER. I'm hoping——

Senator OBAMA [continuing]. Is that we should not—that there should be some sense of cooperation between the administration and Congress so that we don't send a message that we are divided to the world. I completely agree with that. We had the opportunity to do that with the Baker-Hamilton Commission, which has essentially been ignored by this administration. And so, the frustrations that many of us have is, if we have an administration that does not seem willing to listen, and we have a strategy that, to all eyes, is not working, at some point we have to make some decisions, in terms of getting it on track.

I'm way over time, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator OBAMA. Thank you for——

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Some are—I let that go, because I think it's such an important exchange.

The problem, Mr. Secretary, is, in a nutshell, that most of us view the President's projection of forces as his strategy, and he's explicitly rejected the strategic suggestions you and others have made. It's been explicit. But having said that, let me yield now to Senator Isakson——

Senator ISAKSON. And I will——

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. And then we'll be finished.

Senator ISAKSON. I will be quick.

Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary, for your years of service to the United States. And I really only have one question, which relates to the most recent exchanges. And so, I'll state this question and then allow you to respond. But thank you so much for your service and for this paper.

My memory is that the United States of America went into Iraq and had three specific goals. The first was to enforce U.N. Resolution 1441, because the entire world, 176 countries, thought there were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, and there was no confusion on that, and Hussein gave us no comfort that that wasn't true. The second goal was to allow the Iraqi people to hold free elections and write a constitution. Now, we accomplished both of the first two goals. The third-stated goal by the President of the United States in his speech prior to our vote was that we would train the Iraqi military in order for them to keep the peace and allow that fledgling government to survive. I believe I'm right that those—those are not the same words, but those are the specific goals.

The strategy to accomplish those was a military strategy, because it took a military strategy to accomplish goals one, two, and three. Our current dilemma is our failure in No. 3, which has come about because of the rise of sectarian violence, in addition to all the other violence that is precipitated by other interests in the region and al-Qaeda.

Here's the question. You state, in your—where Senator Voinovich was—"It should be seen as"—"it," meaning the current move by the President, in terms of Anbar and Baghdad—"It should be seen as the first step toward a new grand strategy relating power to diplomacy for the entire region, ideally on a nonpartisan basis." And then, in the next paragraph, the last conjunction in that sentence

says "and to provide the maneuvering room for a major diplomatic effort to stabilize the Middle East."

That's a lot, I'm sorry, but my question is this. My hope for the President's strategy, currently, is that it will produce enough stability in the current violent neighborhoods where the sectarian violence is going on, where some reconciliation can take place and you can begin diplomacy. Am I wrong in the—in that hope?

Dr. KISSINGER. I believe that the objectives that I have stated, and the objectives you have stated, are compatible with what the President is attempting to do. And certainly mistakes have been made. Some of these mistakes derived from an overestimation of the ability to apply American domestic experiences to the Iraqi situation. In our country, elections are a way of shifting responsibilities. In Iraq, they were a way of deepening ethnic rivalries. That's hard for Americans to absorb right away.

I am convinced, but I cannot base it on any necessary evidence right now, that the President will want to move toward a bipartisan consensus, and that the things I have said here are not incompatible with his convictions. And I have confidence that he will attempt to do this.

It's, of course, your responsibility to determine to what extent that has been done by the administration. I cannot—but I think that to spend the last 2 years of an administration in a sort of civil war between the executive and the legislative should be avoided by both sides. And we should be able to evolve a position on which so much depends for such a long time as a joint national enterprise. That's my plea. But if I were before the President, I'd say the same thing to him.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, I appreciate the answer, because that, too, is my goal.

You know, Mr. Chairman, every one of us prefers a diplomatic solution to a military solution. But we can't forget, those three goals, which I—nobody disputed what I said—that we went into Iraq—went into Iraq, because diplomacy had failed, worldwide diplomacy at the United Nations had failed, in terms of Iraq refusing to comply with those resolutions. That meant the strategy had to go to a military one or a look the other way, and if you ever look the other way when you're telling people there are going to be consequences, then you have no diplomacy. So, I think it's very dangerous for us to be talking about a circumstance in which there would be no consideration of diplomacy. We are there because diplomacy failed, and what will ultimately succeed will be diplomacy. But my belief in this is that quelling the sectarian violence and stabilizing the conditions long enough for the beginning of reconciliation can be the first step toward regional negotiation and diplomacy working.

And I won't make any more speeches, but I want to thank the Secretary again. He's given me a lot of good lines for the remarks I'm going to have to make on the floor in a few days, and I appreciate it a lot.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you——

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator.

Mr. Secretary, thank you very much for being here. I want to make it clear to you, we're waiting for the invitation from the President to discuss this. We have tried. I have tried, and I'd respectfully suggest a lot of people here have tried. We're also waiting for a strategy. The President has explicitly rejected international involvement and has—the disagreements we have with them is no international involvement and the definition of the Iraqi mission.

But I want to make it clear, I stand ready, as just one of 100 Senators, to work with this President. I have privately told him that—publicly told him that—and we're waiting for both an invitation and a wholesome discussion, a fulsome discussion, about what the strategy should be. What is the strategy?

And everyone I have talked to, thus far—there may be exceptions—from his former Secretary of State to you to Democrats involved, to the best of my knowledge, no one can come forward and say how we can get from here to there absent engaging the international community, and that's been flatly rejected. Flatly rejected. Involving the United Nations, involving the Permanent Five, involving a larger construct of Muslim nations, as you suggested, has been, every time, flatly rejected.

So, I'm not quite sure, Johnny, I'm ready to work. I am—and I'm sure everyone is. And so, again, I don't want you to leave, Mr. Secretary, thinking that we're looking for a fight with the President. We're looking for the President to engage us. Not Democrats—Democrats and Republicans looking for him to engage us.

And I'll conclude by saying, Mr. Secretary, I suggested, and others suggested the same thing on the Republican side, that what the President should have done after the last election—invite those of us on both sides that he thinks have some modicum of influence here, to Camp David—no staff, no telephones, no nothing—just to sit down and have a real discussion.

I have found, at least in my experience thus far, there is not, really, a desire to do that. I think it's best for the country, I think it's best for the region, I think it's best to respond to the American people that way. But, in the meantime, this is all about responding to a tactic masquerading as a strategy that changes a mission that many of us think is not able to be accomplished by what he's suggesting.

But, again, your contribution is significant. It always has been. I thank you very much, and I hope you'll remain available to us, both publicly and privately.

Dr. KISSINGER. Thank you for the spirit in which this session has been conducted.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. You're well respected by everyone on this committee.

OK. I thank you, Mr. Secretary. Our next witness is an equally distinguished former Secretary of State, and I understand she is in the anteroom and will—I'll—we'll get her and escort her in.

[Recess.]

The CHAIRMAN. The hearing will come back to order.

And, again, I want to thank Secretary Kissinger, but welcome enthusiastically, as well, Secretary Albright.

Staff has pointed out to me I should make a clarification so no one misunderstands. There has been an invitation to the White House to work on a group called the Lieberman—or, not called—the Lieberman, and others, Antiterrorism Group, but that is not the invitation I'm talking about, so I don't want anybody to misunderstand. The White House is always generous in their invitations for us to come down and talk, but I think we need to have a real sense of where they want to go.

At any rate, having said that, Madam Secretary, welcome. It's a great honor having you here. And I want to publicly thank you for your continued involvement, in a very detailed way, in engaging with your former colleagues—Foreign Ministers—and you've put together a group of—talk about bipartisan, it's multinational, as well as sharing every ideological stripe, and you've kept that group together. It is a very influential group of individuals you continue to meet with, and the collective input is, I'm sure, as welcomed in other capitals as it is here. So, I thank you.

I made an opening statement earlier, so I'm not going to go any further, other than to say you're very welcome here, as you know, Madam Secretary, and we're anxious to hear what you have to say.

Senator Lugar.

Senator LUGAR. I'd simply follow you, Mr. Chairman, and we're looking forward to hearing the Secretary's testimony.

The CHAIRMAN. The floor is yours, Madam Secretary.

STATEMENT OF HON. MADELEINE K. ALBRIGHT, FORMER SECRETARY OF STATE; PRINCIPAL, THE ALBRIGHT GROUP LLC, WASHINGTON, DC

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and Senator Lugar and members of the committee.

I am delighted to be here and to return to these very familiar surroundings and to have the opportunity to testify. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for saying what you did about my former Foreign Ministers group. It grows by virtue of what it is. And so, we have a lot of interesting discussions and good hopes that some of our words will be taken seriously.

I am very glad to testify, and I will speak both plainly and bluntly. There are no good options. If there were, many of us, including many of you, would not have been issuing such urgent warnings for the past 4 years. Those warnings were ignored. The result is that every available alternative now carries with it grave risks. Each raises moral and practical questions about our responsibilities. And each depends for success far more on what others do than on what we do, which is another way of saying that, despite our power, we have lost control of the most important U.S. national security initiative of this decade.

I desperately want General Petraeus and our forces to succeed. Those troops are the finest in the world and will accomplish any mission that is within their power, but it is the responsibility of civilian authorities to assign the missions that make sense. Instead, we have put our forces in the absurd position of trying to prevent violence by all sides against all sides. The Sunnis want us to protect them from the Shiites. The Shiites want us on the sidelines so that they can consolidate their power. Both are divided among

themselves. Al-Qaeda is using the turmoil to recruit the bin Ladens of tomorrow. And Iran's regional influence is greater now than it has been in centuries. If I were a soldier on patrol in Baghdad, I wouldn't know whom to shoot at until I was shot at, which is untenable.

I agree with the President that it would be a disaster for us to leave Iraq under the present circumstances, but it may also be a disaster for us to stay. And if our troops are not in a position to make a decisive difference, we have an overriding duty to bring them home.

The Iraq Study Group recommended a more limited role for the United States troops. Their view, which I share, is that Iraqis must take responsibility for their own security, because, although we can assist, we cannot do the job for them. We do not have enough people, we do not speak the language, we do not know the culture well enough, and, quite frankly, we do not have the recognized legal and moral authority to go into Iraqi homes and compel obedience. Each time we do, we lose as much ground politically as we might hope to gain militarily, and that's why the President's current policy should be viewed less as a serious plan than as a prayer. It is not about reality, it is about hope. But hope is not a strategy.

The truth is that Iraqis will continue to act in their own best interests, as they perceive them; and we must act in ours. Today in Iraq, three nightmares come to mind. First, an Iraq that serves as a training and recruiting ground for al-Qaeda. Second, an Iraq that is subservient to Iran. Third, an Iraq so torn by conflict that it ignites a regionwide war. We may well end up with one, or all three, of these nightmares. There is no easy exit. And I expect this year to be brutal.

Accordingly, I offer my recommendations with genuine humility, for they are designed simply to make the best of a truly bad situation.

First, we should do all we can to encourage a political settlement that would reduce the violence. Americans are united on this. We favor an arrangement that would recognize the Shia majority, protect the Sunni minority, and allow the Kurds a high degree of autonomy. In recent days, there has been some movement in the right direction. The overall violence, however, remains at a record level, and the prospects for a real breakthrough are tenuous, at best.

My second recommendation supports the first, which is to increase diplomatic activity. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, we both know that we can talk to governments without endorsing them or overlooking past actions. Talking to governments about hard problems is why diplomacy matters. It's actually what diplomats do.

The case for talking to Syria is strong, if only to warn its government about the dangers of supporting violent elements, either in Iraq or Lebanon. Further, we have cooperated with Syria in the past on some issues, including Iraq, and might well be able to do so now.

As for Iran, there are many serious people with whom one might talk. The problem is that President Ahmadinejad is not one of them. We should do nothing that might bolster his standing, but we should indicate our desire over the long term to have good rela-

tions with Iran's people. More broadly, United States efforts to put diplomatic pressure in Iraq with regard to its nuclear program deserve the support of every member of this committee, and those efforts may still work.

I do, however, urge the committee to ask detailed questions about every aspect of the administration's intentions toward Iran, and to demand credible answers. I—it would be interesting to know why the statements have gotten more bellicose. It would be interesting to know why there are aircraft carriers in the region. It would just be interesting to know where they're going. We have learned the hard way what happens when this administration decides on a policy without putting its assumptions to the test of legislative scrutiny and informed debate.

Third, we should do all we can to revive a meaningful Arab-Israeli peace process. This is important for the Israelis and Palestinians themselves, but I also say this because United States prestige in the region has suffered due to our inactivity these past 6 years, but, more important, because peace is the right goal to pursue.

As shown by her recent trip, Secretary Rice has begun to engage. I only worry that it is too little, too late. Middle East diplomacy is a full-time job, and a roadmap does no good if it is never taken out of the glove compartment.

Fourth, both in Iraq and in the region, we must avoid the temptation to take sides in the millennium-old Sunni-Shiite split. We must be mindful of the interests of all factions and willing to talk to every side, but our message should not vary. We should pledge support to all who observe territorial borders, honor human rights, obey the rule of law, respect holy places, and seek to live in peace.

Fifth, Congress should continue to support efforts to build democratic institutions in Iraq. As chair of the National Democratic Institute, I'm not neutral about this, but it was always unrealistic to believe that a full-fledged democracy could be created in Iraq overnight. It is, however, equally unrealistic to think that a stable Iraq will ever be created if democratic principles are not part of the equation.

One of my great fears is that our Nation's experience in Iraq will cause Americans to abandon efforts to build democracy over the long term. That would be a mistake. There are wise and unwise ways to go about the task. But the goal of supporting democracy is the right one. It is intimately connected to America's role in the world, both historically and in the future. And if we give up on democracy, we give up not only on Iraq, but also on America.

Sixth, we should make one more effort to encourage others, especially our NATO allies, to expand their training of Iraq's military and police. Every country in Europe has a stake in Iraq's future. Every country should do what it can to help.

Finally, we should call on religious leaders from all factions to take a stand against the violence in Iraq. Everyone is so convinced they have God on their side, we should at least make the case that God is on the side of peace.

At the same time, we should reiterate our own pledge, on moral grounds, to minimize harm to civilians and guarantee humane

treatment of prisoners. And element of confession in this would not hurt.

The bottom line is that there must be an evolution in the political situation in Iraq that will curb sectarian violence and reduce the level of insecurity to something that can be managed. With a settlement, we could withdraw gradually, with nightmares avoided. Without a settlement, our troops cannot make a decisive difference, and might as well begin to redeploy.

Mr. Chairman, America's own war between the States lasted about as long as the current war in Iraq, and it went on so long that Abraham Lincoln said, in frustration, that the heavens were hung in black. We might say the same today.

I see profound problems ahead, but I have confidence in the resilience of our Nation. We can, in time, regain our balance, restore our reputation, and all that is required is that we respond creatively to change, live up to our own principles, and ensure that America becomes America again.

Thank you very much, and now I look forward to responding to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Albright follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. MADELEINE K. ALBRIGHT, FORMER SECRETARY OF STATE; PRINCIPAL, THE ALBRIGHT GROUP LLC, WASHINGTON, DC

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. I am pleased to return to these familiar surroundings and to have the opportunity to testify regarding U.S. policy toward Iraq. To maximize time for discussion, I will speak both plainly and bluntly. There are no good options.

If there were, many of us—including many of you—would not have been issuing such urgent warnings these past 4 years. Those warnings were ignored. The result is that every alternative now carries with it grave risks and the potential for even deeper and wider strife.

Each raises moral and practical questions about our responsibilities—to the people of Iraq, to our troops, and to our collective future.

Each depends for success far more on what others do than on what we do, which is another way of saying that—despite our power—we have lost control of the most important U.S. national security initiative of this decade.

I desperately want General Petraeus and our forces in Iraq to succeed. Those troops are the finest in the world and will accomplish any mission that is within their power, but it is the responsibility of our civilian authorities to assign them missions that make sense.

Even with all that has gone wrong, I could have supported an increase in troops if that increase had been tied to a clear, important, and achievable mission—and if we were guaranteed that our forces would have the best training and equipment.

Instead, we have put our fighting men and women in the absurd position of trying to prevent violence by all sides against all sides. The Sunnis want us to protect them from the Shiites. The Shiites want us on the sidelines so they can consolidate their power. Both are divided among themselves.

Al-Qaeda is using the turmoil to recruit the Zarqawis and bin Ladens of tomorrow. Violent criminals operate with impunity. And as a direct result of our actions, Iran's regional influence is greater now than it has been in centuries.

If I were a soldier on patrol in Baghdad, I wouldn't know whom to shoot at until I was shot at, which is untenable.

To quote 1stSgt Marc Biletski while under sniper fire in the capital last week, "Who the hell is shooting at us? Who's shooting at us? Do we know who they are?" Or to quote Specialist Terry Wilson, a soldier on that same patrol, "The thing is—we wear uniforms, they don't."

I agree with the President that it would be a disaster for us to leave Iraq under the present circumstances. But it may also be a disaster for us to stay—and if our troops are not in a position to make a decisive difference, we have an overriding duty to bring them home sooner rather than later.

James Baker and Lee Hamilton recommended a more limited role for U.S. troops—with an emphasis on training, working in tandem, and providing a backup rapid reaction capability.

Their view, which I share, is that Iraqis must take responsibility for their own security—because although we can assist—we cannot do the job for them. We do not have enough people; we do not speak the language; we do not know the culture well enough and, quite frankly, we do not have the recognized legal and moral authority to go into Iraqi homes and compel obedience. Each time we do, we lose as much ground politically, as we might hope to gain militarily.

This is crucial because, if there is to be a solution in Iraq, it will come about through political means. This has been obvious for years. An arrangement must be worked out that will give each side more than they can obtain through continued violence.

If Iraq's leaders finally begin to move in this direction, we would likely see progress on the security front. And I think the American people would be more patient about the continued presence of our troops.

But from the evidence thus far, this is neither a likely outcome, nor one we can dictate. For better or worse, Iraqis appear to think they know their own society and their own interests better than we do. They have responsibilities to each other that they must meet, but no reason, based on the "thousands of mistakes" Secretary Rice admits we have made, to take our advice.

They have no appetite, after Abu Ghraib and Haditha, to listen to our lectures about human rights. And they know that President Bush has ruled out leaving, so where is our leverage? That is why the President's current policy should be viewed less as a serious plan than as a prayer. It is not about reality. It is about hope. But hope is not a strategy.

The truth is that Iraqis will continue to act in their own best interests as they perceive them. We must act in ours.

Today, in Iraq, three nightmares come to mind.

First, an Iraq that serves as a training and recruiting ground for al-Qaeda. Second, an Iraq that is subservient to Iran. Third, an Iraq so torn by conflict that it ignites a regionwide war. We may end up with one of these nightmares; we could end up with all of them. There is no easy exit.

Ordinarily, civil wars end in one of three ways: One side defeats the other; an outside force intervenes to compel peace; or the sides exhaust themselves through violence. The first outcome is unlikely in Iraq and the second unrealistic.

I expect this year to be brutal. Accordingly, I offer my recommendations with genuine humility, for they provide no magic answers; they are designed simply to make the best of a truly bad situation.

First, we should do all we can to encourage a political settlement that would reduce the violence. Americans are united on this. We favor an arrangement that would recognize the Shia majority, protect the Sunni minority, and allow the Kurds a high degree of autonomy. Such an arrangement would share oil revenues fairly, ensure the protection of basic infrastructure, and spur economic reconstruction.

In recent days, there has been some movement in the right direction.

For example, there has been progress toward approval of a national oil law and some evidence of restraint—both voluntary and otherwise—on the part of the largest Shia militias. The overall violence, however, remains at a record level—and the prospects for a real breakthrough are tenuous at best.

My second recommendation supports the first, which is to increase diplomatic activity throughout the region. This was proposed by the Iraq Study Group and ignored by the administration with respect to Syria and Iran.

Mr. Chairman, we both know that we can talk to governments without in any way endorsing them or overlooking past actions. Talking to governments about hard problems is why diplomacy matters; it is what diplomats do. Iraq's neighbors are relevant to Iraq and anyone who is relevant to Iraq is relevant to the security and mission of American troops.

The case for talking to Syria is strong, if only to warn its government about the dangers of supporting violent elements either in Iraq or Lebanon. Further, we have cooperated with Syria in the past on some issues, including Iraq, and might well be able to do so now.

As for Iran, there are many serious people with whom one might talk; the problem is that President Ahmadinejad is not one of them. We should do nothing that might bolster his standing, but we should indicate our desire over the long term to have good relations with Iran's people. Iran's influence in Iraq is, of course, inevitable given its closeness and shared religion. It is not possible to exclude Iran from Iraq.

However, we should bear in mind that no Arab population will take orders from Tehran if it has an alternative. Iran will dominate Iraq only if Iraq's Shiite population feels it must turn in that direction for protection.

More broadly, U.S. efforts to put diplomatic pressure on Iran with regard to its nuclear program deserve the support of every member of this committee; those efforts may still work.

I do, however, urge the committee to ask detailed questions about every aspect of the administration's intentions toward Iran and to demand detailed and credible answers. We have learned the hard way what happens when this administration decides on a policy without putting its assumptions to the test of rigorous legislative scrutiny and informed public debate.

Third, we should do all we can to revive a meaningful Arab-Israeli peace process. I say this because U.S. prestige in the region has suffered due to our inactivity these past 6 years, but more important, because peace is the right goal to pursue. This is true politically, militarily, and morally for Arabs and Israelis alike.

Secretary Rice appears to understand this and, as shown by her recent trip, has begun to engage. A meeting of the quartet is scheduled for Friday. I only worry that it is too little, too late. Middle East diplomacy is a full-time job. It requires a willingness to be blunt and the resources and prestige to encourage real compromise. A roadmap does no good if it is never taken out of the glove compartment.

After all that has happened, the prospects for peace may seem dim, but the logic of peace has never been more compelling. Although we should focus first on Israel and the Palestinians, the question of a comprehensive settlement should also be addressed provided Syria changes course and begins to play a positive regional role. The basic outlines of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East are well known. America's urgent commitment to such an agreement must also be clearly understood.

Fourth, both in Iraq and in the region, we must avoid the temptation to take sides in the millennium old Sunni-Shiite split. It would be an error to align ourselves with the Shiites (because Saddam Hussein's loyalists and al-Qaeda are Sunni) or the Sunnis (because Iraq's worst militias and Hezbollah are Shia). We must be mindful of the interests of all factions and willing to talk to every side, but our message should not vary.

We should pledge support to all—Sunni, Shia, Christian, Druze, Jew, Arab, Kurd, Persian—who observe territorial borders, honor human rights, obey the rule of law, respect holy places, and seek to live in peace.

Fifth, Congress should continue to support efforts to build democratic institutions in Iraq including the next step—provincial elections. Though the odds seem long, the best news coming out of Iraq these past few years have been the rounds of balloting, the approval of a constitution, the convening of a national parliament, and the beginning of a multiparty system. Given where Iraq began, these events have occurred with startling rapidity. As chair of the National Democratic Institute (NDI), I am not neutral about this but neither is America. It was always unrealistic to believe that a full-fledged democracy could be created in Iraq even in a decade. But it is equally unrealistic to think that a stable and peaceful Iraq will ever be created if democratic principles and institutions are not part of the equation.

I must add that, 2 weeks ago, an employee of NDI was killed in an attack on a convoy in which she was riding. Three dedicated security personnel were also killed. I said then that there is no more sacred roll of honor than those who have given their last full measure in support of freedom. Andrea Parhamovich was from Ohio, a constituent of Senator Voinovich on this committee. According to her family, "Andi's desire to help strangers in such a dangerous environment thousands of miles away might be difficult for others to understand, but to us, it epitomized Andi's natural curiosity and unwavering commitment. She was passionate, bold, and caring, as exemplified by her work to improve the lives of all Iraqis."

One of my great fears is that our Nation's experience in Iraq will cause Americans to abandon efforts to build democracy over the long term. That would be a mistake. Obviously, security issues have to be taken into account in particular cases, and in every case, there are wise and unwise ways to go about the task; but the goal of supporting democracy is the right one. It is intimately connected to America's role in the world, both historically and in the future. If we give up on democracy, we give up not only on Iraq, but also on America.

Sixth, we should make one more effort to encourage others, especially our NATO allies, to increase their training of Iraq's military and police. Every country in Europe has a stake in Iraq's future; every country should do what it can to help. In the Balkans, we used a diplomatic contact group of interested nations to coordinate policy, generate resources, and take steps to improve security on a regional basis.

Something similar should have been established for Iraq immediately after the invasion; it remains a useful idea.

Finally, we should call on religious leaders from all factions and faiths to take a stand against the violence in Iraq. Given our own lack of credibility, we can't get too close to this initiative without poisoning it—but there are figures of respect—Mustafa Ceric (Grand Mufti of Sarajevo), Mohammed Khatami (former President of Iran), King Abdullah of Jordan, Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Ayatollah Sistani—who might be willing and able to articulate the religious case for reconciliation in Iraq. It's worth a try. Everyone is so convinced they have God on their side; we should at least make the case that God is on the side of peace.

At the same time, we should reiterate our own pledge—on moral grounds—to minimize harm to civilians and guarantee humane treatment to prisoners. An element of confession in this would not hurt.

The bottom line is that there must be an evolution in the political situation in Iraq that will curb sectarian violence and reduce the level of insecurity to something that can be managed. With a settlement, we could withdraw gradually, with nightmares avoided. Without a settlement, our troops cannot make a decisive difference and might as well begin to redeploy. In that case, we should do all we can to help the Iraqis who have taken risks to support us these past few years.

Ordinarily, I am an optimist, but in this case I am not optimistic. I do, however, oppose efforts at this point to cut off funds for military operations in Iraq. As many members of this committee are in the process of showing, there are more constructive ways to express concern about administration policies.

Mr. Chairman, America's own war between the States lasted about as long as the current war in Iraq. It went on so long that Abraham Lincoln said in frustration that the heavens were hung in black. We might say the same today.

I see profound problems ahead, but I have confidence in the resilience of our Nation. We can, in time, regain our balance and restore our reputation. All that is required is that America become America again.

We must respond creatively to change. We must use the full array of our national security tools. We must live up to our own democratic principles. We must, in the words of John Kennedy, pursue peace as the necessary rational end of rational man.

And we must honor the men and women of our Armed Forces by ensuring that they have the right equipment, the right leadership, and the right missions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Madam Secretary.

I'm going to yield to Senator Boxer and then I'll go last in this round.

Senator BOXER. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman. I so appreciate it.

Madam Secretary, thank you very much for your clarity. And I think you're the first person in a long time that came before us and used the word "peace" a few times. And I like that, because it's a vision. And I remember, during the darkest days of the Vietnam war, there was a bumper sticker that appeared, Mr. Chairman, on some cars, and it said, "Imagine peace." And at first I looked at it, because where I was, definitely in the antiwar camp, and saying, "What does that mean?" And then I realized that we had almost gotten to a point where we couldn't imagine what it would be like not to turn on the TV and see dead soldiers, Americans, as we're seeing now every day. So, we need to always think ahead to the day when we will have that. And we need to have action now to get to that place.

And here's where I'm worried. I see paralysis setting in, in the political sector of our own country. And it's almost—it's a fear of what's happening now, but a fear of how it could look, "It could be worse." And I think when you get into that place, where you're fearful of what's happening now, but you fear the unknown of what could be worse, you're stuck. And I think we're stuck, and I think we need to start talking about a vision. We have to think diplomacy and talk about diplomacy. We have to think about peace and talk about peace. We have to challenge al-Maliki, who—and now,

if—I apologize to him in advance—I have never heard the man stand up in a speech and say, "I am calling for a cease-fire in my country that I love so much." I haven't heard that. I want to hear that.

And it's one thing to talk about the American civil war, where Americans versus Americans; it's another thing to have an Iraqi civil war, where Americans are paying a huge price. And you quoted, in your written statement, your longer version, of a soldier—and you name him—that was from the New York Times story—who said, "Who the hell is shooting at me?" They don't know. And, to this, we're going to escort another 21,000 of our beautiful children, and some of them are fathers and mothers. We're putting them into that hell.

So, I'm glad that you're using the words "peace," and I want to talk to you about something I've been pushing, and my chairman knows I am, because I said most people are paralyzed, not everyone. Our chairman has come forward with a vision of how this thing can end up in a place where people will stop killing each other and yet keep together the country of Iraq to do the things a country has to do, including making sure the oil is shared in a fair way. It's not three separate countries. He's gotten a rap on that. Never was. Always semiautonomous, policing by your own people, trust built up in that kind of—it's just what's happening in Kurdistan.

Now, today we had a breakthrough, I think, with Dr. Kissinger. Dr. Kissinger said, essentially—and I am being fair in what he said—he said, "You know, I think that's where it's going," he said, in answer to my question, "it's going to the Biden plan. It's moving that way, but we have to be careful not to put the American stamp on it, because that wouldn't be good," to which I said, "I'd rather have us in the middle of a diplomatic solution than in the middle of a civil war."

And I'm asking you the same question. And I'm not asking you to endorse the Biden-Gelb plan, or the Gelb-Biden plan, however it is, but isn't it time now to think—not only think diplomacy, but act as if that is where we're going? The American people voted to get us out of there, in my opinion. Yes; they're cautious. None of our plan—I'm on the Feingold bill, Feingold-Boxer—we say it's going to take 6 months, and we're going to leave antiterror forces there, we're going to leave training forces there. Not one plan says we're walking away from the region. But the American people want us to get out, want our soldiers to stop dying, want a diplomatic solution. What did the President give them? A military strategy, a battle plan, for 21,000 troops.

So, I'm asking you, because I get frustrated sometimes with diplomats, of which I readily admitted before, I'm not one, you know that—because I'm afraid that diplomats sometimes, by nature, are cautious in what they say, because that's your job, that—you have to keep everybody moving, and you can't shut off any ideas. And I get it. But if we could agree that now is the time to think diplomacy, rather than keep talking about surges and so on, is it not time for, maybe, a consensus to develop around this notion of a meeting, whether it be regional, international, where everyone comes to the table with their plans?

You know, yesterday, I had an all-day hearing on global warming. It was the most interesting thing. And, Mr. Chairman, I missed you desperately. You were here. But we had—a third of the Senate came—a quarter in person, the rest wrote. What was that—why was it important to do that? Because we want to see where everybody is, and we want to envision not the catastrophe of global warming, but how we're going to solve it. And so, we came together as a U.S. Senate yesterday. It was a fascinating thing. And I think we are way past the time where we have to be much more aggressive about demanding a kind of a conference where the ideas to solve this problem all come on the table. And I'm wondering if you feel that sense of urgency for diplomacy and specific solutions.

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Thank you, Senator. And I think that I have sometimes been known for being fairly blunt while I have been trying to be diplomatic.

I think we need a surge in diplomacy. That is what is essential here. And what has troubled me is that there has not been any kind of a comprehensive diplomatic approach to what is happening—in the Middle East, specifically; but generally. Comprehensive diplomatic planning is not a hallmark of this administration. And I think that that has been very much missing.

So, I would agree that what has to happen is a big diplomatic push. I was interested in what Dr. Kissinger had to say. I think—he and I obviously talk fairly frequently, and we have talked about the idea of a regional diplomatic approach, where, in fact, you actually talk to everybody, where you might begin by having a contact group of the immediate powers, the Permanent Five of the Security Council and then the regional countries. But I believe that what is happening in the region is in the national interest of a number of different countries, and they should be at the table. So, I think that there needs to be a very comprehensive diplomatic approach.

On the idea of what happens to Iraq, I think that—I do think it's essential to talk about the territorial integrity of Iraq, which both you and Chairman Biden have talked about. What I am troubled by is that this administration failed, after the invasion, to discuss with the political people in Iraq the concept of federalism—that is something we happen to know something about—when they were searching for particular ways to run a country that clearly is composed of a variety of different sects, groups, and religious approaches. And so, I think the idea of the—as the Constitution of Iraq is written, which allows for—and mandates, in fact—a great deal of regional autonomy, is appropriate. I think there are certain central powers that a government needs. Some of it has to do with the oil revenue and various other parts. So, without endorsing any plan, I do think reality here sets in that there will be regional autonomy. I do think we have to be very careful not to pursue or precipitate a breakup of Iraq as a country, because I think, as all of you have described, it would have a dangerous impact on the rest of the region. But it is time for us to have a surge in diplomacy.

Senator BOXER. Mr. Chairman, can I just finish, in 30 seconds? Thank you.

Senator Biden's plan never called for breaking up the country into separate countries, so I have to say that a hundred times. Never, ever did. It's always been the type of system that is allowed

in the Iraqi Constitution. I just think sometimes, you know—no one, that I know of, is suggesting it, at least not in the Senate. So, I wanted to clear the point on that.

But I just want to thank you very much. I don't know how many people saw—in the news this weekend, there was a conversation with the people who were close to al-Sadr. And what al-Sadr said is, as soon as the American troops are ready to go after him, he's gone away. And he and his boys are going to other parts of Iraq to increase their organization. They're not going to stand out there and be killed. And so, while we're surging, he's going to expand his influence in the rest of the country. So, how this surge, in the long run, is going to help us resolve things is beyond me, and the only way is what you say, a diplomatic surge, an idea such as the chairman's and others, on the table to give hope to the people that there is a peaceful way out of this nightmare. And I just want to thank you for continuing to come forward, because it's very charged, and it's very hard, and I thank you for your words today.

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Thank you. If I might just comment, I have—when asked about Senator Biden's plan, I have said that, in fact, it is an attempt to keep the country together——

Senator BOXER. Good.

Ms. ALBRIGHT [continuing]. Which I do believe is what it is about. I'm just talking about, in the long run, what might happen that we do have to watch out for. But I think it is very clear, from my reading of the plan, that it is done in order to keep the country together, and I do think that is an essential point.

I also think that a point that you make is, our troops are in a very difficult position. They are there, their presence is necessary for security, but their presence is also a flypaper attracting everybody who hates us. So, there are no simple solutions here, which is why I think that we have to have a discussion, such as you all are initiating.

Next, on Iran, I would like to know what is going on with our Government's policy toward Iran.

Senator BOXER. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. So would I, Madam Secretary.

Senator Lugar.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, let me ask you a question based upon your longtime extraordinary leadership with the National Democratic Institute and your interest in democracy, generally. We had a panel, the other day, which included a witness who had been working for the National Endowment for Democracy, but also included the son of President Talibani, and two other persons with roots in Iraq. What I took away from that panel was a description of Iraq after our military operations were concluded; in a word: Anarchy. They described how there was very little policing in most of the areas of the country. As a result, bandits, common criminals, preyed upon people, not simply in Baghdad, but really throughout the country. And, therefore, the thing people care about most there, quite apart from our interest in democracy for the country, or some central government, was simply protection for themselves, for their property, and so forth.

From this desire for security, they suggested, grew many militia, not simply the well-known ones that involve thousands of persons, or those identified with sectarian causes, but local groups of people who exercise some political authority.

Out of the midst of this, the United States worked with some authorities in Iraq to have elections, elections with regard to people in Parliament, one with regard to the Constitution, but some of our witnesses said these elections confirmed about the number of Sunnis there are in the country, how many Shiites, likewise, and how many Kurds. So, it is as if we took a census. The Shiites, as the most numerous group predictably got more representatives than the others.

Secretary Kissinger, this morning, made the point that in a situation in which there are not well-established institutions which recognize minority rights, which have these checks and balances and human rights and so forth, in essence, democratic votes may simply confirm that one side is dominant and there is a sectarian feeling that dominance may then be enforced by a government which comes from all of this.

I'm asking your view—was our pursuit of democracy, the stages that occurred there, appropriate? If it was not, was there, at any point, an opportunity for these institutions that buttress democracy to grow? Or, in the sectarian situation, is there going to be a sense, for a while, of minority rights, rather than winner-take-all? And, finally, if, in this current situation, the Maliki government, the Shiite government, feels that somehow it is being undermined and seeks assistance from Iran so that it preserves at least the Shiite side of it, as well as maybe some civil authority in Iraq, how are we to respond to that?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Well, we've hit on my favorite subject, so—but I think that the issue here is that I think we're all alike, and people want to be able to make decisions about their own lives. Therefore, I do believe that democracy is not just a Western whim, but something that does fit across the world. But you cannot impose democracy. Imposing democracy is an oxymoron. And what the National Democratic Institute had done in various places—we're in over 60 countries now—is to support democracy in various places where there are ideas and people want to participate in their own government.

I think that many mistakes were made early on in Iraq, in terms of not understanding what had to be done with the political structure. We talked about the federalism issue. Also, that elections would, in fact, make clear that the Shia were the majority population. But it is possible to have elections in which the majority is elected, while minority rights are also honored.

And I think that we have learned that democracy is not an event, democracy is a process. And there have been, I think, positive feelings about democracy in Iraq. I do think, when we saw the purple fingers and everything, it was a legitimate movement, there were people who took great risks to go out and vote at that time. NDI has been on the ground, we have been training a lot of people. Very sadly, we lost a person last week, Andrea Parhamovich—from Ohio—who was a wonderful young woman.

But the truth is that we can't give up on Iraq. We will not have a functioning Jeffersonian democracy, or Jacksonian or any other, for the time being. But I do believe in the idea of democracy support. I do not believe in the possibility of imposing democracy on Iraq, which I think was really part of what was happening there.

Senator LUGAR. I offer my sincere condolences to the entire NDI family on the death of Ms. Parhamovich. But, let me ask one question you've raised that Iran brings into this international context. There are fears on the part of some of the Sunni nations surrounding Iraq that the Shiite government might ally with Iran. What are the dangers there?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Well, I think that we have to be very careful about a long-range trend in the region which is an Arab-Persian war—Sunni-Shia, if you want to describe it that way. And I think that it is of great concern. And we should try, in many ways, to hope that we're not in the middle of it, and also to do everything to try to mitigate such a possibility. That is not done, frankly, by deciding that we're never going to talk to Iranians. And the relationship between the Shia in Iraq and the Iranians exists, that's there. And I do think that our main problem is trying to figure out how to develop an area within the Middle East where these shifts can be absorbed peacefully, where we are part of some kind of a new security framework and are able to deal with what I think could be a disaster, which is a Persian-Arab war.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Senator Menendez.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate your courtesy, as well, throughout the hearing.

And, Madam Secretary, it's great to see you again, and we appreciate your service. And I want to thank you for your candor.

You know, I read your testimony before Secretary Kissinger finished his, and used some of it to ask questions, so there's some degree of unanimity on one or two of these issues. Part of your testimony talks about that there are no good options, just the best of what exists. And the result is that every alternative now carries with it great risk and the potential for even deeper and wider strife. Secretary Kissinger agreed with that.

But then, you go on to say, "Each depends," talking about the alternatives, "for success far more than what others—on what others do than on what we do," This is another way of saying that, despite our power, we have lost control of the most important U.S. national security initiative of this decade. And Dr. Kissinger had a little bit of a different view of that. He felt that we could still drive the effort by our leadership to try to get others, who are critical to achieving success, to do what we would help them to do to achieve that.

How do you see that? At this point, how do you see us being able to drive, or to change that dynamic, so that, while we may have lost control, as you say, of the most important U.S. national security initiative of the decade, we seek to regain some of that control? In another part of your written statement, you say, "An arrangement must be worked out that will give each side more than they can obtain through continued violence." The question is: How do we

get to that set of circumstances? How do we make, in other words, Iraqis love their children more than they hate their neighbors?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. It's going to be very difficult for me to say what I'm about to say, which is that I am very troubled by America's reputation, at this point. I very much thought, and continued to say, often, when I was Secretary, that the United States was the indispensable nation. I have fully believed that, and I have thought and believed in the goodness of American power. I continue to believe in the goodness of the American people and our overall direction, but, rather than being in a position where we can drive something now, when we get involved in something, people are very suspicious about it.

I just came back from West Africa and East Africa, where people were saying, "Well, you know, America's position on Sudan is really basically some kind of a reaction to what they're not doing in the Middle East." And everything is viewed with suspicion. And that troubles me incredibly, because the world needs America to have ideas, to put bridging proposals on the table, and yet, at the moment, our motives are suspect everywhere.

Therefore, I think that what is essential is for us to begin to use the diplomatic tool much more, which is why I thought that working through some kind of a contact group would be a good idea, also trying to see the Middle East as a regional issue. Secretary Kissinger spoke at length about history, and I think—feel very strongly that people need to look at the Middle East in a historical way. President Clinton told me to read one particular book, called "The Peace to End all Peace," which provides a history of how the modern Middle East was created after the end of the First World War. And the short version was that it happened because the British and French bureaucracies were lying to each other. When the British left the area, the United States became the, kind of, governing power.

And what is viewed in the Middle East now is that we are all colonial powers, and there is a massive shift going on in the region. I think we have to recognize that. We have to be there to support those who want to live in peace and live in countries that make sense. But I'm sorry to say that, at this moment, it's a little hard for the United States to put down a plan and say, "Salute," because our motives are suspect. That is the reason that there has to be very active diplomacy, a regional plan.

And I also would say the following. We have to be protective of our national interest. The United States did not begin World War I or World War II, but, when we saw that it affected our national interest, we went in there and fought. The Europeans and others who did not favor this war and have criticized it, need to understand that what is going on in the Middle East affects their national interest, and they need to get in there and help. They have to help in the training of a lot of the Iraqis, they have to help in a lot of the reconstruction. It means we have to share the contracts a bit. But they need to understand that they also have a national interest in this. And, therefore, internationalizing this issue, understanding the shifts in the Middle East, is where I think we need to go.

But I don't want anybody to misunderstand me in terms of my respect for what our troops have done, the support that the American people have given, and the necessity that ultimately America continues to play a vital role in the world. But, at the moment, our moral authority is seriously damaged.

Senator MENENDEZ. Under the heading of the part of your statement that says, "An arrangement must be worked out that would give each side more than they can obtain through continued violence"—what would you envision some of that being?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Well, I think that the violence is just—I can't visualize what it's like to live in Baghdad or Basra or places where people are terrified to go to meetings. Violence is getting them nowhere. And I think that what needs to be done is to really work on—as everybody has said, there have to be political solutions to this; there are no purely military solutions. A political solution will provide majority rule, but, as many people here have learned, minority rights are also very important. And so, there has to be a structure which permits that, which recognizes the differences among the various groups in Iraq, where they gain by not killing each other, but in sharing the wealth of what is a pretty resource-rich country. And I think, also, that the religious leaders need to play an important part in this search for common ground. None of it is easy, believe me. And it has been exacerbated by the fact that, as others have described, there is routine killing and gangs. But they can gain more by a political solution in which minority rights are recognized and resources are shared.

Senator MENENDEZ. One very last question. Lee Hamilton was here with Secretary Baker and he basically said he has little faith in Prime Minister Maliki, in terms of having a series of benchmarks, chances to meet them, and not achieving them. What's your assessment of that?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Well, I don't know Prime Minister Maliki. I think that it is very hard for us to say they're a sovereign government and then expect them to do exactly as we want them to. On the other hand, if our forces are there, helping, then we do have the right to advocate certain—"benchmarks" is the best word, not a timetable, but—benchmarks, in terms of what they need to achieve in moving forward on getting the oil legislation passed or in working together on developing some of the political institutions.

We cannot leave this as open-ended. I think that's an essential part. We also have to make clear that we don't want to have permanent bases there. And we have to make clear that we need to see some progress. So, I would agree with the general thrust of the Iraq Study Group on this, and some others who have testified.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator LUGAR [presiding]. The Chair has asked me to recognize Senator Nelson.

Senator BILL NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, thank you for your public service and your levelheaded approach to foreign affairs. And thank you for your great accomplishments while heading up our diplomatic efforts.

The Iraq Study Commission said, we ought to open up to Syria. Now, I understand you've already discussed this issue here earlier today. I went to Syria. We saw a little crack in the door after a

very sharp exchange between myself and President Assad on things that we disagree on. But he did open the door, as he did 3 years ago, to cooperation with the Americans on better control of the border. And he followed through on that over the last 3 years; albeit sporadic, there was cooperation, and then the cooperation precipitously stopped a couple of months after the assassination of Rafik Hariri. Now President Assad has opened the door again. What would be your advice to us in order to continue this dialog if the executive branch refuses to engage in it?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Well, first of all, my general belief is that one gains by communication with countries with whom we disagree. In fact, it is even more important, because we need to know what's going on and what their thinking is. And I certainly met with people that I didn't agree with—Milosevic or Kim Jong Il. But I think that it is a way to learn a lot and to deliver some pretty tough messages.

I think that we need to take advantage of openings that President Assad provides, for a number of reasons. One, we need their—we need Syria's help, in terms of the way you have talked about the border issues, but also I think it would be very useful to somehow separate, a bit, this kind of peculiar alliance or relationship between Iran and Syria. I also, without breaking any laws, in terms of negotiations, I think that there are ways for various parliamentarians to meet, for dialog through private channels, track-two diplomacy, and a way to try to indicate that Americans are interested in learning what is going on in Syria.

We also learned, through the newspapers, that there were some attempts to restart the Israel-Syria talks. So, there are any number of avenues, I think, where it would not hurt, and I think it would be in U.S. national interests, to try to find out more what President Assad is thinking, which in no way would lessen our interest or our desire to find out what happened on the assassination of Prime Minister Hariri. I think we're able to do both things at the same time.

Senator BILL NELSON. I raised the issue of Iran with President Assad, in the way of, "Would you not realize, Mr. President, that, down the line, your interests are opposite those of Iran, and that Iran ultimately wants Persian domination of the Arab countries in the region? And yet, you're establishing a relationship right now that ultimately is going to haunt you." He disputed that. What would you, as someone who is extraordinarily experienced in these matters of diplomacy, advise us as an avenue to convince Syria—specifically, Assad—that Iran is really not his friend?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Well, I think you've pointed out the whole value of having these kinds of conversations, because there are not a lot of people around President Assad who, I think, are willing to challenge a lot of his thinking. And, therefore, it is important for people with historical background and understanding of the long-term problems to sit there with him and point up what you have said you did. It doesn't mean he's going to agree with you overnight, but if enough people deliver the same message—I dealt with President Assad, and—having also dealt with his father, before that—and I think that repetition works and that it is important. And that's the reason to open up a variety of channels to be able to point up what

is happening in the whole Middle East, that Syria can, in fact, ultimately take its position within the Arab world, but that it has to behave responsibly and it has to understand what the threats to its national interests are, too. And that's why an outsider that can point these things up, I think, is very useful.

Senator BILL NELSON. Given the fact that there is a schism in Iran—we've seen it in the local elections recently, we've seen other evidence that Ahmadinejad is being reined in—would you advise that this is an opening for the United States? Could some kind of dialog ultimately bring about more moderation in the extremist kind of statements and views expressed by the President of Iran?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Well, let me start out by saying none of this is easy. Iran is a very complex place. Our history with Iran is equally complex. And during the Clinton administration, we tried a number of ways to push. This is when President Khatami was in office, and one had to be very careful. They, in fact, did not respond, and I have it on pretty good authority that some of them are sorry that they didn't. But, again, I do think the statements that President Ahmadinejad has been making are preposterous and do not deserve a face-to-face meeting, then, with an American official leader. But there are a number of different groups in Iran. We do know—I found Tom Friedman's column, this morning, very interesting, where he points up how many people are educated in Iran, what the problems are, in terms of dissent, the fact that people feel that they are not getting a reward for the richness of Iran's oil wealth. And I think that there, again, are ways that there can be track-two diplomacy and that there are other people in Iran that can be spoken to by Americans, as well as non-Americans. And so, for the same reason, I would try to parse that situation and make it—it's interesting to me that, in fact, there has been criticism of Ahmadinejad in Iran for the statements that he's made, both on the nuclear issue and others. And I think we need to be able to work within that, through a variety of other groups and track-two diplomacy, as well as official contacts.

The CHAIRMAN [presiding]. Do you have any—you want to follow up with anything, Senator? You're welcome——

Senator BILL NELSON. Well, I'm so shocked.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, you're here, and, even more shocking, I haven't asked any questions yet, so I'm going to—the Secretary has been very gracious with her time, and the good news is, there's not a lot of people left here, at this moment, and——

Senator BILL NELSON. Well, I would like to ask one more question.

The CHAIRMAN. Please. You go right ahead.

Senator BILL NELSON. I went to Saudi Arabia specifically at the request of General Hayden, the head of the CIA, because there hadn't been a lot of congressional delegations going to Saudi Arabia. And personal relationships are important in that part of the world. So, again, this idea of dialog, building the relationships, and so forth. But, as I pushed, in my talk with the King, and then a number of his nephews with whom I met, who were responsible in the various ministries for the different functions of the government, I didn't get the straight feeling that they would really get involved in Iraq and help us through their Sunni tribal contacts as I was

requesting. From the Saudi point of view, clearly a more stable Iraq is in their interest—but I didn't get the warm feeling that they were really foursquare going to get in and do it. And that's not even to bring up the issue of: Would they help fund some of the reconstruction of Iraq? Can you give me an insight into the Saudi mind as to why? And does that portend it will be very, very difficult to get all the rest of those neighboring countries to come together and help move Iraq toward political compromise?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Well, I think one of the more difficult things, even when one has access to all the intelligence, is to know exactly what's on the Saudi mind. And when we were in office, I found, actually, that often the Saudis were more helpful than the public ever knew. So, I don't know whether that's going on now or not. I do think that they are very concerned—I know King Abdullah pretty well from when he was Crown Prince, and I do think that they are concerned about changes within their own country, and—as you point out, a number of different sects and divisions there, and a slowness to reform. And, obviously, that is their major concern.

I think that it would be good, also, for them to try to help in what is going on in Iraq. On the other hand, I don't think we want to start seeing stories in the papers, "All of a sudden the Saudis are going into Iraq," and there's a kind of a concern that that will broaden everything.

So, the question is how to get their help, in terms of understanding that the Sunnis should be a part of the entire system, and that they also need to help, ultimately, with the large funds that they have. And that all the countries, with the Saudis in the lead, would benefit if there were not such turmoil in the region.

But that, again, is part of what the job of diplomacy is. You can't just, kind of, all of a sudden decide that the Vice President is going to Saudi Arabia. You need to have very constant contact, you need to know what is on the Saudi mind. As I read, there's about to be a new Saudi Ambassador here. And I think, again, it is very important for all of you, and many of us, to go to Saudi Arabia on a regular basis and talk about things with them. I find my trips there always very enlightening. And we need to know more about Saudi Arabia and about Jordan and Egypt and all the countries, because, as I said earlier, there is a massive shift going on in the region, and it behooves us to understand that we are in the middle of a systemic change and that our role there will be different.

And I hope that we think more about some kind of an overall security system for the region, which is why I talked, earlier, about a comprehensive diplomatic approach to this area.

Senator BILL NELSON. Do you think, after 1,327 years of hatred between Sunnis and Shiites, that we have a chance of bringing those two together——

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Well——

Senator BILL NELSON [continuing]. In the midst of this sectarian violence?

Ms. ALBRIGHT [continuing]. I don't think we do, because most people don't even know the difference between them. I do think, however, that we should be in a position that we can—to encourage. And I never—I wrote a book about the role of God and religion

in foreign policy—got a good title, "The Mighty and the Almighty." And what I—I had trouble, even there, trying to figure out the adjectives and the nouns, and to say "moderate Muslims," because moderate Muslims don't believe moderately. So, I think that moderates need to be passionate about what they believe in. But I think that there are elements within Islam that are more capable of helping in this than we are. And that is one of the reasons that I believe that it's essential to get religious leaders involved in this.

Senator BILL NELSON. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Casey. And then I'll wait until the end here.

Senator CASEY. My——

The CHAIRMAN. Unless you want some time, Senator.

Senator CASEY. No; my timing is better than it normally is.

Madam Secretary, thank you very much for your testimony today and for being with us, and for your public service. Remarkable public service at, then, a difficult time in our Nation's history and, I think, today, as well.

One of the areas that I've tried to focus on in the midst of the great panels that Chairman Biden and Senator Lugar have put together for us that come from the perspective of military strategy and the questions that surround that, the political and governmental challenges that we face in Iraq, and that they face, of course. But I've tried to focus, as many of us have, on diplomacy, and sometimes, in my judgment, the lack thereof, or the lack of a strategic commitment to diplomacy. And I know you may have covered this today, but I wanted to get your thoughts, in terms of (a) what's gone before us since 2003, in terms of what I think is a lack of a strategy on diplomacy, and (b) and, I guess, more importantly, what we should be doing, what our Government should be doing—the President, the State Department, and certainly this committee and the Congress, in its oversight role—to foster a strategic diplomatic surge, if you will, as opposed to what I seem to see as a—kind of, tactical in responding to changes on the ground or public pressure, as opposed to a strategy effort that's sustained, and there's—kind of a sustained engagement over time. I don't know if you can answer that, in terms of what's gone before us and what's ahead, if you had the ability to directly impact it.

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Let me just say this, there's nothing easier than to be on the outside and criticize those that are currently involved in American diplomacy, especially when they criticized what we had been doing in American diplomacy. But I will try to contain myself.

I do think that what has not happened is to have any kind of a comprehensive approach to diplomatic solutions. To a great extent, one of the most interesting things that's happened in—from the perspective, now, of a professor—of the struggles between the State Department and the Defense Department is: What is the role of diplomacy? To what extent is there a real partnership between force and diplomacy? It is one of the things that was very much on my mind when we were dealing with the issues of Kosovo. Chairman Biden mentioned this Foreign Ministers group that I've pulled together. We are the people that worked all together through Kosovo, which is how we began to understand how force and diplo-

macy work together. And I don't see that happening, particularly, here. Diplomacy really is taking very much of a back seat. To the extent that one has seen it, a lot of it is ad hoc, rather than being part of a larger comprehensive plan.

I believe that it is absolutely essential to begin to see the issues of Iraq within the region and to understand that diplomatic efforts have to also involve the other countries in the region and then other countries in the world, because what is happening in Iraq is definitely affecting their national interests.

People often talk about diplomacy as a chess game between two people. It's not a chess game. In chess, you have a lot of time, you sit there between moves, and it's relatively quiet. I think it's more like a game of pool, where, in fact, there are balls on a table. You pick up a cue stick, you hope very much you can get the ball into the pocket on the other side, but, on the way, you hit a lot of other balls. And that's what's happening. And we are not considering enough the horizontal aspect of diplomacy and getting enough players involved in it.

I think, also, we need to consider, for instance, that it isn't just the issues in the region. As we talk about Iran and what they're doing on their nuclear program, or not doing on their nuclear program, you can just bet that Kim Jong Il, in Pyongyang, is listening also. So, I think we have to understand much more the interaction of all of this and to understand that diplomacy is not appeasement, that it is the vehicle for delivering some pretty tough messages, and to get the help of others in trying to resolve some of these problems. So, I'm very glad that you are focusing on that, also very glad to see you here.

Senator CASEY. Thank you.

And I was thinking, as well, about the—I think it helps those of us in government—and you've dealt with a lot of us over the years, and we're better if we have lists that are very specific. And I'm just wondering whether there's a—and you may have covered this earlier, and I had one of those five-different-hearings-in-one-morning days, so—it's not an excuse, it's just an explanation for where we've been today—but I guess if you were thinking of the next—maybe not even 6 months, but 3 to 6 months, if you had a short list of things we should do diplomatically, very specific steps, what would they be? If you can——

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Well——

Senator CASEY. Boiling it down.

Ms. ALBRIGHT [continuing]. I think that one which has to be done, for its own sake, as well as, obviously, the effect in the region, is for very strong concentration on the Israeli-Palestinian issue. I know that there are those who want to make it central to resolving what's happening in the Middle East, and I think that linkage is not correct, because it's important to understand that issues there have to be dealt with for their own sake, but they have to be dealt with. And so, I was very glad to see Secretary Rice go to the region. I understand the Quartet is going to be meeting in Washington on Friday, so that there is some activation of that. And I think that would help not only the immediate issue, but also show American interest that has been lacking.

I, then, also would work on trying to pull together this contact group of countries that have an interest in the region, the Permanent Five of the Security Council, plus the countries that surround Iraq, and—we did that when we were dealing with the Balkans, and it creates kind of an executive committee or a group that deals with this issue on a day-to-day basis, and then they are able, each one, as a part of that, to broaden the circle by having relationships with other countries. So, that would be one thing.

I also would try, through diplomacy, to get other countries to help in the reconstruction of Iraq and in the training of Iraqis, because the only way that we're going to get out of there, which I believe we have to do, is if the security situation is dealt with, and the only way the security situation will be dealt with is if the Iraqis themselves begin to deal with it.

So, I could make a longer list, but, I think, if they did that much, that would be a big step forward.

The CHAIRMAN. It would keep them occupied for a while.

Senator CASEY. Three is a good list for the Congress, I know that.

That's—but I know my time is almost expired, and I just want to reiterate our thanks to you for your public service and for your continuing public service in addition to which your testimony today gives us a lot of food for thought, and I'm grateful.

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Good. Thank you, Senator.

Senator CASEY. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, Madam Secretary, thank you. It's kind of like the old days. I get to sit down with you alone, and I, quite frankly, miss your energy and your insight.

Madam Secretary, I just want to make a couple of things clear. I believe that, had the President come up to the Congress and to the leadership here in both parties and said, "Look, I have a comprehensive plan, which includes the need to temporarily alter force in Iraq, but here's the whole plan," he may have gotten a very different reception.

The problem with the President's plan: It's the tactic. It's a tactical change in mission, inserting our troops in the midst of a civil war, in the single most white-hot portion of that civil war, a city of 6.3 million, in the middle of Baghdad. And so, that's what most of us are reacting to. And now, as Senator Lugar has said, we share the view that the concern is that you have friends like my good friend Senator McCain, who supports this, saying, "This is the last chance."

Now, what I'm worried—and you and I have had discussions about this—my great worry is, as this administration continues to mishandle Iraq, the American people are not going to be prepared to act even in those areas where there is an overwhelming rationale to need to have forward-based forces, have forces engaged in certain circumstances. So, I'm worried the President's proposal here is not only going to fail, but, in its failure, the American people will walk away from whatever everybody acknowledges, from Senator Boxer to Senator Isakson, which says that we have interest in the region.

And so, that takes me to the next point that I want to discuss with you. I realize that—I was warned, by many very smart people

you and I both know, not to put forward a specific plan, months ago. It's been the only specific plan out there. It's not because I'm so smart. There's a lot of very, very important people. But it's a dangerous thing to put out a specific plan, as we know, in this town. And—but I was so convinced, from my experience in Bosnia—as you and I well know—I don't think it's an exaggeration to suggest, Madam Secretary—other than you, from the outside, I was the most consistent pounding voice to get us engaged in Bosnia and to stop the genocide, and in Kosovo. But it was your leadership—your leadership inside that got that done. And I learned a lot of lessons from Bosnia.

The sectarian violence in Bosnia and in the Balkans overall, for 800 years, from Vlad the Impaler on, equals anything that we've seen in Iraq. And I noticed what you did. I noticed what—at least with a little nudging and a little bit of help from the outside by me, what—it would be an exaggeration—what we did—you did it. But I was—I was rooting you on and making every bit of—using every bit of influence I could to move.

But what did you do? You had Dayton. And what did you do in Dayton? You not only brought in the regional players, you brought in Russia, you brought in all the major players. And you locked everybody in a room, and you came up with something far, on paper, more divisive than anything I've suggested with regard to Iraq. You set up the Republika Srpska, with a separate President. You set up Bosnia, with two Presidents, one Croat and one Bosniak, a Muslim. And you were right. Because the only way there was any possibility to keep that country from shattering, even though all of your interlocutors, from France to England—I need not remind you, I know—said, "No, no, no, no, no, no. No." Well, where are we today? The genocide has stopped. They're working like the devil to unite the country under a different constitution. Things are not all, as they say, "hunky-dory" in Kosovo, but—guess what?—they're not killing each other, and there's hope.

Now, what I have been amazed at is why everyone thinks, when I took the Iraqi Constitution—I was there that day, and put my finger in the ink, and I read the Constitution that we helped write. It calls for, it sets out explicitly that Kurdistan is a republic, is what they call a region. They define what powers regions have, what the powers of the central government are. I met, in my seven trips, with as many people as anybody in this government has, I suspect. I have been to Basrah. I've been to Fallujah. I've been even out into Al Asad Air Force Base, in the middle of God knows where. And guess what I found out? If you're going to keep this country together, you'd better give it some breathing room. The idea you're going to take a country, with all due respect to everyone, that has been a construct of the postwar era, World War I, that put together groups of personages who would never have been together as a unified country, and say, "By the way, now Saddam's gone. The wicked witch is dead. You're going to have a strong central government," is beyond my comprehension. Beyond my comprehension.

And so, now we're down to a situation that the only two plans being debated are the Biden-Gelb plan and the President's nonplan. Nobody else has a plan. If you look at the Iraq Study Group,

God love them, they have proposals, but what do they say? They say national reconciliation, "U.S. forces can help provide stability, but they cannot stop violence, they cannot contain it. The Iraqi Government must send a clear signal to the Sunnis," and it makes recommendations that are totally consistent with what I laid out 9 months ago.

But what I can't understand is why this administration will not do what you and every one of us has suggested. A year ago, I wrote an op-ed piece, you did, Secretary Schultz, Secretary Kissinger, calling for an international conference. Not just the regional powers. What you did in Dayton. And so, what we call for here is to get the Islamic countries involved. Get Iran involved, but also get France, Germany, the Permanent Five—Germany is not one—the Permanent Five of the United Nations. Bring in Indonesia, possibly even Pakistan, India. Bring them in. Create a circumstance where there is incredible pressure to accept a system arrived at by the Iraqis that will be honored by the immediate neighbors. And so, what I don't understand is: Why do we continue to talk about something that I've not found a single solitary person thinks can happen in your lifetime or mine, and that is a strong united central government in Baghdad whose purpose is to rule the country and have the ability to get trust from all the warring factions to trust they'll distribute the revenues fairly, to trust that everyone will be treated equally? It's not going to happen. I've been around as long as you, Madam Secretary. It is not going to happen in anyone's lifetime in this room.

So, I appreciate you suggesting that my plan—our plan—is to hold Iraq together, but I'd like to ask the central question. Do you see any possibility—and if you would, would you outline for me—within the next 10 years, of a strong central government without constitutional guarantees relating to energy and guarantees relating to local protecting security forces? I ask this question to everyone, which is: Can anyone picture the possibility of the Iraqi national police force—that's what it is now—ever patrolling the streets of Fallujah? Can anyone imagine that happening? You know and I know, you're not even allowed—those forces are not even allowed to set foot in the Kurdish area, under the Constitution, without their permission. What is it that makes anybody think we're going to get a strong central government that will allow our troops to come home and not continue to be sacrificed to a sectarian cycle of revenge?

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Mr. Chairman, I agree with what you have said, in terms of the actual impossibility, I think, at this point, to get a kind of dominant centralized government. And if it comes, it will come at great expense of all minority rights, and, therefore, will continue the fighting.

I appreciate all your kind words about the Balkans, and I do think we developed a great partnership. And we did manage to get all those people—we had to lock them at Dayton, but we did manage to get something done.

Every situation is slightly different, but I do think that the concept of having an international conference where others participate in the solution is what is necessary. And I must say I regret the extent to which your ideas were misinterpreted up front, because

some people just talked about it as a partition. It is not a partition. And I agree, also, with you, that there has to be breathing space for the various regions.

I do think there is a problem, in that some of the neighboring countries might then take advantage of it, and there also might be elements within some of these regions who would then move for some kind of independence. But the bottom line is, that is not the necessary outcome of it.

I think the reason that it is not—that an international conference is not being considered is that this administration is not exactly big into international conferences or partnerships or trying to work a problem out. And it is an issue, because, as powerful as we are, the issues that are out there cannot be dealt with by the United States alone, and it is not a derogation of our responsibilities in order for us to share this problem with other countries.

Which leads me to say what you started out with. I am deeply concerned that when this war is over—and it will be over—that the American people will basically say, "We've had it. We have enough problems in this country." And we do. It's what I call the "Katrina Effect." If you can't pay attention to what's happening at home, then people are not eager to help abroad. But we have to be engaged. The world could not exist without American engagement. And I hope that we do not allow that to happen.

And further, Mr. Chairman, I'm very troubled about what has happened to the word "democratic." This administration, because of—it has militarized democracy in Iraq—is giving democracy a bad name. And the United States cannot be the United States if we do not understand that we are better off if other countries are democratic, if we support democratic movements. We can't impose them. But I hope very much that we all do not turn away from the concept that democracy is the best form of government.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, Madam Secretary, I appreciate your testimony. The reason I waited to go last was to be able to raise that broad context with you. And you and I, as I said, go back a long way. And I appreciate your input and response to my larger question.

I'll conclude by saying that it's about time we acknowledged the reality which is happening on the ground. It's about time we get specific about a political solution, not just calling for one—suggesting one. And it's about time we get the international community, who I believe is ready to embrace it. And I assure you, in my view—if the Kurds understand, which they do in my discussions, that a disintegration of Iraq, which may happen, putting them in the position where they're de facto independent, is the very thing that will bring the Turks in. The only way to keep the Kurds safe and not have that expression they have, "the mountains are their only friends," is to make sure there is a united Iraq, loosely federated. Absent that, we have a war on our hands, in my humble opinion.

But I believe this is becoming inevitable. I think we'll find a lot of people coming around to, if not exactly what Les Gelb and I proposed—something closer to it, because the reality is 3.5 million people have already fled Iraq. The cleansing is well underway. And the

rest of the concerns we have are: Iran is getting involved, the Syrians are indirectly involved, the Saudis are threatening to become more involved. So, the question is: How do you stop the thing that we're all saying we don't want to have happen? And I would respectfully suggest, if not the only way, one of the ways is as I've suggested.

And I mean what I said about your leadership on Bosnia and your leadership in Kosovo. It saved a serious, serious, serious dislocation, and not just in the Balkans, but all of Europe, and you—in my view, your tenure will go down in history for having avoided that.

I thank you very much. We are adjourned. Excuse me for my——

Ms. ALBRIGHT. Mr. Chairman, could I just thank you——

The CHAIRMAN. Sure.

Ms. ALBRIGHT [continuing]. For having these hearings? I have very carefully followed and read the transcripts. I think you have, in fact, provided a forum for a truly serious discussion of the issues in Iraq, and I hope, Mr. Chairman, that you do the same for Iran.

The CHAIRMAN. I will.

Ms. ALBRIGHT. You made very clear that the President does not have authority to expand the war into Iraq, and I hope very much that, as chairman of this committee, that you will also proceed to give this kind of a discussion on that.

Thank you so——

The CHAIRMAN. Be sure I——

Ms. ALBRIGHT [continuing]. Much for asking me to come.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Madam Secretary. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 1:02 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

IRAQ IN THE STRATEGIC CONTEXT, SESSION 2

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2007

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:23 a.m., in room SH–216, Hart Senate Office Building, Hon. Joseph R. Biden, Jr. (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Biden, Bill Nelson, Menendez, Cardin, Casey, Webb, Lugar, Hagel, Coleman, Sununu, and Voinovich.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR., U.S. SENATOR FROM DELAWARE

The CHAIRMAN. The hearing will come to order.

Mr. Chairman, before we begin the hearing, I'd like to make a very brief comment on Senator Warner's resolution on Iraq.

Three weeks ago before this committee, Secretary Rice presented the President's plan for Iraq. It's main feature is to send more American troops into Baghdad in the middle of what I believe is a sectarian war. The reaction on this committee, from Republicans to Democrats alike, ranged from profound skepticism to outright opposition. And that pretty much reflected the reaction across the country.

Senators Hagel, Levin, Snowe, and I wrote a resolution to give Senators a way to vote what their voices were saying. I believe that was the quickest, most effective way to get the President to reconsider the course he's on and to demonstrate to him that his policy has little support across the board in this body.

After we introduced our resolution, Senator Warner came forward with his. The bottom line of our resolution is the same as Senator Warner's: "Mr. President, don't send more troops into the middle of a civil war."

There was one critical difference. As originally written, Senator Warner's resolution left open the possibility of increasing the overall number of troops in Baghdad, as well as in Iraq. We believed—the sponsors of our resolution—that that would send the wrong message. We ought to be drawing down and redeploying within Iraq, rather than ramping up, to make clear to the Iraqi leaders that they must begin to make the hard compromises necessary for the political solution virtually everyone acknowledged is needed to bring this conflict to a somewhat successful end.

We approached Senator Warner, my cosponsors and I, several times, to try to work out our differences, and I am very pleased

that last night we succeeded in doing just that. The language that Senator Warner removed from his resolution removed the possibility that it can be read as calling for more troops in Iraq. With that change, I am pleased to support Senator Warner's resolution.

When I first spoke out against the President's planned surge before the new year, I made it clear that I hoped to build a bipartisan opposition to his plan, because this was the best way to have him reconsider. And that's exactly what we have done. We'll see what happens on the floor. But this is exactly what we have done with the Biden, Levin, Hagel, Snowe, and the Warner, Nelson, et cetera, resolution now, all of us joining Senator Warner, as amended.

Now, we have a real opportunity for the Senate to speak clearly. Every Senator will be given a chance to vote on whether he or she supports or disagrees with the President's plan, as outlined by Secretary Rice. If the President does not listen to the—and assuming that the majority is where I believe it is, with Senator Warner and myself and others—if the majority of the Congress and the majority of the American people speak loudly, it's very difficult, I think, for the President to totally dismiss that. But this is an important first step.

Before we begin, let me make clear that the purpose, from the outset, was to get as much consensus as we could on the President's overall plan, and that's why I am delighted to join and work off of Senator Warner's resolution, which, quite frankly, is even a more powerful statement than "a Biden resolution" coming from one of the leading Republicans in the U.S. Senate.

And today marks the final day of our initial series of hearings. I remind our members what they already know, that this committee will, as under my friend and former chairman and future chairman of this committee, because we've been here for an awful lot of changes back and forth over the years—that we will continue to engage in aggressive oversight in the coming weeks, in the coming months, and throughout this year.

We are joined this morning by two very distinguished former National Security Advisors. First, we'll hear from GEN Brent Scowcroft, and later we'll hear from Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski. They are among the best strategic thinkers in America, and we're honored that they're here to join us.

And without further ado, since I did not know we would have worked out a compromise with Senator Warner last night—rather than read the remainder of my statement, I'll ask unanimous consent that it be placed in the record.

[The prepared statement of Senator Biden follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR., U.S. SENATOR FROM DELAWARE

Before we begin, let me make a brief comment on Senator Warner's resolution on Iraq.

Three weeks ago, before this committee, Secretary of State Rice presented the President's plan for Iraq. Its main feature is to send more American troops into Baghdad, in the middle of a sectarian civil war.

The reaction on this committee, from Republicans and Democrats alike, ranged from skepticism to prfound skepticism to outright opposition. And that pretty much reflected the reaction across the country.

Senator Hagel, Senator Levin, Senator Snowe, and I wrote a resolution to give Senators a way to vote what their voices were saying.

We believe that the quickest, most effective way to get the President to change course is to demonstrate to him that his policy has little or no support across the board.

After we introduced our resolution, Senator Warner came forward with his. The bottom line of our resolutions is the same: Mr. President, don't send more Americans into the middle of civil war.

The was one critical difference. As originally written, Senator Warner's resolution left open the possibility of increasing the overall number of American troops in Iraq.

We believed that would send the wrong message. We ought to be drawing down, not ramping up, and redeploying our forces that remain in Iraq. That's the best way to make it clear to the Iraqi leaders that they must begin to make the hard compromises necessary for the political solution virtually everyone agrees is necessary.

We approached Senator Warner several times to try to work out the differences. I am very pleased that last night, we succeeded in doing just that.

The language Senator Warner removed from his resolution removed the possibility that it can be read as calling for more U.S. troops in Iraq.

With that change, I am pleased to support his resolution.

When I first spoke out against the President's planned surge before the new year, I made it clear that I hoped to build bipartisan opposition to his plan because that was the best way to turn him around. And that is exactly what we have done.

Now, we have a real opportunity for the Senate to speak clearly. Every Senator will be given a chance to vote whether he or she supports or disagrees with the President's plan to send more troops into the middle of a civil war.

If the President does not listen to the majority of Congress and the majority of the American people, we will look at other ways to change the policy.

But this is an important first step.

The CHAIRMAN. And welcome to you, General. It's truly an honor to have you here. You're one of the most respected men in this country.

And I will now yield to my colleague, Senator Lugar.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD G. LUGAR, U.S. SENATOR FROM INDIANA

Senator LUGAR. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I thank you for holding this hearing, and I welcome our distinguished former National Security Advisors.

This is, by our count, the 14th meeting of this committee on Iraq since the committee began its series of hearings, on January 9. And, just parenthetically, Mr. Chairman, I congratulate you, and your staff working so well with our staff, in a bipartisan way, on bringing before the committee, and, therefore, before the Senate and the American people, a galaxy of remarkable people, both American and Iraqi, who have addressed this issue, with profit to all of us.

These bipartisan hearings have given us the opportunity to engage administration officials, intelligence analysts, academic experts, former national security leaders, Iraqi representatives, and retired military generals on strategy in Iraq and the broader Middle East. And this process has provided members a foundation for oversight, as well as an opportunity to dialog with each other.

On Tuesday, our committee hosted Secretary of State James Baker and Representative Lee Hamilton, the cochairs of the Iraq Study Group. Both witnesses voiced the need to move Iraq policy beyond the politics of the moment. Even if Congress and the President cannot agree on a policy in Iraq in the coming months, we have to find a way to reach a consensus on the United States role in the Middle East.

Yesterday, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger recalled a half-century of U.S. involvement in the Middle East. He argued that

this history was not accidental. We have been heavily involved in the region because we have enduring interests at stake, and these are interests that are vital to our country. Protecting those interests cannot be relegated to a political timeline. We may make tactical decisions about the deployment or withdrawal of forces in Iraq, but we must plan for a strong strategic posture in the region for years to come.

Both the President and Congress must be thinking about what follows our current dispute over the President's troop surge. Many Members have expressed frustration with White House consultations on Iraq. I've counseled the President that his administration must put much more effort into consulting with Congress on Iraq, on the Middle East, on national security issues, in general. Congress has responsibility in this process. We don't owe the President our unquestioning agreement, but we do owe him, and the American people, our constructive engagement.

I appreciate that the administration wants a chance to make its Baghdad strategy work, and, therefore, is not enthusiastic about talking about plan B. Similarly, opponents in Congress are intensely focused on expressing disapproval of the President's plan through nonbinding resolutions. But when the current dispute over the President's Baghdad plan has reached a conclusion, we will still have to come to grips with how we are to sustain our position in the Middle East.

At yesterday's hearing, I noted that Secretary Rice had taken steps that shift the emphasis of U.S. Middle East policy toward countering the challenges posed by Iran. Under this new approach, the United States would organize regional players—Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, Turkey, the Gulf States and others—behind a program of containing Iran's disruptive agenda in the region. This would be one of the most consequential regional alignments in recent diplomatic history. Such a realignment has relevance for stabilizing Iraq and bringing security to other areas of conflict in the region, including Lebanon and the Palestinian territories. Moderate states in the Middle East are concerned by Iran's aggressiveness and by the possibility of sectarian conflict beyond Iraq's borders. They recognize the United States is an indispensable counterweight to Iran and a source of stability. The United States has growing leverage to enlist greater support for our objectives inside Iraq and throughout the region. In this context, the President's current Iraq plan should not be seen as an endgame, but, rather, as one element in a larger Middle East struggle that is in its early stages.

The President should be reaching out to the Congress in an effort to construct a consensus on how we will protect our broader strategic interests, regardless of what happens in Baghdad in the next several months. Without such preparation, I am concerned that our domestic political disputes or frustration over the failure of the Iraq Government to meet benchmarks will precipitate an exit from vital areas and missions in the Middle East. We need to be preparing for how we will array United States forces in the region to defend oil assets, target terrorist enclaves, deter adventurism by Iran, provide a buffer against regional sectarian conflict, and gen-

erally reassure friendly governments the United States is committed to Middle East security.

We look forward to the insights that will be brought to us by our distinguished witnesses this morning on the strategic and political dynamics involved in our Middle East policy.

I thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator.

General, the floor is yours.

STATEMENT OF LTG BRENT SCOWCROFT, USAF (RET.), FORMER NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR; PRESIDENT, THE SCOWCROFT GROUP, WASHINGTON, DC

General SCOWCROFT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to commend you, Senator Lugar, and the committee, for undertaking this series of hearings. By any measure, the United States finds itself in a most difficult situation in Iraq. If there were an easy solution to our difficulties, we would have found it before now.

In our search for resolution, we must, above all, keep our focus on the U.S. national interest. It is with this in mind that I would like, this morning, to look at Iraq in a regional context.

The conflict in Iraq has brought to the surface a number of seemingly disparate tensions, issues, and conflicts which have stirred various parts of the Mideast region in a way in which they have now become interrelated, yet we still generally tend to consider Iraq as if it were in a regional vacuum. For example, the costs of staying in Iraq are brutally apparent to us, daily—troops killed, hundreds of millions of dollars spent—but the costs of leaving Iraq are almost never mentioned. It is almost as if pulling out our troops and leaving Iraq were cost-free. Even those who do not support pulling out assert that our patience is not unlimited or that President Maliki must step up to his responsibilities, or else. Or else what?

In fact, however, the costs for U.S. withdrawal before a stable Iraq emerges are enormous. Our friends would feel abandoned, left to cope by themselves with a debacle we had created. Our opponents would be emboldened and encouraged to take the offensive. Terrorists everywhere would trumpet the driving of the Great Satan from the region. Moderates in the region, who are our great hope, would be demoralized and run for cover. I could go on, but the almost inevitable result would be a region in chaos, our friends in disarray, radicalism on the march, and U.S. credibility in the region, and the world at large, seriously damaged.

But just as the region would suffer if we abandoned Iraq, the region can help us deal with Iraq. It is clearly in the interests of the countries of the region to help. After all, countries of the region provided troops and money for the 1991 gulf war. Even Syria joined us in that conflict. But since then, it has come to be seen by our friends to be dangerous to be identified with the United States. We need a diplomatic initiative to change that; one which involves the entire region. That means Syria, Iran, and the Arab-Israeli peace process.

A vigorously renewed effort to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict could change both the dynamics in the region and the strategic cal-

culus of key leaders. Hezbollah and Hamas would be—would lose much of their rallying appeal. American allies, like Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the Gulf States, would feel liberated to assist in stabilizing Iraq. And Iraq would finally be seen by all as a key country that had to be set right in pursuit of regional stability.

Resuming the peace process is not a matter of forcing concessions from either side. Most of the elements of a settlement are already agreed as a result of negotiations in 2000 and the roadmap of 2002. What is required is to summon the will of Arab and Israeli leaders, led by a determined American President, to forge the various elements into a conclusion that all parties have publicly accepted, in principle. As for Syria and Iran, we should not be fearful of opening channels of communication, but neither should we rush to engage them as negotiating partners. Moreover, they should be dealt with separately. Their interests, their concerns, are different, and we should not treat them as a duo. Syria cannot be comfortable in the sole embrace of Iran. It also has much to gain from a settlement with Israel, and it may be even more eager if it sees the peace process moving forward without it.

Iran is a different matter. Nuclear issues, first of all, should be dealt with on the U.N. track, not as a part of a regional forum. In its present state of euphoria, Iran has little interest in making things easier for the United States. However, if the peace process makes progress, and other regional states become more interested or engaged in stabilization in Iraq, Iran may be more inclined to negotiate seriously.

In Iraq itself, we should continue to encourage moves toward reconciliation and a unified government. With respect to the surge, I consider it a tactic rather than a strategic move. If it is successful in stabilizing Baghdad, that could begin to change the climate and bring a new self-confidence to Iraqi forces, which could be important. But it will not end the problem. As I say, it is a tactic rather than a strategy.

As a general proposition, I believe American troops should gradually be deployed away from intervening in sectarian conflict. That must be done by Iraqi troops, however well or badly they are able to do it. Our troops should concentrate on training the Iraqi Army, providing support and backup to that army, combating insurgents, attenuating outside intervention, and assisting in major infrastructure protection. That does not mean that the American presence should be reduced. That should follow success in our efforts, not the calendar or the performance of others.

As I said at the outset, there are no easy answers to the problems we face. As we move ahead, we will not find impatience, a quick fix, or seeking partisan advantage a friend to U.S. national interests over the long run. It is going to be hard to make a bad situation better. It will be easy to make it worse.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of General Scowcroft follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LTG BRENT SCOWCROFT, USAF (RET.), FORMER NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR; PRESIDENT, THE SCOWCROFT GROUP, WASHINGTON, DC

[From the New York Times, Jan. 4, 2007]

GETTING THE MIDDLE EAST BACK ON OUR SIDE

(By Brent Scowcroft)

WASHINGTON.—The Iraq Study Group report was released into a sea of unrealistic expectations. Inevitably, it disappointed hopes for a clear path through the morass of Iraq, because there is no "silver bullet" solution to the difficulties in which we find ourselves.

But the report accomplished a great deal. It brought together some of America's best minds across party lines, and it outlined with clarity and precision the key factors at issue in Iraq. In doing so, it helped catalyze the debate about our Iraq policy and crystallize the choices we face. Above all, it emphasized the importance of focusing on American national interests, not only in Iraq but in the region.

However, the report, which calls the situation in Iraq "grave and deteriorating," does not focus on what could be the most likely outcome of its analysis. Should the Iraqis be unable or unwilling to play the role required of them, the report implies that we would have no choice but to withdraw, and then blame our withdrawal on Iraqi failures. But here the report essentially stops.

An American withdrawal before Iraq can, in the words of the President, "govern itself, sustain itself, and defend itself" would be a strategic defeat for American interests, with potentially catastrophic consequences both in the region and beyond. Our opponents would be hugely emboldened, our friends deeply demoralized.

Iran, heady with the withdrawal of its principal adversary, would expand its influence through Hezbollah and Hamas more deeply into Syria, Lebanon, the Palestinian territories, and Jordan. Our Arab friends would rightly feel we had abandoned them to face alone a radicalism that has been greatly inflamed by American actions in the region and which could pose a serious threat to their own governments.

The effects would not be confined to Iraq and the Middle East. Energy resources and transit choke points vital to the global economy would be subjected to greatly increased risk. Terrorists and extremists elsewhere would be emboldened. And the perception, worldwide, would be that the American colossus had stumbled, was losing its resolve and could no longer be considered a reliable ally or friend or the guarantor of peace and stability in this critical region.

To avoid these dire consequences, we need to secure the support of the countries of the region themselves. It is greatly in their self-interest to give that support, just as they did in the 1991 Persian Gulf conflict. Unfortunately, in recent years they have come to see it as dangerous to identify with the United States, and so they have largely stood on the sidelines.

A vigorously renewed effort to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict could fundamentally change both the dynamics in the region and the strategic calculus of key leaders. Real progress would push Iran into a more defensive posture. Hezbollah and Hamas would lose their rallying principle. American allies like Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the Gulf States would be liberated to assist in stabilizing Iraq. And Iraq would finally be seen by all as a key country that had to be set right in the pursuit of regional security.

Arab leaders are now keen to resolve the 50-year-old dispute. Prime Minister Ehud Olmert of Israel may be as well. His nation's long-term security can only be assured by resolving this issue once and for all. However, only the American President can bring them to the same table.

Resuming the Arab-Israeli peace process is not a matter of forcing concessions from Israel or dragooning the Palestinians into surrender. Most of the elements of a settlement are already agreed as a result of the negotiations of 2000 and the "roadmap" of 2002. What is required is to summon the will of Arab and Israeli leaders, led by a determined American President, to forge the various elements into a conclusion that all parties have already publicly accepted in principle.

As for Syria and Iran, we should not be afraid of opening channels of communication, but neither should we rush to engage them as negotiating "partners." Moreover, these two countries have differing interests, expectations, and points of leverage and should not be treated as though they are indistinguishable.

Syria cannot be comfortable clutched solely in the embrace of Iran, and thus prying it away may be possible. Syria also has much to gain from a settlement with Israel and internal problems that such a deal might greatly ease. If we can make progress on the Palestinian front before adding Syria to the mix, it would both avoid

overloading Israel's negotiating capacity and increase the incentives for Damascus to negotiate seriously.

Iran is different. It may not be wise to make Iran integral to the regional strategy at the outset. And the nuclear issue should be dealt with on a separate track. In its present state of euphoria, Iran has little interest in making things easier for us. If, however, we make clear our determination, and if the other regional states become more engaged in stabilizing Iraq, the Iranians might grow more inclined to negotiate seriously.

While negotiations on the Arab-Israel peace process are under way, we should establish some political parameters inside Iraq that encourage moves toward reconciliation and unified government in Iraq. Other suggested options, such as an "80 percent solution" that excludes the Sunnis, or the division of the country into three parts, are not only inconsistent with reconciliation but would almost certainly pave the way to broader regional conflict and must be avoided.

American combat troops should be gradually redeployed away from intervening in sectarian conflict. That necessarily is a task for Iraqi troops, however poorly prepared they may be. Our troops should be redirected toward training the Iraqi Army, providing support and backup, combating insurgents, attenuating outside intervention, and assisting in major infrastructure protection.

That does not mean the American presence should be reduced. Indeed, in the immediate future, the opposite may be true, though any increase in troop strength should be directed at accomplishing specific, defined missions. A generalized increase would be unlikely to demonstrably change the situation and, consequently, could result in increased clamor for withdrawal. But the central point is that withdrawing combat forces should not be a policy objective, but rather, the result of changes in our strategy and success in our efforts.

As we work our way through this seemingly intractable problem in Iraq, we must constantly remember that this is not just a troublesome issue from which we can walk away if it seems too costly to continue. What is at stake is not only Iraq and the stability of the Middle East, but the global perception of the reliability of the United States as a partner in a deeply troubled world. We cannot afford to fail that test.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, General.

We'll have 7-minute rounds with these two witnesses, all right?

General, thank you for your testimony. It's quite clear, as I understand it, we can't win in Iraq—succeed in Iraq—without a political settlement; we can't leave Iraq, because of the regional and global consequences if we did, absent a settlement. We need regional cooperation, but our friends are reluctant to be associated with us in this present atmosphere, so it's unlikely to get regional cooperation, but one way to get it would be if we demonstrated a sincere effort to get the Israeli-Palestinian peace process back on track.

Let me ask you, specifically, whether you believe that the Israelis see a benefit in getting the peace process back on track.

General SCOWCROFT. I don't know, Mr. Chairman, exactly what the Israelis are thinking now. Their government is in a very difficult situation, as popularity is near zero. A tough response for the Prime Minister is very difficult. It seems to me, in his inner heart, he must feel that this could be his salvation. It, after all, is Israel's salvation. Israel cannot permanently live surrounded by hostile forces. And so, a solution to this problem is very much in Israel's interest, just as our leaving the region would be the worst possible outcome for Israel.

The CHAIRMAN. My instinct is that Prime Minister Olmert understands that. What I get fed back from different and disparate sources in Israel is—well, let me characterize it a different way. Were you the National Security Advisor today, would you be pushing the President—any President—to have a much more focused and clear attempt to get this peace process back on track?

General SCOWCROFT. Yes; I would. I believe the administration, at least from all appearances, is moving in that direction. But——

The CHAIRMAN. One of the things that perplexes me, anyway, is how long it took the administration to engage the Israelis and be public in any utterances with regard to the war in Lebanon, how—I mean, we just don't seem to have anybody of real consequence on the ground full time that the Israeli leadership knows has the ear of the President of the United States. This is a risk, I know. I've been here for seven Presidents, and every President, I know, calculates the risk of getting himself deeply involved in trying to resolve this crisis. But I guess what I'm asking you is: Isn't it necessary for the President to get deeply involved in—not telling Israel what to do, but making it clear that we are willing to take risks along with them to get this process underway?

General SCOWCROFT. I think it is critical for the President to be involved, because the states of the region are very nervous, they're worried about the spread of radicalism. If you noted, at the time of the Lebanese incursion, the first word from the Arab governments was "condemnation of Hezbollah"——

The CHAIRMAN. Yeah.

General SCOWCROFT [continuing]. For kidnaping the soldiers. That turned, in about 3 days——

The CHAIRMAN. Yeah.

General SCOWCROFT [continuing]. To "condemnation"——

The CHAIRMAN. Seems to me——

General SCOWCROFT [continuing]. "Of Israel."

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. We missed a significant opportunity to—I see a common interest with the Sunni states and Israel right now. In my dialogs with leaders in the leading Sunni states, from Egypt to Saudi Arabia, they seem much more concerned about this—they refer to the Shia Crescent. It seems to me there is a mutuality of interest here. It seems to me they're in the position where they may be prepared to be much more responsible than they have in the past—excluding Egypt; I think they've been responsible, by and large—to actually be a proactive player in bringing about a positive settlement between Israel and the Palestinians. From my perspective, it even looks as though Syria is in an unholy alliance with a country that they don't have a real shot for a long-term future with: Iran. So, I happen to agree with your assessment that there's an opportunity here for, really, some solid diplomacy.

Let me conclude by asking you this: Many of our witnesses we've had have laid out, in, sort of, historical terms, that when you deal with a country that was literally the consequence of a diplomat's pen on a map, like the Balkans, like Syria—we could name other places in Africa, as well—that one of two formulas seem to work. Either you have a strongman take hold to hold that country together, or, two, you have some form of a loosely federated system with a central government, with some significant authority in the regions, particularly over their own security. That's what happened in Dayton, that's what happened other places.

Can you comment briefly on what you see down the road as the outlines of a political settlement that might hold that country together—Iraq—where it's not a threat to its neighbors, where it's

not a haven for terror, and where we can be a positive influence in providing assistance for both of those things?

General SCOWCROFT. I believe that it's possible to have a centralized Iraqi State, but it won't be easy, and it may take a long time to resolve itself. It is similar, in some respects, to Yugoslavia. The difference, however—loosely federated or even independent states in Yugoslavia has worked reasonably well. Although if our troops left Kosovo, or our troops—or the troops that are still in Bosnia left, I fear we'd find it was not over.

But Iraq happens to be surrounded by powerful neighbors, relatively powerful neighbors, with intense interests in the future of Iraq. I think a loosely federated system would be an invitation to meddling and would perhaps even hasten the regionalization of a conflict.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, if there's a second round, I will come back and talk a little bit about the Iraqi Constitution, which is explicit in setting out Kurdistan as one of those loosely federated areas, by definition, and lays out where any of the 18 other governates can conclude they have local control over their security. I'd like to talk with you, but my time is up.

Senator LUGAR. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

General Scowcroft, I would just like you to think aloud about Iraq in this sense. We've had testimony from Iraqis that as our military forces obtained military victory over Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi Armed Forces essentially disintegrated, people fled, leaving their uniforms and their arms, and were no longer identified with the military force. In addition to that, we heard that the police forces, various other coercive elements, also dissipated to a point that we had not only the celebrated sacking of the museums in Baghdad, and looting of a tremendous scale but back in the provinces, people who were robbers, thieves, and ne'er-do-wells really terrorized people. Now, the question that was raised by these Iraqis comes down to this. We have worked—that is the United States and our allies—with some Iraqi politicians to bring about a constitution, even elections, a Parliament—which seems to be meeting on occasion—ministers, and a Prime Minister. But at this point the whole country lacks what at least these Iraqis said were coercive elements, not in the sense of torture and debilitating the people, but simply keeping some degree of order, law and order, so that ordinary people could go about without being hit by predators. We hear, too, that some people have formed militias, not the celebrated ones with thousands of people, but simply groups to protect themselves.

It's not clear, at least to me, as I've listened to all of this, how order comes to this situation and whether our aspirations—by that, I mean Iraq becoming a model example of democracy in the Middle East—works, really, in this situation. Can you share with us some of the thought you have given to this with respect to Yugoslavia and other nations that have struggled to build institutions and such capacities following conflict. And what sort of prognosis can you give of what would be a reasonable government situation in Iraq that would fit with the rest of the surrounding territories and fit with our strategy, perhaps, of withdrawal from sectarian violence, but providing sufficient presence to batten down the hatches

with regard to terrorists or those that would be totally disruptive of borders?

General SCOWCROFT. You have asked a very difficult question, Senator. And I think, for the United States, Iraq is perhaps sui generis. You know, we've had heavy involvements in Korea, heavy involvements in Vietnam, and so on; but there, we participated alongside a government which was constituted, which was operating, which had people who knew how to run a government. Iraq has none of those. It is destroyed. It's a blank slate, seething with the sectarian, religious, ethnic tensions that resulted from it being an artificial state. So, we have to put the whole thing together. And it's not as if Maliki were part of a government firmly in power and so on; we're trying to set up a government. The situation is much more like Somalia, for example, than it is like Vietnam.

And I don't know how we end this up. I think we have to push for reconciliation. We have to try to train—not just train the Iraqi Army, but convince them what they're fighting for, who they're fighting for. Is it a sect? Is it a religion? Is it an ethnic group? Or is it the symbol of the state of Iraq? And I don't think we're there yet. We're apparently closer in the army than we are in the police, which is badly infiltrated by these, let's call them, private forces. To me, that's going to take time. And it's going to take patience. And it's going to take a presence; hopefully, over time, a decreasing presence, as they start to learn how to govern themselves. Most of the people in the government now have never held any kind of office. You can't expect an instantaneous democracy to emerge. You may have to go through strongman phases and so on. But hopefully we can be increasingly a Big Brother, offering a helpful hand, admonishing here, helping there. As we and, if we're successful in the region, as the regional partners of Iraq begin to play a role, we can succeed. But it's—there is no magic wand, and it's a daunting task.

Senator LUGAR. What you've described is something perhaps like South American democracy that arose—this is a broad characterization—but the army was the powerful group, and it provided some order, and then, in due course, it said, "We're tired of governing. We want to invite some civilians in to participate and provide some elements of democracy." And sometimes when the civilians don't do well, the army returns, dismisses the civilians, tries again. Is this roughly what you're talking about?

General SCOWCROFT. Well, there are a number of models of democracy—the Latin American model, the Turkish model. There are a lot of them. And each culture has to figure out its own. But we have a heavy responsibility now in Iraq figuring out its own, without plunging the entire region into turmoil with all those consequences.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you very much.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Senator, welcome. And——

Senator CARDIN. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. It's nice not to have to wait all this time, isn't it? [Laughter.]

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Scowcroft, thank you very much for your service to our country and for being here. We very much appreciate your advice.

I'm having some difficulty reconciling the additional troops being sent into Baghdad with your advice that we should be redeploying troops away from the sectarian violence as part of our strategy. It seems to me that the President's announcements move in the wrong direction there, but also signal to the Iraqis that we intend to keep our troops where sectarian violence is the worst.

I want to concentrate on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, because I think you've raised some very valid concerns. We've been talking about this for a long time, but the framework for resolving the conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians is fairly well defined. And I don't believe time works to the advantage of resolving the issue. I think there is an opportunity. We should be taking advantage of that opportunity, and it requires a very strong presence from the United States—as the chairman said, not to dictate the terms of the peace, but to be the force for keeping the parties at the table to resolve their differences and to implement a peace plan.

So, if you were to give the President advice as to how we could elevate and move forward with the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, could you share with us how you would see the President elevating that issue? And, second, how would you advise Congress to try to move forward with the Israeli-Palestinian peace effort?

General SCOWCROFT. Certainly, Senator. I think a strong sense of Presidential leadership is essential in order to give heart to our friends in the region who—most of whom have been vocal in wanting to pursue the peace process, but are afraid to get out in front of the United States. If the President shows some determination that he wants to press forward, I think he will find a lot of help. And a lot of help is needed. One of the conventional arguments is that Israel now has a government under siege and is not in a position to negotiate. And, on the Palestinian side, there is a struggle between Fatah and Hamas, and there is no negotiator. I believe those problems are fixable.

The more difficult one probably is the Palestinian issue. But, even there, there's some movement. The Hamas external leader in Damascus recently said that, "Israel is a reality. There will remain a state called Israel. This is a matter of fact." Now, that's not recognizing Israel, which we have demanded of Hamas, but it's a—certainly a step, a big step away from driving Israel into the sea. So, there's something there we can work with. And the Egyptians are working hard to resolve that problem.

So, those are the things I think we need to pay attention to originally, to get the negotiators ready to talk at the table. As you say, if they sit down, most of the issues have already been agreed, and those that haven't, the outlines of an agreement are still there. It will take tough negotiating, but I think it is there.

Senator CARDIN. Is there a specific positive role that you envision for the U.S. Congress in this regard?

General SCOWCROFT. I think the Congress should be supportive of that kind of effort. I certainly am not prepared to tell the Congress what it ought to do. On your first point, about the surge, there's no question that the surge go—is in contradiction to my

general statement, "We need to get out of sectarian conflict." But there is a particular problem right now in Baghdad, and if Baghdad should become a single-sect city, we would have a new and different kind of a problem for the whole of Iraq. So, I think there is a rationale for trying to stabilize the situation in Baghdad, which violates the general rule that we shouldn't do that.

Senator CARDIN. I would point out that there are, right now in Iraq, so many displaced individuals as a result of sectarian violence. I understand the importance of Baghdad to maintain ethnic diversity, but it seems like Iraq has moved in the wrong direction now for a period of time.

General SCOWCROFT. Well, I wouldn't disagree with that. And, as I say, on the surge—the President has decided he wants to surge. I think that the Congress role here is unlikely to be helpful in the direction that it's going, in the sense that what you send is signals abroad that if they just push a little harder, then the President may have to change his mind.

Senator CARDIN. Of course, I would argue that if the President would work with Congress and listen to our hearings here, there could be much more unity in our position in Iraq.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for——

General SCOWCROFT. My guess is the President is listening attentively right now.

The CHAIRMAN. I hope so.

Senator Hagel.

Senator HAGEL. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Welcome, General Scowcroft. It's always pleasant, enlightening, informative to have you before us, and we always appreciate your thoughts.

I have just a quick response to a point you made, and then I want to go back to a comment in your testimony and ask a question.

We all appreciate, I think, that there are no clear comparisons of past conflicts the United States has been involved in, with Iraq. You noted that Somalia may be, in many regards, closer to a comparison with Iraq than Vietnam. But, because you have served as National Security Advisor to two Presidents and your entire career has been about national security, very few understand it as well as you do. But I would make this observation. I do think there is one clear comparison with Vietnam where we are in Iraq, and that is that we continue to get bogged down more and more. When the President's talking about sending 22,000 more U.S. troops, you can define that in any way you want, but that's an increase in our involvement, our military involvement. The President will soon be coming before the Congress for another $100 billion emergency supplemental, most all of that for Iraq. That is certainly an additional amount of involvement. We have the largest Embassy—U.S. Embassy in the world, by far, in Iraq, and we continue to keep building up that Embassy. That's certainly a significant increase in our involvement. So, rather than going the other way, we continue to bog ourselves down, and our country. And the consequences of that, you being a career professional military man, certainly are aware, just as the Washington Post noted a couple of days ago, what this is doing to our force structure, specifically our equip-

ment, that we will not have enough equipment. And I had the Secretary of the Army in my office, 2 days ago, asking him about that. The rotation patterns, all the consequences that most people don't understand. You do. So, it's my observation that that is the one clear comparison, just like Vietnam, "Just send more troops, send more money, send more involvement, give us more time." And I don't think there's any way you can escape that reality.

Now, that leads me into a question that was prompted by a comment you made. And you, I think, said something to the—I don't have your testimony, so I can't quote exactly, but something to the effect that our withdrawal, or decrease of involvement, should follow—not timelines or any other definitions—but it should follow, I believe, in your words, should follow success in our efforts. Well, next month, it'll be 4 years that we have been there. We are nearing 3,100 deaths. And I was just at a funeral of a Nebraska Army lieutenant who was one of those abducted in Karbala. We are over 23,000 wounded. And I can recite all the other numbers, which you're familiar with. So, after 4 years, then, based on what you said, we should base any withdrawal or plans for decreasing our involvement—that should follow success in our efforts.

My question is: What do you define "success" as being? And the other question picks up a little bit on your exchange with the distinguished Senator from Maryland. Do you believe the Congress has a role in this? You mentioned something about resolutions sending wrong signals. Do you believe that Congress has a constitutional responsibility and role in war? What is that? And I'd like you to define that, if you would, and answer that question. So, two questions, General. And thank you.

General SCOWCROFT. Absolutely. To answer the last one first; of course I think Congress has a role. One of the distinguished constitutional jurists, whose name I can't recall now, said, "In matters of war and international relations, the Constitution is an invitation to struggle between the executive and the legislature." And I'll just leave it there.

Do I think Congress has a role? Absolutely. And the ultimate role that Congress has in the making of war is the power of the purse. There's no question about that.

Senator HAGEL. I appreciate that. And, of course, there are more definition of our role, which is heavy in precedent over the last 230 years, as well, not just the power of the purse, as you well know. But we're not here before the Judiciary Committee, so—

But, please, sir, thank you, if you would answer the other question, as well, I appreciate your comments.

General SCOWCROFT. Now, the other question?

Senator HAGEL. The other question was based on your testimony when you said that U.S. withdrawal or——

General SCOWCROFT. Oh, yes.

Senator HAGEL [continuing]. Any efforts to move out should be——

General SCOWCROFT. Right.

Senator HAGEL [continuing]. Your words, should follow success in our efforts. Now, after 4 years and all that we've put in, and we're continuing to put more in, what is your measurement of success?

You said this should—this may go on for years and years, we may go through strongmen. Well, what is our responsibility?

General SCOWCROFT. I think——

Senator HAGEL. And what is that measurement of success?

General SCOWCROFT. I think our responsibility is a state which is stable enough to be a force for stability in the region, not for disruption in the region. And our goal, I think, has to be the region itself now. And I think we cannot afford chaos in the Middle East.

Senator HAGEL. Well, that's not my question. We——

General SCOWCROFT. I——

Senator HAGEL [continuing]. All agree with that. But what is your—we hear a lot of rhetoric, General——

General SCOWCROFT. It——

Senator HAGEL [continuing]. From the President——

General SCOWCROFT. I——

Senator HAGEL [continuing]. And others, saying, "Well, we ought to have a measurement. We ought to know when—we're going to threaten and we're going to pull out and we're going to have benchmarks." Well, when is that measurement of some precision so that you know? Or is it beyond——

General SCOWCROFT. I don't——

Senator HAGEL [continuing]. Our control?

General SCOWCROFT. I don't know what the precision is. We have troops in Korea 50 years after that war——

Senator HAGEL. But you're surely——

General SCOWCROFT [continuing]. Was over.

Senator HAGEL [continuing]. Not making a comparison to Korea.

General SCOWCROFT. No; I'm not making a comparison to Korea. But I don't know when you can let the hand—when you're training your child with training wheels on the bicycle, how do you know when to take the training wheels off?

Senator HAGEL. Well, again, I wouldn't use——

General SCOWCROFT. I don't know.

Senator HAGEL [continuing]. That analogy, either. And when you've got——

General SCOWCROFT. But——

Senator HAGEL [continuing]. Seventy percent or more of the Iraqi people who don't want us there, and over 60 percent say it's OK to kill Americans, and we're going to put a number of new troops in Baghdad, which you have just noted that you don't, I guess, to some extent, agree with—you've noted it's sectarian—those are sectarian issues. So, then, isn't there some jumble in all this? And when you say we ought to have, as your—in your words, "a success in our efforts," well, how do you measure——

General SCOWCROFT. Well——

Senator HAGEL [continuing]. Success in——

General SCOWCROFT. It would be——

Senator HAGEL [continuing]. Your efforts?

General SCOWCROFT. It would be nice to be precise and to have all these benchmarks that everybody can see and so on. This is not that kind of a problem. We're in a mess, and we've got to work our way out of it.

Senator HAGEL. Well, that's——

General SCOWCROFT. And——

Senator HAGEL [continuing]. That's true, but how——

General SCOWCROFT. And we've——

Senator HAGEL [continuing]. To do that?

General SCOWCROFT [continuing]. Got to work our way out of it, not into a bigger mess, a regional mess, where one of the results will make $60 oil look like a bargain.

Senator HAGEL. You do that by continuing to put more troops in Baghdad?

General SCOWCROFT. I did not say put more troops in.

Senator HAGEL. Well, how do you work your way out of the mess?

General SCOWCROFT. Well, I can repeat what I said. You focus on training, you focus on backing up the army, you focus on lines of communication, you focus on infrastructure, you focus on keeping the outsiders from intervening, and you encourage reconciliation and consolidation of the government.

Senator HAGEL. Then how do you measure that?

General SCOWCROFT. The way you measure anything.

Senator HAGEL. Would you give us a good grade, over the last 4 years, of measuring success? Are things getting better?

General SCOWCROFT. No.

Senator HAGEL. So, another 4 years, we take another look, and maybe the Congress should look at a resolution, and maybe it shouldn't?

General SCOWCROFT. I think this problem is not going to be over inside a decade.

Senator HAGEL. Does that mean more American troops——

General SCOWCROFT. No.

Senator HAGEL [continuing]. Get fed into the grinder and——

General SCOWCROFT. I do not believe we need more American troops.

Senator HAGEL. My time's up. Thank you, General. Thank you very much.

General SCOWCROFT. Because I want to get out from in between the sectarian violence.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Casey.

Senator CASEY. Thank you very much. Senator Menendez has graciously allowed me to jump ahead.

General, I'm grateful for your presence here and your service to the Nation.

And I'm going to ask a—maybe two questions about Iraq, specifically, but, before I do that, I wanted to ask a question which I think is on the minds of a lot of people when the American people think about Iraq, and they think about the sacrifice that both you and Senator Hagel were just reviewing, in terms of the loss of life. In my State, the State I represent along with Senator Specter, we've lost the third highest number. So, we're cognizant of that. I think a lot of Americans are concerned about what happens next, not just with regard to Iraq, but what happens next with regard to Iran.

Someone that I respect greatly—I won't use his name, but—many months ago, said to me—made the assertion, and I'll paraphrase, that if this Government were to strike Iran, one of the immediate and direct consequences of that would be the slaughter of

GIs, hundreds, if not thousands, right away. And I don't know if that's correct or not, but I wanted to ask you that question, based upon your experience as a national security expert, your experience in war, and what you've seen and read and analyzed with regard to what's happening now in the Middle East as it pertains to Iran. Do you think—and let me just put it plainly to you—do you think that if there is a military strike by this Government on Iran—do you think it is highly likely, or unlikely, maybe—maybe you have a third option—that a large number of American GIs would be slaughtered in Iraq?

General SCOWCROFT. Well, Senator, I can't really tell you, there. I must say that the utility, at this point, of a strike on Iran escapes me, so I haven't pursued what the consequences will be. It seems to me that there are many other options open with Iran—there being a very difficult person in the Presidency at the present time—both their general sectarian threats and the nuclear issue, but I think we have maneuvering room with them, and time with them. I don't think that the Iranian structure is quite as unified and monolithic as it appears to some and, with some very careful diplomacy, we might be able to uncover more fissures there. And I would certainly pursue diplomacy.

Iran didn't just rise yesterday from the ashes to be a threat. Iran's been there for a long time. We've had problems with them since the fall of the Shah. But I see no reason that those problems suddenly have become overwhelmingly menacing.

Senator CASEY. But can you assess the question I just asked about American troops in Iraq?

General SCOWCROFT. Well, if I were—if I were an Iranian leader, having been struck by a United States air attack, for example, having no means to retaliate directly on the United States, I would do whatever I could to take it out on United States interests, where I could reach them.

Senator CASEY. I also wanted to point to—and I appreciate your statement today, some of which was contained in a New York Times op-ed on January 4—and I was struck by a number of—a number of statements in your op-ed. One was that—I want to read, in part—when you're speaking of Iran, you talked about failure in Iraq or withdrawal being the catalyst for an expansion of Iranian influence in the region, and then you go on to say, and "Our"—this is in the context of some kind of withdrawal—"Our Arab friends would rightly feel we had abandoned them to face, alone, Iraq radicalism that has been greatly inflamed by American actions in the region and which could pose a serious threat to their own governments."

I was struck by the juxtaposition of the sense that you would have that they would—our Arab friends would feel abandoned, but also your assertion that radicalism in the region has been greatly inflamed by American actions in that region. I just wanted to have you talk about that, in terms of what actions have inflamed that radicalism in the region.

General SCOWCROFT. Well, I think the situation in Iraq has inflamed it. It has exacerbated the century-old tension between Sunnis and Shias. And it has brought to the fore conflicts—again, historic, but quiescent—between Persians and Arabs. And all of

those now are surfaced and are boiling. And I think that the Iraq developments have helped to create that kind of a situation.

Senator CASEY. I almost am out of time, General. Let me just see if I can get one more in.

Again, on the question of Iran, you assert, with regard to the reaction that Iran would have if our forces were to be withdrawn or largely redeployed—just specifically—I know we only have a few seconds, but—what do you think the Iranian reaction would be to a total withdrawal of U.S. forces?

General SCOWCROFT. Well, that's very speculative, Senator. I don't know. I think—in some respects, they may be dismayed, but, in other respects, I think they would be very encouraged, because they could see the way open for the expansion of Iranian or Shia influence throughout the region, with us having vacated. And I think that would probably be the predominant. They would think they had won a victory.

Senator CASEY. Thank you, General.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Before I move to Senator Menendez, I have to make a point that we're going to be having three votes in a row, I'm told, around noon, and we have need for a business meeting to pass out a resolution to the committee, which is pro forma, but it sets out the budget for the committee for the 110th Congress. So, I'm going to suggest to my colleagues, between the first and second vote on the floor, we go down to our Foreign Relations Committee meeting room in the Senate on the first floor, S–116, and we'll take 30 seconds to vote out the resolution.

With that—excuse me—oh, I'm sorry. Senator Coleman. I beg your pardon.

Senator COLEMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Following up on Senator Casey's comment about the Iranian reaction to the withdrawal of our forces, in the New York Times article you talked about withdrawal, and to describe the consequences you used a phrase, "Our opponents would be hugely emboldened, our friends would be deeply demoralized." That statement resonates with what we've heard throughout the 50 hours of hearings that we have had here in the Foreign Relations Committee on Iraq, as well as numerous briefings and markups—the committee really has done an extraordinary job of examining this issue. The one obvious thing is that this is a complex issue. There's not a silver bullet here. And there are consequences to the things that we do. Understanding that Iraq is a mess today, it could be much worse tomorrow. Is that a fair statement? If we withdraw precipitously, as the Iraqi Study Group talked about—and I think your New York Times piece also touched on this—al-Qaeda would be emboldened, and our allies would be left with long-term doubt about American reliability. Those who have stepped up to the front in Iraq alongside us would probably be slaughtered. And so, there are great consequences to withdrawal.

One of the issues that we have talked about here is the perception of America in the global arena. If we do the wrong thing in Iraq, if we simply abandon Iraq, that perception could be worse. Would that be a fair statement?

General SCOWCROFT. I believe that's a fair statement, Senator. I think we would be perceived in the world, "Well America's lost it," you know, we're a force of the past, we're fading, we're not up to the challenges. I think that would be wrong, but I think that would be the perception.

Senator COLEMAN. What are the consequences of that perception?

General SCOWCROFT. Well, it would be—it would be a subtle shifting of where you want to put your confidence. Who do you want to stand with, who do you want to be careful about, and so on, and so forth? And I think it would be significantly deleterious.

Senator COLEMAN. There are some of us who understand the consequences of failure—and, again, it's laid out in the Iraqi Study Group, Secretary Kissinger talked about it yesterday, and Secretary Baker talked about it when he testified before the committee. They also pointed out that they believe that we're going to be in Iraq for a long time—hopefully, though, not in the middle of a sectarian civil war. But it is important to let our allies know, and to let the Iranians know, that we're not abandoning Iraq. We must let al-Qaeda know we're not walking out on Iraq, but we don't want American troops to be in the middle of the sectarian battle that is engulfing parts of it.

General Scowcroft, you have military experience and can offer us a certain perspective. We have debates in the Senate. We pass resolutions. In the case of our Iraq policy, the Senate's discussion involves a resolution that may challenge an aspect of the President's policy. Can you help me understand if this debate we're having has an impact on the folks on the ground? Does the nature of the debate that is taking place here in Congress on our Iraq policy embolden our enemies? Or do people simply think: This is the way the United States works, it's the way the Congress works, and folks understand that?

General SCOWCROFT. I think it—I don't think it has much effect on the troops. Troops know what they're doing. They're following their orders. They're doing their damnedest. And I don't think the Congress voting a nonconcurrence or something in what the President has done will affect their attitudes or anything. I don't know how it will affect those who are opposing us over there if they would think, "Well, look, you know, we've got the President on the run now. If we just push a little harder, he'll cave." I don't know that. That's pure speculation.

Senator COLEMAN. As I approach this issue, I don't want to do anything to undermine the resolve of the folks on the ground. I want them to know we support them. We may disagree with an aspect of what the President is doing, but in the end we still want to see—or at least I want to see—success, however it's defined. Success in Iraq would perhaps be defined by some stability, by al-Qaeda not having a base in Iraq from which to sow greater uncertainty and instability in the region. On the other hand, here in the Senate we have this—I believe—constitutional responsibility to represent what our citizens are saying about U.S. policy. If we're troubled by something that the President is doing, we have to say it. But it's an important question. I appreciate the response.

Let me ask you about benchmarks. Yesterday Secretary Kissinger said that he was concerned about this idea of benchmarks

and the consequences of holding Iraqis accountable if they don't achieve them. I believe in your article in the Times you also talked about benchmarks—if the Iraqis fail to meet the benchmarks, what do we do about it? And part of the problem—and I hope the debate here in the United States helps on this front—is that the Iraqis have to understand that our patience is not infinite. Maybe we'll leave them to kill each other in Baghdad and move American troops to other areas where they can focus on missions such as keeping the Iranians out of Iraq. I don't know whether the Iraqis are tired of killing each other. I don't know whether they're exhausted from that yet. How do we insist, or let the Iraqis know, that they've got to actually do some things that we've agreed to for us to continue with the sacrifice of blood and treasure?

General SCOWCROFT. Well, one of my problems with benchmarks is that it sort of presupposes that the government is not doing its best; the Iraqi Government. Well, by our lights, they're not doing their best, but it's not that they are disinterested and just sitting on their hands. They believe passionately, but not all in the same direction, and they're killing each other for their beliefs. And what we're trying to do is to put together a government which can draw together these disparate elements in some kind of a unified approach that you could call Iraq. The problem with benchmarks is, as this government struggles, if they don't meet the first benchmark, we drawdown some support almost making certain they can't meet the second benchmark. And so, it begins to look like a recipe for withdrawal and blaming the Iraqi Government. Is the Iraqi Government what we would wish? No. But it's—we're trying to set up a government from zero. There is no government in Iraq. When we destroyed Saddam Hussein and the Baathists, there was nobody left who had any experience in governing. And so, all of the tensions, all of the sectarian and religious tensions boil up, and you put in a bunch of people and you write a constitution quickly, and you hope that it's going to work. But it's going to take time.

Senator COLEMAN. I see that my time is expired. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Menendez.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General, thank you for your service to our country. Thank you for your testimony.

I have a couple of questions that I hope you could be helpful with. You know, many of our colleagues who are concerned about challenging our present course of action all want to achieve success. The question is: How does one do that?

And some who challenge this and say the consequences of failure make that a linkage in the case for escalation, but, overwhelmingly, the testimony that we have heard here, including from experts who come from both sides of the political divide, have said, largely, that you cannot achieve victory here through a classic military context. And so, you know, I don't quite buy the escalation aspect as the pivotal issue as to whether we have success or failure in Iraq.

But that goes to the broader question. Isn't, in essence, what we are doing here with our troops a role of nation-building? Is that an appropriate mission for the U.S. military?

General SCOWCROFT. It is an appropriate role for the United States military in a situation where conflict is a predominant fact of the nation, yes. Hopefully, we can gradually get out of that, but right now, without the military, there would be—there would be no hope.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, I asked you that question because when I served in the House of Representatives, for a long time I heard my colleagues on the other side of the aisle rail against the context of nation-building and having the military be an integral part of nation-building. But it seems to me that's very much what we're doing.

But to further go down this line, I looked at your January op-ed piece, and I read it with great interest. There are a couple of things that you said that concerns me with our present course of action. You said, "American combat troops should be gradually redeployed away from intervening in the sectarian conflict." And you also said that controlling the sectarian conflict, "is a task for Iraqi troops, however poorly prepared they may be." And that's where I want to take off the next line of questioning with you.

Everything we hear from the administration suggests, or tries to suggest, to the American people, and to the Congress, that it is Iraqis who are leading this effort, that it is Iraqis who are going to be on point, and that we are there, filling in, in the background along the way, and being helpful, and talking about embedding. But when I look at some of the most recent news reports from the front lines, I see an incredible lack of troop strength and training of Iraqi forces and the confusion that comes along with having them take the lead. Here's one quote from an article, "As the sun rose, many of the Iraqi Army units who were supposed to do the actual searches of the building did not arrive on time, forcing the Americans to start the job on their own. When the Iraqi units finally did show up, it was with the air of a class outing, cheering and laughing as the Americans blew locks off doors with shotguns. Many of the Iraqi units that showed up late never seemed to take the task seriously, searching haphazardly, breaking dishes, rifling through personal CD collections in the apartments." In the article, a lieutenant colonel of the 3d Stryker Brigade combat talked about the difficulty of conducting such operations. He said, "This was an Iraqi-led effort, and with that comes challenges and risks. It can be organized chaos."

Twenty-some-odd-thousand more troops into that scenario? I don't understand that.

And then, balancing that and your answer, how do we, in such a scenario, send 20-more-thousand troops? You say that, at some point, no matter how poorly prepared they may be, they should lead in this effort. I probably agree with you, they need to stand up, at some point, on their own, particularly in a sectarian conflict. And why is it that, notwithstanding your recommendations and the recommendations of so many others, we do not seem to have an administration willing to engage in a very vigorous way, as so many members in a nonpartisan effort here have called for, in the regional summits and the high level of engagement of other countries in the region, which you yourself call for, as a significant comprehensive part of this plan? Why is there such a reticence, from

your perception of the administration, to do that? If you could pursue those two lines, I'd appreciate it.

General SCOWCROFT. Well, I think, as to the surge, as I said, I describe the surge as a tactical maneuver, not as a strategic move. The reason for it, that I would adduce, is that Baghdad is a special case, and if one can stabilize Baghdad, then it would have a great psychological impact in the country and also might give the Iraqi forces a greater sense of self-confidence than the article that you read indicates that they have.

But it won't change the situation, fundamentally, in Iraq. It might be a blip, it might be a positive blip, but it won't. And, as Senator Hagel said, you know, we've got a long, hard slog here, and this is—it might be helpful. If it doesn't work, it'll—it might be harmful. But it's—you know, I didn't focus on it, because it's a decision that the President has made, and it is being implemented, even as we—even as we speak.

Now, I think the administration is moving to greater regional involvement. And I think that Secretary Rice's last trip, where she spoke some, and listened a lot, will encourage them to move further. What I worry about is that it's going to take not just gradual movement, it's going to take visible determination in order to rally our friends behind us.

Senator MENENDEZ. My time is up, but Lee Hamilton and Jim Baker were here, and I think it was Lee Hamilton specifically who said that the sense of urgency—and, on the diplomatic side, I don't get the sense of intensity and urgency that is necessary in order to achieve our goals. But I hope both these sets of hearings and the vote that will soon take place will have the administration understand the sense of urgency, certainly on the diplomatic side.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator LUGAR [presiding]. Well, thank you very much, Senator Menendez.

The chairman has been called to the floor for a moment. The thought is that we will recess the hearing and wait for Dr. Brzezinski's appearance, which should be in a few minutes.

Let me just ask, before I take that action, whether there are members who have additional questions of General Scowcroft.

[No response.]

Senator LUGAR. Seeing no further questions, we thank you very much for coming, once again, to be part of a very important hearing. You've made a wonderful contribution, and we look forward to seeing you again soon.

General SCOWCROFT. I thank you all for your listening to me. Thank you very much.

Senator LUGAR. For the moment, the committee is recessed, and we will wait for Dr. Brzezinski's appearance.

[Recess.]

Senator LUGAR. The committee is called to order.

We welcome Dr. Brzezinski, a wonderful friend of the committee, for this very important appearance today.

We have asked Dr. Brzezinski to present an opening statement, and he will do that, and then we'll proceed to questions. I think Senators know that we are heading toward rollcall votes at noon

or shortly thereafter. Therefore, we'll begin immediately, given the chairman's instructions.

Dr. Brzezinski, we're delighted to have you, and would you please proceed?

STATEMENT OF DR. ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI, FORMER NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR; COUNSELOR AND TRUSTEE, CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, WASHINGTON, DC

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, indeed. Your hearings come at a critical juncture in the United States war of choice in Iraq, and I commend you and Senator Biden for scheduling them.

In my view, it is time for the White House to come to terms with two central realities. First, the war in Iraq is a historic, strategic, and moral calamity. Undertaken under false assumptions, it is undermining America's global legitimacy. Its collateral civilian casualties, as well as some abuses, are tarnishing America's moral credentials. Driven by Manichean impulses and imperial hubris, it is intensifying regional instability.

Second, only a political strategy that is historically relevant, rather than reminiscent of colonial tutelage, can provide the needed framework for a tolerable resolution of both the war in Iraq and intensifying regional tensions.

If the United States continues to be bogged down in a protracted, bloody involvement in Iraq—and I emphasize what I'm about to say—the final destination on this downhill track is likely to be a head-on conflict with Iran and with much of the world of Islam at large. A plausible scenario for a military collision with Iran involves Iraqi failure to meet the benchmarks, followed by accusations of Iranian responsibility for the failure, then by some provocation in Iraq or a terrorist act in the United States, blamed on Iran, culminating in a, "defensive" United States military action against Iran that plunges a lonely America into a spreading and deepening quagmire eventually ranging across Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.

Indeed, a mythical historical narrative to justify the case for such a protracted and potential expanding war is already being articulated. Initially justified by false claims about WMDs in Iraq, the war is now being redefined as the decisive ideological struggle of our time, reminiscent of the earlier collisions with Nazism and Stalinism. In that context, Islamist extremism and al-Qaeda are presented as the equivalents of the threat posed by Nazi Germany and then Soviet Russia, and 9/11 as the equivalent of the Pearl Harbor attack which precipitated America's involvement in World War II. This simplistic and demagogic narrative overlooks the fact that Nazism was based on the military power of the industrially most advanced European state and that Stalinism was able to mobilize not only the resources of the victorious and militarily powerful Soviet Union, but also had worldwide appeal through its Marxist doctrine.

In contrast, most Muslims are not embracing Islamic fundamentalism, al-Qaeda is an isolated fundamentalist Islamist aberration, most Iraqis are engaged in strife because of the American occupation which destroyed the Iraqi State, while Iran, though gaining in

regional influence, is, itself, politically divided, economically and militarily weak. To argue that America is already at war in a region, with a wider Islamic threat of which Iran is the epicenter, is to promote a self-fulfilling prophecy.

I then go on, Mr. Chairman, to compare the posture of the United States, insofar as negotiations are concerned as, in some ways, reminiscent of the moralist self-ostracism that the United States practiced in the early 1950s toward Communist China. But, for the sake of time, I'll not read that passage.

Let me end this introductory remark before advocating some policy by noting that practically no country in the world—no country in the world—shares the Manichean delusions that the administration so passionately articulates, and the result, sad to say, is growing political isolation of, and pervasive political—or popular antagonism toward the U.S. global posture.

I think it is obvious, therefore, that the American national interest calls for a significant change of direction. There is, in fact, consensus in America in favor of a change, a consensus that the war was a mistake. It is a fact that leading Republicans have spoken up and expressed profound reservations regarding the administration's policy. I can simply invoke here the views of former President Gerald Ford, former Secretary of State Baker, former National Security Advisor Scowcroft, and several of your colleagues, Mr. Chairman, including Warner, Hagel, Smith, among others. And hence, the urgent need today is for a strategy that seeks to create a political framework for a resolution of the problems posed both by the United States occupation of Iraq and by the ensuing civil and sectarian conflict. Ending the occupation and shaping a regional security dialog should be the mutually reinforcing goals of such a strategy, but both goals will take time to be accomplished and require a genuinely serious U.S. commitment.

The quest to achieve these goals should involve four steps:

First, the United States should reaffirm explicitly and unambiguously its determination to leave Iraq in a reasonably short period of time. Let me comment. Ambiguity regarding the duration of the occupation, in fact, encourages unwillingness to compromise and intensifies the ongoing civil strife. Moreover, such a public declaration is needed to allay fears in the Middle East of a new and enduring American imperial hegemony. Right or wrong, many view the establishment of such a hegemony as the primary reason for the American intervention in a region only recently free of colonial domination. That perception should be discredited from the highest U.S. level. Perhaps the U.S. Congress could do so by a joint resolution.

Second, the United States should announce that it is undertaking talks with the Iraqi leaders to jointly set with them a date by which U.S. military disengagement should be completed, and the resulting setting of such a date should be announced as a joint decision. In the meantime, the United States should avoid military escalation.

Comment briefly. It is necessary to engage all Iraqi leaders, including those who do not reside within the Green Zone, in a serious discussion regarding the proposed and jointly defined date for United States military disengagement, because the very dialog

itself will help to identify the authentic Iraqi leaders with the self-confidence and capacity to stand on their own legs without United States military protection. Only Iraqi leaders who can exercise real power beyond the Green Zone can eventually reach a genuine Iraqi accommodation. The painful reality is that much of this current Iraqi regime, characterized by the administration as representative of the Iraqi people, defines itself largely by its physical location, the 4-square-miles-large United States fortress within Baghdad, protected by a wall, in places 15 feet thick, manned by heavily armed United States military, popularly known as the Green Zone.

Third, the United States should issue, jointly, with appropriate Iraqi leaders, or perhaps let the Iraqi leaders issue, an invitation to all neighbors of Iraq, and perhaps some other Muslim countries, such as Egypt, Morocco, Algeria, and Pakistan, to engage in a dialog regarding how best to enhance stability in Iraq in conjunction with United States military disengagement, and to participate eventually in a conference regarding regional stability.

Brief comment. The United States and the Iraqi leadership need to engage Iraq's neighbors in a serious discussion regarding the region's security problems, but such discussions cannot be undertaken while the United States is perceived as an occupier for an indefinite duration. In fact, I would argue, Mr. Chairman, that the setting of a date for departure would trigger a much higher probability of an effective regional dialog, because all of the countries in the region do not want to see an escalating disintegration in the region as a whole. Iran and Syria have no reason, however, to help the United States consolidate a permanent regional hegemony. It is ironic, however, that both Iran and Syria have lately called for a regional dialog, exploiting thereby the self-defeating character of the largely passive—and mainly sloganeering—United States diplomacy. A serious regional dialog promoted directly or indirectly by the United States could be buttressed at some point by a wider circle of consultations involving other powers with a stake in the region's stability, such as the EU, China, Japan, India, and Russia. Members of this committee might consider exploring informally, with the states mentioned, their potential interest in such a wider dialog.

Fourth and finally, concurrently the United States should activate a credible and energetic effort to finally reach an Israeli-Palestinian peace, making it clear in the process as to what the basic parameters of such a final accommodation ought to involve.

Brief comment. The United States needs to convince the region that the United States is committed both to Israel's enduring security and to fairness for the Palestinians who have waited for more than 40 years now for their own separate state. Only an external and activist intervention can promote the long-delayed settlement, for the record shows that the Israelis and the Palestinians will never do so on their own. Without such a settlement, both nationalist and fundamentalist passions in the region will, in the longer run, doom any Arab regime which is perceived as supportive of U.S. regional hegemony.

After World War II, the United States prevailed in the defense of democracy in Europe because it successfully pursued a long-term political strategy of uniting its friends and dividing its enemies in-

stead of dividing our friends and uniting our enemies, of soberly deterring aggression without initiating hostilities, all the while also exploring the possibility of negotiating arrangements. Today, America's global leadership is being tested in the Middle East. A similarly wise strategy of genuinely constructive political engagement is now urgently needed. It is time for the Congress to assert itself.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Brzezinski follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI, FORMER NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR; COUNSELOR AND TRUSTEE, CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. Chairman, your hearings come at a critical juncture in the U.S. war of choice in Iraq, and I commend you and Senator Lugar for scheduling them.

It is time for the White House to come to terms with two central realities:

1. The war in Iraq is a historic, strategic, and moral calamity. Undertaken under false assumptions, it is undermining America's global legitimacy. Its collateral civilian casualties as well as some abuses are tarnishing America's moral credentials. Driven by Manichean impulses and imperial hubris, it is intensifying regional instability.

2. Only a political strategy that is historically relevant rather than reminiscent of colonial tutelage can provide the needed framework for a tolerable resolution of both the war in Iraq and the intensifying regional tensions.

If the United States continues to be bogged down in a protracted bloody involvement in Iraq, the final destination on this downhill track is likely to be a head-on conflict with Iran and with much of the world of Islam at large. A plausible scenario for a military collision with Iran involves Iraqi failure to meet the benchmarks; followed by accusations of Iranian responsibility for the failure; then by some provocation in Iraq or a terrorist act in the United States blamed on Iran; culminating in a "defensive" U.S. military action against Iran that plunges a lonely America into a spreading and deepening quagmire eventually ranging across Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.

A mythical historical narrative to justify the case for such a protracted and potentially expanding war is already being articulated. Initially justified by false claims about WMD's in Iraq, the war is now being redefined as the "decisive ideological struggle" of our time, reminiscent of the earlier collisions with Nazism and Stalinism. In that context, Islamist extremism and al-Qaeda are presented as the equivalents of the threat posed by Nazi Germany and then Soviet Russia, and 9/11 as the equivalent of the Pearl Harbor attack which precipitated America's involvement in World War II.

This simplistic and demagogic narrative overlooks the fact that Nazism was based on the military power of the industrially most advanced European state; and that Stalinism was able to mobilize not only the resources of the victorious and militarily powerful Soviet Union but also had worldwide appeal through its Marxist doctrine. In contrast, most Muslims are not embracing Islamic fundamentalism; al-Qaeda is an isolated fundamentalist Islamist aberration; most Iraqis are engaged in strife because the American occupation of Iraq destroyed the Iraqi State; while Iran—though gaining in regional influence—is itself politically divided, economically and militarily weak. To argue that America is already at war in the region with a wider Islamic threat, of which Iran is the epicenter, is to promote a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Deplorably, the administration's foreign policy in the Middle East region has lately relied almost entirely on such sloganeering. Vague and inflammatory talk about "a new strategic context" which is based on "clarity" and which prompts "the birth pangs of a new Middle East" is breeding intensifying anti-Americanism and is increasing the danger of a long-term collision between the United States and the Islamic world. Those in charge of U.S. diplomacy have also adopted a posture of moralistic self-ostracism toward Iran strongly reminiscent of John Foster Dulles's attitude of the early 1950s toward Chinese Communist leaders (resulting among other things in the well-known episode of the refused handshake). It took some two decades and a half before another Republican President was finally able to undo that legacy.

One should note here also that practically no country in the world shares the Manichean delusions that the administration so passionately articulates. The result is growing political isolation of, and pervasive popular antagonism toward the U.S. global posture.

It is obvious by now that the American national interest calls for a significant change of direction. There is, in fact, a dominant consensus in favor of a change: American public opinion now holds that the war was a mistake; that it should not be escalated, that a regional political process should be explored; and that an Israeli-Palestinian accommodation is an essential element of the needed policy alteration and should be actively pursued. It is noteworthy that profound reservations regarding the administration's policy have been voiced by a number of leading Republicans. One need only invoke here the expressed views of the much admired President Gerald Ford, former Secretary of State James Baker, former National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft, and several leading Republican Senators, John Warner, Chuck Hagel, and Gordon Smith among others.

The urgent need today is for a strategy that seeks to create a political framework for a resolution of the problems posed both by the U.S. occupation of Iraq and by the ensuing civil and sectarian conflict. Ending the occupation and shaping a regional security dialog should be the mutually reinforcing goals of such a strategy, but both goals will take time and require a genuinely serious U.S. commitment.

The quest for a political solution for the growing chaos in Iraq should involve four steps:

1. The United States should reaffirm explicitly and unambiguously its determination to leave Iraq in a reasonably short period of time.

Ambiguity regarding the duration of the occupation in fact encourages unwillingness to compromise and intensifies the on-going civil strife. Moreover, such a public declaration is needed to allay fears in the Middle East of a new and enduring American imperial hegemony. Right or wrong, many view the establishment of such a hegemony as the primary reason for the American intervention in a region only recently free of colonial domination. That perception should be discredited from the highest U.S. level. Perhaps the U.S. Congress could do so by a joint resolution.

2. The United States should announce that it is undertaking talks with the Iraqi leaders to jointly set with them a date by which U.S. military disengagement should be completed, and the resulting setting of such a date should be announced as a joint decision. In the meantime, the United States should avoid military escalation.

It is necessary to engage all Iraqi leaders—including those who do not reside within "the Green Zone"—in a serious discussion regarding the proposed and jointly defined date for U.S. military disengagement because the very dialog itself will help identify the authentic Iraqi leaders with the self-confidence and capacity to stand on their own legs without U.S. military protection. Only Iraqi leaders who can exercise real power beyond "the Green Zone" can eventually reach a genuine Iraqi accommodation. The painful reality is that much of the current Iraqi regime, characterized by the Bush administration as "representative of the Iraqi people," defines itself largely by its physical location: The 4-square-miles-large U.S. fortress within Baghdad, protected by a wall in places 15 feet thick, manned by heavily armed U.S. military, popularly known as "the Green Zone."

3. The United States should issue jointly with appropriate Iraqi leaders, or perhaps let the Iraqi leaders issue, an invitation to all neighbors of Iraq (and perhaps some other Muslim countries such as Egypt, Morocco, Algeria, and Pakistan) to engage in a dialog regarding how best to enhance stability in Iraq in conjunction with U.S. military disengagement and to participate eventually in a conference regarding regional stability.

The United States and the Iraqi leadership need to engage Iraq's neighbors in serious discussion regarding the region's security problems, but such discussions cannot be undertaken while the United States is perceived as an occupier for an indefinite duration. Iran and Syria have no reason to help the United States consolidate a permanent regional hegemony. It is ironic, however, that both Iran and Syria have lately called for a regional dialog, exploiting, thereby, the self-defeating character of the largely passive—and mainly sloganeering—U.S. diplomacy.

A serious regional dialog, promoted directly or indirectly by the United States, could be buttressed at some point by a wider circle of consultations involving other powers with a stake in the region's stability, such as the EU, China, Japan, India, and Russia. Members of this committee might consider exploring, informally with the states mentioned, their potential interest in such a wider dialog.

4. Concurrently, the United States should activate a credible and energetic effort to finally reach an Israeli-Palestinian peace, making it clear in the process as to what the basic parameters of such a final accommodation ought to involve.

The United States needs to convince the region that the United States is committed both to Israel's enduring security and to fairness for the Palestinians who have waited for more than 40 years now for their own separate state. Only an external and activist intervention can promote the long-delayed settlement for the record

shows that the Israelis and the Palestinians will never do so on their own. Without such a settlement, both nationalist and fundamentalist passions in the region will, in the longer run, doom any Arab regime which is perceived as supportive of U.S. regional hegemony.

After World War II, the United States prevailed in the defense of democracy in Europe because it successfully pursued a long-term political strategy of uniting its friends and dividing its enemies, of soberly deterring aggression without initiating hostilities, all the while also exploring the possibility of negotiated arrangements. Today, America's global leadership is being tested in the Middle East. A similarly wise strategy of genuinely constructive political engagement is now urgently needed.

It is also time for the Congress to assert itself.

The CHAIRMAN [presiding]. Thank you very much——

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. And welcome, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. I read, as I commended your testimony, this morning, to my colleague, who was about to read it, and has read it. I apologize for being absent for a moment. I had to be on the floor.

As usual, you are direct, cogent, and insightful. I appreciate your availability to the committee and, also, your availability to a number of us individually to seek your advice.

We just heard from a man we all regard well, one of your successors, who cautioned that if we were to "leave," Iraq, there would be these dire consequences. I read, with incredible interest, your paragraph on page one of your testimony, saying, "If the United States continues to be bogged down in a protracted, bloody involvement in Iraq, the final destination on this downhill track is likely to be a head-on conflict with Iran and much of the world of Islam at large."

Now, the argument the President is making is: The conflict with Islam intensifies if we withdraw. You're making the argument that continuing to be bogged down here is more likely to result in that outcome. Could you expand on that for me?

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. Conflict, by its very nature, is not self-containable. It either diminishes, because one side has prevailed or because there is an accommodation, or it escalates. If we could prevail militarily and in a decisive fashion, even though I oppose the war, there would be a strong case to be made for it. But I think we know by now that to prevail we would need to have 500,000 troops in Iraq, wage the war with unlimited brutality, and altogether crush that society, because it would intensify, probably, its resistance. So, that's a no-starter.

Escalating the war as a consequence of protracting it, is hardly an attractive option for the United States, because, before too long, as I say in my statement, we could be facing a 20-year-long involvement, not only in Iraq, but Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. And think how precarious Pakistan is, and how uncertain the situation in Afghanistan is becoming. So, it's in our interest to isolate the conflicts and to terminate them. And we have to exploit, at least try to exploit, the political possibility, the political option.

Now, in the end, I cannot dogmatically argue that it is certain to succeed. But if we don't try, we know we'll never have had the chance.

The CHAIRMAN. You seem to be arguing that if we stay on the particular course we're on now, it will not succeed. You're confident the present course will not succeed?

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. Well, I think every indicator over the last 3 or so years indicates that. The situation is worsening. Hostility toward the United States is intensifying. Our isolation worldwide is both being perpetuated in some respects, becoming more culturally grounded. Look at the public opinion polls.

I think we have to take a hard look at what the options are. Now, I realize there are risks in a strategy in which the goal is to find an alternative outcome than a military victory. But, at the same time, we shouldn't become prisoners of apocalyptic and horrific scenarios, in some respects reminiscent of those which were described and drawn in the latter phases of the Vietnamese war, and which did not take place. I'm not sure that if we were to disengage from Iraq, that the consequence is this kind of horrific set of dominoes falling all over the Middle East. Moreover—and please notice carefully, in my statement I'm not saying we should unilaterally disengage.

The CHAIRMAN. I understand that.

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. I'm saying we should work with the Iraqis on setting a date, and use that as a trigger for an international conference of Iraq's neighbors. Because I don't believe, if you look carefully at the interests of Saudi Arabia or Jordan or Syria or Iran, that they have a stake, an interest, in making the explosion get out of hand. They're——

The CHAIRMAN. Well, quite frankly——

Dr. BRZEZINSKI [continuing]. Vulnerable regimes.

The CHAIRMAN. Unless I'm missing something, that was pretty much the consensus of most of the witnesses we've had in the last 4 weeks, and that is, they have an interest in it not exploding.

You echo the comments made yesterday and the day before and throughout this hearing process about Iran when you say Iran is, "politically divided and economically and militarily weak." Now, the question is: If that is true—and I think we overlook how politically divided it is and overlook how economically weak it is. We seem to be building it up to be, you know, 20 feet tall, and that this is the new superpower in the region. Matter of fact, some have used that phrase. Give me your assessment of the present threat that Iran poses in the region and what you think a continued protracted American presence in Iraq will do to impact whether they grow weaker, stronger, et cetera.

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. I think some form of American presence in Iraq is going to be a fact, assuming even a political settlement. But it will not be the same as a military occupation and a political hegemony imposed by a militarily successful campaign. I think that kind of presence, Iran has no choice but——

The CHAIRMAN. Do you think that was the objective of this administration, initially?

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. I have no idea what its initial objective was, because the motives it provided for the action proved to be entirely erroneous. And if they were the real motives, then the whole campaign was based on false assumptions.

The CHAIRMAN. It's unfair to ask you to be a soothsayer, I——

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. Yeah.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Apologize.

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. Now, if there were hidden motives—I can imagine, potentially, several. One would be to gain American domination over the region's oil, to put it very simplistically. Another, it could be to help maximize Israel's security by removing a powerful Arab State. Another one could have been to simply get rid of an obnoxious regime with which the United States had accounts to settle, going back to 1991 and the alleged assassination attempt against President Bush senior. There could be a variety of motives. But the official motives were WMDs.

The CHAIRMAN. Can you expand slightly on the notion—because I interrupted you—that Iran is politically divided, economically and militarily weak?

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. It is economically weak, because it is an economy that hasn't been thriving and it's one-dimensional, and it's relatively isolated. It's politically divided, in the sense that, in my judgment, the mullahs are Iran's past, and not its future, and that its fundamentalist regime is not very popular with the masses, and particularly with the younger generation, much of which is very pro-American. But, sadly, it is also more united, nationalistically, in part because of our attitude toward Iran, which has been extremely hostile and which has gelled together a kind of residual national sentiment, particularly in support of the nuclear program. And I think our policy has unintentionally—I hope, unintentionally—maybe it was devilishly clever—but I think unintentionally helped Ahmadinejad consolidate himself in power and exercise a degree of influence, which actually his position doesn't justify. You know, most Americans, when they say "President Ahmadinejad," they think he is the equivalent of President Bush. He's not. He's roughly a third-level official who doesn't even control the military resources of the country.

The CHAIRMAN. That's an important point to make. I think the vast majority of Americans would think he controls the——

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. Yeah.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Security apparatus.

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. And he doesn't.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I thank you very much.

Senator Lugar.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Brzezinski, just to follow through on that questioning of the chairman, you've called for U.S. military disengagement on a schedule to be jointly set with the Iraq leadership. Now, as I just heard you speaking, could this mean that in these talks with the Iraqi leaders, they decide that there should be some United States military presence in Iraq for an indefinite future. Would that be a contingency of these talks? But what I'm wondering is, as we engage in the talks with the Iraqi leadership, if it would not come, at least into their minds, that they do not want the United States to depart altogether from Iraq, nor, in fact, if we were to get into the second part of your thought, and that is, having entered into these talks, or even begun to discuss a date or a timeframe, the other countries might very well come to a conclusion that an American presence in Iraq of some sort, of some quantity, was a very important issue for them. Are these potential consequences of these talks that you've prescribed?

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. Absolutely. I have drafted the statement very carefully to take into account the existing situation. I have felt, some time ago, that we should have indicated a deadline for our departure, and, roughly a year or more ago, I said we should aim at a year. But I'm also aware of the fact that, during the intervening period of time, the situation has deteriorated and the consequences of our departure are probably going to be more difficult than had we done it a year or a year and a half ago. And time is not working in our favor.

Nonetheless, having said this, I would personally use these discussions with the Iraq leaders—not only the ones in the Green Zone, I emphasize—to identify those Iraqi leaders who have the sense of confidence to stand on their own feet, and then set with them a date. I would still advocate roughly a year. But I would certainly consider favorably any Iraqi desire for residual American presence. And I can envisage it occurring in a variety of ways. For example, the Kurdish leaders might say that they would welcome some residual American presence, because they are understandably fearful that either the Iranians or the Turks could use our departure as an excuse for dealing with what they view as a Kurdish irridenta directed against them. I can envisage some situation in which we will want to retain a military presence, perhaps, in Kuwait; and, thereby, in the immediate proximity. Theoretically, one could envisage some residual American presence in some remote base in Iraq, if that was the wish of the Iraqi leaders. And I think these are the kinds of things we can discuss with them with a deadline in mind, and then negotiate a mutually satisfactory deadline. And then, that deadline, I think, would make it easier to trigger a serious negotiating process with all of the neighbors regarding stability in Iraq and their stake in that stability.

Senator LUGAR. Well, that very nuanced and thoughtful suggestion, I think, is important to make a part of the record, because, frequently in these debates, Senators or the general public end up with the idea of everybody in, everybody out. There aren't too many nuances in this, sort of a rush—the image of the evacuation of the Vietnam Embassy is given as symbol—the photo of the helicopter lifting the last persons out. Now, this is obviously not what we're talking about here, particularly in the context of Afghanistan, nearby, in which the counsel right now of our NATO allies, quite apart from our situation, is that probably we should do more. Now, that comes, then, into some conflict with our military's ability to stretch to do a number of things at the same time, but—

Now, let me just ask—furthermore, you say, things may have deteriorated. Indeed, Secretary Rice has made the rounds. That's certainly what she seems to have found from some of the parties. So, this would lead those countries that have Sunni affinity to hope, at least for the time being, that the United States was not in a rush for the borders. And that sort of conference that you're suggesting, of the neighbors, which I think is an excellent idea, would bring together all of these parties that we're dealing with bilaterally, but increasingly appear to have some common themes, which includes a U.S. presence of some sort as a stabilizing factor.

I laboriously want to trace through what I think are excellent suggestions to make sure that the nuances of this are understood

by Senators, and by the public that may take seriously your testimony, as we do.

Now, I want to ask, finally—given the fact that the amount of government anywhere in Iraq is, in some cases almost de minimis at this point—one of the effects of our invasion and military operations, as we've seen, was not only the army disintegrated, so did the police force, so did what some Iraqis have said, almost any coercive ability to bring about order. The period of rebuilding is likely to be very long, and it's not really clear who helps do this rebuilding, aside from us. And I—I'm troubled by that, because we've had testimony from Iraqis that the problem is not just insurgents and militia and sectarian violence—just common criminals, thousands of them, preying upon Iraqis who do not have much protection, wherever they may be in the country. We have some responsibility for that, and, at the same time, it's not really clear how you fulfill a rebuilding of Iraq, at least in that comprehensive sense. That—and I hope maybe that might be a part of this leadership parley between the Iraqi leaders and ourselves. Maybe the United States doesn't do all of the nation-building, but, very clearly, someone will have to try to help restore some fabric in the provinces, in addition to the Baghdad situation that we've visited about.

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. I very much agree with what you say, Senator Lugar. Let me just add one preliminary point and then address specifically the points you have just raised.

My horror scenario is not a repetition of Saigon, the helicopters on top of the Embassy, and the flight out of the country. My horror scenario is that by not having a plan—and I understand that my friend, yesterday, discussed perhaps the possibility of a secret plan that the administration has—what I fear is that the secret plan is that there is no secret plan. My horror——

The CHAIRMAN. That's a good bet.

Dr. BRZEZINSKI [continuing]. Scenario is that we'll simply stay put, this will continue, and then the dynamic of the conflict will produce an escalating situation in which Iraqi failure to meet the benchmarks will be blamed on the Iranians. There will be, then, some clashes, collisions, and the war expands.

Now, as far as dealing with the rebuilding of Iraq in a setting in which we commit ourselves to disengage, and the commitment to engage, set jointly, becomes a trigger for an international conference, I think a great deal depends not on us engaging in nation-building, but on the surfacing of a genuine Iraqi motivation. I personally view with great skepticism all this talk about us creating an Iraqi national army, creating a nation, building—nation-building, and so forth. The problem is, we have smashed this state. We have given an enormous opportunity for narrow sectarian interests and passions to rise. What is needed, again, is a sense of Iraqi nationalism. And that residualist still exists. But to make it possible, it has to be led by Iraqi leaders who are viewed by their country as authentic. And I'm sorry to say, but the leadership, sitting in an American fortress, which doesn't venture outside is not very authentic. The authentic leaders are those who have their own bodyguards—indeed, their own militias—and their own capacity to assert their power. They have to be engaged in a dialog, and then in

the solution, a political solution. And that's what we very badly need.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary.

Senator Menendez.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Brzezinski, thank you for your testimony.

Let me ask you—we've had other witnesses here who have said that, in their opinion, that the biggest winner from our engagement in Iraq, as a result of our policies there, to date, at least—has been Iran. Would you agree with that?

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. Yes. I wouldn't use the word "winner," but I would say geopolitical beneficiary. Yes; they have benefited a great deal.

Senator MENENDEZ. You started off your statement today saying that, "If the United States continues to be bogged down in a protracted, bloody involvement in Iraq, the final destination on this downhill track is likely to be a head-on conflict with Iran and with much of the world of Islam at large." That's a pretty dire assessment. Could you take us through what you see happening if we don't change the course of events?

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. Well, I have alluded to it, but you cannot be precise, because the future is always so full of contingencies that, simply, there is no way of picking out which ones you think really will happen. But, basically, escalation, accusations, some incidents—there have already been some incidents between us and the Iranians—there are some allegations that the Iranians are responsible for certain acts; allegations, but not facts—and that would spark, simply, a collision. It could even be, in some fashion, provoked.

Let me draw your attention to something that your staff should give you and, I think, that might be of interest to some other members of this committee, and that's a report in the New York Times, dated March 27, 2006. It's a long report on a private meeting between the President and Prime Minister Blair 2 months before the war, based on a memorandum of conversation prepared by the British official present at this meeting. And in it, according to this account, the President is cited as saying that he's concerned that there may not be weapons of mass destruction found in Iraq, and that there must be some consideration given to finding a different basis for undertaking the military action. And I'll just read you what this memo allegedly says, according to the New York Times.

The memo states, that, "The President and Prime Minister acknowledged that no unconditioned—no unconventional weapons had been found inside Iraq." This is 2 months before the war. "Faced with the possibility of not finding any before the planned invasion, Mr. Bush talked about several ways to provoke a confrontation." And he described, then, several ways in which this could be done. And I won't go into that. I don't know how accurate these ways were. They're quite sensational, at least one of them. And if one is of the view that one is dealing with an implacable enemy that has to be removed, that course of action may, under certain circumstances, be appealing. I am afraid that the situation in Iraq continues deteriorating. And if Iran is perceived as, in some

fashion, involved or responsible, or the potential beneficiary thereof, that temptation could arise.

Senator MENENDEZ. If the Iranians are training Shiite militias, as I think there's a general perception that they are—isn't the administration also, despite all of its recent statements about how it's going to deal with Iranian personnel in Iraq and the carrier group that went into the gulf—isn't it equally as important to tell Prime Minister Maliki that he has to be as forceful in demanding that Maliki cut ties to these groups, and clear about the consequences if he refuses? Isn't that equally as important as the messages we're sending to the Iranians?

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. The problem here is that we have destroyed the Iraqi State. The Iraqi so-called national army is composed of people with very strong sectarian loyalties, and that the militias that exist are, in some respect, the real expressions of existing residual political power in Iraq. If Maliki undertakes an assault on some of these militias—and some are said to be well armed and as large as 60,000 men—he's going to be further isolated and further weakened. So, in a sense, he's being asked to undertake an impossible assignment. A political settlement has to aim at drawing in those elements in the Iraqi political spectrum, which is now very volatile and very confused, that have a long-term interest in the existence of an Iraqi State.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, let me ask you, then, on that point. If the people we need to be engaged with are the people who are beyond the Green Zone and have power by virtue of the militias and the political backing of elements of Iraqi society, what is the catalyst that gets them to the table to move them in the direction to achieve the goal, if it's possible—if it's possible—of a government of national unity? That's the first question.

And the second question, in the remaining time that I have, is, it seems to me that with Iraq's neighbors, while they should have a stake, it has not gotten to a point sufficiently bad to catalyze a change in the behavior of Iraq's neighbors. They haven't seemed to be incentivized as long as they believe that we will shed our blood and our national treasure. They are, I believe, reticent to do anything. We have not led a real effort to get them engaged in any significant way. It seems to me that sometimes, and there are other witnesses here who have said that, things have to get worse before they, in fact, can cross the threshold of understanding what their interests are.

So, I'd like your perceptions on those two things. What is it that catalyzes these groups that you suggest are the essential elements to try to achieve some success in a political context? And how do we get these other countries engaged, who—we believe have a stake, and they probably think they have a stake, but don't believe that it's time for them to pull the trigger yet?

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. Well, actually, my answer is the same to both questions. Namely, the realization that the United States is not there indefinitely, and that, within a reasonable period of time, with a jointly set date, the United States will disengage. That will have the effect of forcing, first of all, the various Iraqi parties to think of the consequences of American departure. Right now, in a curious way, the occupation, even though resented by most Iraqis,

is an umbrella for internal intransigence. Nobody really feels any incentive to compromise, because ultimately they know the situation is being kept more or less afloat by our occupation, though most Iraqis dislike it.

And, as far as the neighbors are concerned, they don't fear any real explosion in Iraq, because we're there. And hence, they may have different interests—the Saudis certainly have different interests than the Iranians—but they know that there is a kind of enduring volatile status quo, at our expense, but which doesn't confront them with any real choices. But if we were to set, jointly—and I keep emphasizing "jointly"—the date with Iraqis for our departure, it would have the effect of forcing all of the governments around Iraq to ask themselves, How do we deal with the problem of stability in Iraq? Do we really want to have a regional war among ourselves? The Saudis and the Jordanians, theoretically against the Iranians, and the Syrians in between, is that really appealing to anybody in the region? Most of the regimes in the region know that that kind of a war could spread and destroy them. And hence, we are far more likely to mobilize some degree of responsible interest in an accommodation that reinforces Iraqi stability if we do what I am advocating, a conjunction of the two actions, one triggering the other.

And I deliberately included in my suggestions countries like Pakistan, Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, because they may have some military resources that could be available for helping an Iraqi Government stabilize and police internal arrangements and develop a national army, a national army that's not developed by an occupier that's alien—namely, us—but by fellow Muslims. They may be willing to do that. And I would like to see other countries involved, countries that have a stake in that region's stability because of their dependence on energy, and they could be helpful particularly in a massive international recovery program for Iraq, which would be triggered by those two steps that I've advocated.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Senator Casey.

Senator CASEY. Doctor, thank you for your testimony and for your great public service to the Nation, continuing to this very moment, because I believe what you're doing here is very important to helping the Congress play the role it must play when it comes to Iraq and our national security generally.

I want to try to ask some very brief questions, and try to get at least three, but I want you to take your time in answering them as thoroughly as you think they warrant.

You made one assertion, during your testimony, about troop levels, saying that any kind of success in Iraq means, by definition, an American commitment of 500,000 troops. I wanted to have you expound on that, or just indicate that that's—is that—that's an accurate assessment of what you've testified to, the—that number?

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. Oh, you want me to answer each——

Senator CASEY. Yes.

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. Fine. Look, that figure is illustrative of a larger proposition; namely, to win this kind of a war, you have to have an overwhelming force. I'm not going to fight to the death for 500.

It could be 550, it could be 480, or it could be 600. My point is, we're no longer trying to crush a regime with a traditional army in the field, often led by corrupt officers without much loyalty in the rank and file to the cause on the other side. We're fighting, increasingly, the kind of chaotic, amorphous, sectarian, ethnic, religious resistance that's more pervasive. And we're discovering the same thing that the Russians discovered in Afghanistan, that the Israelis recently discovered in Lebanon, that that kind of a popular war requires a far higher commitment of resources on the part of the external power that has come in, in order to win. And, therefore, our military effort would simply have to be immeasurably greater. And that's the purpose of the 500,000.

Senator CASEY. Certainly greater than what we have there now, even——

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. Considerably——

Senator CASEY [continuing]. With——

Dr. BRZEZINSKI [continuing]. Greater.

Senator CASEY. Right.

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. Not 21,500 greater.

Senator CASEY. I'd ask you to evaluate, or critique, in any way that you think is appropriate, two basic assertions, among many, but two basic assertions by President Bush and his administration that we hear over and over and over again. One, the most recent assertion, that any kind of engagement with Iran and Syria would be, "extortion." Secretary Rice said that in her testimony. We've heard that. That's No. 1. And not in any order, necessarily. No. 2, the assertion, ongoing now for several years, that the war in Iraq is the central front on the—with regard to the war on terror, or the most important front with regard to the war on terror. I guess both of those assertions, if you can respond to both of them.

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. Well, engagement equals extortion, that's a very curious way of defining diplomacy. In other words, diplomacy only makes sense if the other side, in advance, concedes our desires and indicates its willingness to accept them.

The CHAIRMAN. I think you got it right. I think you've defined it.

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. Diplomacy that way is very one-sided and unlikely to be seriously practiced. So, this is what I meant, that we are sloganeering rather than strategizing in our democracy.

We negotiated with the Soviets at a time when they could have destroyed us almost instantly. The threat we face here is not even remotely comparable. I was responsible, for 4 years, for actually informing the President of a nuclear attack on the United States. I had 4 minutes in which to present the basic facts to the President. Excuse me, I had 3 minutes to present the basic facts to the President. The President had 4 minutes in which to make a decision as to how to respond. Twenty-eight minutes later, there would be nuclear exchange. Six hours later, 150 people—150 million people might have been dead. That is the kind of threat we faced, and yet we negotiated. In fact, negotiations were very important in marginally stabilizing that relationship.

We should negotiate with Iran. It won't be easy. We have conflicting interests. There are conflicts outside of the region that we have with Iran, like the nuclear problem. But certainly, attempting

a diplomacy is essential. And freezing oneself in ostracism is reminiscent, as I said in my testimony, of the position maintained by John Foster Dulles toward China in the early fifties.

On the second point, the central front—well, if it is the central front, it certainly is self-created, because the "war on terror," started 2 years earlier, or a year and a half earlier. And we had the problem with terror. I would never call it a "war," anyway. But we have had, and continue to have, a serious problem with the threat of terrorism. But the war in Iraq has, to me, the most elusive connection with the war on terror. The Iraqi regime, abhorrent though it was, was not engaged in terrorist activity against us. And I do not see the argument that, if we were not to continue the military campaign in Iraq, somehow or other, those who are opposing us in Fallujah or in Ramadi or in Najaf will swim across the Atlantic and engage in terrorist acts in the United States. It just strains credulity to hear arguments like that.

Senator CASEY. One final question. I only have a minute left. And I asked General Scowcroft this question this morning. It's been asserted by some—and I heard it from one individual for whom I have a lot of respect—that any military strike by the United States on Iran would obviously have a lot of ramifications, but one direct and immediate and unmistakable consequence of that would be the slaughter of American GIs currently in Iraq, probably mostly in Baghdad, almost like a—President Kennedy, years ago, talked about a nuclear sort of Damocles, in a—in the context of Iran and Iraq, a sort of Damocles over the head of American GIs that would be an immediate consequence.

I just want to get your assessment of that, quickly, in the context of highly likely or unlikely, and then whatever you can do to amplify that.

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. I would say, speculatively—I'm not certain of my answer, but I would say, instinctively, it's not very likely.

Senator CASEY. Not very likely.

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. Not very likely. I think the resistance against us in Iraq is largely indigenous, and, more or less, it expresses itself in terms of its current capability. In other words, there is no sort of hidden residual capability that could suddenly be unleashed because Iran has been attacked.

The fact is, you know, that most Iraqi Shiites fought pretty well against Iran during the 8-year-long war. It's a kind of simplistic generalization that many people employ, to the effect that the Shiites in Iraq are, somehow or other, beholden entirely to Iran. There are affinities and connections, undeniably, but there is an Iraqi identity, and the Shiites fought very well against the Iranians.

The Iranians can do a lot of other things if we attack Iran, but that one, I think, is unlikely.

Senator CASEY. Thank you, Doctor.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. The Senator from Florida, Senator Nelson.

Senator BILL NELSON. Good morning——

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. Good morning.

Senator BILL NELSON [continuing]. Dr. Brzezinski.

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. Hi.

Senator BILL NELSON. In your statement, I am drawn to the paragraph about calling for an international conference regarding regional stability. And I quote you, "a serious regional dialog promoted, directly or indirectly, by the United States could be buttressed at some point by a wider circle of consultations." I certainly agree with you. Would you expand on that?

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. Yes, Senator. It seems to me that—and I'm, to some extent, repeating myself—that we have not yet tapped, in a constructive fashion, the underlying interest of the states adjoining Iraq, and we haven't tapped sufficiently their underlying fear regarding their future by engaging them in a process in which they're only likely to be engaged if they think the American occupation is coming to an end; namely, Syria's discussions, among themselves, but also with the Iraqi authorities, whoever they are, and with us, about how regional stability ought to be preserved and how regional stability within Iraq ought to be consolidated. And we can't do that until and unless we, one, create the preconditions for it by the decision to leave, and, two, by engaging them in an effort which involves discussions.

Now, you don't go to a conference simply out from the cold, all of a sudden. You engage in previous discussions. That's what we hire a Secretary of State for, not to sit there and proclaim categorical statements, but to engage in the process. And the process itself, over time, can generate some degree of responsiveness, it can identify irreconcilable issues, as well as issues in which there is some shared stake. That is the purpose of diplomacy. Diplomacy isn't the answer to everything, but it is an important component of resolving issues and avoiding conflict.

Senator BILL NELSON. And those who say that we should not talk to, for example, Syria are ignoring the fact that, in the past when we talked to Syria, there was some consultation and progress with regard to the closing of the border, cooperation, albeit sporadic, that precipitously cut off after the assassination of Rafik Hariri. As you have pointed out, circumstances change, and, for the first time, Syria and Iraq have now opened diplomatic relations with each other.

And thank you for your comments.

And, Mr. Chairman, I know we're getting close to a vote, so I will stop so that one of our other Senators can go ahead.

Senator LUGAR [presiding]. The Chair recognizes Senator Webb.

Senator WEBB. Thank you—procedural note, do I call you "Mr. Chairman," Senator?

The CHAIRMAN. Why not?

Senator WEBB. Is it "Mr. Ranking Member"?

Senator BILL NELSON. Why not? [Laughter.]

Senator WEBB. Dr. Brzezinski, I certainly appreciate being able to hear your views. And, you know, I've read your articles over the years, and agree with a great bit of it, and appreciate having your wisdom at the table.

I will—also in light of the fact there's going to be a vote, I want to ask you two fairly specific questions, one of which is—we've been trying to sort out options, you know, if the administration were to take those options, or if the Government were, regarding how to get to this, you know, diplomatic conference or the forum where we

can, sort of, start resolving this—issues and increase the stability of the region while we pull out our troops. And from the way that you have constructed your testimony, it—and from what you just said—you're basically saying that we should first announce that there will be a substantial withdrawal, and then arrange for a conference to be called. Is that correct? Or is it—you're saying this should happen concurrently or——

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. No, no; let me just clarify what we should say, or what we should do. But first let me remind you, I'm your constituent. [Laughter.]

And it's good to see you here.

Senator WEBB. You have been the deciding vote. [Laughter.]

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. No; it's——

Senator WEBB. I'm—well, I'm assuming——

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. Probably was. [Laughter.]

What we should make clear is that there's a finite date to our presence, set jointly with the Iraqis. And that finite date should not be too far removed. And use that at the same time as a trigger for convening this regional event, this regional undertaking, because, as long as there is uncertainty about the duration of our stay, I don't think the adjoining states are likely to be engaged in helping us create regional stability, even though they are fearful of regional instability. So, these two things are interrelated, and that is why it is a strategic package, what I'm arguing for.

Senator WEBB. Thank you.

The second question is: I'm wondering if you see any circumstances under which this administration would open up some sort of serious dialog with Iran and Syria? And, if so, what they would be. I—to me, that's just the ultimate sticking point in the strategy that they—the so-called strategy that they have just announced.

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. Well, I think, unfortunately, the administration has used rhetoric terminology regarding Iran that has played into the hands of people like Ahmadinejad, thereby creating, in a sense, a process in which a dialog—a serious responsible dialog, not only regarding Iraq, but regarding nuclear weapons, the nuclear program—has become more difficult. That has to be reversed. I have no way of knowing whether the administration is prepared to undertake that reversal. I am perplexed by the fact that major strategic decisions seem to be made within a very narrow circle of individuals, just a few, probably a handful, perhaps not more than the fingers in one hand. And these are the individuals, all of whom but one, made the original decision to go to war and used the original justifications for going to war. So, they, unavoidably, are in a situation in which they are reluctant to undertake actions which would imply a significant reversal of policy. That's, from a human point of view, understandable, but, from a political point of view, troubling.

Senator WEBB. And it—and, from our—well, at least from the perspective, I think, of the people who are concerned about where we are, it is the conundrum that we face hearing the preponderance of testimony from people like yourselves, reading the Iraq Study Group reports where the recommendations are concurrent, that there should be some sort of military—continuation of military

action to try to assist the present government, but, at the same time, that there should be diplomatic action. And the overwhelming recommendation is that this include opening up dialog with Syria and Iran. And yet, if this administration refuses, or consciously avoids that step, then what you have, in the Baker-Hamilton report is a complete stoppage of half of what the recommendations consist of. And Chairman Hamilton mentioned, the other day when I asked him, that this step forward, this procedural step forward, should, arguably, come from the President and the Secretary of State, and I don't think we're likely to see it. Would you comment?

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. I think you're right in your last comment. And, in a sense, that constitutes a kind of constitutional stalemate, which can only be broken, in my judgment, given the circumstances and given the stakes involved, by congressional leadership—and, hopefully, bipartisan congressional leadership—because at stake, truly, is the future of this country and its role in the world. And if we get bogged down into something very messy and expanding, American global leadership will be in the gravest of jeopardy. It already is largely delegitimated worldwide.

So, congressional leadership here is important, and that joint leadership can only emerge, particularly the President's own party, if the leadership of the President's party, out of patriotic concerns, becomes convinced, itself, that the President has to be faced with the reality that much of the Nation—and the Congress, specifically—has a very different view of what is needed, and has a very different assessment of what is happening.

Senator WEBB. Thank you very much.

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. That's a very major challenge.

Senator WEBB. Thank you for your testimony. Thank you for being here today.

The CHAIRMAN [presiding]. That's what we're, I might add, attempting to do. Whether it will work or not—it's a first step. If you have any—I'm not being facetious here—any additional ideas as to how to do that, with specificity, they'd be welcome.

But we have a vote——

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. Just one point——

The CHAIRMAN. Please.

Dr. BRZEZINSKI [continuing]. I'd propose in response to just that.

The CHAIRMAN. Please.

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. I think a clear congressional resolution on the fact that the United States does not intend to stay in Iraq for an indefinite period of time would be very helpful.

The CHAIRMAN. We have passed, I might add, on, I think, two occasions, "no permanent basis." It's not the same thing, you're saying.

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. No, it's different——

The CHAIRMAN. It is different. And we could not even get that through.

But, having said that, let me yield to the Senator from——

Senator CARDIN. Mr. Chairman, I just really——

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. Maryland.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I just wanted to thank you, Dr. Brzezinski, for your testimony. I am in agreement with pretty much everything you've said.

There's only one thing that disappoints me, and that is you're a resident of Virginia rather than Maryland. [Laughter.]

Other than that, I think we're in full agreement.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, again, I want to thank you so much, Dr. Brzezinski. As I said, you're always so clearheaded in your recommendations. There's no doubt about what you're proposing. I, for what it's worth, agree with you, in large part, particularly as it relates to what I believe to be, not only the hyping of the circumstance for going in, but the hyping of the threat, and so on. I'll conclude by saying I agree with your worst-case scenario as the one I worry about most, as well, that as this becomes protracted, it gets—my dad used to have an expression I've not used often, but when people talk about war, he'd say, "The only war worse than one that's intended is one that's unintended." And I worry that if we stand on the—your phrase is "slope"—that that's where we could end up, and that would be a disaster.

But I thank you very, very much, and thank you for being available to us. It is the intention of the committee to hold hearings on Iran in a timely way, and I would ask you to consider, ahead of time, whether you'd be willing to come back and talk about Iran.

Dr. BRZEZINSKI. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. It's been a privilege to be here.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

We are adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:03 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

LETTER FROM NECHIRVAN BARZANI, PRIME MINISTER, KURDISTAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT OF IRAQ, ERBIL, KURDISTAN-IRAQ

JANUARY 23, 2007.

Hon. JOSEPH BIDEN, *Chairman,*
Hon. RICHARD LUGAR, *Ranking Member,*
Senate Foreign Relations Committee,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR BIDEN AND SENATOR LUGAR: I convey the greetings and friendship of the Kurdish people to the United States. I am following with great interest your important hearings on the situation in Iraq. The Kurdistan Regional Government of Iraq (KRG) has been a full partner with the United States and our fellow Iraqis in trying to build a democratic Iraq. We understand America's frustration with the situation in Iraq and we, too, are frustrated, disappointed, and saddened by the continuing instability, violence, and loss of life.

It is our deeply held view that the only viable long-term solution is a federal structure for Iraq that recognizes and empowers regional governments in the north, south, and center of the country. The Kurds are committed to a voluntary union within a federal system and have no plans to secede from Iraq.

A program for reconciliation in Iraq must offer a ground-breaking approach to both the decentralization of authority and the distribution of resources. In that context, I would like to take this opportunity to offer some clarification regarding the discussion of the Kurdish position on the Iraqi oil law that came up during Secretary Rice's appearance before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Thursday, January 11, 2007, and in subsequent press accounts of the negotiations over the law.

I have personally led the intensive negotiations about the Iraqi oil law in Baghdad on behalf of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). The KRG has proposed a historic plan for the development of Iraqi oil resources and the distribution of oil revenues that is consistent with the interim Iraqi Constitution, also known as the Transitional Administrative Law. In accordance with article 112 of the Constitution, the federal government and the government of the oil producing regions will jointly manage production from existing fields. Regional governments have exclusive control over new fields, including the right to sign contracts with foreign companies. The law will follow article 142 of the Constitution in recognizing as valid the contracts the KRG has signed with foreign oil companies.

There is agreement that oil revenues will be distributed to Iraq's regions based on population, thus assuring the Sunni Arabs their proportionate share of oil wealth. And, while not constitutionally required to do so, the KRG has agreed that this sharing will include revenues from new fields as well as existing fields, including Kirkuk. Finally, the Kurdistan Regional Government will enact its own petroleum law to implement in our region what has been agreed with the federal government.

In order to assure transparency in contracting, the KRG will permit a newly created Federal Oil Council to audit all future contracts and to object to those that do not meet agreed standards.

As far as the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) is concerned, the oil law has not yet been finalized, although there have been recent statements and press accounts to the contrary. The last draft that the KRG was in agreement with was presented to Prime Minister al-Maliki for his review on December 17, 2006, and the details of that draft is what I have described. Any further material changes to that draft will require the KRG's consent. Although the process of drafting the oil law

is nearing completion, the important annexes to the law are still pending. Also, there are three associated laws (the revenue-sharing law, the Iraq National Oil Company (INOC) charter law, and a law to define the Oil Ministry's new role) which must be drafted and agreed upon before the whole package can be regarded as being final.

Let me conclude with a word about Kirkuk. As you know, Saddam Hussein's regime carried out a brutal policy of "Arabization"—that is the forced migration of Kurds from Kirkuk, and Arabs to Kirkuk—to alter the Kurdish and demographic character of the city. Turcomen citizens also suffered under this policy. Although the consequences of Saddam's crimes are still with us, there will be a historic referendum in Kirkuk later this year. It should go without saying that the status of Kirkuk is a Kurdish and an Iraqi issue. It is not the business of any other country, including Turkey, which should not interfere in the affairs of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

I am personally committed to deepening Kurdish and Iraqi ties with Turkey, and my record speaks to that commitment. Turkish investment in, and trade with, the Kurdistan Region has been decisive in our economic stability and growth. An open and friendly border with Turkey is a top priority for the Kurds and for Iraq. However, we urge Turkey to avoid any statements or actions that could set back its relations with the KRG and further destabilize the situation in Iraq.

I hope this letter offers some clarification on the position of the Kurdistan Regional Government and that you would consider it for submission as part of the official record for your hearings on Iraq.

I plan to come to Washington in February and would welcome the opportunity to meet with you then. KRG Minister and Director of Foreign Relations Falah M. Bakir will soon visit Washington and will be available for consultations on the oil law or on any other questions you may have.

I would like to convey my personal invitation to you and your Senate colleagues to visit the Kurdistan Region of Iraq during your next visit to the region.

Sincerely yours,

NECHIRVAN BARZANI,
Prime Minister.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. JONATHAN MORROW, SENIOR LEGAL ADVISER TO THE MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES, KURDISTAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT; FORMER SENIOR ADVISER TO THE U.S. INSTITUTE OF PEACE

IRAQ OIL AND REVENUE SHARING AGREEMENTS: NECESSARY BUT NOT SUFFICIENT FOR STABILITY

Summary

Hopes in the United States that oil and revenue-sharing legislation will bring stability to Iraq are exaggerated. No belligerent in Iraq's civil war is stating its aims in terms of oil rights and revenues. In parts of Iraq outside the Kurdistan region, petroleum development will remain hampered by security problems for the foreseeable future.

However the hopes are not entirely misplaced. Intergovernmental oil and revenue-sharing agreements—likely to be concluded between the Iraq Federal Government and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) in coming weeks, and reflected in national legislation—are an essential, if not sufficient, condition for prosperity and stability. The agreements may form the basis of a modus vivendi for what is already a highly regionalized, confederal, if not partitioned Iraq. As with other new-born federations, Iraq may find that it is the logic of economics and trade, if nothing else, that encourages cordial relations among the federal and regional governments.

Significantly, the agreements to date reflect real Iraqi interests, and have not been imposed by the U.S. administration. They reflect the reality of a very decentralized Iraq. In doing so they strike a careful balance between, on the one hand, the need for Iraq-wide consistency of petroleum policy, and on the other, the legitimate interests of regions, including the Kurdistan region, in administering petroleum operations in their territory. Largely at the insistence of the KRG, the Iraq oil law will conform with international best practice in the petroleum industry, incorporating the possibility, if federal and regional ministers so choose, of using private sector exploration and development under risked contracts. The revenue-sharing law will seek to maintain a viable if not strong federal government, with the remainder of revenues shared throughout Iraq on a per capita basis, including proportionate shares to the oil-deprived Sunni Arab areas of Iraq.

The U.S. administration should maintain its current practice of encouraging, but not orchestrating, these intergovernmental agreements. The United States should increasingly defer to the IMF and other multilateral organizations to provide technical assistance on these agreements.

Introductory Remarks

I offer this written testimony on my own behalf, and at the request of the office of the chairman of the committee. For the past 3 years I have been an observer and participant in Iraq's constitutional and petroleum negotiations, and have a personal interest in the prospects that those negotiations might have for stemming the flow of blood in Iraq. As a former U.N. official I have experience advising post-conflict governments in petroleum law matters, particularly in the case of East Timor, now a successful oil-producing state. I am an Australian citizen-resident in Washington, DC.

I am currently acting as legal adviser to one of the Iraqi negotiating parties, the KRG. In presenting these remarks I draw on my 2 years experience working on the Iraq Constitution and legal system as a senior adviser at the United States Institute of Peace, and as an occasional senior adviser to the United Nations in Iraq. I have made 12 trips to Iraq over the course of the last 3 years. I have not cleared this testimony with the KRG or with any other party.

Background

In recent weeks, Iraqi negotiators have made progress in agreeing the terms of two critical pieces of Iraqi legislation: A law for the exploration and development of oil and gas (commonly referred to as the "Hydrocarbons Law"), and a law for Iraq-wide petroleum revenue sharing (the "Revenue Sharing Law").

The negotiations are essentially bilateral, as between the two existing governments in Iraq: The federal government and the KRG. The venue for negotiations is the "Iraq Oil Committee," an ad hoc intergovernmental committee, chaired by Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister Barham Salih, that meets occasionally in the Baghdad International Zone. The principal negotiators representing each party are Dr. Thamir Gadhban, adviser to Prime Minister Maliki, and himself a former Oil Minister in the Allawi Government of 2004–2005; and Dr. Ashti Abdullah Hawrami, Minister of Natural Resources in the KRG and a long-time petroleum consultant based in London, and not aligned with either of the two Kurdistan political parties. Dr. Gadhban, though himself a secular Shiite and now aligned with the Shiite-dominated Maliki government, carries the support of important sections of Iraq's Sunni Arab leadership.

These negotiations take place at a point in time when the emergence of a second and predominantly Shia region, in the south of Iraq, seems possible. To date, and notwithstanding the centralist preferences of Prime Minister Maliki, the prevailing political forces in Shia Iraq are regionalist in nature; this was evident in the 2005 constitutional negotiations, and in the passage of the Law of the Executive Procedures Regarding the Formation of Regions in November last year.

The State of Play—Hydrocarbons Law

A draft of the Hydrocarbons Law was agreed on December 17, 2006, between Dr. Gadhban and Dr. Hawrami. Though representing very different interests in Iraq, those two individuals have developed a good—and in Iraq, rare—rapport. They are each very experienced in the petroleum industry, and have relationship of considerable trust.

In point form, the essential terms of the agreement reflected in that draft are as follows.

1. New intergovernmental oil body.—A new supreme petroleum regulatory body will be created: A Federal Council for Oil and Gas. The critical feature of this institution is that it is an intergovernmental entity with direct representation of the federal government, the KRG, and any other subnational government that may come into existence. Important decisions will be made jointly by the governments. As Iraq comes increasingly to resemble a confederal or even international entity—analogous to the European Union, for instance—these intergovernmental entities will be increasingly important.

2. Risk and reward contracting.—Significantly, the Federal Council for Oil and Gas, the Iraq Oil Ministry, and the KRG, will have the ability to resort to risk and reward contracting with the private sector, including production sharing agreements. The level of political commitment to production sharing varies within Iraq. The KRG has endorsed a heavily private sector oriented approach in its own territory, which contains approximately 10–15 percent of Iraq's petroleum. The KRG has already concluded two such contracts, with Norwegian and Turkish companies, in circumstances where significant oil discoveries have since been made; the KRG

plans to execute several more in the near future. Such an investor-friendly approach is much less popular in Baghdad, where unrisked service and buy-back contract models are likely to be the norm.

3. Intergovernmental cooperation, with right of arbitration.—Consistent with the Iraq Constitution, the KRG will retain the right to license petroleum activities in the Kurdistan region. Under the Iraq Constitution, petroleum administration is not an exclusive power of the federal government (art. 110) and therefore regional law is paramount (art. 115). Existing KRG contracts are grandfathered (art. 141). However, in keeping with the constitutional requirements of intergovernmental cooperation (art. 112), the KRG will review existing KRG petroleum contracts to ensure that they are consistent with the policy criteria agreed in the Federal Council for Oil and Gas, and will forward future KRG contracts to the Federal Council for Oil and Gas which in turn may, as a last resort, submit those contracts to independent arbitrators if they perceive that they are inconsistent with those criteria.

As of today's date, some senior Iraq Federal Government officials have resisted the cooperation and arbitration approach as agreed on December 17, and are insisting that the federal government have a blanket right of approval over KRG contracts. This new stance is at odds with the Iraq Constitution and the principles of cooperation that it contains. This is the principal cause of delay in negotiations and is the obstacle preventing the draft Hydrocarbons Law going to Cabinet and Parliament.

It is unlikely that the KRG will accept this reversal of attitude on the part of some in the federal government. First, the Constitution of Iraq supports the KRG view. Moreover, the KRG is aware that many oil-producing federations, including the United States, Canada, Australia, Sudan, and the United Arab Emirates, give power to manage petroleum production to subnational governments. Most importantly, there is an overwhelming anxiety in the Kurdistan region that a future Iraq Federal Government might deliberately, and for political reasons, prevent the Kurdistan's oil from being produced, to the economic detriment of the region. In the past, successive Iraq Governments, including of course Saddam Hussein's, have done so. This is why there is hostility in the Kurdistan region to any assertion of an extra-constitutional right of approval by Baghdad for KRG petroleum activities. The December 17 compromise position—including the arbitration mechanism—is sensible, represents a serious concession by the KRG from its rights under the Constitution, and accommodates any reasonable federal government requirement for Iraq-wide cooperation and uniformity.

In addition to this outstanding political issue, some technical work remains to be concluded on the draft law, including the completion of annexes setting out model contracts.

The State of Play—Revenue Sharing Law

The Revenue Sharing Law is less well advanced. The draft Hydrocarbons Law sets out some general revenue sharing principles, but quite properly leaves the details to a separate piece of legislation. The general principles so far agreed for the Revenue Sharing Law are as follows:

1. All oil and gas revenues will be deposited in an "Oil Revenues Fund," under the oversight of a Council of Trustees. The Council will, like the Federal Council for Oil and Gas, be an intergovernmental institution, with direct representation of the federal government and the KRG.

2. There will be an initial regular allocation to a "Future Fund," perhaps analogous to the Kuwait Fund.

3. There will be second regular allocation to the federal government.

4. There will be a third regular allocation to the regions and governorates according to population. Where the federal government currently carries out essential government activities within region or governorate, the cost of those activities will be deducted from the allocation of that region or governorate.

It is noteworthy that in agreeing to these principles, the KRG is waiving its right under the Constitution to retain revenues from oil and gas fields that were not in production at the time the Constitution entered into force—the so-called "future fields" (implied in art. 112). The KRG position is that it is ready to pool revenues from all petroleum fields—both current and future—into a common account provided certain obvious safeguards are in place. Those safeguards include a transparent and credible revenue sharing mechanism in place in Baghdad that guarantees no superfluous or wasteful federal government spending, and that guarantees that, after the federal government allocation, the Kurdistan region will receive its per capita entitlement (approximately 17 percent on the most reliable population figures). The other safeguard the KRG requires is that there be a modern and investor-friendly petroleum legal regime throughout Iraq in the form of the Hydrocarbons

Law—so that the KRG is not the only part of Iraq generating and sharing new petroleum revenues.

These four agreed principles still leave some matters to be resolved in the draft Revenue Sharing Law. Perhaps the most important of those outstanding matters are:

1. Establishing the proper scope of the federal government. The Constitution gives the federal government very limited exclusive powers. Those powers include defense and foreign affairs, but do not include, for instance, taxation or petroleum operations or criminal and family law. However there is a large range of nonexclusive powers that no other level of government in Iraq is capable of exercising: Health services in Kerbala, for instance, or education in Anbar, or the justice system in Baghdad. All these activities need, for the time being, to be funded by the federal government.

However the federal government should not receive a blank check. The regions and governorates have a right to limit the scope of federal government spending so that there will be significant remainder for division amongst competent regions and governorates (including the Kurdistan region) on a per capita basis, consistent with the Constitution. This will require a careful negotiation on the functions of the federal government and careful drafting of the negotiation results.

2. Establishing the criteria by which an existing governorate, or any new region that may be created, will be considered competent to receive a direct allocation. These criteria will presumably include the practical ability of that governorate or region to receive funds and spend them on government services. Perhaps those criteria should include the need for an elected government to be in place.

At this point in time, the KRG has been invited by the federal government to table the first draft of the Revenue Sharing Law for negotiations. The KRG has now done so. I note that the KRG views the Hydrocarbons Law and the Revenue Sharing Law as parts of a single package of legislation that should be passed by the Iraq Parliament simultaneously. I also note, however, that the Iraq Parliament has been struggling to reach a quorum since December 2006 and early passage of either law, however desirable, seems unlikely.

Prospects for Peace

The progress on the hydrocarbons and revenue-sharing agreements is encouraging. The laws that give effect to these agreements, when they are in place, can help ensure the fiscal viability of the Iraq Federal Government as well as the proper constitutional integrity and autonomy of the regions. The laws will, in particular, relieve tensions between the federal government and the KRG. The Hydrocarbons Law will, incidentally, confirm the implication in the Constitution that the administration of Kirkuk petroleum fields will remain under the joint control of the federal government regardless of the outcome of the Kirkuk referendum; similarly, all revenue from Kirkuk petroleum will be pooled nationally. In this way, the Hydrocarbons Law will work to reduce (but not eliminate) Arab-Kurd tensions over the future of Kirkuk.

The chances that these laws will alleviate the central conflict in Iraq—between Sunni Arabs and Shia Arabs—are slim. Contrary to some suggestions, including Recommendation 28 of the Iraq Study Group Report, oil laws are unlikely to provide the venue for "national reconciliation." It has often been suggested that one catalyst for the export of terrorist activity from the Sunni parts of Iraq is a Sunni Arab fear of the consequences of a partition of Iraq in circumstances where they lack oil resources. Any initiative—such as the imminent Revenue Sharing Law—that might guarantee those parts of Iraq their per capita share of petroleum revenues could eliminate that anxiety, and thus reduce violence. If revenue is being shared, the prospects of regionalization in Iraq become less threatening.

This argument is not convincing, at least in the short term. Since 2003, no representative of Iraq's Sunni Arabs has come forward with demands for a per capita share of Iraq's petroleum revenues. The Sunni Arab negotiating strategy has hitherto been wholly directed at strengthening the federal government, and has been unwilling to adopt a regionalist strategy; or, as the recent National Intelligence Estimate put it, they have been "unwilling to accept their minority status." The near- and medium-term prospects for the appearance of an economically savvy Sunni regional administration seem remote.

However, the emergence of Sunni regional political entities is inevitable, since at some point the Sunni Arabs will be forced, by necessity, to abandon their ambitions for restored national hegemony. The only alternative for them will be to concentrate on securing their own regional prosperity. When that day arrives, the emerging Sunni Arab region will need the ability to access a full per capita share of national petroleum revenues. An impoverished Sunni region will likely be further radicalized.

On the other hand, a sustainable Sunni region, that can provide its own security and other government services, can be free from the fear of majoritarian rule from Baghdad, and can assert control through regional security forces over criminal elements now at large in the Sunni triangle. At the very least, the Revenue Sharing Law offers this hope.

Constitutional Amendment

Efforts to permanently recentralize oil management and dismantle the constitutional revenue-sharing requirements by amending the Constitution are very unlikely to succeed. While regional interests including the KRG are prepared in legislation to step down from the Constitution and agree to sharing mechanisms, they will likely wish to retain the constitutional default position—namely regional administration of petroleum fields and the right to retain "future fields" revenue.

Within Iraq, the only constituency for a constitutional amendment initiative on oil is in the Sunni nationalist camp, representing approximately 20 percent of Iraq's population. The requirement in the Constitution (art. 142) that any amendment pass a three-governorate veto test means that no such proposed amendment will succeed, since at the very least the KRG would move its constituency in any proposed referendum to block the recentralization of oil powers. It is unlikely, of course, that any such initiative would reach referendum. The chairmanship of the Iraq Parliament's Constitution Review Committee is held by the major Shia regionalist party, SCIRI. International commentators on the matter are often unaware that the schema of decentralization set out in the Constitution was very deliberate. I have written on these matters in greater detail in USIP Report 168, "Weak Viability: The Iraqi Federal State and the Constitution Amendment Process," July 2006, www.usip.org/pubs/specialreports/sr168.pdf.

Moreover, efforts to amend these provisions of the Constitution are often grounded in the belief that a decentralized petroleum industry is less capable of succeeding than a centralized one. Given the number of successful oil producing federations in which regions control petroleum production, this belief is questionable.

It does seem possible and desirable, however, that there be some constitutional amendments on these subject matters. In particular, a broad constituency could be found to reflect at least some of the agreements in the Hydrocarbons Law and Revenue Sharing Law in constitutional language, giving greater permanency and clarity to the principles of joint decisionmaking between federal and regional governments. Later this month, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq will be convening the Iraq Parliament's Constitution Review Committee to consider these matters; the federal government and KRG oil negotiators will also attend the meeting.

Another possible amendment will the entrenchment in the Constitution of an Upper House of Parliament, to regions and governorates direct representation in that body. Surprisingly enough, there is no permanent venue in Iraq for regional and governorate representation at the federal level.

Recommendations for the U.S. Administration

The United States has played a minor but helpful facilitating role in the oil and revenue sharing discussions so far. This role is an appropriate one and should not be amplified. International misperceptions of U.S. interference in the drafting of an Iraq oil law are likely to endure.

The United States should encourage the IMF to take a greater role in the preparation of these laws, and in particular the Revenue Sharing Law and associated institutions. The IMF is uniquely equipped to provide the specialist technical advice in this area.

The United States should work to assist the establishment of a Sunni region in Iraq, with an elected leadership capable of receiving and spending a per capita allocation of petroleum revenues. The United States should not attempt to prevent the emergence of a southern (predominantly Shia) federal region if the people in that part of Iraq so choose.

PERSPECTIVE OF IRAQ DRAFT PETROLEUM LAW BY TARIQ SHAFIQ, DIRECTOR, PETROLOG & ASSOCIATES, LONDON, UK; CHAIR, FERTILE CRESCENT OIL COMPANY, BAGHDAD, IRAQ

IRAQ DRAFT PETROLEUM LAW: AN INDEPENDENT PERSPECTIVE

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Iraq may prove to have one of the greatest endowed petroleum resource bases in the world, with oil potential reserves in excess of 215 billion barrels (bnb) and proven reserves in the region of 115bnb, which puts it on par with Saudi Ara-

bia. Moreover, its finding and development costs are low—amongst the lowest in the Middle East. However, its historical maximum production rate in any one year has not exceeded 3.5mn b/d, although its exploration and development history has stretched almost for eight decades. Iraq's oil production level historically has lagged behind its oil reserve capability and has neither reflected its low extraction costs.

Present Iraq proven reserves can support a production plateau of 10 million barrels per day (mbpd) and maintain it for a decade. As such, priority should go to rehabilitation and production capacity build-up and not to exploration for a few years to come.

Planning oil field development for production capacity growth ought to be carried out on a composite master plan, which examines the capacities of the discovered and producing fields (including each and every producing formation within each field) from a technical and economic feasibility point of view. In the mean time, it should take into consideration Iraq's economic development plans and needs. This necessitates a centralisation of policy and planning.

1.2 Finding cost per barrel of oil is estimated at: < US Cent 0.5. Development cost per barrel of oil is estimated at: US$0.5–1.0. This puts capital investment cost per 1 million barrels production capacity at US$3 billion for expansion of existing production facilities and US$6 billion, at the oil field boundary. These figures may go to US$4.5 and US$9 billion to account for security requirements and recent high oil equipment inflation cost. Operating cost per barrel is US$1–2.

1.3 Today, Iraq's production facilities are either dilapidated, looted, sabotaged, or war-torn to the extent that in September 2003, the country's production rate sank to around 1mbpd in comparison to a pre-war level of March 2003 of some 2.8mbpd. Thus far, at the beginning of 2007, Iraq is producing around 2mbpd and exports around 1.5mbpd, which is declining.

Iraq's oil industry has been governed by the concession oil agreements until the early seventies, and decrees and regulations since then. It is about time Iraq has a petroleum law that sets out clear terms and conditions for good oil and gas industry exploitation plans, policy, and execution.

2.0 The Draft Petroleum Law

2.1 On the invitation of the Iraqi Minister of Oil, Dr. Hussain Shahrestani, the Iraqi draft petroleum law was researched and drafted by a team of three independent Iraqi oil technocrats (including myself), who together have international, Middle East and Iraqi oil industry experience amounting to some 120 years. Invited to join the team was the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) Minister of Oil, but that did not materialize.

2.2 The overall objective of the draft petroleum law is to optimize Iraq's oil and gas exploitation, maximize return, and unite the country and nation.

The draft petroleum law seeks uniformity of plans and policy throughout the country. It requires the Ministry of Oil's (MoO) consultation and participation with the provinces. Supervision of oil and gas operations is shared between the provinces and the central Ministry. The decisionmaking process has built in checks and balances to enhance transparency and anticorruption practices.

A summary of the key points of the second draft of the Petroleum Law is presented in Appendix I—Iraq Draft Petroleum Law: A Summary of Key Points.

2.3 The law is investment friendly. It encourages private enterprise and welcomes the international oil companies (IOCs) to work in partnership with the Iraq National Oil Company (INOC). They have a recognized role to play in the transfer of up-to-date state-of-the-art technology, technical and managerial training of Iraqis, and in investment capital. Selection from among prequalified companies will be made through tendering in a transparent and accountable process.

Contract negotiations and decisions will be tasked to a high-level Federal Commission assisted by a negotiating entity and a think tank. Authority for final signature is vested with the Council of Ministers.

INOC will be an independent holding company, with affiliated regional operating companies with an interrelated directorship, to ensure proper communication and management as well as the participation of the provinces. All discovered fields will be earmarked to INOC.

The central Ministry will be tasked with the supervisory and regulatory role, in addition to the preparation of plans and policy in cooperation and participation with the provinces.

2.4 The law is based on Articles 111 and 112 of the new Iraqi Constitution, seen in the light of Articles 2, 49, 109, and 110, which broadly define the authorities and responsibilities of the Federal and Provincial authorities within the Petroleum sector.

In order to clarify the imprecise nature of these articles and to work on the basis of a fair and sound interpretation, an objective and independent legal consultancy was sought, a copy of which is presented in Appendix II—Interpretation of Iraq's Constitutional Articles Governing Oil & Gas by an Independent Legal Firm.

In the forthcoming review of the Constitution it is expected that a large sector of the nation and in particular the large majority of Iraqi oil technocrats, will vote for modification of these critical Articles 111 and 112 governing the ownership of oil and gas and management of production, plans and strategic policy, respectively, in light of the legal interpretation attached below. However, the draft petroleum law has been written on the basis of this legal interpretation irrespective of whether the review takes place.

3.0 Ongoing negotiations

3.1 As highlighted above, the overall objective of the draft petroleum law is to optimize oil and gas exploitation, maximize return, and unite the country. As such, the draft law was written in the interest of the nation state as a whole, to apply equally to all parts of the country, with no margin for negotiation between the federal government and any one region or governorate or among the ethnic and sectarian divide.

3.2 The petroleum draft prepared by the drafting team has been adopted by the MoO without modification.

However, with differences between rival sectarian and ethnic parties at its peak, negotiations between the major parties have become the rule, in advance of democratic debate among the members of the Council of Representatives (the Parliament). The case of the draft petroleum law is no exception.

Hard negotiations have been taking place, essentially, between KRG representatives and the rest of the members of the Ministerial Committee, which was set up to examine and make recommendations on draft petroleum law to the Council of Ministers. Once approved by the Council, the law would be passed to the Council of Representatives for ratification.

The KRG position, expressed in their published Draft Petroleum Law, was based on a radical interpretation of the pivotal Article 111, allowing for the oil and gas in the Kurdistan as the property of the people of Kurdistan, not the whole Iraqi nation, as an undivided asset. Their petroleum law is so designed as to contain terms and conditions vis-a-vis the Federal draft petroleum law, with a large margin for negotiation as demonstrated in the past.

It is my view that a material change in the second draft petroleum law that increases the powers of the provinces, could compromise the interests of the nation as a whole. From the KRG perspective, a compromise made by them is part of their negotiating strategy.

Examining the Temporary Law for Administration (TAL), issued by the CPA, shows that consultation or cooperation in the management of oil and gas resources by the federal government with the regions and governorates was the only requirement, conditional on an agreed fair distribution of revenue.

The Constitution, however, requires more than consultation and cooperation in the management of resources. The draft federal petroleum law goes beyond that in sharing with the regions and governorates management and decisionmaking. It has been drafted for the interests of the nation-state as a whole and to apply equally to all parts of the nation, with no built-in margin for negotiations between the federal government and any one region or governorate.

The third and finalized draft petroleum law will in addition contain agreed principles governing Revenue Sharing and Reserved Fund. Each of the two will be entrusted independent administrative bodies. The former shall be based on equal population basis.

3.3 The negotiations did not start in earnest until the revenue-sharing issue was settled.

The negotiations were slow, proceeding in a stop and go fashion over the last 5 months. An important breakthrough occurred when a senior KRG Minister stated in an oil conference in London on 8 December 2006, that, following a recent definitive agreement between KRG and federal government negotiators over an acceptable scheme of oil revenue sharing, the KRG position on the interpretation of Articles 111 and 112 had changed and come into line with that of the central government. He added that in due course, following the building of mutual confidence, the KRG might consent to the redrafting of relevant constitutional articles. This was regarded by those Iraqis present as a genuine gesture by the Iraqi Kurdish nation acting in the common interests of the Iraqi nation.

Despite this declaration, however, the KRG appears to maintain its earlier position of authority to negotiate contracts with companies independently of the Federal Petroleum Commission and without the requirement for its approval.

Another sticky issue is the KRG's half a dozen PSA contracts with small oil companies. These provide windfall profits well above and multiples of the norm reasonably required by the current draft petroleum law, in the order of an internal discounted rate of return of 60–100 percent. The central Ministry has decreed them as unacceptable and without legal base. Whether they are to be cancelled or reviewed to be brought into line with the terms of the Federal petroleum law is another issue which yet to be settled.

One possible explanation for the KRG to maintain its position on these two issues is that there might be a lack of consensus among its leadership, or again its desire to maintain a bargaining position.

In my opinion, if the KRG maintain this position it would amount to a de facto rejection of Articles 111, 112, and other relevant articles of the Constitution, which task the federal government with the responsibility for the proper management of oil and gas resources. It would leave the door open for other regions and governorates to follow suit and set a damaging precedence. It could lead to diversified contract terms and conditions which lack transparency, accountability, and the checks and balances built into the federal law.

However, as of today I understand that a compromise solution has been reached on these two issues within the Negotiating Committee, that would allow the KRG to negotiate contracts with companies in the presence of a representative from the central MoO and subject to the approval of the Federal Petroleum Commission (FPC); and allow the KRG themselves to renegotiate their existing PSA contracts to bring them in conformity with the Federal Petroleum Law but validity is subject to the approval of the FPC. The wording is chosen diplomatically to meet the Kurd's sensitivity.

I understand also that the Negotiating Committee has agreed on a third version of the Draft Petroleum Law, as of today. However, I understand that approval from the KRG top decisionmakers has not yet been received. The further delay could be because of disenchantment of the KRG leadership with the compromise solutions.

The third and finalized draft, which I have received today, is disappointing and weak in the critical changes that have been made to the two principle articles of competence of authorities and grant of rights, as a result of negotiations and bargaining.

The critical items that have been removed from the original draft are fundamental in the context of professionalism and transparency and weaken the checks and balances built into the original draft. The principles are still there but the mechanisms for enforcing them under Iraq's prevailing situation have been skillfully removed or circumvented to make the outcome purely cosmetic.

The role of the professional think tank has been considerably weakened. Its former scope to examine all issues has been reduced to only those selected by the FPC. The requirement to publish their annual report has been removed. Membership appointment is reduced to one year from five, and requires the unanimity of all the members of the FPC.

The appointments of the think tank and FPC have been made to conform to Iraq's sectarian and ethnic divide, an alarming indication of political interference at a time when sound professional management is badly needed.

The FPC has been enlarged up to 20 or 30 members which makes it more fit for a debating society than trusties tasked with a vital decisionmaking role, whilst its role has been considerably weakened. The negotiating role of the FPC has been removed and given to the regions (i.e., KRG). The FPC in the new setup may be used to provide legitimacy to the product rather than scrutinize the process and ensure its conformance with the principles which were so carefully put in the first draft.

The resultant checks and balances are now insufficient to cope with Iraq's internal political complications, and are more of a facade, leaving the competence of authorities and the processes of the grant of rights fully open to manipulation by the political forces that prevail. Further and critically for the future of Iraq's oil and gas industry, the balance of power in the management of Iraq's oil and gas resources has shifted from the central federal government to the regions.

4.0 Concluding Remarks

4.1 Without a central unified policy there will be disharmony and competition between INOC (operating on production and marketing its export oil to provide the state's income) and the regions and governorates (operating on exploration for unrequired additional reserves for many years to come), and among the various re-

gions and governorates, with disharmony and envy between the haves and have-nots.

This would cause instability, with damaging consequences contributing to further fragmentation, instead of promoting the unity of the nation and country.

The Constitution has tasked the federal government with the job of management of the oil and gas resource management, not any one village, governorate, or region.

4.2 Instability would lead to an unhealthy oil industry and would discourage the serious IOCs, who have the required knowledge, capital, and markets. Iraq would then find itself accepting speculators with more promises than they can deliver, and the minor companies which do not have the capability to develop Iraq's giant oil fields.

4.3 IOCs, in my view, are advised to aim for urgently needed rehabilitation of the infrastructure, expansion of production capacity of partially developed fields, improving damaged reservoir performance, and to develop the many discovered but not yet delineated oil fields, rather than going for exploration for unnecessary new oil. A rush for exploration and development contracts would be viewed as mortgaging the reserves of future generations. It would provide fuel to the view that the war was for oil.

4.4 There are today a number of damaging trends of "tsunami" dimensions, engulfing Iraq. There is a widespread lack of security and law and order, widespread killing for reasons of identity, ethnicity, sect, or for no reason other than criminal ends.

4.5 There is widespread lack of efficiency in government organizations and a near absence of institutional performance or sound management at the centre and, especially in the provinces, in addition to a lack of investment and extremely high unemployment.

4.6 Action to reverse these damaging trends ought to be all embracing in nature, coordinated and united in approach, and having the welfare of country and nation at heart above all considerations. A healthy and robust oil industry would provide the revenue necessary for social and economic reform and the right environment for easing much of the above trends.

APPENDIX I—IRAQ DRAFT PETROLEUM LAW: A SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

The draft Petroleum Law aims at uniformity of plans and policy throughout the country. It provides prior consultation with the provinces. Decisions taken at the centre involves provincial participation.

Supervision of oil and gas operations is shared between the provinces and Ministry. The decisionmaking process has checks and balances to enhance transparency and anticorruption practices.

Its overall objective is to optimize oil and gas exploitation and maximize return, and unite the country. It is based on Articles 111 and 112 seen in the light of Articles 2, 49, 109 and 110 of the Constitution which broadly define the authorities and responsibilities of the Federal and Provincial authorities within the Petroleum sector.

1.0 Competence of Authorities

1.1 The Council of Representatives

The Council of Representatives shall enact all Federal legislation on Petroleum Operations. It shall also approve all agreements made in connection with Petroleum Operations that extend outside Iraqi territory.

1.2 The Council of Ministers

1.2.1 The Council of Ministers shall:

Be responsible for recommending proposed legislation on the development of the country's Petroleum resources for introduction into the Council of Representatives.

Be the competent authority to formulate Federal Petroleum policy and supervise its implementation. It also administers overall Petroleum Operations, including the formulation of Federal policy on all matters within the scope of this law including i.a. Exploration, Production, Transportation, Marketing, the proposal of Petroleum legislation, and the approval of such regulations as may be necessary from time to time on said matters. It shall submit proposals on legislation to the Council of Representatives.

Be the competent authority to approve and sign Exploration and Production contracts granting rights for conducting Petroleum Operations and the amendments thereto, in so far as they concern territory inside Iraq.

1.2.2 It shall have the following administrative entities:

A. The Federal Petroleum Commission

Assists the Council of Ministers: In matters related to the approval of Petroleum plans and policy which are prepared by the Ministry, and in granting Exploration and Production rights. It is chaired by the Prime Minister with the Secretariat of the Minister of Oil.

B. The Negotiation Committee

An entity for planning and executing the process leading to the allocation of Exploration and Production rights.

It consists of specially trained members of the Ministry, INOC and related entities with appropriate skills and experience.

For specific negotiations the committee shall be supplemented by representatives from the region or the governorate where the particular acreage is located.

C. The Petroleum Advisory Council

A think tank to examine and provide comments and recommendations, as a consultative entity, on overall Petroleum plans and strategic policy, licensing contracts, overall Development policy, as well as key projects and any other relevant matters referred to it by the Federal Petroleum Commission or the Ministry.

It consists of nine technocrats, three of whom are from the regions and governorates whose deliberations are published and nonbinding.

1.3 The Ministry of Oil

A. The Ministry is the competent authority for proposing federal policy and legislation as well as issuing regulations and guidelines and undertaking the necessary monitoring, supervisory, regulatory, and administrative actions required to ensure the proper implementation thereof.

B. The Ministry shall in consultation with the provincial authorities draw up federal policies and plans on Exploration, Development, and Production on an annual or as needed basis.

The geographical distribution and timing of exploration and production programs shall be optimised on the basis of proposals from the provinces and producing governorates.

C. The Ministry, or a special entity under it, shall have the responsibility of monitoring Petroleum Operations to ensure adherence to legislation, regulations, and contractual terms.

The same entity shall through inspection, technical audits, and other appropriate actions verify conformance with legislation, regulations, contractual terms, and internationally recognized practices.

1.4 Iraq National Oil Company, INOC

The Council of Ministers shall submit a proposal for a law to establish the Iraqi National Oil Company (INOC), as an upstream holding company fully owned by the government, and be earmarked all discovered fields. Fields which are either undeveloped or partially developed may be developed in cooperation with reputable oil companies.

1.4.1 INOC shall:

Be authorised to carry out Exploration and Production Operations inside Iraq on behalf of the government.

Establish Affiliated Operating Companies to carry out Petroleum Operations in the provinces and producing governorates on the basis of contracted management fees. Such fees shall cover costs and a reasonable profit margin to allow a healthy development of operations. The share option for the provinces and governorates in such operating companies can be up to 50 percent.

Be the operator and is authorized to enter directly into Service and Management Contracts with appropriate oil or service companies if required.

1.5 The Provincial Authorities shall:

Propose to the Federal authorities activities and plans for the province to be included in the country's plan for Petroleum Operations. They shall further assist and participate with the Federal authorities in discussions leading to the finalization of the Federal plan as required.

Participate in the licensing process regarding activities within their respective province.

Participate as part of the Commission's negotiation team in licensing preparations, evaluations, and negotiations regarding areas within the province.

Be represented in the activities carried out by the Petroleum Commission and Petroleum Council.

Undertake the monitoring, regulation, and administration of Petroleum Operations to ensure adherence to legislation, regulations, guidelines, and the specific terms of the relevant Exploration and Production Contracts. Such functions shall be carried out in close coordination and harmonization with the Ministry to ensure uniform and consistent implementation throughout the Republic of Iraq. The Ministry shall also provide professional support to the Provincial Petroleum entity.

INOC's operational activities in the province shall be carried out by affiliated companies where the provincial authorities have an option to participate up to 50 percent through ownership in the respective affiliates.

2.0 The Licensing Code

2.1 The licensing process shall be based on transparent and accountable tendering and shall take into account recognized practices by the international petroleum industry. It shall adhere to the following principles and procedures:

Competitive licensing rounds—The contractual terms offered to applicants shall be specified in model contracts.

The form and terms of the model contract shall take account of the specific characteristics and requirements of the individual area.

2.2. All model contracts shall be formulated to honor the following objectives and criteria:

- National control
- Ownership of the resources
- Optimum economic rent to the country
- Appropriate return on investment to the investor
- Reasonable incentives to the investor for ensuring solutions which are optimal to the country in the long-term related to, i.a:
  - Improved and enhanced recovery
  - Technology transfer
  - Training and development of Iraqi personnel
  - Optimal utilization of the infrastructure
  - Environmentally friendly solutions and plans

2.3 The Model Contracts may be based upon Service Contract, Buy-back Contract, and Production Sharing Contract (PSC).

Only prequalified companies shall be considered in any licensing round.

Evaluation of prequalified applicants shall aim at establishing a short list of successful candidates for negotiations.

The selection and ranking of successful applicants shall be on the basis of the quality and relevance of the proposed work plan and the anticipated economic rent to the nation.

The overall allocation of Exploration and Production rights throughout the Republic of Iraq shall aim at achieving variety among oil companies and operators with different background, expertise, experience, and approach so as to enhance efficiency through positive competition, benchmarking of performance and transparency. The possibility of using consortia of selected companies, particularly in large fields, shall be considered.

Not later than 2 months after the endorsement of Exploration and Production contracts by the Council of Ministers the text of the contract shall be made public.

APPENDIX II—INTERPRETATION OF IRAQ'S CONSTITUTIONAL ARTICLES GOVERNING OIL AND GAS BY AN INDEPENDENT LEGAL FIRM

There are two specific articles and a governing article in the Federal Constitution relating to oil and gas resources.

Ownership of Oil Resources

Article 111 is unequivocal that all oil and gas are owned by *"all the people of Iraq in all regions and governorates."* (Emphasis added.) The language on its face does not admit to the ownership of any particular resource by any particular group or geographical or political region. In effect it gives all citizens of Iraq, wherever resident, an undivided interest in all of the oil and gas resources of the country. Notably it does not vest oil and gas resources in the "state" nor does it allocate the resources to particular regions or governorates. The regions and governorates are addressed solely in the collective form. Moreover it refers to all of the oil and gas resources and does not use the limiting language of "current fields" included in Article 112 First.

Given that oil and gas is the property of the "people" as a whole, any power to alienate the resource by sale or other disposition lies with the "people." In this re-

gard it is worth noting that the only political entity representing all of the people of Iraq is the Council of Representatives. Article 49, First.

Management of Oil Resources

Article 112 First provides that the federal government, with the "producing" governorates and regional governments, shall manage oil and gas "extracted from present fields" subject to a revenue distribution formula. "Management" in Article 112 is not defined nor is it subject to any words of limitation. Thus management should be read in the ordinary sense of conducting or supervising all of the business aspects relating to oil and gas extracted from present fields, e.g., production, transport, refining, disposition.

Article 112 Second provides that the federal government, again with the producing regional and governorate governments, shall establish the strategic policies for the development of oil and gas in accordance with certain standards. Article 112 Second does not contain the limiting words "extracted from present fields."

Thus Article 112 provides a general structure for the oil and gas sector in which strategic policies are set on a unified basis for all of the oil and gas resources of the country and then the implementation of those policies is managed in one case (oil and gas extracted from existing fields) by the federal government with the producing governorates and regional governments and in the second case (oil and gas not extracted from existing fields) by the regions or the governorates. In the second case the regions and governorates assume their power to manage by virtue of Article 115.

The word "extracted" does not connote a limitation in this management authority but rather should be read as defining what oil and gas resources are subject to the management authority of Article 112 First, i.e., oil and gas "extracted from present fields." Article 112 envisions two functions: The establishment of oil and gas policies and management of the oil and gas resource. Nothing suggests a tripartite definition in which "extraction" would not be subject to either the strategic policies or the management function.

Authority of Region Under Article 112

Article 112 First provides that the "federal government, with the producing governorates and regions" shall undertake the management of the designated resources. Article 112 Second provides that the "federal government, with the producing regional and governorate governments," shall formulate the necessary strategic policies.

Article 112 First provides at the end of the section for the matters addressed in the section to be regulated by a law. The same provision for regulation by a law is not included in Article 112 Second dealing with the formulation of strategic policies. Perhaps, the drafters did not view "policies" as requiring legislation, and that the required law governing management would reflect the policies.

The precise nature of the interaction of the federal government and the regions and governorates under Article 112 is not clear and may have been left deliberately ambiguous. Article 112 by its language and its separation from Article 110 (the exclusive authorities of the federal government) and Article 114 (the shared competencies) is evidently something more than a shared competency but something less than an exclusive competency. Some sort of collaborative or consultative process is required. Two items, however, point to the leadership of the federal government in the process. In both the first and second sections, the federal government is the subject of the sentences and is commanded to act, albeit with the producing regions and governorates. Second, in Article 112 First the activity subject too the section is to be regulated by "a law." The unitary reference to "a law" as elsewhere in the Constitution refers to federal legislation. Thus whatever the form of collaboration between the governmental units, the final action is to be determined by the federal legislative council.

The leadership of the federal government in Article 112 is further reinforced by Article 110 which sets out those areas where the federal government has exclusive authority. Among the exclusive authorities of the federal government are "formulating foreign sovereign economic and trade policy"; and "regulating commercial policy across regional and governorate boundaries in Iraq." Thus, the shared authority of Section 112 is cabined by the power of the federal government to prescribe and set policies whenever trade or investment crosses national, regional, or governorate boundaries or involves trade or investment moving in and out of Iraq. Regional action in violation of such policies would be unconstitutional as it infringes upon areas committed to the exclusive authority of the federal government.

Even if one reads Article 112 Second as it relates to the formulation of strategic policies in the oil and gas sector as being an exception to the exclusive power of the

federal government, virtually all ancillary implementing action would be subject to those policies that the federal government has the exclusive authority to establish. Only activity taking place exclusively within a governorate would be exempt, a very limited area indeed.

Limitation on Present Fields

The principal negotiators of Article 112 First appear to agree that the management authority provided by the section does not apply to all gas and oil resources. Rather it extends to oil and gas "extracted from present fields." The phrase needs to be broken up into its component parts. Nothing in the Constitution suggests that "field" should be given anything but its ordinary understanding in the petroleum industry and in Iraq. The Society of Petroleum Engineers defines field as follows:

Field—An area consisting of a single reservoir or multiple reservoirs all grouped on, or related to, the same individual geological structural feature or stratigraphic condition. The field name refers to the surface area, although it may refer to both the surface and the underground productive formations.

In Iraq various areas and structures have historically been identified as fields, e.g., the Rumaila field, the Kirkuk field.

Rather the controversy surrounds the qualifier "present." Some including certain Kurdish authorities have construed "present" as meaning "presently producing" or "presently capable of being produced." The difference is not trivial. In the absence of other limiting language, however, "present" should have its ordinary meaning of "existing." There is still the issue of present when? Most people seem to believe that it meant existing at the time of the compromise or perhaps more precisely when the Constitution came into effect.

Regional Power To Nullify Decisions Pursuant to Article 112

The Constitution does give the regions and the governorates certain powers to modify or nullify federal legislation, but neither can be reasonably read to apply to Article 112. Article 115 provides:

All powers not stipulated in the exclusive powers of the federal government belong to the authorities of the regions and governorates that are not organized in a region. With regard to other powers shared between the federal government and the regional government, priority shall be given to the law of the regions and governorates not organized in a region in case of dispute.

Since the powers in Article 112 do not appear in the list of exclusive powers of Article 110, the first sentence in Article 115 could be read to give the regions and governorates authority in the areas covered by Article 112. This construction, however, would make Article 112 a nullity and thus cannot stand. The second sentence of Article 115 applies by its terms to the "shared" powers of the regional government and the federal government. The shared powers are specifically dealt with in Article 114 and this reference should be limited accordingly to the powers set out there.

Article 121 Second also gives the regions certain powers. That Article provides: In case of a contradiction between regional and national legislation in respect to a matter outside the exclusive authorities of the federal government, the regional power shall have the right to amend the application of the national legislation within that region.

Nevertheless, this article does not apply to the activities of Article 112 as this is not an area where the regional government has authority to adopt legislation. This section only applies to those areas where the federal and regional governments have shared competency. These areas are set out in Article 114, and it is in these areas where there is conjoint legislative authority that the regional government pursuant to Article 121 has the limited authority to modify the federal legislation operative in its region. To hold otherwise would again make Article 112 a nullity, not only nullifying the federal authority but also the rights of the other producing governorates and regions to participate in the policy formation provided for by Article 112.

Validity of Existing Kurdistan Contracts

Prior to the adoption of the Constitution, the Kurdistan Government entered into certain oil exploration or development contracts with foreign companies. The contracts have not been made public and their scope and the fields to which they apply are unknown.

In support of its authority to enter into these contracts Kurdistan representatives point to Article 141 of the Constitution which preserves the validity of certain actions of the region of Kurdistan taken since 1992.

That article provides:

Legislation enacted in the region of Kurdistan since 1992 shall remain in force, and decisions issued by the government of the region of Kurdistan, including court decisions and contracts, shall be considered valid unless they are amended or an-

nulled pursuant to the laws of the region of Kurdistan by the competent entity in the region, providing that they do not contradict with the Constitution.

Although the savings clause is very broadly drafted, it is subject to the last limiting clause that any such legislation, court decisions, or contracts do not conflict with the Constitution. Any existing contract could conflict with Article 112 of the Constitution to the extent that it derogates the authority given to the federal and regional governments with respect to the management of production from existing oil fields or to the extent that it conflicts with the strategic policies that are to be adopted pursuant to Article 112. If such contracts purport to exercise authority within the areas committed by Article 110 exclusively to the federal government (e.g., foreign sovereign economic and trade policy), the contracts may also be invalid or subject to modification with respect to activity taking place after the Constitution became effective. Any more definitive analysis would require review of the contracts and might also have to await decisions regarding management and policy pursuant to Article 112.

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