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CURRENT SITUATION IN IRAQ

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

JANUARY 12 AND 25, 2007

Printed for the use of the Committee on Armed Services

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IRAQ

FRIDAY, JANUARY 12, 2007

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:32 a.m. in room SH–216, Hart Senate Office Building, Senator John Warner[1] (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Senators Levin, Kennedy, Byrd, Lieberman, Reed, Akaka, Bill Nelson, E. Benjamin Nelson, Pryor, Webb, McCaskill, McCain, Warner, Inhofe, Sessions, Collins, Ensign, Chambliss, Graham, Cornyn, Thune, and Martinez.

Committee staff members present: Richard D. DeBobes, staff director; and Leah C. Brewer, nominations and hearings clerk.

Majority staff members present: Jonathan D. Clark, counsel; Daniel J. Cox, Jr., professional staff member; Gabriella Eisen, professional staff member; Evelyn N. Farkas, professional staff member; Richard W. Fieldhouse, professional staff member; Creighton Greene, professional staff member; William G.P. Monahan, counsel; Michael J. Noblet, research assistant; Arun A. Seraphin, professional staff member; and William K. Sutey, professional staff member.

Minority staff members present: Michael V. Kostiw, Republican staff director; Pablo Carrillo, professional staff member; Ambrose R. Hock, professional staff member; Gregory T. Kiley, professional staff member; Derek J. Maurer, minority counsel; Elaine A. McCusker, professional staff member; David M. Morriss, minority counsel; Lucian L. Niemeyer, professional staff member; Christopher J. Paul, professional staff member; Lynn F. Rusten, professional staff member; Sean G. Stackley, professional staff member; Kristine L. Svinicki, professional staff member; Diana G. Tabler, professional staff member; and Richard F. Walsh, minority counsel.

Staff assistants present: David G. Collins, Micah H. Harris, and Benjamin L. Rubin.

Committee members' assistants present: Mieke Y. Eoyang and Sharon L. Waxman, assistants to Senator Kennedy; Frederick M. Downey, Assisant to Senator Lieberman; Elizabeth King, assistant to Senator Reed; Richard Kessler, assistant to Senator Akaka; Jeff Benson and Caroline Tess, assistants to Senator Bill Nelson; Eric

[1] NOTE TO READERS: The 110th Congress convened on January 4, 2007. Committee memberships, however, were not made official by the Senate until the afternoon of January 12, 2007. This hearing convened at 9:32 a.m. on January 12, 2007. As you will read, Chairman Warner gaveled the hearing open and then passed the gavel to his successor, Senator Carl Levin, effecting for purposes of this transcript a change in the chairmanship of the committee.

Pierce, assistant to Senator Ben Nelson; Gordon Peterson, assistant to Senator Webb; Nichole M. Distefano, assistant to Senator McCaskill; Richard H. Fontaine, Jr. and Paul C. Hutton IV, assistants to Senator McCain; Arch Galloway II, assistant to Senator Sessions; Mark Winter, assistant to Senator Collins; Clyde A. Taylor IV, assistant to Senator Chambliss; Matthew R. Rimkunas, assistant to Senator Graham; Russell J. Thomasson, assistant to Senator Cornyn; and Stuart C. Mallory, assistant to Senator Thune.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN WARNER, CHAIRMAN

Chairman WARNER. Thank you very much. As a consequence of the recent election and as a consequence of the Republican caucus, I stepped down as chairman. The Senate has as yet not reorganized, so the designated chairman, Senator Levin, desires that we adhere to the strict rules, and at this time I pass the gavel to my good friend Senator McCain for such purposes as he may wish to make of it.

Senator MCCAIN [presiding]. This may be one of the shortest passages in history. [Laughter.]

Senator LEVIN. I think we will stop it right there, as a matter of fact. [Laughter.]

Chairman LEVIN [presiding]. Thank you.

Senator MCCAIN. Congratulations, Senator Levin. I look forward to working in the same strong bipartisan fashion which has characterized our membership on this committee for many years. We thank Senator Warner for the great job that he did as chairman of this committee. We congratulate you and look forward to working with you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator McCain.

Senator WARNER. I join in those remarks.

Chairman LEVIN. The feelings are very, very mutual indeed, and Senator Warner has set a style here that I intend to emulate in terms of bipartisanship. It has been a tradition of this committee and that will continue, I know, and I know that it is your intention that it continue as well, Senator McCain.

Apparently, we are going to have two votes coming up in about 20 or 25 minutes and we will see how that will be handled when we get to that point. But let me first welcome Secretary Gates and General Pace to the committee this morning. This is Secretary Gates' first appearance before this committee as Secretary of Defense. We anticipate and look forward to more, Mr. Secretary, and I hope you do too. We congratulate you on your confirmation, of course. We hope both of you will convey to our troops and to their families the gratitude of this committee for their dedication, their sacrifices, and their service to our country.

I also want to say a special welcome to the new members of the committee: Senator Pryor, who is returning for his second tour of duty; and Senator Webb, Senator McCaskill, and Senator Martinez.

All of us share the common goal of trying to maximize the chances of success in Iraq. The reason that I oppose increasing the number of U.S. troops in Iraq as the President outlined this week is because I do not believe that it will help us achieve success in Iraq. In fact, I believe that the policy will help prolong the violence

in Iraq and make it harder to achieve this goal while increasing the loss of American lives and treasure.

Increasing the number of U.S. forces in Iraq is a flawed strategy because it is based on the false premise that there is a military solution to the violence and instability in Iraq when what is needed is a political solution among the Iraqi leaders and factions. Iraq's own Prime Minister Maliki acknowledged recently that, "The crisis is political and the ones who can stop the cycle of aggravation and bloodletting of innocents are the politicians."

Our sending more troops to Iraq suggests that the future of Iraq is in our hands when, in reality, it is in the hands of the Iraqis themselves. On Wednesday evening the President said that he had made clear to Iraq's leaders that America's commitment is not open-ended. I welcome those words, but the reality behind the President's new rhetoric is that the open-ended commitment continues. More American military men and women would be sent into the chaos of Iraq's sectarian violence without condition, without limitation.

President Bush indicated that the Iraqi government needs "breathing space" to make political progress. I believe the opposite is true. The Iraqi leaders do not need breathing space; they must feel real pressure to reach a political settlement. Increasing our military presence in Iraq takes pressure off.

The Iraq Study Group (ISG) put it this way last month: "An open-ended commitment of American forces would not provide the Iraqi government the incentive it needs to take the political actions that give Iraq the best chance of quelling sectarian violence."

President Bush also said the Iraqis have set benchmarks for themselves. But look at the track record of the Iraqi government in meeting some of its past benchmarks and promises. Iraqi President Talabani said in August 2006 the Iraqi forces would, "take over security at all Iraqi provinces by the end of 2006." That pledge has not been kept.

The Prime Minister said last June that he would disband the militias and illegal armed groups as part of his national reconciliation plan, and in October he set the timetable for disbanding the militias at the end of 2006. That commitment has not been kept.

The Iraqi Constitutional Review Commission was to present its recommendations for changes in the constitution to the Council of Representatives within 4 months of the formation of the government last May. The commission has yet to formulate any recommendations.

Prime Minister Maliki put forward a series of reconciliation milestones to be completed by the end of 2006 or early 2007, including approval of the provincial election law, the petroleum law, a new de-Baathification law, and the militia law. None of those laws have been enacted as committed.

The Iraqi Army pledged six battalions in support of American and coalition efforts during Operation Forward Together last summer. In fact, the Iraqis provided only two battalions. That is not a track record that inspires confidence in Iraqi pledges and commitments.

The President said that "America will hold the Iraqi government to the benchmarks that it has announced." But how did the Presi-

dent say we are going to do that? What will the consequences be if the Iraqis fail to meet these benchmarks, particularly since some of them have been established and missed in the past?

The President said, "If the Iraqi government does not follow through on its promises it will lose the support of the American people." That is an empty threat given the fact that the Iraqi government has already lost the support of the American people and it has not affected their behavior.

The President's most recent plan, like the previous one, includes no mechanism to hold the Iraqis to their commitments. Deepening our involvement in Iraq would be a mistake, but deepening our involvement in Iraq on the assumption that the Iraqis will meet future benchmarks and commitments, given their track record, would be a compounding of that mistake.

We must also be mindful of what the President's increase in U.S. forces would mean to our already overstretched Armed Forces. Sending more troops to Iraq will have a negative effect on our soldiers, their families, and on the ability of this Nation to respond to other contingencies that may arise. The combat brigades now in Iraq will be extended beyond their normal tours by as much as 4 months, as has happened at least twice before.

Additional combat brigades would need to be deployed, brigades which will be short of personnel and equipment because the state of readiness of Army and Marine Corps units that are not currently deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan is low. Many of these brigades have only been back from their last deployment less than 12 months. Many of the soldiers in those brigades will have had much less than 12 months with their families because they have to train up for their next deployment. That violates current policy and good practice and will harm morale and retention down the road.

Just 2 months ago, General Abizaid testified before this committee against increasing the number of U.S. troops in Iraq. He said: "I met with every divisional commander, General Casey, and 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?' They all said no. The reason is because we want the Iraqis to do more. It is easy for the Iraqis to rely upon us to do the work. I believe that more American forces prevent the Iraqis from doing more, from taking more responsibility for their own future."

General Casey made that same point on January 2 when he said, "The longer that U.S. forces continue to bear the burden of Iraq's security, it lengthens the time that the government of Iraq has to make the hard decisions about reconciliation and dealing with the militias. The other thing is that they can continue to blame us for all of Iraq's problems, which are at base their problems." That was General Casey.

For America to supply more troops while the Iraqi leaders simply supply more promises is not a recipe for success in Iraq. Telling the Iraqis that we will increase our troops to give them yet more breathing space will only postpone the day when Iraqis take their future into their own hands and decide whether they want to continue to fight a civil war or to make peace among themselves.

Senator McCain.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN McCAIN

Senator McCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I join you in welcoming our witnesses here today, and I am very pleased to serve again with the returning members of our committee, and I again would like to welcome all the new members to the committee.

Mr. Chairman, it is a hard thing to change course in the middle of a war. I commend the President for recognizing the mistakes of the past and for outlining new steps on the military, economic, and political fronts. I believe that together these moves will give the Iraqis and America the best chance of success.

We should make no mistake. Potentially catastrophic consequences of failure demand that we do all we can to prevail in Iraq. A substantial and sustained increase in U.S. forces in Baghdad and the Anbar Province are necessary to bring down the toxic levels of violence there.

There is much agreement that the dire situation in Iraq demands a political solution. That is true. But we must also realize what it will take to enable any political solution. It is simply impossible for meaningful political and economic activity to take place in an environment riddled with violence, as Baghdad is today. Security is a precondition for political and economic progress. Until the government and its coalition allies can protect the population, the Iraqi people will increasingly turn to extragovernmental forces, especially Sunni and Shia militias, for protection.

Only when the government has a monopoly on the legitimate use of force will its authority have meaning, and only when its authority has meaning can political activity have the results we seek.

The presence of additional coalition forces would allow the Iraqi government to do what it cannot accomplish today on its own—impose its rule throughout the country. They can do this by engaging in traditional counterinsurgency activities aimed at protecting the population and breaking the cycle of violence. In bringing greater security to Iraq and chiefly to Baghdad, our forces would give the government a fighting chance to pursue reconciliation.

As I have said before, a small, short surge would be the worst of all worlds. We need troops in the numbers required to do the job in place for as long as it takes to complete their mission. We must ensure that we are committing sufficient numbers of additional troops, and I look forward to our witnesses' testimony on this score. It would be far better to have too many reinforcements in Iraq than to suffer, once again, the tragic results of insufficient force levels.

The other elements of the President's strategy are also critical. The Iraqi government must meet new benchmarks, including a reconciliation process for insurgents and Baathists, more equitable distribution of government resources, sharing oil revenue with the entire Iraqi population, and holding provincial elections that will bring Sunnis into the government.

Also, Iraq's neighbors need to play a more constructive role. For example, I would like to see the Saudis fund a major jobs creation program in Iraq. Gulf States must not fiddle while Baghdad burns.

I know that some of my colleagues disagree with the troop increase in Iraq and I have heard the calls for a withdrawal to begin

in 4 to 6 months. Those who advocate such a policy have a right, even an obligation, to join in the debate on this issue. I believe these individuals also have a responsibility to tell us what they believe are the consequences of withdrawal in Iraq. Do they not fear Iranian, Saudi, and Turkish involvement in Iraq, a wider regional war, a haven for terrorists, a humanitarian catastrophe? Do they truly believe that we can walk away from Iraq?

We were able to walk away from Vietnam. If we walk away from Iraq, we will be back, possibly in the context of a wider war in the world's most volatile region. I believe that those who disagree with this new policy should indicate what they would propose to do if we withdraw and Iraq descends into chaos.

We made many, many mistakes since 2003 and these will not be easily reversed. Even greater than the cost thus far and in the future, however, are the catastrophic consequences that would ensue from our failure in Iraq. By surging troops and bringing security to Baghdad and other areas, we can give the Iraqis and their partners the best possible chance to succeed.

From everything I saw during my trip to Iraq last month, I believe that success is still possible. I would not support this new strategy if I did not think it had a real chance of success. But let us realize there are no guarantees. By controlling the violence we can pave the way for a political settlement. Once the government wields greater authority, however, Iraqi leaders must take significant steps on their own and they must do it right away.

Increasing U.S. troop levels will expose more brave Americans to danger and increase the number of American casualties. When Congress authorized this war we were committing America to a mission that entails the greatest sacrifice a country can make, one that falls disproportionately on those Americans who love their country so much that they volunteer to risk their lives to accomplish that mission.

When we authorized this war we accepted the responsibility to make sure they could prevail. Increasing deployments is a terrible sacrifice to impose on the best patriots among us. My travels and meeting with many servicemembers lead me to believe, however, that these Americans will once again do everything they can to win this war.

I will conclude by commending the President's announcement Wednesday night that he plans to increase the standing size of the Army and Marine Corps by some 92,000 soldiers and marines. Such a step is long overdue, particularly given our commitments in Iraq and Afghanistan. I believe that the increase in end strength is in the national security interests of our country. I hope it will receive the backing of all Senators.

Chairman Levin, again, thank you. I look forward to the testimony of the witnesses today.

Chairman LEVIN. I thank you, Senator McCain, very much.

Let me note that Senators Bayh and Clinton are not here today because they are on a previously scheduled trip to Afghanistan and Iraq, but they want the witnesses to know that they intend to submit questions for the record.

Again, our thanks to you, Secretary Gates. You have taken on a huge responsibility and you have done it, I believe, with great

thoughtfulness and we appreciate the reaching out which you have done to so many of us during the few weeks that you have been there and have had so many other responsibilities.

Secretary Gates.

STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT M. GATES, SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Secretary GATES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator McCain, and members of the committee. Let me say at the outset that it is a pleasure to appear before this committee for the first time as Secretary of Defense. The Senate Armed Services Committee has long been a steadfast friend and ally of the men and women in uniform and a source of steadfast support in meeting the Nation's defense needs. I thank you for that and I look forward to working with you.

Let me begin by quickly summarizing two announcements I made yesterday morning, one of which Senator McCain just referred to. I have recommended to the President an increase in the two Services of 92,000 soldiers and marines over the next 5 years—65,000 soldiers and 27,000 marines. The emphasis will be on increasing combat capability. The increase will be accomplished in two ways. First, we will make permanent the temporary increase of 30,000 for the Army and 5,000 for the Marine Corps. We then propose to build up from that base in annual increments over 5 years, 7,000 troops a year for the Army until they reach 547,000, and 5,000 a year for the Marine Corps until they reach 202,000.

While it may take some time for these troops to become available for deployment, it is important for our men and women in uniform to know that additional manpower and resources are on the way.

Second, for several months the Department has been assessing whether we have the right policies to govern how we manage and deploy members of the Reserves, the National Guard, and our Active units. Based on this assessment and the recommendations of our military leadership, I am prepared to make the following changes to Department policy. First, mobilization of ground Reserve Forces will be managed on a unit basis instead of an individual basis. This change will allow us to achieve greater unit cohesion and predictability in how Reserve units train and deploy.

Second, from this point forward members of Reserves will be involuntarily mobilized for a maximum of 1 year at any one time in contrast to the current practice of 16 to 24 months.

Third, the planning objective for Guard and Reserve units will remain 1 year of being mobilized followed by 5 years demobilized. However, today's global demands will require a number of selected Guard and Reserve units to be remobilized sooner than this standard. Our intention is that such exceptions will be temporary.

The goal for the Active Force rotation cycle remains 1 year deployed for every 2 years at home station. Today most Active units are receiving 1 year at home station before deploying again. We believe that mobilizing select Guard and Reserve units before their 5-year period is complete will allow us to move closer to relieving the stress on the total force.

Fourth, I am directing the establishment of a new program to compensate individuals, in both the Active and Reserve compo-

nents, that are required to mobilize or deploy early or extend beyond the established rotation policy goals.

Fifth and finally, I am directing that all commands and units review how they administer the hardship waiver program to ensure that they are properly taking into account exceptional circumstances facing military families of deployed servicemembers.

It is important to note that these policy changes have been under discussion for some time within the Department of Defense (DOD) and would need to take place regardless of the President's announcement the other night.

Just as an aside, but an important one, I am pleased to report to the committee that all Active branches of the military exceeded their recruiting goals for the month of December, with particularly strong showings by the Army and the Marine Corps. Our Nation is truly blessed that so many talented and patriotic young people have stepped forward to defend our Nation and that so many servicemen and women have chosen to continue to serve.

With respect to the President's initiative, he described a new way forward in Iraq on Wednesday night, a new approach to overcoming the steep challenges facing us in that country and that part of the world. I know many of you have concerns about the new strategy in Iraq and in particular are skeptical of the Iraqi government's will and ability to act decisively against sectarian violence, and are skeptical as well about a commitment of additional troops.

The President and his national security team have had the same concerns as we have debated and examined our options going forward. Yet our commanders on the ground and the President's intended nominee as the new commander believe this is a sound plan, in no small part because General Casey and other senior military officers have worked closely with the Iraqi government in developing it.

Further, the President, Ambassador Khalilzad, and General Casey have had prolonged and extremely candid conversations, not just with Prime Minister Maliki, but with other senior leaders of the Iraqi government, and have come away persuaded that they finally have the will to act against all instigators of violence in Baghdad.

This is, I think, a pivot point—the pivot point—as the Iraqi government insists on assuming the mantle of leadership in the effort to regain control of its own capital. I want you to know that the timetable for the introduction of additional U.S. forces will provide ample opportunity early on and before many of the additional U.S. troops arrive in Iraq to evaluate the progress of this endeavor and whether the Iraqis are fulfilling their commitments to us.

Let me make two other quick points. First, this strategy entails a strengthening across all aspects of the war effort, military and nonmilitary, including the economic, governance, and political areas. Overcoming the challenges in Iraq cannot be achieved simply by military means, no matter how large or sustained, without progress by the Iraqis in addressing the underlying issues dividing the country.

Second, we must keep in mind the consequences of an American failure in Iraq. As I said in my confirmation hearing, developments

in Iraq over the next year or 2 will shape the future of the Middle East and impact global geopolitics for a long time to come.

I would not have taken this position if I did not believe that the outcome in Iraq will have a profound and long-lived impact on our national interests. Mistakes certainly have been made by the United States in Iraq. But how ever we got to this moment, the stakes now are incalculable. Your senior professional military officers in Iraq and in Washington believe in the efficacy of the strategy outlined by the President. They believe it is a sound plan that can work if the Iraqi government follows through on its commitments and if the nonmilitary aspects of the strategy are implemented and sustained.

Our senior military officers have worked closely with the Iraqis to develop this plan. The impetus to add U.S. forces came initially from our commanders there. It would be a sublime, yet historic, irony if those who believed the views of the military professionals were neglected at the onset of the war were now to dismiss the views of the military as irrelevant or wrong.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Secretary Gates follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY HON. ROBERT M. GATES

Mr. Chairman, Senator McCain, members of the committee. Let me say at the outset that it is a pleasure to appear before this committee for the first time as Secretary of Defense. The Senate Armed Services Committee has long been a steadfast friend and ally of our men and women in uniform and a source of support in meeting our Nation's defense needs. Thank you for that. I look forward to working with you.

Let me begin by advising you of two announcements I made yesterday.

First, the President announced Wednesday night that he would strengthen our military for the long war against terrorism by authorizing an increase in the overall strength of the Army and the Marine Corps. I am recommending to him a total increase in the two Services of 92,000 soldiers and marines over the next 5 years—65,000 soldiers and 27,000 marines. The emphasis will be on increasing combat capability.

This increase will be accomplished in two ways. First, we will propose to make permanent the temporary increase of 30,000 for the Army and 5,000 for the Marine Corps. Then we propose to build up from that base in annual increments of 7,000 troops for the Army and 5,000 for the Marine Corps until the Army reaches a level of 547,000 and the Marine Corps reaches a level of 202,000.

I am aware that the armed services committees have been leading the national debate over the proper size of the military. Accordingly, I hope that you will join in supporting this important initiative.

While it may take some time for these new troops to become available for deployment, it is important that our men and women in uniform know that additional manpower and resources are on the way.

Second, for several months, the Department of Defense (DOD) has been assessing whether we have the right policies to govern how we manage and deploy members of the Reserves, the National Guard, and our Active component units.

Based on this assessment and the recommendations of our military leadership, I am prepared to make the following changes to DOD policy.

First, mobilization of ground Reserve Forces will be managed on a unit basis instead of an individual basis. This change will allow us to achieve greater unit cohesion and predictability in how Reserve units train and deploy

Second, from this point forward, members of the Reserves will be involuntarily mobilized for a maximum of 1 year at any one time, in contrast to the current practice of 16 to 24 months.

Third, the planning objective for Guard and Reserve units will remain 1 year of being mobilized followed by 5 years demobilized. However, today's global demands will require a number of selected Guard and Reserve units to be remobilized sooner than this standard. Our intention is that such exceptions be temporary. The goal for the Active Force rotation cycle remains 1 year deployed for every 2 years at

home station. Today, most Active units are receiving 1 year at home station before deploying again. Mobilizing select Guard and Reserve units before this 5-year period is complete will allow us to move closer to relieving the stress on the Total Force.

Fourth, I am directing the establishment of a new program to compensate individuals in both the Active and Reserve components that are required to mobilize or deploy early or extend beyond the established rotation policy goals.

Fifth, I am also directing that all commands and units review how they administer the hardship waiver program to ensure they are properly taking into account exceptional circumstances facing military families of deployed servicemembers.

It is important to note that these policy changes have been under discussion for some time within DOD and would have needed to take place irrespective of the President's announcement on Iraq.

I am also pleased to report that all Active branches of the U.S. military exceeded their recruiting goals for the month of December, with particularly strong showings by the Army and Marine Corps. Our Nation is truly blessed that so many talented and patriotic young people have stepped forward to defend our Nation, and that so many service men and women have chosen to continue to serve.

IRAQ STRATEGY

On Wednesday night, the President described a new way forward in Iraq—a new approach to overcoming the steep challenges facing us in that country and in that part of the world.

I know many of you have concerns about the new strategy in Iraq and, in particular, are skeptical of the Iraqi government's will and ability to act decisively against sectarian violence, and are skeptical as well about a commitment of additional American troops. The President and his national security team have had the same concerns, as we have debated and examined our options in Iraq going forward. Yet, our commanders on the ground—and the President's intended nominee as the new commander—believe this is a sound plan, in no small part because General Casey and other senior military officers have worked closely with the Iraqi government in developing it. Further, the President, Ambassador Khalilizad, and General Casey have had prolonged and extremely candid conversations not just with Prime Minister Maliki but with other senior leaders of the Iraqi government and have come away persuaded they have the will to act against all instigators of violence in Baghdad.

This is, I think, the pivot point in Iraq as the Iraqi government insists on assuming the mantle of leadership in the effort to regain control of its own capital. While I doubt General Pace and I can change many minds here today, perhaps we can allay at least some of your concerns. Above all, I want you to know that the timetable for the introduction of additional U.S. forces will provide ample opportunity early on—and before many of the additional U.S. troops arrive in Iraq—to evaluate the progress of this endeavor and whether the Iraqis are fulfilling their commitments to us.

Let me make two additional points. First, this strategy entails a strengthening across all aspects of the war effort—military and non-military—including the economic, governance, and political areas. Overcoming the challenges in Iraq cannot be achieved simply by military means—no matter how large or sustained—without progress by the Iraqis in addressing the underlying issues dividing that country.

Second, we must keep in mind the consequences of an American failure in Iraq. Multiple administrations of both political parties have concluded that what happens in southwest Asia, the Gulf region, and the Middle East more broadly is of vital interest to the security and prosperity of the American people. As I said in my confirmation hearing, developments in Iraq over the next year or two will shape the future of the Middle East and impact global geopolitics for a long time to come.

Whatever one's views of the original decision to go to war and the decisions that brought us to this point, there is broad agreement that failure in Iraq would be a calamity for our Nation of lasting historical consequence.

The violence in Iraq, if unchecked, could spread outside its borders and draw other states into a regional conflagration. In addition, one would see:

- An emboldened and strengthened Iran;
- A safehaven and base of operations for jihadist networks in the heart of the Middle East;
- A humiliating defeat in the overall campaign against violent extremism worldwide; and
- An undermining of the credibility of the United States.

The actors in this region—both friends and adversaries—are watching closely what we do in Iraq and will draw conclusions about our resolve and the reliability

of our commitments. Should we withdraw prematurely, we could well leave chaos and the disintegration of Iraq behind us. Further, governments in the region probably are already asking themselves: If the Americans withdraw in defeat from Iraq, just how much farther, and from where else, might we withdraw?

I would not have taken this position if I did not believe that the outcome in Iraq will have a profound and long-lived impact on our national interest.

Significant mistakes have been made by the U.S. in Iraq, just like in virtually every war in human history. That is the nature of war. But, however we got to this moment, the stakes now are incalculable.

Your senior professional military officers in Iraq and in Washington believe in the efficacy of the strategy outlined by the President Wednesday night. They believe it is a sound plan that can work if the Iraqi government follows through on its commitments and if the non-military aspects of the strategy are implemented and sustained.

Our senior military officers have worked closely with the Iraqis to develop this plan. The impetus to add U.S. forces came initially from our commanders there. It would be a sublime, yet historic, irony if those who believe the views of the military professionals were neglected at the onset of the war were now to dismiss the views of the military as irrelevant or wrong.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Secretary Gates.

General Pace.

STATEMENT OF GEN. PETER PACE, USMC, CHAIRMAN, JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

General PACE. Mr. Chairman, Senator McCain——

Chairman LEVIN. Let me interrupt you and forgive me for doing this. The vote is now into the second half and I think after you have concluded, General Pace, what we will have to do is adjourn because there are two votes. So we will recess for perhaps 10 or 15 minutes, enough time at least for some of us to get back to begin our round of questions. We will do that immediately after you are finished, General Pace.

General PACE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Sir, I would like to thank you, Senator McCain, and all the members of the committee, as the Secretary has done, for your very strong bipartisan, sustained support of the military. We appreciate all that you do for us.

Also, I would like to thank all the members of the committee who go on fact-finding trips, visit the troops, and especially those of you, most of you, who have had a chance to visit the troops in the hospitals. That makes a difference and the word gets out to the troops that you are visiting them and that you are visiting them not only where they are serving, but also when they are injured.

I would like to take a minute to thank the troops publicly for what they do. It is an incredible honor for me to sit before you and represent them. They continue to perform magnificently and to do everything we have asked them to do. I would especially like to thank their families who are sacrificing for this Nation as well as anyone who has ever worn the uniform. The addition of troops and the extensions of troops all impact families and we deeply appreciate what they do on the home front to provide support to the security of this Nation.

If I may, Mr. Chairman, for just a minute, outline the military plan that General Casey has worked out with his commanders side-by-side with the Iraqi commanders in support of Prime Minister Maliki's initiative to change the political and economic environment in Iraq in a way that would allow for success militarily

as well. The plan calls for a senior Iraqi commander of Baghdad under whom there will be two Iraqi division commanders, one responsible for east of the river and one responsible for west of the river. Below them will be nine districts, each commanded by an Iraqi brigade commander, and in those districts there will be the support of a U.S. battalion partnered with those Iraqi units.

Inside each of those districts there will be three to four police stations that will be the hubs of activity for the Iraqi army, Iraqi police, and U.S. forces. So the Iraqis can be in the lead doing the patrolling, doing the door-to-door census work and being a presence; those will be the hubs for the rapid reaction forces that will allow us to do this mission.

General Casey and his Iraqi counterparts did a troop-to-task analysis, meaning what do we need to do and how many troops do we need to do it. In the process of doing that analysis, they needed more Iraqi and U.S. troops, General Casey and General Abizaid came forward and asked for additional troops for Baghdad.

The Iraqis will also provide additional troops. They have pledged to have three Iraqi brigades move from elsewhere in the country into Baghdad. These brigades and their commanders have been selected in coordination between General Casey and his counterpart, as have been the two division commanders and the nine brigade commanders who are going to be stationed in Baghdad. This has been a collaborative effort, but one that has been supported by the prime minister.

The significant difference in my opinion is the pledge of the Iraqi leadership to allow for their commanders to work throughout Baghdad without regard to sectarian areas to bring rule of law to all criminals, to work in mixed neighborhoods and Sunni neighborhoods and Shia neighborhoods to bring the peace that is required.

Significantly, $10 billion of Iraqi money has been allocated, pledged, to reconstruction efforts. That is important and significant. There is also a pledge from both of our governments, both Iraq and the United States, to increase economic activity to provide jobs to get the young men off the street and productively employed.

Out in al-Anbar Province, where we have had recent success, the Marine commanders have asked for reinforcements to reinforce that success. The Sunni sheiks in that area have taken on the al Qaeda mission themselves and in fact have encouraged their youth to join the local police. About 4,000 have been recruited so far and about 1,000 of those are currently in training in Jordan so they can come back to the Sunni neighborhoods and provide support.

Our commanders have been asked for the equivalent of one brigade plus-up out in al-Anbar, two brigades of U.S. and three brigades of Iraqi in Baghdad. They are happy to have the additional forces that are put in the pipeline on the U.S. side that are onwards to go, that can be turned off if not needed, but that can in fact arrive and reinforce success or be prepared to take action should the enemy do something that we have not already planned for.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, General.

We are now going to recess for about 15 minutes. Sorry for this, but that is the way the Senate operates.

[Recess from 10:04 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.]

Chairman LEVIN. The committee will come back to order.

We are going to have a first round of 7 minutes. Secretary Gates, again our apologies for the interruption, but that is the last vote for today, so we will not have any more votes to interrupt us.

Mr. Secretary, first let me ask you whether you agree with Prime Minister Maliki's statement that "the ones who can stop the cycle of aggravation and bloodletting of innocents are the Iraqi politicians"?

Secretary GATES. I think that it certainly is the Iraqis themselves that have to stop the cycle of violence. I think it includes the politicians. It includes some of the religious leaders and some of the others. But certainly the political leaders have to be a part of that.

Chairman LEVIN. The President said a few weeks ago that the United States "will be in Iraq so long as the Iraqi government asks us to be in Iraq." Is that still our policy?

Secretary GATES. Yes, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. Is that not the kind of open-ended commitment which the Baker-Hamilton group said was a mistake because, in their words, "An open-ended commitment of American forces would not provide the Iraqi government the incentive it needs to take the political actions that give Iraq the best chance of quelling sectarian violence, and in the absence of such an incentive the Iraqi government might continue to delay taking those difficult actions"? Is not that kind of an open-ended statement exactly the wrong message to the Iraqis?

Secretary GATES. Sir, what I think the President had in mind was that we would probably have to be in Iraq to provide help of one kind or another to the Iraqis for quite some time, and obviously we are interested in a longer-term strategic relationship with them—interested in talking to them about that. We do not want permanent bases in Iraq.

I think that what the President was describing was, over time, a dramatically reduced American presence, but the fact that we would continue to be there and help them in some respects for as long as they wanted us.

Chairman LEVIN. Now, the Iraqis have made both military and political commitments to us, is that correct?

Secretary GATES. Yes, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. If those commitments are not kept, then what?

Secretary GATES. I would say two things. First, Mr. Chairman, as I indicated in my statement, I think we are going to know fairly early in this process whether the Iraqis are, in fact, prepared to fulfill the commitments that they have made to us in terms of being able to go into all neighborhoods, lack of political interference in military operations, and things like that.

So I think we will have a pretty good idea early on.

Chairman LEVIN. Like when?

Secretary GATES. I would think, on the military side, probably within a couple of months.

Chairman LEVIN. Keep going.

Secretary GATES. I am sorry. What was the second part of your question?

Chairman LEVIN. If they do not keep their commitments?

Secretary GATES. I think if at that time we conclude that at a government level and on a broad level they have not fulfilled their commitments, then I think we have to reevaluate our strategy.

Chairman LEVIN. Just saying we are going to reevaluate our strategy is the definition of an open-ended commitment. Again, we reevaluate strategy all the time. Just to say if you folks do not live up to what you commit, well, then, we are going to reevaluate, that is not pressure on the Iraqis. That is the same thing which has been going on for years.

Secretary GATES. The President did indicate to Prime Minister Maliki that his patience was not unlimited. I think that the premise of this entire strategy is, in fact, the Iraqis taking the lead and fulfilling these commitments. If they fail to do those things, then I think it is incumbent upon the administration and incumbent upon me to recommend looking at whether this is the right strategy.

Chairman LEVIN. That has been true, though, for years, has it not?

Secretary GATES. I think that what is perhaps the newest part of this is that it really does put the onus on the Iraqis to come through. This is the Iraqis' idea. The Iraqis seem to want to be in charge of this operation, to take the leadership. I think they recognize they are running out of time, not necessarily even in terms of the American political scene, but in terms of their own political scene and the deteriorating situation in their own capital.

Chairman LEVIN. Have they set up a timetable or agreed to a timetable to meet those commitments?

Secretary GATES. The commitments that they have made as part of this plan? They have made several commitments that they have already fulfilled.

Chairman LEVIN. I am talking about the ones that they have not fulfilled. Is there a timetable to take on the militias, for instance?

Secretary GATES. The military operation—and I will defer to General Pace—but their first additional brigade, as I understand it, is to move to Baghdad around the 1st of February, and our first brigade will get there about the middle of January. So my understanding—and I will ask General Pace to comment—is that the operation itself will probably begin with some seriousness around the first week in February.

Chairman LEVIN. In terms of saying to the militias that they are going to disarm those militias and they are going to take them on with robust rules of engagement, do we have a specific timetable for that?

Secretary GATES. Not that I know of. But we will move immediately—the first targets will be the mixed neighborhoods—but it is clear that that includes neighborhoods that are majority Shia. So they will be moving on those. There will be no safe havens in this, but I think it is fair to say that they will start with the mixed neighborhoods first.

Chairman LEVIN. Without a timetable?

Secretary GATES. General?

General PACE. Sir, the Secretary is right, there is no timetable.

Chairman LEVIN. Ambassador Khalilzad said in August that Iraq faces an urgent crisis in securing Baghdad. That is August. He said

that to combat this complex problem Prime Minister Maliki's government has made securing Baghdad its top priority. "The Iraqi government's Baghdad Security Plan has three principal components," Ambassador Khalilzad said, "those components are: first, stabilize Baghdad zone by zone. Four Iraqi army battalions, two coalition brigades, and five military police companies will be redeployed to Baghdad, resulting in more than 12,000 additional forces on the city streets." Did that happen?

Secretary GATES. No, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. Then the Ambassador also said, "after joint coalition and Iraqi military operations have secured a neighborhood or district, a structure of Iraqi security forces sufficient to maintain the peace is expected to be left in place." Did that happen?

Secretary GATES. I better defer to General Pace because I was not here then.

General PACE. It did not, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. It did not happen.

In October Prime Minister Maliki said: "The initial date that we have set for disbanding the militias is the end of this year or the beginning of next year." Did that happen?

General PACE. No, sir, it did not.

Chairman LEVIN. Maliki also said that a government committee was formed in October to give the militias a deadline to lay down their arms. Did that happen?

General PACE. To my knowledge it did not, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. I am afraid that we are in the same situation we were back then. We have promises and commitments without deadlines, promises that were not kept, to do the exact same thing that they say they will do now, but without consequences if they fail other than that we will reevaluate our strategy.

It seems to me that is not a change of course. That is a repetition of the path that we are on, which is a path that promises are made about taking on militias, for instance—and by the way, money was promised before, too, to be allocated by the Iraqi government, which never came through. So we have promises, commitments made, but nothing is conditioned upon them on our part, and there are no consequences when they fail other than a general statement that then we will review our strategy.

So it seems to me part of the real reaction that I think you and the President have seen is that there is a commitment of real troops getting in deeper militarily on our part, but on the part of the Iraqis there are just promises without consequences for failure to live up to those promises.

My time is up and we will again have a 7-minute early bird rule here. Senator McCain.

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

Secretary Gates, how soon can we expect General Petraeus' nomination to come before the committee?

Secretary GATES. I signed the nominating papers this morning and they were being hand-carried over to the White House today. I will call and let them know of the committee's interest in receiving them as quickly as possible.

Senator MCCAIN. The chairman and I discussed this. I am very happy to say, we could have a hearing as quickly as possible. Hope-

fully, that could be as early as next week if we get the papers. I think it is very important if you have a new team to get the new team in place to implement a new strategy. I think my colleagues share that desire.

Secretary Gates, you said yesterday and again today that in a couple of months we will know. We have the first brigade, as you just mentioned, about mid-January, another one mid-February, and another one mid-March. How will we know within a couple of months as to whether they are being effective or not, when really the third of five brigades as I understand it is not even there until mid-March?

Secretary GATES. I think what we will have is some indication of whether the Iraqis are keeping their commitments in terms of not whether the operation itself necessarily has been effective, but whether the Iraqis have fulfilled their commitments to provide specific brigades by specific times, whether they are in fact allowing the operations to proceed without political interference, whether they are allowing the operations to go into all neighborhoods. Those are the things.

Senator MCCAIN. Those are important distinctions.

Do you have confidence that the present Iraqi government will carry out the commitments that they have made in recent days, as Senator Levin just discussed?

Secretary GATES. As the chairman has indicated, the record of fulfilling commitments is not an encouraging one. But I will say this: They really do seem to be eager to take control of this security situation. They will have control of all but one of their own divisions, military control of all their divisions, by March. Prime Minister Maliki asked me when I was there about 3 weeks ago, "how can I be held accountable if I do not have control of my own military forces? How can you hold me accountable if I do not have control of my own military forces?"

Everything that we have seen beginning with the appointments of the military officers to lead this campaign that they have promised to do by a specific date, they have done so far. I think the feeling on the part of those who have talked to Prime Minister Maliki—and I think it is important to stress that the President and the Ambassador and General Casey have not just talked to Maliki about these commitments; they have talked to President Talabani, Vice President Hakim, Vice President Hashemi. So that it is the entire Iraqi government that has embraced these commitments this time as opposed to just Prime Minister Maliki in the past.

So I think there is a sense of confidence on the part of General Casey and those that are dealing directly with the Iraqis on this that they have every intention of fulfilling their commitments this time.

Senator MCCAIN. General Pace, there is a popular notion in Washington that U.S. troops are getting "caught in the crossfire" between the Sunni and Shia. When I was there, every military person I talked to said when American forces go in the violence subsides. Has that been the history of our involvement in this Sunni-Shia sectarian violence?

General PACE. Sir, it has been. We are not caught in a crossfire. The vast majority of our casualties are from the improvised explo-

sive devices (IEDs). When we have been going into neighborhoods and providing presence there, we have not been in firefights. But what we have needed is the additional Iraqi troops to be able to stay in the neighborhoods and provide security so that they can do the hold and build pieces of this, and that is why the Iraqi commitment to the three-pronged plus-up—troop plus-up, political plus-up, and economic plus-up—is so fundamental to the success.

Senator MCCAIN. Are you confident, General Pace, that we have a sufficient number of troops in this plan to get the job done?

General PACE. I am confident, given the Iraqis delivering on their promises and the economic legs of this stool, that the military part of this plan is sufficiently resourced both from the standpoint of what the commanders on the ground have asked for and any additional troops that we made available to them that are going to go unless the commanders on the ground say please stop.

Senator MCCAIN. It is a matter of concern to a lot of us.

Secretary Gates, are the Iraqis more or less likely to rely on sectarian militias for their security if we announced a withdrawal of American forces in 4 to 6 months?

Secretary GATES. I think that any time you announce a specific deadline or a specific timeline for departing in a situation as volatile as this, you basically give your adversaries the confidence that all they have to do is wait you out.

Senator MCCAIN. General Pace?

General PACE. I did not understand the question, sir. Could you repeat?

Senator MCCAIN. Let me put it to you in a different way. If we announced a withdrawal within 4 to 6 months, should we not just go ahead and announce the withdrawal?

General PACE. Sir, if we announced a withdrawal I think our enemies would just simply hold their breath and wait for us to get out of town. We should not announce a withdrawal. We should announce our intent, we should resource that intent, and we should see it through.

Senator MCCAIN. Secretary Gates, let us suppose that we do withdraw in 4 to 6 months, as has been espoused in a letter to the President of the United States by the Senate Majority Leader and the Speaker of the House, what happens in the region then in your opinion, Mr. Secretary?

Secretary GATES. I think it will depend on the circumstances in Iraq at the time. If we withdraw and the situation descends into chaos, which——

Senator MCCAIN. How likely is that?

Secretary GATES.—which I think most people believe is a very real possibility, given what has happened over the past year.

Senator MCCAIN. What do you believe?

Secretary GATES. I think it is highly likely that there would be a significant increase in sectarian violence in Iraq, that the government would probably begin to come apart, that the army might come apart, and that you would probably have outside elements. So you would have a significant increase in violence and an increased interest in the part of other players outside of Iraq in intervening to protect their interests.

Senator MCCAIN. Including great tensions between Turkey and the Kurds?

Secretary GATES. Yes, sir.

Senator MCCAIN. Again, I think that, Mr. Secretary, if those are your views, that we ought to emphasize that more, because those who are calling for withdrawal are somehow conveying the impression, either intentionally or unintentionally, that then it is all over. I think it is far from all over. I think it is a situation which sooner or later would threaten our vital national security interests and we would have to act accordingly.

I also wonder if you agree that our failure in Iraq has emboldened the Syrians, emboldened the Iranians, caused greater difficulties with Hezbollah and Hamas, and contributed to increased tensions and dangers in the region.

Secretary GATES. Yes, I do, and in fact when I participated in and co-chaired the Council on Foreign Relations study with Dr. Brzezinski in 2004 on Iran, an important premise of that report was that in fact the Iranians had been put on their back foot by our success in Afghanistan and by the invasion of Iraq, that the Iranians were quite concerned about having U.S. forces on their east and west borders, and that they in fact had shown some interest in helping us in some respects in Iraq.

As the situation in Iraq has deteriorated, that mixed record of Iran in terms of doing things that hurt us and doing a few things that were helpful has become very one-sided, as they have gained confidence that we are in trouble there, that in effect we are on the defensive, and there have been no positive things and in fact they are now participating in and supporting efforts to kill American troops.

I would say that I think there is an alternative scenario, it could happen within the timeframe that is being discussed, and that is that, if these operations actually work, you could begin to see a lightening of the U.S. footprint both in Baghdad and potentially in Iraq itself. If we are able to be successful in quelling the violence, we will continue to be at the mercy of anybody who straps on a suicide vest, but if you lower the level of sectarian violence significantly, and they meet some of these political commitments that have been made before and not met, then you could have a situation later this year where you could actually begin withdrawing.

But I think that would be dependent on success on the ground, not on having announced something beforehand.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Senator McCain, since you made reference to a letter which was signed by the two leaders, which I would say, in all due respect, is somewhat different than the characterization, but let it speak for itself in any event——

Senator MCCAIN. It does.

Chairman LEVIN. It does speak for itself and I think very powerfully. In any event, we will make that letter part of the record.

[The information referred to follows:]

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

January 5, 2007

President George W. Bush
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

The start of the new Congress brings us opportunities to work together on the critical issues confronting our country. No issue is more important than finding an end to the war in Iraq. December was the deadliest month of the war in over two years, pushing U.S. fatality figures over the 3,000 mark.

The American people demonstrated in the November elections that they do not believe your current Iraq policy will lead to success and that we need a change in direction for the sake of our troops and the Iraqi people. We understand that you are completing your post-election consultations on Iraq and are preparing to make a major address on your Iraq strategy to the American people next week.

Clearly this address presents you with another opportunity to make a long overdue course correction. Despite the fact that our troops have been pushed to the breaking point and, in many cases, have already served multiple tours in Iraq, news reports suggest that you believe the solution to the civil war in Iraq is to require additional sacrifices from our troops and are therefore prepared to proceed with a substantial U.S. troop increase.

Surging forces is a strategy that you have already tried and that has already failed. Like many current and former military leaders, we believe that trying again would be a serious mistake. They, like us, believe there is no purely military solution in Iraq. There is only a political solution. Adding more combat troops will only endanger more Americans and stretch our military to the breaking point for no strategic gain. And it would undermine our efforts to get the Iraqis to take responsibility for their own future. We are well past the point of more troops for Iraq.

In a recent appearance before the Senate Armed Services Committee, General John Abizaid, our top commander for Iraq and the region, said the following when asked about whether he thought more troops would contribute to our chances for success in Iraq:

> *"I 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. And the reason is, because we want the Iraqis to do more. It's easy for the Iraqis to*

rely upon to us do this work. I believe that more American forces prevent the Iraqis from doing more, from taking more responsibility for their own future."

Rather than deploy additional forces to Iraq, we believe the way forward is to begin the phased redeployment of our forces in the next four to six months, while shifting the principal mission of our forces there from combat to training, logistics, force protection and counter-terror. A renewed diplomatic strategy, both within the region and beyond, is also required to help the Iraqis agree to a sustainable political settlement. In short, it is time to begin to move our forces out of Iraq and make the Iraqi political leadership aware that our commitment is not open ended, that we cannot resolve their sectarian problems, and that only they can find the political resolution required to stabilize Iraq.

Our troops and the American people have already sacrificed a great deal for the future of Iraq. After nearly four years of combat, tens of thousands of U.S. casualties, and over $300 billion dollars, it is time to bring the war to a close. We, therefore, strongly encourage you to reject any plans that call for our getting our troops any deeper into Iraq. We want to do everything we can to help Iraq succeed in the future but, like many of our senior military leaders, we do not believe that adding more U.S. combat troops contributes to success.

We appreciate you taking these views into consideration.

Sincerely,

Harry Reid
Majority Leader

Nancy Pelosi
Speaker

Chairman LEVIN. Senator Kennedy.

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

Mr. Secretary, thank you, again, and General, for your service.

Some of us believe that as long as we are going to be a crutch over there the Iraqis will not make the judgment and will not make the decisions which are in the interest of a more secure Iraq. That is what basically part of the debate is about. Many of us who have supported it believe that you have to start redeployment before they really get the message that they are going to have to take a decision, are interested because they were criticized because of establishing some time frame, and yet the administration now has a time frame because they have a surge.

The administration denies that it is an escalation; it is just a surge. "Surge" by definition, there is a beginning and an end to it. So this runs into this other issue, which I never felt a lot of, that suddenly al Qaeda is going to go away or disappear for a period of 6 or 8 months and then come out and fight it at a different time.

But let me go back to three concerns that I have in terms of the administration's policy. First, when we go back to what the authorization was in terms of the Armed Forces, it was effectively that Saddam had violated United Nations (U.N.) resolutions, had weap-

ons of mass destruction (WMD), and operational contacts with al Qaeda.

Saddam is gone now, and the President, in his statement, talks about a new policy that he has. He has a new policy, and he talks about the surge. We look back in terms of the history of surges. We had one in Najaf in 2004, you had the surge, and we had a loss of a good number of American troops. We had the Fallujah surge, where over 300 American troops were lost. We had the surge in 2005 at the time of the elections. They were peaceful elections but there was an escalation of violence against American servicemen just after that. Then in 2006 we had the surge after Samarra and we had a spike in American deaths.

Many of us who listened to General Abizaid and General Casey, who were sitting in those seats, believe that they thought that the lesson from those experiences was that the surge and the escalation was not really what was in the interest of the United States or security or achieving our goals there.

Now we have the announcement of the President's program and we ask ourselves, well, what is the reaction from Mr. Maliki? If you look at this morning's paper with the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of the New York Times, John Burns, this is his report: "Iraqi Shiite-led government offered only grudging endorsement on Thursday of the President's proposal deploying 20,000 additional troops in an effort to curb sectarian violence and regain Baghdad. The tepid response raised questions about whether the government will make a good faith effort to prosecute the new war plan. Iraqi leader, Prime Minister, Maliki failed to appear at a news conference and avoided any public comment."

Now we are asking the American people to support an increase in sending American servicemen over there when we have this kind of reaction from the leader in Iraq.

At least, Mr. Secretary, if we are going to have this kind of departure from what was in the original authorization, if we have this kind of reaction in terms of Mr. Maliki, and understanding that American foreign policy is best when the American people are behind it. When they are behind an American foreign policy, that is when it is at its best. Why not come back to Congress? Why not come back and permit us to have a vote on this surge? Let the American people speak through their elected representatives to find out whether the American people—with the time it took the President now, 2 months, to make this judgment, let us have 10 days to try and make a judgment and a decision whether the American people are behind this.

If we find out that they are, it is going to at least enhance, from the administration's point of view, your view. If we find out at this time that they are not, it is going to be of value in terms of policymakers.

Secretary GATES. Senator Kennedy, I take your point. I will certainly pass the message to the President. I think he feels that he has the authority that he needs to proceed. I think quite honestly that he believes that sometimes a President has to take actions that contemporaneously do not have broad support of the American people because he has a longer view.

I remember that when the first President Bush made the decision to throw Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait the polls showed about 15 percent of the American people supported that action. After it was successful, about 90 percent supported it. So there are times when a President has to take actions as he sees the long-term national interest and sometimes he pays a political price for that.

Senator KENNEDY. I appreciate the comments that you make and the basic concept. But we have been in this war now for 4 years with the policy of this administration, and he has indicated that this is a new policy. Basically, many of us believe that we are increasing and enhancing the chances that American servicemen are going to get caught in this civil war—the basic strife between the Sunni and the Shia.

We can talk about an escalation of sectarian violence. We can talk about what Senator Hagel, Kofi Annan, and others have called the civil war. It is escalation of sectarian violence, Americans getting caught between the Sunni and the Shia on these battles. That is the basic conflict there; the Kurds in the north, but the basic conflict there.

Basically, many of us believe that we are exposing Americans to a civil war and that we ought to have some opportunity to express our views on that. We do not believe and I do not believe the American people would authorize it. You ask them or the Senate would. I might be wrong. Do we want to have Americans involved in making judgments and decisions in this escalated sectarian conflict and in a civil war?

I think we saw at the end of the Vietnam War how this country, Republicans and Democrats, came together and passed the War Powers Act. You can say that does not apply now, but it was an expression at that time, across the country of bipartisan support. 78 Senators—Republicans and Democrats—said they had been left out of the decision on Vietnam; we do not want that to happen again.

It is happening again, Mr. Secretary, and I think the American people through their representatives should have an opportunity to speak.

My time is up, but I thank you. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Kennedy.

Senator Warner.

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

First, Secretary Gates, thank you and your family for once again returning to the public sector to take on this arduous assignment. I have had the privilege of working with many Secretaries of Defense and indeed serving a number of years in that building myself, and it is an enormous challenge. I really believe, drawing on my own lifetime of experience, this moment in American history is a very critical one.

I observed the President's conclusion that it would be a disaster if we were to allow Iraq to implode, be divided, and scattered to the winds in that region. So we must find a way to avoid that. I do not call it victory, I do not call it win, but to enable this government and its people to continue to seek their own level of democracy and freedom.

I have studied very carefully the President's program and I am continuing to study it. He was responsive to some of us. As early as last October, I came back from Iraq, felt that the situation was just drifting sideways and that we needed to have an intensive reexamination. I commend the President and his team, including you and your staff, General Pace, for doing a very thorough study. What he laid before the American public here a night ago was a credible product and one worthy of very careful consideration.

But among the things that I want to consider before I make final judgments is the National Intelligence Estimate (NIE). Our committee recommended that that be done. The administration has it underway. Yesterday, in that seat, I asked Ambassador Negroponte, our chief of intelligence, and he said it would be finished toward the end of the month.

Are you acquainted with the drafts thus far? Were you fully aware of the conclusions that they were reaching in the NIE from the President's announcement the other night?

Secretary GATES. No, sir.

Senator WARNER. General Pace, are you familiar with it?

General PACE. Not in the form of a written document, sir. But certainly in the dialogue that we have been involved with, the intelligence input has been very much in the forefront. So I have to believe, although I have not seen the document, that the people who are making the recommendations and giving us the intelligence on which we base our estimates.

Senator WARNER. It will be available to Senators, I hope, before the end of this month.

Now, General Pace, as so often is the case, and I think ever since World War II, we as a country have contributed a great deal of money to provide facilities within the military to wargame strategies—the National War College, your Joint Services Command, and other entities. To what extent has this plan been thoroughly vetted by, I call it, a wargame scenario or an A team, a B team, a red team, a blue team, the various types of analytical mechanisms that DOD utilizes to carefully scrub it before it gets on the table and you implement it?

General PACE. Sir, several ways. First, in Iraq itself with General Casey, General Odierno, General Zilmer, the Marine commander out there, working on the plan with their Iraqi counterparts, doing the troop-to-task analysis of how many individuals are going to be needed to do the work involved, then doing the tabletop and rock drill type exercises that go along with those, and having red teams themselves looking at it from the enemy's viewpoint. That was all done inside of Iraq.

Back in Washington, DC, myself and the chiefs for several months have taken a good hard look at where we are, where we should be, what the impediments are, how to make changes to that, and have been taking a look at the plans coming up.

The Joint Forces Command in Northern Virginia has the responsibility also to provide assistance and General Smith from Joint Forces Command has assisted in that regard. General Petraeus' command out in Kansas right now is also involved.

Senator WARNER. All right. I would indicate to you that I would like to examine that. I will come back to you and ask to look at some of those reports.

Did they consider some of the conclusions in the Baker-Hamilton ISG report? I find this a very helpful document. I do not agree with much of it, but there are some things in here which strike me as very important.

General PACE. Sir, every single one I can guarantee you within the Joint Chiefs were looked at. We took all 79. We took a look where we were. We cross-referenced those that we were in agreement with and we specifically took a look at those that we were not in agreement with to make a conscious decision that we were either with them or not with them, for whatever reasons we believed.

Senator WARNER. I misspoke when I said I disagree with much of it. I have looked it over. I am not trying to pronounce the quantum of how I agree.

But I want to point out recommendation 43: "Military priorities in Iraq must change." Indeed, I and others asked for a change. This is their concept of change: "With the highest priority being given to the training, equipping, advising, and support missions and to counterterrorism operations," which essentially says the current mission should be augmented, strengthened, and given greater emphasis.

Was that given consideration?

General PACE. Absolutely, not only given consideration, sir, but in fact it is part of the way forward. We are going to double and triple the size of the embedded trainers with all Iraqi units and we are going to take them below the 600-man battalion level down to the 100-, 150-man company level within the Iraqi army.

Senator WARNER. My estimate here, that recommendation would not require anywhere near the 20,000-plus that you envision. It seems to me several thousand could be put in as a start and to see whether or not in fact the Iraqis do swing in and become full partners, which they failed to do in the previous Baghdad operation, my point being it seems to me should we not walk a few steps along this line and then see how quickly, hopefully, the Iraqis begin to take up their responsibilities, rather than this massive plan pushing forward all at once?

General PACE. Sir, I understand your point and I think that we should in fact increase, as the Baker-Hamilton report recommended. But as we took a look at the military plan to support Prime Minister Maliki's initiative, understanding the changed political and economic environment and in concert with that——

Senator WARNER. My time is up. I have just one last thing for Secretary Gates. The President made a very important statement the other night regarding Iran and Syria. He 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 will interrupt the flow of support from Iran and Syria and we will seek out and de-

stroy the networks providing advanced weaponry and training to our enemies in Iraq."

I remember Vietnam. I was in the Pentagon in those many years. I am concerned about whether or not this would require U.S. forces to cross the borders into Iran and Syria to implement this program, or does this program envision just actions within the territorial area of Iraq?

Secretary GATES. Senator Warner, I will ask General Pace to comment. First, I believe it refers strictly to operations inside the territory of Iraq, not crossing the border.

With respect to your earlier point, the practical effect of the flow of our troops is going to accomplish I think what you suggest. One brigade will go the middle of this month. A second brigade will not go until the middle of next month, and then they will flow at roughly monthly intervals. As I said in response to Senator McCain's question, before we have sent in very many additional American troops, we will have a pretty good idea, at least on the military side, whether the Iraqis have stepped up to the plate in terms of fulfilling their commitments.

General Pace?

General PACE. Sir, from a military standpoint, there is no need to cross the Iranian border. We can track down and are tracking down and have added resources to go after the networks in Iraq that are providing tools to kill our troops, regardless of where they are coming from. It is instructive that in the last couple of weeks we found Iranians twice.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Senator WARNER. My last comment to you, General, would be that I hope your rules of engagement to your forces are such that you do everything you can to avoid American GIs getting into a crossfire of sectarianism, so much of that crossfire predicated on religious doctrine which has been debated within this theory of Sunni and Shia religion for over 1,000 years. That is not our responsibility. It is the Iraqi forces' responsibility to settle that.

General PACE. The Iraqis will lead and, as you have seen on TV in the last couple of days, the Iraqi forces have been in the lead in places like Haifa Street. We have been providing fire support, and our troops will continue and always will have the right to defend themselves with the force needed.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Thank you, Senator Warner.

Senator Lieberman.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Mr. Secretary and General, for your service. I want to begin by going back to perhaps the first sentence of the chairman's opening remarks, in which he said all of us share the common goal of maximizing the chances of success in Iraq. I start with that premise, I accept it, and I think it is true, because no matter what your opinion is about what we should do, I think everyone understands it would be a disaster to fail in Iraq, for all the reasons that have been spelled out.

The President presented a plan the other night. I support it because I believe it can maximize our chances of success in Iraq. There are no guarantees. We all know that. But it does move for-

ward toward the goal that Senator Levin has spoken of of maximizing our chances of success in Iraq.

It does, incidentally, grow out of, exactly as General Pace has said, statements and requests that we heard—the group of us who were there in Iraq in December, from our military, the commanders in charge, the colonels—the boots on the ground. They want to finish the fight. They believe in the cause for which we are fighting. They believe they can win it, but in Baghdad, because of sectarian violence, and in Anbar because of al Qaeda insurgency, they need reinforcements.

So I support the President's plan. I think those who do not support it have an obligation to offer a plan that also moves toward the goal of maximizing our chances of success in Iraq, and so far I have not heard that, with all respect. There seem to be two responses that are contemplated here in Congress. One is a resolution that would simply express, a sense of the Senate expressing disapproval of the President's plan for increasing troops. That would have no effect on our ability to implement the plan, but I fear it would send a mixed message to our enemies and to our troops, in fact.

The second alternative being discussed is to take some action to stop the President as Commander in Chief, the Secretary of Defense, the military, from implementing this increase in troop strength.

Senator McCain asked you a series of important questions, Mr. Secretary, about the impact of beginning a withdrawal in 4 to 6 months on sectarian violence and the prospects of a political solution. My interpretation—please tell me if I am wrong—of your answers is that you feel very strongly that beginning to withdraw our troops from Iraq does not maximize our chances of success there. Am I correct?

Secretary GATES. Senator, my view is that if, as I suggested, this operation is successful, we in fact may be able to begin drawing down some of our troops later this year. But that will depend entirely on the situation on the ground. What I was trying to differentiate between was that, in some period of time later this year, based on the conditions in Iraq, we might be able to begin doing that, and announcing beforehand that we were going to begin withdrawing during a period regardless of the conditions on the ground.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Absolutely, I understood that. Or beginning to withdraw our troops without the increase in troops that the President is now implementing, that also would not maximize our chances of success.

Secretary GATES. It certainly is the view of the commanders on the ground that this increase will enhance our chances for success.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Let me ask you this question. Consider the alternative proposal that I presume will be put before the Senate and the House, that Congress in some way take action to stop the Commander in Chief from implementing the plan that he proposed the other night. What impact do you think that would have on the current state of sectarian violence in Baghdad if Congress acted to stop the funding for the additional troops requested by the Commander in Chief?

Secretary GATES. I will defer to General Pace, but I think, first of all, it is important to understand that the reason for the change in policy, strategy, tactics, however you want to characterize it, is that everybody agreed that where we have been for the last several months is unsatisfactory.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Correct, I agree.

Secretary GATES. The President himself has said that it is unacceptable.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Agreed.

Secretary GATES. So there is a broad consensus that something needs to change.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right.

Secretary GATES. So the view of our commanders is that the plan that the Iraqis have put forward, that our commanders have worked to flesh out with them, offers the best chance of having some success through a changed approach, and the changes are familiar to everyone in terms of the role of the Iraqis. But I defer to the General.

Senator LIEBERMAN. General Pace, so if Congress blocked the implementation of the troop increase now contemplated, what would be the effect on sectarian violence in Baghdad?

General PACE. Sir, I think sectarian violence would continue, that the commanders on the ground have made the proper assessment that, given the changed political environment in Iraq, led by the Iraqi government, and the increase in economic activity, that we do have a proposal that can be successful. Without the resources to execute that mission, then it will certainly not be successful. I do not know then the direct impact, but it will clearly not be successful if not allowed to execute.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Secretary Gates, if a motion to block implementation of the plan that the President announced the other night passed Congress, what would be the impact on the political leadership of Iraq insofar as we all know that in the end Iraq has to go forward as a result of an Iraqi political solution?

Secretary GATES. I honestly do not know the answer to the question. It is hard to imagine that it would have a positive effect.

Senator LIEBERMAN. That is certainly my fear, that if we took action to block the funding, it would damage the morale of the troops which remains extremely high.

Let me ask two different kinds of questions. There are some rumors around that in the normal course of things General Petraeus, who I think was an excellent choice to assume command in Iraq—a lot of us know him and are impressed by his experience, his commitment, his feeling that we can succeed in Iraq. But I have heard that it may be that he will not arrive there until April. Is that true, and if so is there any way that that can be expedited because of the urgency on the ground and because of the fact that you are implementing this new plan now?

Secretary GATES. We certainly will get the nominations of the three officers that I have recommended to the President. All three I signed out this morning to the White House. They were hand-carried to the White House and, believe me, after this hearing I will let the White House know of the desire to move as quickly as possible.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you. That is very important.

General Pace, a final quick word. Tell us a little more about the action in Irbil that ended up in capturing some Iranians?

Chairman LEVIN. If you could do that briefly, General, because the time is running.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you.

General PACE. Yes, sir. As I mentioned, Senator, we are tracking across Iraq all networks that provide weapons to our enemies, that provide the opportunity for the IEDs and the like. In the pursuit of that network, most recently in Irbil but also recently in Baghdad, twice in the last 2 or 3 weeks, in pursuit of those networks, when we have gone and captured those cells, we have captured Iranians.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Senator Inhofe.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, let me just echo the words of Senator Warner on how much I appreciate the service you have rendered for your country in the past and what you are doing today.

It is going to be unpopular for me to say what I am saying, but somebody in this hearing has to do it. A lot of the criticism from yesterday's hearings and today's and future hearings are highly politically charged. It may be just a coincidence that those six people who were most outspoken in their criticism of the effort and of the President yesterday are all six running for president.

I am glad that Senator Lieberman talked about people who are opposing this. If you oppose it, you need to come up with why you are opposing it and what are the solutions. A lot of people who are opposing the President today were opposing him before he made his speech.

Now, let me be a little bit positive on some things because all we have heard is negative so far. I have had occasion in the last few years to be in the Iraqi area of responsibility 12 times, probably more than anybody else has. As I think back, after the first election, I remember so well how people risked their lives to get out and vote, women, knowing that they were going to have opportunities they had never had before.

One lady, through an interpreter, told me, "as I was voting, it occurred to me, this is not just the first time in 30 years of a brutal dictator; this is the first time in 4,000 years we have had an opportunity for self-determination." She said, "I could not see the ballot for the tears in my eyes."

I think it was 6 months later, the day after Zarqawi was taken—we have talked a lot about Maliki—but there was Prime Minister Jassim, Dr. Rubaie, all of them. I became really convinced that there is a high quality of leadership there. They have the capability of doing this, and they impressed upon me that a lot of what we hear over here about the Sunnis and the Shia is really a western concept. Those were their words. He said, "We are Iraqis first."

I thought the President did a great job in his speech, and I would just like to repeat one thing that he said, the fact that he took responsibility for the failures, and there have been failures. He went on to say, "The gloves have to come off." The implications of failing

in Iraq will be faced by our children and grandchildren, of which I have 20. There will be sectarian cleansing, civil war, and probably genocide. Radical Islam will have a safe haven to carry out training, to use as a base of operations to target free societies.

Senator McCain, who is not here right now, but he made the comment that they would follow us home.

Let me just make a comment. One thing that I do not want to hear in the years to come is that we did not resource this thing right. Let me suggest a couple things here and get your response to them very briefly. First of all, we must give our commanders and the troops what they are asking for and give them the resources they need, including the rules of engagement.

Second, equipping the Iraqis. One of the experiences I had in Fallujah was that these guys are really committed. I am talking about the Iraqis now. They say, yes, we are going to be able to take care of our own security. Look at the weapons they are carrying around. Most of it is old Chinese and Russian stuff that does not work. They are out there, instead of with any kind of armor, they are in pickup trucks.

So I would ask you, either one of you, are we in a position to provide the necessary equipment? Because you do not hear anything about that. I am talking about equipment to the Iraqis.

Second, if you determine in the near future that we need more troops, will you come back and ask for them?

General PACE. Sir, yes to both. On the Iraqi side, the equipping of the Iraqi armed forces is at about 98 percent of what we need to give to them. The other 2 percent is being produced and delivered.

Senator INHOFE. That is good.

General PACE. They have flak jackets, helmets, rifles, machine guns, small vehicles, trucks, Humvees, and the like.

Senator INHOFE. A lot of that was done since the last election took place, I assume?

General PACE. Since the last election in Iraq?

Senator INHOFE. Yes.

General PACE. Yes, sir, that is correct.

With regard to troop levels, yes, sir, we will continue to ask for the troop levels. The commanders on the ground have asked for in this instance two brigades for Baghdad and one brigade in al-Anbar. In the process of providing those, we gave them not only what they asked for, but put in the pipeline to be delivered at a later date troops that can reinforce success. So they are going to get what they need, and the commanders are happy to have that additional capacity should they need it.

Senator INHOFE. I assume you agree with that statement, Mr. Secretary?

Secretary GATES. Yes.

Senator INHOFE. I was going to, but time is not going to permit me to, get into the justice problem that is over there. We have these qualified attorneys right behind me, Senators Sessions, Graham, and Cornyn, and I am sure that they will address this. So let me jump into something else.

I want to commend you, Secretary Gates, for coming out and recommending the 92,000 additional soldiers and marines. With the

drawdown of the 1990s, I saw this coming. Many of us did. We went to the Senate floor, and now we are correcting that. So I appreciate that.

In your written statement you said something I do not think you said in your spoken statement. I just want to read this because I think it really puts it in perspective: "Significant mistakes have been made by the United States in Iraq, just like in virtually every war in human history. That is the nature of war. But however we got to this moment, the stakes are now incalculable." Essentially, that is almost exactly what Winston Churchill said at one time.

Now, for clarification, General Pace, because I may not understand this right, on the nine districts that we have, we are talking about having a brigade of Iraqi army, a brigade of police, and then they would be fortified by a battalion of our troops or coalition troops; is that correct?

General PACE. Sir, when all the forces are there, there will be 18 Iraqi brigades—9 Iraqi army and 9 Iraqi police. There are currently six Iraqi army, nine Iraqi police.

Senator INHOFE. I am breaking it down to each one of the districts.

General PACE. Yes, sir. In each of the nine brigade areas, the mix will be either one Iraqi army and one Iraqi police or two of one kind or two of another, based on the capacity of the police and the types of——

Senator INHOFE. The problems.

General PACE. Yes, sir, whether police would be most useful or soldiers would be most useful in those districts.

Senator INHOFE. It would be two brigades, though, in each district?

General PACE. It might be three, it may be three in a particular district and one in another, sir. But the math ends up being on average two per district.

We then have a battalion per district, but we have six brigades already in Baghdad, with a seventh brigade, which is our mobile brigade, which is our Stryker brigade, and we propose to add two brigades to that. So we would end up having a total of nine brigades in Baghdad. The Iraqis would have 18.

Senator INHOFE. Okay. I just think it is important to let the American people know the mix that is there. It is heavily, heavily weighted toward the Iraqi participation and we are in the back supporting them on somewhat of an embedded basis.

General PACE. Yes, sir. The Iraqi casualties today are twice what ours are. The Iraqis are in this fight and they are taking the responsibility, and they need some help.

Senator INHOFE. General Pace, the Iraqis I talk to when I am over there say that they are very proud of that. They want to be out front.

My time has expired but I would like for the record to have you respond to this hugely successful operation in Somalia. Two of the programs that I have supported very much are train and equip and the Commander's Emergency Relief Program (CERP), and I think probably, with train and equip, the biggest success story that we can use as a model took place in Ethiopia, and I would like to have you for the record respond as to what lessons we learned there that

are going to be helpful for the two of you as we address the problems in Iraqi.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The information referred to follows:]

We have reviewed our historical files, and we have no record of a train-and-equip mission with Ethiopia that would be the model for lessons learned applied to problems in Iraq.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Inhofe.

Let me now call on Senator Byrd. I want to thank Senator Jack Reed for his usual courtesies in allowing this deviation from our strict early bird rule.

Senator Byrd.

Senator BYRD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, we hear a great deal about a new strategy. I do not see much that is new in this approach. We have escalated our forces in Baghdad before and yet we remain caught in the crossfire of a civil war. We have provided nearly $36 billion in reconstruction funding for new schools and hospitals and roads and electrical systems and oil lines, and yet the violence continues unabated. I have little confidence that this time the results will be any different.

At the outset of this war, the Bush administration believed apparently that democracy could be exported through the barrel of a gun. That belief was wrong then. It is wrong still today. 20,000 more guns and 20,000 more soldiers will not make it right.

In December, the ISG reported that the violence in Iraq is now primarily a sectarian conflict. But in his speech to the Nation, the President threatened that starting to bring our troops home would mean new terrorist threats to our Homeland. That is exactly the same sales job that was used to justify the start of this misguided war, that Saddam Hussein was planning for the day in which he would unleash WMD on our cities. We heard about mushroom clouds and lethal drones from Iraq targeting our cities. Those claims were little more than hype and fright.

The trust that the people gave this administration was squandered long ago. Secretary Gates, when the American people hear the administration's claim about terrorists taking over Iraq and committing another September 11 on our country, why should anyone believe the hype? The White House refuses to recognize that Iraq is in a civil war, that the violence is between religious groups and not, as the President would have the people believe, driven by terrorism.

How can there be a new plan for Iraq if the President does not acknowledge the new reality on the ground in Iraq? Do you want to comment on that question?

Secretary GATES. Yes, sir. I think in reality there are four wars going on in Iraq right now simultaneously: a Shia on Shia conflict in the south; sectarian violence, particularly in Baghdad but also in Diyalah and a couple of other provinces; an insurgency; and al Qaeda. The extremists, the insurgents, and al Qaeda in particular, have tried for some time to provoke the kind of sectarian violence that we are now seeing. The Shia were actually quite restrained for some time, until the bombing of the mosque at Samarrah, and now we see the sectarian violence that you have referred to.

But we also continue to see the extremists from time to time engaging in particularly violent acts intended to keep stoking the fires of this sectarian violence. This effort that we are talking about now is to try and bring that kind of sectarian violence under control under Iraqi auspices.

Whatever was the case when the war started—and I cannot and will not speak to that—the reality is that virtually all of the bad guys in the Middle East are now active in Iraq. Hezbollah is providing training. Al Qaeda is active. The Iranians are interfering. The Syrians are interfering. They are all there. So the situation is both violent and complex.

We are having some success against al Qaeda. Al Qaeda and the insurgents, and the Shia extremists, the Jaysh al-Madhi, continue to inflict the vast preponderance of American casualties, not the sectarian violence, not being caught in a crossfire.

So I cannot speak to the claims that were made at the beginning of the war, but we face a very complex situation today.

Senator BYRD. When you appeared before this committee in December, you said, Mr. Secretary, that any military action against Iran should be a last resort. I keep hearing about Iran. The President seems to have placed diplomacy on the back burner again. The American people have little faith in this administration. The war in Iraq was based on a foundation of manipulation and machination. Now we see the specter of a new war front in Iran. The American people have not signed up for our troops to be the pawns for any new wargames. The country has far too much respect for the men and women who wear the uniform.

But it seems to me I heard the President tell the Nation in his speech, we will 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. How will that be accomplished, Mr. Secretary? Will our forces cross the border into Iran?

Secretary GATES. Let me respond, Senator Byrd, and then invite General Pace to add his comments. We believe that we can interrupt these networks that are providing support through actions inside the territory of Iraq, that there is no need to attack targets in Iran itself. I continue to believe what I told you at the confirmation hearing, that any kind of military action inside Iran would be a very last resort.

Senator BYRD. General Pace?

General PACE. Sir, we have our Special Operations Forces every day working against the networks that provide the weapons that kill our troops. They continue to raid and they will continue to raid. I think one of the reasons you keep hearing about Iran is because we keep finding their stuff in Iraq.

Senator BYRD. Let me just change the subject. Under what authority were the air strikes in Somalia executed?

General PACE. Under the authority of the President of the United States, sir.

Senator BYRD. What authority did he have? What did he base his authority on? Did the President authorize this action?

General PACE. There was an order that was published a couple of years ago that received the proper authorities from the Secretary

of Defense and the President to be able to track al Qaeda and other terrorist networks worldwide, sir.

Senator BYRD. Do you think that authority was sufficient?

General PACE. I do, sir.

Senator BYRD. My time is about up. Was there any consultation with or notification in Congress regarding the decision to take military action against suspected terrorists in Somalia?

General PACE. There was notification to the proper Members of Congress, by then Under Secretary of Defense Cambone, who specifically briefed the proper members on the worldwide authorities.

Senator BYRD. Who are the proper members?

General PACE. Sir, I will have to find out from the current Under Secretary, but it is in the Intelligence Committee, I believe, sir. I will find out, but I do know he specifically came over and briefed and came back and told me and then Secretary Rumsfeld that he had done what he was supposed to do.

Senator BYRD. Mr. Chairman, my time is up, but I think this question bears further examination.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Byrd.

If you, General Pace, could let us know who was notified, if in fact that happened, we would appreciate that for the record.

[The information referred to follows:]

[Deleted.]

Chairman LEVIN. Senator Sessions.

Senator SESSIONS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I have to say that a little over a year ago, I was very pleased that General Casey indicated he thought we could draw down troops. But as you noted, Mr. Secretary, the attacks by the terrorists and al Qaeda did provoke the Shia, and we ended up with sectarian violence, particularly in Baghdad. This destabilized that very large city and makes it even more difficult to create the political settlement that we need in the long run. So I do think Baghdad is a critical matter.

I suppose we have three options. Number one, we can have a 4-month type withdrawal and just pull out immediately. Number two, we can continue the same. Or number three, we can adjust tactics and our capabilities to meet the new situation that occurs on the battlefield. General Pace, is that not the history of war, that you have to continue to not think that you are going to be able to do the very same thing indefinitely but change is necessary when the situation changes?

General PACE. Sir, change is most definitely necessary, and I think all of us—the Joint Chiefs and the commanders on the ground—realize that where we were a couple of months ago in Iraq and where we thought we would be were not the same place, and therefore we collectively undertook to determine, okay, where are we, where should we be, how do we get there, what are the impediments, and what do we need to change? That is what this has resulted in, sir.

Senator SESSIONS. When I came back from Iraq in August with Senators Levin, Warner, and Pryor, I asked you about conducting a review and you said you had just commenced one. How many

weeks or months did you work intensively on developing a new strategy for Iraq?

General PACE. Sir, we started intensively the first week of September and are still doing it.

Senator SESSIONS. You should continue.

Now, we talked about, many of us and you in the military, talk about benchmarks or metrics. One of the key things is Iraqi participation. This is a serious matter. Mr. Secretary, do you have right now formally completed the kind of criteria, benchmarks, that we will be looking at to determine whether or not the Iraqis are participating adequately?

Secretary GATES. Yes, sir. I think that the benchmarks that I will be looking at specifically in the early stages, are the Iraqis providing the troops that they promised to provide at the time they promised to provide them, is there political interference at the senior governmental level in tactical decisions and military operations, and are the military forces of Iraq and the United States being allowed to go into all parts of the city of Baghdad? Those are the first three criteria that I believe are benchmarks, where I believe we will get some measure of the performance of the Iraqis in this operation.

Senator SESSIONS. Let me just follow. I think there should be some more. But my question to you is, will you keep us informed, and if this is failing to occur do you understand that our commitment here is not unlimited?

Secretary GATES. Absolutely.

Senator SESSIONS. With regard to General Petraeus and his leadership, I met with him right after the first hostilities when he commanded the 101st Airborne in Mosul. I met with him again when he commanded the training of the Iraqi army when he was in Baghdad. Two years he has been in Iraq. He has now written the counterinsurgency manual for the military on how to defeat an insurgency. I think he is the best person you can send. Will you allow him to tell us in his best military judgment if things are not occurring satisfactorily and if we are in a position where we will not be successful, or will you tell us that at the earliest possible date? Because I see no need to commit American soldiers and place them at risk in a situation that is not winnable or successful, where we do not see success as a possibility.

Secretary GATES. Absolutely, Senator.

Senator SESSIONS. General Pace?

General PACE. Yes, sir.

Senator SESSIONS. Do you feel that is a responsibility of you as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs?

General PACE. I absolutely do, yes, sir.

Secretary GATES. If I might add, Senator, I think it is my responsibility as well.

Senator SESSIONS. I agree.

Now, both of you, just for the record, you believe that this new strategy will meet the test that Senator Levin and Senator Biden have insisted on—and I think it is legitimate. Will it significantly enhance our ability to be successful in Iraq?

General PACE. Sir, the military strategy coupled with the changed political atmosphere, coupled with economic development,

can be successful. It will not be successful by itself as a military strategy, nor will the other two parts be successful without the military strategy. It is a three-pronged plus-up. All must move forward together.

Senator SESSIONS. I could not agree more. Mr. Secretary, these other aspects are important, other than just military. We all know that. It is very much a team concept when you are part of an administration. You do not want to be critical of other agencies and departments, but other agencies and departments have critical roles in this situation.

Will you tell us if those agencies and departments are not sufficiently meeting their responsibilities to help create a lawful system and economy, oil production, and infrastructure?

Secretary GATES. Senator, we will be prepared to report to this committee on performance in all three aspects of the operation that General Pace described.

Senator SESSIONS. Is this plan that has been proposed here, does it call for increased performance from the other departments and agencies of this government?

Secretary GATES. Yes, sir.

Senator SESSIONS. I think that is important.

Now, finally, you have written me a letter in response to my letter to you about the total inadequacy of prison bed spaces in Iraq. But I have not gotten a briefing from your staff yet and a plan to fix it. According to my calculations, I believe we have about 10,000 bed spaces in Iraq today, but in fact it is about one-ninth the number of bed spaces per capita that we have in my State, for example.

We have a situation of real violence. We are going to have Iraqi and American troops and Iraqi police doing enhanced work in Iraq, in Baghdad, that city. We cannot have a catch-and-release policy. We cannot have a revolving door. But if we do not dramatically and immediately increase significantly the number of prison bed spaces, there is no place to put them.

Do you understand the seriousness of that matter? If we are going to commit troops and soldiers and police to catch bad guys, do you know that we have to have a place to put them?

Secretary GATES. Yes, sir. After you mentioned this problem to the President the other day, Secretary Rice and I agreed that it was a high priority matter that needed to be addressed.

Senator SESSIONS. I thank both of you for your commitment and leadership. I do not think this matter is a lost cause. I think with good work and smart efforts we can make a difference, and it is going to take the entire government, more than just the military, to make that happen.

Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you. Thank you, Senator Sessions.

Senator Reed.

Senator REED. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, gentlemen, for your service. Secretary Gates, thank you particularly for signing up at a very difficult and challenging moment in our history.

General Pace, General Petraeus labored many months to write a new counterinsurgency manual. Clearly, within that manual it calls for a range of 20 to 25 counterinsurgents for every 1,000 of

population, which in Baghdad translates to 120,000 troops. How many American forces will be there after we finish this buildup?

General PACE. 31,000, sir.

Senator REED. How many Iraqi forces will be there?

General PACE. 50,000, sir.

Senator REED. So we are about 40,000 short of the doctrine.

General PACE. With pure math, yes, sir, not forgetting that in places like El Salvador we helped with 55 soldiers total.

Senator REED. Right, but we are talking about a situation which always seemed to require more resource than less, and with this increment we are 40,000 troops less than the doctrine.

Also, I think you are aware that some of the major proponents of this argument, General Jack Keane and Dr. Robert Kagan, suggest that a minimum of 30,000 troops would be necessary. These are the most, I think, vociferous spokespersons for an increase in troops. Given that, was your advice to the President of the United States that 20,000 troops would be sufficient to conduct this operation?

General PACE. Sir, my advice to this committee and my responsibility to give my best military advice to the Congress of the United States includes the fact that I believe that this plan, which is a military part of an overall plan that includes most fundamentally the Iraqi leadership and change of political will and guidance to their own forces and our ability to operate in Baghdad, and, equally important, an economic piece, that, given the three-legged stool, that the troop-to-task analysis to get the job done in Baghdad by adding three additional Iraqi brigades and two additional U.S. brigades was sufficient. In case they are needed, three more brigades that have not been asked for by the commanders on the ground have been put into the pipeline to arrive.

Senator REED. I must express my concern. We are talking about a huge deviance from the doctrinal notion of how many troops. I understand that is a rough measure, but we are 40,000 troops below that, but also, I think what your answer illustrates, General, is that the critical issue here is not an increase in military forces. It is a stiffening of the will of the Iraqi political parties to do what they must do. In fact, I do not know if you would agree, but if they today would commit themselves immediately, realistically, and on the ground to do these things, this troop increase would be not necessary.

General PACE. Sir, I agree with most of what you said, but not all. It is absolutely fundamentally true that for this to be successful it must be embraced by the Iraqi government, which it has been since this is an Iraqi initiative. The promises that they have made must come to pass, and so far the ones they are supposed to have done by now they have done. But at the final analysis, when they deliver all that they have promised, our analysis, militarily, team between George Casey, General Casey, the Iraqis, General Odierno, and with General Petraeus' assistance in his role as the doctrine person, all of that analysis indicates that this number of troops is correct for this mission, not without regard to doctrine, but doctrine is a template. As I mentioned, some places you only need as many as 55, as you have in El Salvador. Other places you need more.

Senator REED. General, Baghdad is not one of those places.

Mr. Secretary, the premise, the logic of this operation, is that it will produce effects by the Iraqi government—principally under the rubric of reconciliation—the change in oil allocation and having provincial elections. What is going to give the Maliki government—the Shia government—the incentive to include Sunnis in their government when the effect of most of our operations will be to attack the Sunnis, eliminate their perceived enemies, and take the heat off them from doing anything? Why should they be more cooperative now when we are essentially doing what they want us to do? You and I both have visited Mr. Maliki and the interior minister and the defense minister, and they will tell you about the insurgency: "It is a Sunni insurgency, that is the problem; you help us with that problem."

So I think the highest probability of what will happen is that our forces and their forces will engage Sunni insurgents and attrite them, politely speaking, while they handle the Shia insurgents. But the logic here of forcing them to act, I think, in fact, this might give them a reprieve.

Your comments?

Secretary GATES. I think that one of the fundamental premises of the operation is that the sectarian violence has become so great in Baghdad that it has kept the political process from moving forward. Clearly, the insurgency is principally Sunni, as you indicate, and we will continue to go after the insurgency just as we will al Qaeda.

But I think central to the success of this entire operation is the willingness of the government to allow these forces, both Iraqi and American, to go into mixed neighborhoods, where they are taking on lawbreakers who are both Sunni and Shia, and that includes Sadr City.

Senator REED. Mr. Secretary, I think perhaps one of the different perspectives here is that there is a view perhaps that the sectarian violence in Iraq is part of their political process. The Shia are clearing neighborhoods, they are reorganizing, because they won. I think the notion that this sectarian violence is different than the political forces and that the political leaders are not encouraging or ignoring it, et cetera, defies the facts on the ground. I do not have to tell you. You are quite knowledgeable, but there are people in that government that feel they are benefiting from this sectarian violence.

Secretary GATES. There is no question about that, and I think that is one of the reasons that the willingness to move against the Shia neighborhoods where there are militias operating and people breaking the law is an essential part of this operation and it has to be one of the benchmarks that we look at in terms of whether the strategy is succeeding.

Senator REED. Mr. Secretary or General Pace, will the Iraqi government move Peshmerga units into Baghdad to help them bolster their military effort?

General PACE. Sir, the Peshmerga term applies specifically to the militias up north. From those militias that have existed, the Iraqi army has had brigades formed that are now Iraqi army brigades that are mostly Kurd. Yes, from the Iraqi army units that used to

be Peshmerga soldiers two of the brigades, I believe, sir, will be coming from the north to join up.

Senator REED. So there will be two brigades of Kurdish troops going into Shia and Sunni neighborhoods, which certainly complicates the sectarian nature of this struggle; is that correct?

General PACE. Or gives it balance, in that they are not either for Sunnis or for Shia but for Iraq.

Senator REED. I think they are for the Kurds.

My time is up, but one other question, Mr. Secretary, if I may. You talked about in some circumstances you could redeploy forces if this sectarian violence abates. But that presumes, I think, a lingering responsibility to go after al Qaeda, to provide territorial integrity. But yet, you would still contemplate a withdrawal if this sectarian violence abates?

Secretary GATES. I think if we see an abatement of the sectarian violence and the government moving forward on the commitments that they have made, for example on provincial elections and oil and so on, that we would see the kind of progress in Iraq that would make possible certainly bringing back at some point whatever troops had been sent over as part of this surge, but also looking toward further drawdowns in the future.

Senator REED. Let me ask the other question: If the violence does not abate, will you commit more U.S. troops to Baghdad?

Secretary GATES. I would have to wait and see what the recommendations of the field commander would be, sir.

Senator REED. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Reed.

Senator Collins.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Gates, I was pleased this morning to hear you describe the challenges that we are facing in Iraq as fighting four wars, because that was exactly my impression during my recent trip. I was struck by how different the war is depending on where you are in Iraq. In Anbar Province, the fight is with al Qaeda, it is not sectarian, and there I think we do need more troops, particularly to take advantage of the recent positive development where local tribal leaders have switched allegiance to our side and are joining in the fight against al Qaeda, and there the American commanders did ask for more troops during our trip.

That was not the case in Baghdad. In Baghdad where, as we all know, the violence is sectarian, one American commander told me that a jobs program would do much more to quell the sectarian violence than more troops.

I want to go back to an issue raised by Senator Kennedy and that is the effectiveness of surging troops. The fact is that we have had at least four surges since the initial invasion in March 2003. In the first part of January 2004, there was a surge over the next 4 months of some 30,000 troops. In January 2005, in preparation for the elections there was a surge of 25,000 troops. There was a third surge toward the end of 2005 of 15,000 troops.

So our troop level has gone up and down and they have varied considerably. We have tried surges. That leads me to two questions. First, why would this surge, which is actually slightly smaller than previous surges that we have tried, be successful when

those surges were not. Second, even if we change the rules of engagement, what happens when the surge ends? Why would we not just see once again a resurgence of violence?

Secretary GATES. Senator, let me start and then ask the General to pick up because I am not as familiar with the previous events as he is. I think what is different certainly from the experience last fall in Baghdad is the understanding that there were insufficient forces. If the strategy is clear, hold, and build, there were enough forces for the clear, but not enough for the hold. In some ways, if you will, it replicates the situation at the very beginning of the war. There were enough forces to overthrow Saddam Hussein and beat the Iraqi army, but not enough to maintain control of the country, in my opinion.

So there were not sufficient forces for the hold phase of the operation last fall, and there really was not a strong enough program, for the build part—the economic development—and especially moving in quickly. So I think one of the differences between this effort to quell the sectarian violence in Baghdad and that last fall is there has been a lot of attention paid to the mistakes that were made, and particularly in the hold and build phases of the strategy.

But let me ask General Pace to contribute.

General PACE. Senator, each of the previous surges was built for a specific reason and each was successful for the reason it was sent there—referendums, elections, and the spike in violence in al-Najaf. All resulted in the commanders on the ground receiving the troops they asked for and being able to provide for successful elections, successful referendums, and the like. So those surges were successful.

There was no surge requested nor applied to the Baghdad plan that recently was not successful. This surge is specifically focused on doing the military piece of the three-pronged surge for Baghdad.

But you are absolutely right. If all we do is go into Baghdad with X number of troops and provide increased security for a period of time and during that period of time the leaders, religious and political, do not take advantage of that opportunity, if the economy is not changed and jobs are not provided, then when the troops leave and the other two things have not happened you will have exactly what you said.

Senator COLLINS. That leads me to my second question and that is that we have seen so many broken promises from the Iraqi leaders. Just last month when I was in Iraq and we had the discussion with the Prime Minister, the Prime Minister expressed great frustration over the lack of control over his own troops. But he also did not seem to welcome more American troops at all.

So not only am I skeptical about whether the Prime Minister and other Iraqi leaders will forge the political compromises that are needed to more fully integrate the Sunnis into the governmental power structures, but I am very skeptical that the Prime Minister has really bought into this plan, because just 3 weeks ago when I was talking to him he did not seem to welcome the prospect of additional troops.

I guess my question is what has changed? What has changed in such a brief time to give you confidence that the Prime Minister is fully on board, that he is going to fulfill the pledges, and that

he is going to make the hard choices, the tough decisions that need to be made? I really fear the opposite. I fear that, rather than giving him breathing space to make those changes, that we are in fact lessening the pressure for him to do so.

Secretary GATES. It was quite clear to me when I visited Baghdad before Christmas in my meeting with Prime Minister Maliki that he was very eager for Iraqis to move into the lead in trying to deal with their security problems. As I mentioned earlier, he said to me, how can you hold me responsible for success in the security arena when I do not have control of my own troops? The arrangement has been worked out so that by March he will have control of all but one of his divisions.

There is no question in my mind that Prime Minister Maliki wanted to do this operation on his own, and I think what happened is that as his own military and security leaders began looking at the operation and began working out the details and then began talking and consulting with General Casey and the American military planners that they essentially persuaded the prime minister that additional American forces were necessary in order to make his plan successful.

One other thing that is different in this case is, also as I indicated, we have not put all of the entire weight of this operation, if you will, on Prime Minister Maliki. The President has talked to President Talabani. He has talked to Vice President Hashemi, a Sunni. He has talked to political leader Hakim. They all have affirmed the importance of this operation and their commitment to carrying out the promises and the commitments that Prime Minister Maliki has made.

As I indicated, I think there is considerable basis for skepticism based on the history, but the reality is—and I think a little perspective is in order—this government in Iraq was formed less than a year ago after the first real election in Iraqi history. Most of the people who are running this government were either in prison or were dissidents living outside of Iraq until just 3 years ago or so. They are learning as they go, and the truth is I think to a certain extent they may be getting better as they go along and get a little experience. I think they are beginning to see that they are risking their country falling apart if this sectarian violence continues, and I think that is what has prompted the prime minister to want to get control of the security situation in Baghdad.

We will see, and as I have indicated earlier, I think we will see fairly quickly, whether they are prepared to step up to the plate and perform as they have promised.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Collins.

Senator Bill Nelson.

Senator BILL NELSON. Mr. Secretary, I certainly hope you are right.

At what point, if the sectarian violence does not abate, do we stop the flow of the new troops going in? You said that by 2 months we should know. Is that when this committee should visit with you and say it is or is not working?

Secretary GATES. I think the first element of "is it working" is whether they have in fact fulfilled their commitments on the mili-

tary plan, as I was indicating earlier, did the brigades show up in the numbers that were promised, are they going into all the neighborhoods, are they going into true mixed neighborhoods and settling those down?

Regarding the hold and build parts of this, it will take much more time to see whether they are being effective, although we should see over time a reduction in the overall level of violence. So I think that the first indicators for this committee, for Congress, and frankly for the President, of whether this operation is being successful or not is whether the Iraqis fulfill the commitments they have made on the military side. We should know that in a couple of months.

Senator BILL NELSON. When you say "if they show up," indeed that assumes the problem that has been there, that a number of Iraqi troops that are part of a military unit do not show up when deployed of their home area.

General PACE. Sir, that is true, and part of the incentive for them this time is that in addition to following the orders they are given, there is a stipend of about $150 per month for the time that they are deployed, to help offset some of the strain on their families. So they will get the first $150 upfront and they will get the remainder of that when they redeploy.

It is not about money, but their government is in fact trying to provide some assistance to the families in a way that would help those soldiers leave their families and go do the job their government wants them to do.

Senator BILL NELSON. I want to encourage you to follow up with the Saudis. I had been asked by General Hayden to go talk to them about using their tribal Sunni contacts to try to help in this sectarian violence. But also, clearly the hammer ought to be brought down on the Saudis to encourage them to help finance some of these jobs programs that you are talking about, because the Saudis have a huge stake in Iraq being stabilized, as we do.

Mr. Chairman, I cannot help but note how the tenor of this meeting today contrasted with that of the Senator Foreign Relations Committee yesterday, in which the witness was Secretary Rice. Because you represent a breath of fresh air, Mr. Secretary, there is much more deference and respect. There is a great deal of frustration, as you hear expressed here. That came out in a partisan way yesterday in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Let me ask you, General, do we have enough military assets to do operations in both Iraq and Afghanistan and also be prepared if we face some additional emergency such as Iran or China?

General PACE. Sir, the answer is yes, but it is not without pain to ensure that we are properly prepared. First of all, the units that will be going into Iraq were already in the pipeline and they will be moved forward in the pipeline a couple of months. None of those units will go over with less than 1 year at home, but that still is not the goal that we seek, which is to be able to have 2 years at home before going over.

Then some of the units that are currently in Iraq will be extended on the ground for 3 to 4 months to ensure that this 20,000 stays at the level it needs to. That is Iraq.

In Afghanistan, the pipeline is fine, sir, and we have about 22,500 troops in Afghanistan right now. We will be able to maintain that.

Most important for the American people and for anybody who is a potential enemy of ours out there, we have 2.4 million American servicemembers who are Active, Guard, and Reserve. We have about 200,000 plus of those currently involved in this operation in the Gulf region. We have the enormous might of our Navy and our Air Force available. We can handle anybody out there who might make the mistake of miscalculating our strength.

It will not be as precise as we would like, nor will it be on the time lines that we would prefer, because we would then, while engaged in one fight, have to reallocate resources and remobilize the Guard and Reserve and the like. But there would be no doubt in anybody's mind in this country or anyplace else that, if you challenge the United States, we can handle it.

Senator BILL NELSON. You are making the assumption that 22,000 troops are enough in Afghanistan?

General PACE. No sir, I am not. If we need to plus-up in Afghanistan, sir, we can. What I am saying is we still have 2 million plus Americans in uniform and in the Guard and Reserve available to do this Nation's duty, and they can do it and our enemies should know that.

Secretary GATES. Senator, I might just mention that I am going back out to the region myself in a few days. I am starting in Afghanistan and one of the things that I am focused on particularly is what it will take to reverse the trend line in Afghanistan and to strengthen the Karzai government. We must not let this one slip out of our attention and, where we have had a victory, put it at risk.

Senator BILL NELSON. Yes, Mr. Secretary.

Both of you or one of you, please share with the committee: When we embed our troops in Baghdad, in the midst of all that sectarian violence, how are we going to prevent our troops from being sitting ducks?

General PACE. Sir, thank you, thank you for that concern. You are absolutely right to ask that question. One of the reasons that the size of the teams is going to be doubled or tripled is because we are now going to take them from a unit that is about 500 troops, a battalion-sized unit, and not only increase the size there, but also go down to the company size levels of about 100 to 150 troops.

We want to make sure that when our soldiers and marines go forward with these units that they have enough of our own riflemen with them to make sure that they will be protected close in. That is part of the doubling and tripling of the size of the units to ensure that we can self-protect. In addition to that then are the quick reaction forces, which are a part of what the battalions married or partnered with those Iraqi brigades are all about. They will not only be able to respond to activity across the spectrum, but specifically be there to come quickly to the aid of the U.S. embeds. So this has been thought through very carefully, sir, with regard to protecting our guys and gals, and, in fact, I think one of the very bright spots is that all of our teams that have been working with

Iraqi units in the past have been well-protected by the Iraqi units with whom they are embedded.

Senator BILL NELSON. Mr. Secretary, let me just ask it. Does General Abizaid support the President's plan?

Secretary GATES. Yes, sir, he does. But let me ask General Pace because he has talked to General Abizaid directly about this.

General PACE. The short answer is yes, sir. The longer answer is that all of us in uniform have been looking at this saying: Do not just plus up and have X number of U.S. Armed Forces doing what Y number have been doing in the past. Do not just change the number of troops on the ground. That will not satisfy the problem. Eventually, the Iraqis must take this on, and to do that we must have a changed political environment and we must have a changed economic environment.

If the political environment and the economic environment can be supported by an increase in troops, then we are for it. So the quotations of both General Abizaid, General Casey, and myself, that we have made publicly about "just do not add troops" are all true, but we have also said given a specific mission and specific time, we should consider it. As we have looked at the prime minister's initiative and we looked at his troops' capacity to do it, we are convinced that this plus-up, which has been requested by both General Casey and General Abizaid in addition to their subordinate commanders, that this increase in troops does make sense.

Senator BILL NELSON. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Nelson.

Senator Ensign.

Senator ENSIGN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

All of us have different opinions of whether this is going to work or not and I do not think anybody really knows. I think all Americans should be praying that it works because it is critical that we have success in Iraq. I agree with all of those statements, and to pull out would be a monumental mistake for the United States.

I want to address some of the tactics on going in though. This is much more urban warfare, any time you are in Baghdad, door to door, probably the most dangerous kind of fighting for the troops on the ground that there is. In the past, some have accused us of not giving all the tools necessary over in Iraq.

So I want to start with you, General Pace. It would seem to me that we should be giving our forces all of the tools necessary to minimize American casualties and to minimize civilian casualties. Those are two paramount things that I know our military is about. If you were a sergeant on the ground over there, the idea of a riot control agent, tear gas—not pepper spray, but tear gas—is that something, if you were a sergeant leading some troops in urban warfare, going door to door, and you are approaching, you do not know whether they have civilians, possibly civilians, maybe they have captured an American in there and there are hostiles in there, is tear gas something that would help you from a tactical standpoint?

General PACE. Sir, I need to give you a very precise answer because there are treaties to which the U.S. Government is a signatory that forbid us from using that kind of tear gas for anything other than defensive reasons when we are trying to break up a

crowd that includes women and children and the like. So we do not teach that technique because it is illegal internationally and we have signed up to that treaty.

Because we do not have that, we do have stun grenades and we do have smoke grenades. We do have the kinds of things that help divert the enemy's attention as we clear. We are very good at clearing. What we need are the additional troops to be able to hold and build.

But I want to be precise in my answer because it is not legal for us to proceed along that line.

Senator ENSIGN. There is some disagreement on the situation that I just described, when you are in a situation where there were major military activities as we had seen, we took over, we went in, and now we are more of, whether you call it an occupying force, trying to keep the peace, whether that is wartime or peacetime, certainly there are wartime types of activities. But I have described a type of activity where there are potentially women, in many cases there are women and children, similar to in a crowd situation. You are trying to protect civilians in a defensive posture. You are not just trying to get the bad guys, which you are in, in a crowded situation like that, but you are trying to protect women and children.

Secretary Rumsfeld testified that he felt like he was in a straightjacket. I have talked to many troops on the ground and different lawyers, some lawyers, mostly at the State Department, who would disagree with the characterization that I have made.

But it would seem common sense that the Chemical Weapons Treaty that we have signed on to would at least not be violated, the spirit would not be violated, when you are trying to save innocent lives. It also has a nice side effect that it decreases our casualties.

General PACE. Yes, sir. The bottom line, sir, is if it is offensive it is illegal.

Senator ENSIGN. I agree with that. Clearly, I have not described an offensive situation.

General PACE. If it is defensive, it is legal. But we need to be very careful not to leave Private First Class Pace on the battlefield having to make the decision in his or her mind whether or not this is a defensive event. We have to be very careful.

Senator ENSIGN. I agree. But what if we are not even training them to make those decisions and we are not giving them the tool that could save lives, we are not giving them those tools to do that. You just said we are not training in those kinds of situations.

General PACE. We are not training offensively, sir. We are training defensively, but we not training offensively.

Senator ENSIGN. Has military tear gas—not pepper spray—been used anywhere in Iraq?

General PACE. Yes.

Senator ENSIGN. No, it has not; only pepper spray.

General PACE. Iraq, you said.

Senator ENSIGN. In Iraq.

General PACE. It was used in Afghanistan. Not to my knowledge in Iraq, sir.

Senator ENSIGN. From all the information that I have received, it has not. There have certainly been many situations where,

whether it is mosques with civilians or whatever it is, from a defensive situation, I just think that lawyers looking at crossing every "t" and dotting every "i" are costing civilian lives and U.S. military lives and we ought to take a hard look at this.

I just received a report back from the military on this and, frankly, I found it highly dissatisfactory. We are not doing the right things and giving all of the tools, I believe, to our men and women in uniform, especially when it comes to a situation that they are in with this, with this new change in procedures. I realize that there are some differences as far as what we are giving the rules of engagement, but it would seem to me that we need to take a hard look at that to save Americans.

I do not think the average American out there looks at this and thinks this is common sense at all.

General PACE. I appreciate your intent, sir. I will find out if it has ever been used. We do use it defensively, and I will see if there is a way that we can be more precise. But again, the bottom line is we want to make sure that our young guys and gals are, A, properly defended and, B, not put in legal jeopardy.

[The information referred to follows:]

[Deleted.]

Senator ENSIGN. Thank you. I think a lot of the other questions would be pretty redundant for me to talk about. I have some of the same opinions that those who have said that this strategy is a failed strategy need to offer alternatives and I think it is incumbent upon them to explain why that would be successful.

I have not heard anybody who has criticized this suggest something else that they think would work as well. If we do a phased withdrawal it would seem to me, because they want to put Iraqis more in charge, it would seem to me that the new change in strategy is to have the Iraqis doing more. If we are doing a phased withdrawal and they cannot handle what we are talking about handling in Baghdad, they certainly could not handle a phased withdrawal where we are actually giving them less help.

So my prayer is that this new change in strategy is going to work and I think all Americans should join in that in getting behind our troops.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Ensign.

Senator Ben Nelson.

Senator BEN NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, gentlemen, for being here. Mr. Secretary, it is always difficult and problematic to speculate on what happens and what the "or else" is if the Iraqis fail to be able to achieve the benchmarks that we are setting out. I am going to ask you something about that.

But first let me commend the administration for setting forth benchmarks and conditions for staying. You will have to help me understand whether they are conditions for staying or whether they are just conditions that the government must meet, because for 2 years I have been saying that, as opposed to dates for withdrawing, we ought to be establishing what it would require of the Iraqis so that we can break the cycle of dependence. What would

be the benchmarks or the expectations we have for them to be able to fulfill their duties to take on the responsibility?

But the question is, what is the price if the Iraqis fail? What is the price if Prime Minister Maliki cannot meet the three things that you talked about? I have identified those three things as the essential benchmarks. What does happen? Is it just a reassessment of our position? Does it show that they cannot meet what we want them to do and that they are not capable of taking on the responsibility themselves?

Secretary GATES. I think the honest answer to your question, Senator, is that if they do not perform, if they do not fulfill the commitments that they have made, when I say we will have to reevaluate the strategy, we have to evaluate where we are in the context of our national interest in Iraq and whether there are other strategies that protect our national interest, but may have implications for other aspects of Iraqi society.

Do we focus just on al Qaeda and on the borders and on the insurgency and let the house burn down in Baghdad? I asked General Pace the other day, I said, "What happens if we are hosing down the outsides of the house while the inside is burning down, and obviously the structure cannot stand?"

So the honest answer is—and yesterday marked the anniversary of my third week on the job—that I do not know what the consequences are. What I do know is that we would have to go, we would have to reopen this issue of strategy and we would have to look at what some of the other alternatives are that do not seem very attractive right now.

Senator BEN NELSON. What does Prime Minister Maliki believe the consequences to be if he fails to deliver?

Secretary GATES. I think the first consequence that he has to face is the possibility that he will lose his job. There is some sense—and perhaps part of a growing of the Iraqi political culture—that there are beginning to be some people around that may say, I can do better than he is doing in terms of making progress. So the first question would be if his strategy, if his initiative, if you will, that he brought to President Bush in Amman fails, then he has to perhaps face some domestic political consequences for that.

I go back to what I said to Senator Collins. I think the thing that has struck me at least in all of this is the Prime Minister's sense that his government has to take control of this situation. I was not here for the earlier conversations and promises that Maliki has made, but my impression is that this is different on his part and that he has an understanding that the country is on the verge of coming apart if he does not get control of this.

Senator BEN NELSON. But these are not conditions for staying in Iraq. These are conditions perhaps for his keeping his job or for our not reevaluating our next strategic position. Are there any real conditions for staying in Iraq?

Secretary GATES. As I indicated, I think if the strategy does not work, and I think we have to focus on making it work and we will certainly do our part and try to make sure that the other two legs of this stool are on the ground as well, but if it does not work, then I think we have to evaluate, as I said, our national interest.

If we talk about the consequences of American failure and defeat in Iraq, then saying if you do not do this we will leave and we will leave now, does not strike me as being in the national interest of the United States. So the question will be what different kind of strategy might we be able to come up with that would have some prospect of avoiding a failure or a defeat in Iraq.

Senator BEN NELSON. Would that be part of the idea of a new way forward? I have been concerned about that the American people want a change in direction in Iraq, not a change in slogans. Can we assure the American people that this plan is a new direction in Iraq, a new way forward?

Secretary GATES. I think it is in the sense that it represents a change. In my prepared remarks I called it a pivot point, because it puts the primary responsibility for this operation on the Iraqis, not on the Americans.

Senator BEN NELSON. I have considerable concerns about whether or not the Prime Minister can achieve the benchmarks. But I salute the idea that benchmarks have been established, because at least now we have some way of evaluating success or failure, at least with respect to a major mission. In the past I think it has been very difficult for the American people and maybe for Congress and perhaps for the administration to even measure success, because at one point you had one member of the administration saying we are winning and a member from the same party, a Member of our Senate, saying we are losing. They cannot both be right about the same set of circumstances, the same set of facts, at the same time if those are their conclusions. So I salute that.

On a scale of 1 to 10—this is a tough question—but on a scale of 1 to 10, what do you think the chances are that the Iraqi military under the Prime Minister, in going into Sadr City will take on Muqtada al-Sadr and, if necessary, take out al-Sadr? General? You do not have to do it on a scale of 1 to 10, because that is an unfair point. But you get what I am really trying to go to.

General PACE. I got the question and it is a fair question, sir. I think that whatever that number is, is going to increase as the operations in Baghdad take place, starting in the mixed neighborhoods, showing balance in the mixed neighborhoods, and then doing the Sunni and Shia neighborhoods, showing in the initial neighborhoods that not only will there be clearing operations, but that there are economic and day-to-day living benefits quickly; as that unfolds, that will strengthen not only the desire of the Iraqis to have their armed forces come to their neighborhoods, but also I think make the Iraqi army and the Iraqi police feel good about what they are doing and therefore collectively have a better focus on what needs to be done.

But clearly, you cannot do this through Baghdad except one or two areas. It has to be done across Baghdad. It has to be done without regard to Sunni, Shia, and mixed neighborhoods. It has to be rule of law applied evenly across the board.

Senator BEN NELSON. I hope and pray that you are right, General, and I hope and pray that the mission works. I must admit I have serious reservations. I do not see how it is all going to happen. But at some point for future debate, I would like to ask the question how you can have a democracy with a military full of mili-

tias and a police force that does not necessarily respond to the government. We will save that discussion for another day.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Nelson.

Senator Chambliss.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, gentlemen, as always for your great service to our country, and particularly to you, Secretary Gates, for leaving a very comfortable position in Aggieland and coming back into public service to all the discomforts that we have at the Pentagon these days. Certainly the position that you have accepted is one in which your leadership is required to help solve the most difficult and challenging issue that exist in the world today. So to both of you, thank you.

Mr. Secretary, I want to start out by commending you for your decision relative to the troop increase. Those of us who have served both on this side of the Capitol as well as on the other side have been advocating a force structure increase for several years now. I am pleased to see that you not only have come to us and said you are going to ask for that increase, but the size of it I think is also critically important.

I received an email yesterday from a young Army captain, a member of the 3rd Infantry Division, who is going to be leaving in March for his third tour of duty in Iraq. He is accepting that, but he said in his email that he will be going out a month early to NTC, of course, to get trained up. He has been married for 3½ years and in that 3½ years he has spent 11 months with his bride. That is the kind of toll that we are seeing on our Active-Duty Force structure, and the decision that you have made is not only going to help us in the short-term, but in the long-term, because I worry about the quality of our military as we progress beyond this particular conflict, and that should not be an issue. I think your decision goes a long way toward ensuring that that will not be an issue.

I have been very vocal in saying that I do support an increase in the troop strength that we send to Iraq, provided those troops are given a specific mission and that once that mission is accomplished, those troops are redeployed. I think you probably answered part of this in response to Senator Reed's inquiries, but I would like you to talk a little more about that, Mr. Secretary, and maybe you too, General Pace.

Are these troops going to have a specific mission, and once that missions is accomplished what is going to happen to those troops?

General PACE. Sir, they will have a specific mission. The specific mission will be to provide assistance to the Iraqi army in providing security to the people in Baghdad and increase the number of embeds within the Iraqi armed forces to help them provide fire support and the like, so that we can get this job done and have sufficient Iraq forces in the hold and build phases.

When that is done, these troops, if they have all gotten there or not, will then be able to start coming home. The desire is to be able to go from the 15 brigades we have now up to perhaps as many as 20, but then come back down below 15, because right now we have 7 of our 15 brigades allocated to the Baghdad region, 6 that are in or around the city and one that is in mobile Reserve. With

Baghdad under Iraqi control, we will be able to bring home some of those brigades as well.

But there is no guarantee, sir. I know you know this. There is no guarantee. But given the plan that is there and most importantly again the political and economic changes, the military plan can be successful.

Senator CHAMBLISS. The issue of Maliki and whether or not he is capable of providing the kind of leadership that is going to allow us to succeed from a government stability standpoint is certainly an issue that has been discussed. Mr. Secretary, you have expressed some reservations. I have been to Iraq four times and I have visited with the leadership. I have a concern over that issue also.

But is it not a fact, Mr. Secretary, that part of the plan which the President has implemented includes ideas, issues, and a plan that came forward from Mr. Maliki to the President in recent discussions between the two men?

Secretary GATES. Yes, sir, that is true.

Senator CHAMBLISS. So this is not something where we are saying to the Iraqi government, this is what you shall do or we will do something different. This is a joint decision that has been made by the Iraqi government and the leadership of the United States to develop a plan that is going to give us what we think to be the best results we can achieve, given the current situation?

Secretary GATES. Yes, sir.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Having been to Iraq and been on the ground and seen General David Petraeus operate with respect to the training of the military and the security police over there, I will have to tell both of you, you have absolutely made the best choice of a leader to go on the ground in Iraq that you could possibly make. I have been extremely impressed with him both as an individual and, in this case, most significantly as a soldier.

But one of the things that I have heard from General Petraeus as well as others who have succeeded him there—General Dempsey and other leaders on the ground—is that there is a significant difference in the quality of the personnel and the end result of the individuals who emerge from training with the Iraqi military versus training in the security police. The military forces seem to be better able to do the job once they receive that training than the security police, and in fact the security police, as we know, have been infiltrated by the enemy. There is a lot of corruption going on there and we have seen loss of lives occur in some instances because of failures internally within the security police.

Now, there is one thing the President said the other night that I think is critically important, and it was glazed over by the press. I have also heard this from other folks inside the White House and I would like you to comment on it. It is the fact that, as a part of this new strategy, we are going to move military personnel into police units or at least into police stations where they are going to be headquartered in some instances. So they will be side by side with the security police, and hopefully they will be able to do a better job of monitoring what is going on and making sure that their mission is carried out.

Would you comment on that, please?

General PACE. Sir, first of all, you are absolutely right, there is a difference in quality today between the army and the police. We picked up the responsibility for the police just over a year ago, October 2005, and have revamped their training program. We have had to take brigades at a time off line, re-vet the individuals, the Iraqis fire those who have not been performing, then we reform the units, retrain them, and put them back into action. So we are behind our training program with the army in our training program with the police.

In Baghdad, at the police station hubs in each of the districts there will be a combination of Iraqi army, Iraqi police, and U.S. forces, so it will not be an occasion where it is solely police and U.S. forces as designed right now.

Does that answer your question, sir?

Senator CHAMBLISS. Yes, sir, it does.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Chambliss.

Senator Pryor.

Senator PRYOR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Pace, let me just follow up on one of Senator Chambliss' questions there. He talked about a specific mission and if we are going to have more troops they need to have a very specific mission. Just to make sure I understand this, on this specific mission where we are in the neighborhoods of Baghdad, are we kicking in the doors or are the Iraqis kicking in the doors?

General PACE. Sir, the Iraqis are going to be knocking on the doors. If they have to kick in, they will, but you do not gain favor by doing that. Preferably, they will be knocking on the doors, finding out who is in that house, taking census, like they have done in places like Fallujah.

A lot of the lessons we learned in Fallujah are being applied in Baghdad. But it is an Iraqi lead. That is what happened the other day on the Haifa Street action in Baghdad. The Iraqis were in the lead. They were doing their patrolling and they came under fire, and we were able to support them with our fire support. So that is how it is designed, sir.

Senator PRYOR. So the design is to allow the Iraqis to take the lead immediately?

General PACE. The design is for the Iraqis to take the lead, yes, sir, and for us to back them up.

Senator PRYOR. Okay.

Secretary Gates, the President's and the administration's message this week includes this concept that the Iraqis need to take responsibility, that we need to turn more and more control over to them, that there is a need for a real commitment by the Iraqi leadership on this. In fact, a few moments ago when Senator Chambliss was asking questions he used the term "joint decision" between Prime Minister Maliki and the U.S. Government, and you agreed that this plan is a joint decision.

However, in reading some news accounts—and I will quote one, which happens to be from the New York Times. It says: "Iraq's Shiite-led government offered only a grudging endorsement on Thursday of President Bush's proposal to deploy more than 20,000 additional troops in an effort to curb sectarian violence and regain con-

trol of Baghdad. The tepid response immediately raised questions about whether the government would make a good faith effort to prosecute the new war plan."

There seems to be a huge disconnect here. You are here before the committee today saying that the Iraqi leadership is helping design this and is part and parcel of the planning here, whereas the press report and the interpretation on the ground there in Baghdad is that it is a grudging endorsement and a tepid response. Can you explain that?

Secretary GATES. Sure, Senator Pryor. I think what lies behind this is that Prime Minister Maliki from the very beginning of this has wanted to take charge of the security situation in Baghdad. As he said to me when I visited before Christmas, "how can you hold me responsible for the security when I do not have authority over my own forces?" Part of the process of giving him that authority is the transfer of operational authority over their divisions, and by March they will have operational control over all but one.

Senator PRYOR. Not to interrupt, but what would be grudging there? What would be tepid there? Is it that he does not like the timetable you are on?

Secretary GATES. Let me develop it. I think that his plan as he conceived it in fact was for all Iraqis to do it, and I think that what happened was that his military and security planners sitting down with General Casey and our military planners came to realize that in a practical way in terms of the opportunity for success they really did need some additional U.S. support.

So to the degree that the Iraqi government is grudging in this, I think it is perhaps—and I am speculating, frankly—that they had hoped to do it themselves, and probably grudgingly came to the conclusion that they could not do it themselves based on the advice of their own security and military leaders. That developed in the course of filling in the gaps in the plan with our military planners.

Senator PRYOR. Let me ask it this way: is it your opinion today that the Iraqi leadership is 100 percent on board with this plan?

Secretary GATES. Yes, sir, it is. Not only has the President talked to Prime Minister Maliki, President Talabani, who is a Kurd, Vice President Hashemi, who is a Sunni, and with Mr. Hakim, who is one of the key Shia power brokers. So the President, the Ambassador, and General Casey I think have talked to all of the key players in the Iraqi government on this, and they all support the commitments that have been made to President Bush.

Senator PRYOR. Do you agree with that, General Pace, that the Iraqi leadership is 100 percent on board?

General PACE. I believe the Iraqi leadership is saying they are 100 percent on board. I believe that the benchmarks in this that they should have attained by now on the military side have each been attained. But the success of this operation is going to be based on their delivering on what they have said they will deliver. So they are saying 100 percent. So far they have delivered 100 percent of what is due. But there is more to come and we need to continue to ensure that we focus on all three parts of this.

Secretary GATES. I think General Pace phrased it probably better than I did. I agree with what he said.

Senator PRYOR. So, General Pace, in other words, if this is to succeed they have to do their part, and if they do not do their part it will not succeed; is that fair to say?

General PACE. That is correct. Yes, sir.

Senator PRYOR. Do you agree with that, Mr. Secretary?

Secretary GATES. Absolutely.

Senator PRYOR. So I guess if the Iraqi government does not support the surge, there is no point in doing it; is that fair to say?

General PACE. But they say they do.

Senator PRYOR. I understand they say they do. But if they do not, if they do not put their actions behind their words, is there any point in us doing this surge?

General PACE. Sir, they must put their actions behind their words. Otherwise this plan will not work and therefore, as the Secretary has pointed out, our flow of forces will allow us to modify what we do next.

Senator PRYOR. Thank you.

Now, Secretary Gates, I am running short on time here, but let me ask you about your opening statement. You listed some things that you want to do with the Reserve and National Guard, and, not to belabor this, but currently a Guard unit can be mobilized for 12 to 24 months, and a lot of them are about 18 months. They do their training for maybe 6 months—these are rough numbers—and they get deployed to Iraq for 12 months. Again, those are rough and I know that changes from unit to unit.

But you are going to more of a 12-month mobilization with a 5-year demobilization period between the mobilizations; is that right?

Secretary GATES. That is our intent.

Senator PRYOR. If you are going to a 12-month mobilization, to me it seems that they have to do their training and be very, very prepared and ready to go when they are activated, when they are mobilized. In other words, they need the equipment and the resources to do that training in the interim period. I hear from Guard units all over Arkansas and all over the country that they do not have the equipment.

So what I want to hear from you is the second part of your plan or the unspoken part of your plan from your statement today; what is the plan to provide our National Guard with the equipment that they are critically short of today?

Secretary GATES. Let me give you a short answer and then ask General Pace to elaborate. You will see in the fiscal year 2007 supplemental and in the fiscal year 2007 budget additional funds for reset and substantial funds. You have already given us substantial funds. Our depots are now running at capacity. Several of them are in multiple shifts, and there is a lot going on there.

We understand the nature of the problem. You clearly have understood it and have helped us address it. So the idea is to use the resources that we have been given to try and make sure that the Guard has the equipment that they need to be trained, because you have it exactly right, they have to be ready to go when they go.

General?

General PACE. Sir, your analysis is exactly right, with regard to the 1 year on and 5 years off, so to speak. That is when you have that kind of predictability of when you are going to be coming into

the year when, if needed, you will deploy, you can use the preceding years for your Active Duty to train up to that. It is similar to what we do with our Navy and our Marine Corps right now. They are on a cycle where when you become a battalion commander you know 2 years in advance, absent some kind of a national emergency, what you are going to do, when you are going to do it, and you are able to train up to that.

This will give predictability to our Guard and Reserve Forces as far as when they will be susceptible for employment from the United States, if needed, and it will give them the time before that then to use to get ready. That will not completely compress it, but it will take a 6-month train-up maybe down to 2 or 3, so that we can get a deployment of 8 or 9 months, with the final train-up, deploy, come back, demobilize, and keep it inside of a 1-year window.

Senator PRYOR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you so much, Senator Pryor.

Senator Graham.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First, I would like to compliment you, Mr. Chairman, for this hearing. I think it has served the country well. To my colleagues, you have asked very hard, probing, thoughtful questions that need to be asked and answered. To our witnesses, you have done an outstanding job, I think, of being candid and realistic. Mr. Chairman, you set the tone in your opening statement.

When it comes time to figure out what the Iraqis may or may not do, if they are struggling, as we are, to find a consensus among themselves as we are struggling, my prayers are with them.

Prime Minister Maliki is a suspect person in terms of will in this country. I think he has earned that suspicion. But I would like to say something on his behalf and all those who are participating in an infant democracy in Iraq. I realize that you are risking your lives literally. We may be risking our reelections, but probably the worst thing that will happen to any of us if we are wrong on Iraq is that we go on and enjoy life outside of government.

If you want to participate in government in Iraq—and I think we all understand this—as a judge, as a politician, as a policeman, as an army officer, there are a lot of forces who wish to kill you and your family. I am just glad the French did not have such a pessimistic view of us when they came to our aid in the Revolution. History has borne out that they were right. Sometimes they may not believe that for this moment, but our problems with France are at least between two democracies.

One person that has not been talked about much today is Zarqawi, and thank God that he is gone. But General Pace, is it fair to say that the doctrine of Zarqawi, the al Qaeda leader in Iraq, was to try to create sectarian warfare, and that he had a global view of Iraq, that Zarqawi did not have a provincial view of Iraq, that Zarqawi and his allies in the al Qaeda movement understand that a success in Iraq is a mighty blow to their overall world agenda, and that he basically struck political gold when he bombed the Golden Mosque; is that correct?

General PACE. I believe that is fair to say, yes, sir.

Senator GRAHAM. So, to my colleagues who disagree with where I come out, I view Iraq as part of a global struggle. We know

Zarqawi viewed it as part of a global struggle. There is one thing I hope we can agree upon: that success in Iraq will not be contained to Iraq. To our Syrian and Iranian neighbors of Iraq, I think it is their worst nightmare, gentlemen, for a representative democracy to emerge on their border. No matter how much you want to talk to Syria and Iran about managing the situation in Iraq, they will never come on board with the idea that the Iraqi people can vote for their leaders and tolerate religious differences because it would be a death blow to the regimes that exist in Syria and Iran. So I know why Iran is trying to destabilize Iraq. It is their worst fear, for us to be successful and pull off a functioning democracy on their border.

Now, there are some disturbing things that have come out of this hearing for me in terms of the global struggle we face. Am I wrong to assume that your testimony indicates that the Iranian and Syrian governments are providing sanctuaries for forces who are trying to kill our troops in Iraq?

General PACE. We know that we have had foreign fighters come through Syria. I do not know the complicity of the government, but we do know that foreign fighters travel through Syria. We do know that Iranian-made and supplied weapons are on the streets of Baghdad killing our troops.

Senator GRAHAM. I would like to be on record for my Senate colleagues to hear this from me: if in fact the Syrian and Iranian governments are complicit with organizations and groups that are trying to kill American troops, I hope we will have the resolve in a bipartisan fashion to put them on notice that this will be unacceptable and all options are on the table when it comes to defending Americans who are doing the jobs assigned. Do you agree with that, Secretary Gates?

Secretary GATES. Yes, sir.

Senator GRAHAM. It is in my opinion, ladies and gentlemen, part of the overall war on terror, not some side venture.

Eighty percent of the casualties being suffered now, General Pace, are by IED explosions; is that correct?

General PACE. Between 70 and 80 percent, yes, sir.

Senator GRAHAM. This is one sign of success in this new strategy that I would suggest to you should be a benchmark. IEDs are being made somewhere throughout the country, and I would imagine that the neighbors around the bomb-making plants are probably afraid to turn them in because there is no law and order; is that correct?

General PACE. That is probably correct, sir.

Senator GRAHAM. If there was somebody down the street making IEDs and you were a moderate, on the fence Iraqi, would you feel secure enough to go to the police and turn them in without reprisal coming your way?

General PACE. In some neighborhoods yes, but not in Baghdad.

Senator GRAHAM. Okay. One of the reasons people are making IEDs is they are being paid to do so; is that correct?

General PACE. That is one. Yes, sir.

Senator GRAHAM. So if we can have economic progress, taking off the economic incentive to engage in IED bomb-making, that would be helpful to our troops, is that correct?

General PACE. I believe it would be very helpful, sir.

Senator GRAHAM. Now, if we had a rule of law where the people would not need to take the $500 to make a bomb to kill Americans, but if the person down the street got caught and went to jail for 30 years, that might be another way to deter IED bomb blasts, is that correct?

General PACE. That is correct, sir.

Senator GRAHAM. These are two strategies apart from military force.

General PACE. They are, sir.

Senator GRAHAM. The third part is that we are going to put pressure on the IED bomb-makers to always be on the run and not be secure through military involvement; is that correct?

General PACE. Yes, sir.

Senator GRAHAM. Now, when it comes to troops, Senator Pryor did a very good job and I think Senator Reed did a very good job of trying to explain what levels we need. A million troops will not matter if the Iraqis do not change themselves, is that correct, Secretary Gates?

Secretary GATES. I agree with that.

Senator GRAHAM. Is that correct, General Pace?

General PACE. It would have short-term impact, but not long-term success, sir.

Senator GRAHAM. There have been so many statements made in the last couple of days about this new strategy. One came from the House of Representatives that said this is the craziest, dumbest plan I have ever seen or heard of in my life. We have the right to say almost anything in this country, but I hope we understand that as Members of Congress we have some responsibilities. Criticism and skepticism are the heart and soul of a democracy, but our statements are being viewed not just by the Iraqi government, but those who wish us harm throughout the world.

To my colleagues, I would ask, at least in the short-term here, that we measure our words, that we not have a political stampede to declare the war lost when it is not yet lost, or to embrace strategies that would lead to defeat, because I do believe this is part of the overall war on terror.

General Petraeus has not yet had a chance to rebut the idea this is the craziest, dumbest plan I have ever seen or heard in my life. I would just ask every Member of the Senate, no matter how much you dislike what we are about to do or disagree with what we are about to do from a Commander in Chief perspective, that you allow General Petraeus to come up here and explain his plan.

Secretary Gates, you sit at the top of our military in terms of civilian leadership. You have been asked this question, but I am going to ask you very directly: Are we sending additional troops for a lost cause?

Secretary GATES. Absolutely not.

Senator GRAHAM. General Pace, are we sending brave young Americans, 21,500 plus, for a lost cause?

General PACE. Absolutely not, sir. But we must have the entire weight of all three prongs of that stool present to make sure that these troops' mission is properly supported.

Senator GRAHAM. I got your message.

I am not going to ask you to rate from 1 to 10, but I would like you both to comment again. Whatever doubts we have about the right strategy to lead to victory in Iraq, are there any doubts in either of your minds about the consequences of failure in terms of our long-term national interest? What would they be?

Secretary GATES. There is no doubt in my mind that a failure, which I regard as our leaving Iraq in chaos or an Iraq that has a government that is supportive of terror, would have enormous impact for the region and for us for a long time to come.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. I appreciate it.

One last question. I know my time has expired. To General Pace—and this is very important to me—reenlistment rates are high among those who have served in Iraq, is that correct?

General PACE. They are, sir.

Senator GRAHAM. Why is that so?

General PACE. I think several reasons. First of all, most fundamentally, they believe in the mission they have been given. Second and also fundamentally, they believe that the American people support them in their mission and support them as military.

Senator GRAHAM. Do they believe their mission is directly related to the security of their own children and grandchildren?

General PACE. Absolutely, sir.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you very much.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Graham.

Senator Webb, Senator Martinez just wants to ask consent to put his statement in the record, so we will recognize him just for that purpose.

Senator MARTINEZ. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. I would appreciate the opportunity to put a statement in the record and just take this moment to thank the chairman for this very important hearing and let you know how delighted I am to be on the committee and thank the witnesses for their patience and their very valuable testimony.

[The prepared statement of Senator Martinez follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY SENATOR MEL MARTINEZ

Chairman Levin, Senator McCain, I am honored to have the opportunity to serve on this great committee. Thank you for your leadership and for holding this important hearing to discuss a new U.S. strategic approach to the situation in Iraq.

Secretary Gates, General Pace, thank you for taking the time to join us today.

Earlier this week President Bush articulated to our fellow citizens a change of course for our strategy in the Iraqi theater of this current war. 1 think we are all in agreement that the current strategy has not been successful, and I think that the components laid out by President Bush earlier this week represents a reasonable chance for success in the current environment.

This is not to say that the road ahead will not be difficult. Or that any one solution is a silver bullet solution. But there is no alternative but success. We need to give this a chance.

Not since World War II has our Nation had so much at stake. It is vital that as elected leaders we outline what is at stake in this current war and what it means to our national security.

It is important to remember that Iraq is only part of a much broader war against radical Muslim fundamentalists that is ongoing in Afghanistan, the Philippines, Indonesia, the Horn of Africa, Iraq, and elsewhere. This current struggle and the wider war that is being waged against us and other freedom-loving countries is an ideological struggle about the future of our world—the future of freedom.

I am concerned about the degree to which this war and many of the solutions offered to current difficulties, has become politicized. I know that my colleagues on

both sides of the aisle share my grave concerns about the current situation in Iraq, but once again, I can't stress again how important it is to work together.

The damage to our reputation, our clout, and our efforts at curbing terrorist activity would be disastrous if we cannot find a way to succeed.

I had the good fortune to be able to visit our troops in Iraq recently, many of whom happen to live or train in my State of Florida. I was very glad to see that morale was high, and belief in the mission at hand was strong. I can't say enough about the caliber of young men and women serving in our military at such sacrifice to their family and loved ones.

What also I took away from my trip was the strong belief that the Iraqi government really needed to step up to the plate and start taking some serious measures to secure and govern their country.

I am encouraged that a strong component of the comprehensive strategy laid out by President Bush requires the Iraqi government to take the lead role in the stability and defense of their own country and by putting a serious financial commitment into reconstruction and job creation in Iraq, the Iraqi government has made the type of commitment that must occur if this plan is to succeed. We must give it a chance.

The stabilization of Iraq is paramount. Only after security has been established can reconstruction efforts and the training of Iraqi security forces be expedited. I am hopeful that the Iraqis will do their part—first and foremost—to reconcile the profound sectarian divisions that exist in Iraq. This is the central obstacle to peace, stability, and development in the country. The Iraqi government must also combat the complex sectarian violence, the internal insurgency, and the threat of al Qaeda elements in Iraq.

The coalition can help—but Iraqis themselves—and not the coalition—must work to strengthen institutions, eliminate corruption, and rehabilitate the political and economic system so that Iraqi citizens have a chance at peace.

The Iraqi government is at a key crossroads and they must meet this challenge. I see increasing indications that they know this and I am hopeful that together we can make real progress that the American people are demanding of our sacrifice.

I join my colleagues in thanking you Secretary Gates and General Pace for your service and for your testimony here. General Pace, I want to thank you for the tremendous job you have done throughout this war—first as Vice Chairman and now as Chairman for the last 16 months. Secretary Gates, thank you for accepting this most challenging duty at a truly profound moment in our history.

I would like to make a brief comment and ask two questions, one regarding the diplomacy phase of the strategy—and one on the enhancements to the program of training Iraqi security forces.

First I want to make a comment about the criticism I have heard today of the so-called, "surge strategy." I don't think it is appropriate to frame this discussion around the pros or cons of the troop increase.

While I understand that adding to the number of U.S. troops in Iraq is of concern to all of us, it is inappropriate to condemn the "surge strategy" out of context of a discussion of the larger strategy.

The components of U.S. strategy are: the ends (goals), ways (concepts of employing resources), and means (resources).

The troop increase that the President approved is not the strategy; rather it is one component of the "means" being employed in the strategy.

Even the bipartisan Iraq Study Group (ISG) allowed for a possibility that a surge might be an appropriate component of a new Iraq strategy.

Despite rejecting a substantial increase in troop levels (100,000–200,000), the ISG report said that it ". . . could support . . . a short-term redeployment or surge of American combat forces to stabilize Baghdad or speed up the training and equipping mission . . . ." The adding (or subtracting) of this level of troops (20,000–30,000) does not amount to the change in the strategy in itself.

The current strategy has a full range of political, economic, and security components and it is sound. We should allow the tactical and operational level commanders in Iraq the flexibility that this increase allows—and not oppose the strategy simply because it includes a measured troop increase.

I think it is extremely important that this panel, the Senate, and this Congress dutifully fulfill their oversight responsibilities—and I think we are doing that. I also think that we need to be careful not to undermine the Nation's chance of success with divisive rhetoric or legislative actions that seek to constrain the Commander in Chief.

I also hope that, after we perform an appropriate level of oversight, we—as a Congress—can come together in a bipartisan consensus behind the new strategy (even

though there may be parts of it some do not like) to send a signal of resolve to our friends and enemies.

But more importantly, that consensus is important for our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines to see.

Our service men and women and their families need to know that they have the full support of this Congress and the American people.

In conclusion, Secretary Gates and General Pace: much is at stake and the American people are looking to us for answers. I very much appreciate your thoughts on the best way forward in Iraq and how it will involve the brave men and women of our Armed Forces. I pledge to work with you and with my colleagues to provide every resource necessary to ensure victory.

Chairman LEVIN. We are grateful to have you on the committee and we are sorry that we could not get to you in terms of your schedule.

Senator MARTINEZ. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Senator Webb.

Senator WEBB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I have a statement and some questions I may not be able to ask and I would like to insert them for the record for a written response at a later time.

[The prepared statement of Senator Webb follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY SENATOR JIM WEBB

I raised early warnings regarding this administration's decision to invade Iraq. Like many people with strong national security backgrounds, I believed this action following September 11 ran counter to our Nation's long-term security interests and the stability of the region. Very little has happened since 2003 that was not both predictable and predicted.

The committee's hearings provide a critical opportunity to forge a new strategic direction for Iraq and the entire region. This change in direction is long overdue. I hope all Americans will eventually be able to rally behind a new plan for Iraq if the President honors his earlier commitment to accommodate improvements recommended by Congress.

The President's plan for a new course in Iraq runs contrary to the well-established recommendations of the Nation's top military leaders. The plan continues a pattern of seeking to resolve Iraq's security primarily from the inside out rather than from the outside in. By that I mean the United States must create a regional diplomatic umbrella before we can guarantee the long-term security and stability of Iraq. The President's plan falls well short of what is needed to achieve the necessary international diplomatic outcome. Its primary emphasis is tactical.

I recognize that Iraq faces severe and growing economic hardship as the result of its increasing spiral of violence, but I believe that providing an additional $1 billion in U.S. funding for reconstruction projects would only worsen the rampant waste and corruption as a result of the lack of effective oversight and control of similar billions in funding over the past 4 years. The administration's intention to increase economic aid to Iraq is especially troublesome when we still have victims in critical need of assistance more than a year after Hurricane Katrina's devastation along our Gulf Coast.

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, including many hundreds of servicemembers from the Commonwealth of Virginia who have been killed or wounded. The costs 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 from 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 forever. 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 questions of the moment are how long the United States should be expected to keep our forces in Iraq as its government seeks to assume its own burdens? How and when will we begin to draw down 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?

This administration has never clearly affirmed that 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 need for an overarching diplomatic solution is now, more than ever, an imperative if we are to end the war.

I have said for many months that the United States should not singly focus on 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. Strong diplomatic pressure on such regimes is always preferable to policies that give them leverage as outsiders to the process. I believe that 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—still await answers to these same questions: Where do we go from here? When comes the end?

Chairman LEVIN. We would be happy to do that.

Senator WEBB. Secretary Gates, I want to add my thanks to you for coming back into public service. I had 5 years in the Pentagon, 1 year as a marine and 4 years in the executive department, and I do not think there is a harder job, certainly in the executive branch and possibly in the Government, than serving as Secretary of Defense. I look forward to working with both you and General Pace. My door is open and I hope to be able to make your task more functional, if not always more pleasant, but I am looking forward to working with both of you.

General Pace, I was not going to say this, but I want to say something, just my own little interjection here on the reenlistment rates and why people serve. I come from a family that has spent a lot of time in the military generationally and I think it is fair to say that in my experience people rarely enlist for political reasons and rarely serve for political reasons. They serve because they love their country, they serve because they have a family tradition, and they serve for camaraderie. So I do not agree with the characterization that preceded me on that in toto. There are people who are serving because of the political mission, but there are people who, perhaps even in spite of the political mission, are serving.

I also want to say something about my long-time friend Senator McCain's comments when he was talking about the consequences of pulling out of Iraq, and in your statement, Secretary Gates, you list some of these as an emboldened and strengthened Iran, a base of operations for jihadist networks in the heart of the Middle East, and undermining of the credibility of the United States. In many ways, quite frankly, those have been the results of the invasion and occupation. There is really nothing that has occurred since the invasion and occupation that was not predictable and, in fact, most

of it was predicted. It was predicted in many cases by people with long backgrounds in national security, people like General Shinseki, whose name has been before this committee many times, people like General Tony Zinni, who commanded Central Command and warned about the strategic misadventure of invading and occupying Iraq, people like General Greg Newbold, who served as the director of operations on the Joint Chiefs and whose professionalism I greatly respect, and with whom I had many conversations even before the invasion, and people like General Paul K. Van Riper, who was something of an icon to a lot of us when we were young marines, given his service in Vietnam, who later was the president of the Marine Corps University, who directed Marine Corps intelligence.

In many cases there were people who saw their military careers destroyed and who were personally demeaned by people who opposed them on the issues, including members of this administration. They are people in my judgment who will be remembered in history as having had more conscience. We all know that when you put your uniform on and you say you are going to serve your country and then you take that difficult step to speak in a way that may sometimes even be misconstrued by people serving, that you often pay a price, and I think it is important to say that.

I also would like to say that it is not really true that an American withdrawal would in and of itself be catastrophic. I think we all agree, I hope, that eventually we will withdraw. The question is the circumstances under which we will be allowed to do so. I would share with the administration the goals of an increased stability in the region, a better ability to address international terrorism, and also the ability to address our strategic interests around the world. In my view that is not particularly happening now, and we have had this whole discussion today about this new strategy and, quite frankly, I do not particularly see it as a new strategy. I do not see it as strategic at all. I see it, particularly in terms of national strategy. What I am looking at here is a tactical adjustment to a situation on the ground.

One question that I would have, Secretary Gates, particularly since you served on the ISG, is whether you would agree with the conclusion of the ISG and other people that a strong and inclusive regional diplomatic effort is really the key to eventual political stability in Iraq?

Secretary GATES. Two things, Senator. First of all, I would agree with your characterization that whether or not our withdrawal is a catastrophe will depend very much on the circumstances under which we withdraw. Our goal is in fact eventually to withdraw, and in circumstances that are the opposite of catastrophic. That will depend on the situation on the ground.

I think that a strong diplomatic initiative is very important as a part of this endeavor. I think it is not perhaps central to it, but it is important to it. It is important that I think we make a renewed effort to try and bring progress to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. There is just no question that, while the connection to what is going on in Iraq is not direct, it sets a tone and a mood in the Middle East that makes our job harder.

It is clearly important to get the Saudis more directly engaged and others in terms of trying to support this fledgling government. So I agree that diplomatic initiatives are very important.

With respect to the proposed increase in the end strengths of the Army and the Marine Corps, I have one concern. On the one hand I would fully agree with you that the ground forces are getting pretty well burnt out. I have had conversations with the new commandant. He is on record talking about wanting to get away from the seven and seven and the one for one into a one for two, which is more traditional. At the same time, quite frankly, I am a little bit worried that if we just vote to put these increases in effect over a period of years that they might be ratifying what I and a number of people believe is the current lack of strategic vision in Iraq, since this is where so much of the burden is falling.

I would hope that you will be able to justify these increases in an environment where our troop levels in Iraq might be dramatically reduced.

Secretary GATES. Yes, sir. I would add that, as I have indicated, we are trying to construct it in a way that there are off-ramps in this increase, so that if world conditions should change surprisingly for the better, you do not necessarily have to go to the full extent of the buildup.

Senator WEBB. I appreciate that. Thank you.

General PACE. Senator, if I could have 30 seconds, I absolutely agree with the fundamental things that you said about the reason why people join the Armed Forces. They do not serve for a political purpose. We strive very hard and mightily to not have a political affiliation. So I want to make sure that I align myself with you, with what you say on that.

Senator WEBB. I appreciate your saying that. It was more in my view an attempt to clarify a series of leading questions that were being put to you by my predecessor, because it is very important I think for people to understand that it is rare in my view that people decide to serve purely for some political reason, whatever the issue is. We become the stewards of their service as a result, because we are the political entity here.

Thank you very much.

General PACE. Thank you, Senator.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Webb.

Senator Thune.

Senator THUNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to also echo my appreciation to our panel for their service to our country and for being here today and answering what I think are hard questions and rightfully so. This is a very difficult time, a high-stakes struggle for our country, and one that generates enormous emotion around the country.

I think it was expected, probably after the President's speech the other night, that there would be a lot of debate. There are lots of criticisms of it, obviously, and I think that was somewhat expected, too. I guess those criticisms hover around a couple of just general areas, and I would like just for the record to have you respond to a couple of those because I think it is important for the American people to understand what is at stake here and what is and is not true, what is and is not factual.

First off, one of the arguments against this new approach, this new strategy, is that it is not new, that all these things have been tried before. So I would like to have you comment, what in fact is new about what we are attempting to accomplish now?

Secretary GATES. As in the earlier questions, we will do this as a duet. First, I would say that the leading role of the Iraqis is new. This is the first time on the scale that we are talking about a joint Iraqi-U.S. operation with the Iraqis having the principal responsibility for success.

I think that having sufficient troops for the hold part of clear, hold, and build is new. That clearly was a lesson learned from the operation last fall.

Our understanding of the need for an integrated economic strategy that brings jobs and some relief and a sense of success locally is not a new concept, but integrating it into the plan in this way I think is different.

The willingness of the Iraqis to commit up to $10 billion of their own money I think is a new thing.

A number of the benchmarks put forward by the Iraqis, I think, represent something new in terms of a commitment to avoid political interference in the military operations and a commitment to allow the troops to go after all lawbreakers regardless of their religious background.

So I think those are just some of the things that are different than have been the case in the past.

Senator THUNE. General Pace, one of the other criticisms that has been made, is that this was run roughshod over our commanders, over our generals, that our generals do not support this. You heard statements made earlier, quotes from previous testimony in front of the committee from General Abizaid and General Casey. I visited with you the other day about this and you indicated to me that this is something that really originated with our commanders and with our generals. Could you answer that question about whether or not the generals who are both present and coming into the operation—General Petraeus, Admiral Fallon obviously and General Odierno—what their views are on this?

General PACE. I can, sir, and I have spoken to each of them both in person and by phone multiple times on this issue. The request for the increase is coming from General Casey, Lieutenant General Odierno, and General Zilmer, who are the primary U.S. commanders on the ground—General Casey is the commander on the ground—through General Abizaid, who has forwarded it with his endorsement that this is the right thing.

In fact, when the Secretary and I were in Baghdad we had a private meeting with General Abizaid and General Casey, the Secretary and myself, and it was at that meeting where those two generals brought forward to the Secretary their desire for additional troops.

In addition to that, General Petraeus in his current role as responsible for doctrine on counterinsurgency operations has been consulting with the generals in Iraq and he is very much on board with this and has said so both publicly and privately. Admiral Fallon knows a little bit less about this plan because he has been busy doing what he is doing and I do not know exactly where he

is on it, but I do know that each of the generals who has been involved in this and has current responsibilities for parts of this is requesting this increase. The Joint Chiefs, who began our deliberations in early September because we realized about the middle of August that where we thought we were going to be this year and where we were going to end up being this year were not the same place, therefore something was wrong, and we asked what might be changed. We began meeting multiple times per week, bringing in external experts, talking amongst ourselves to determine what we thought was right, sending ideas both down and up the chain of command, and working as part of this.

So this has been a collaborative effort for at least 4 months amongst all the senior leaders and it is in fact the commanders on the ground, supported by all of us, who are asking for this.

Senator THUNE. I appreciate it. In response to your comments, there are in my view changes. I have been there three times. I just got back from my third visit, and I think this is an approach and a strategy that is different. But I ask these questions simply because these are obviously a lot of what the debate both here in Washington, the political debate, and the debate in public is about.

The other question I would ask, because this is another point that is often a criticism that is leveled, is that, can we achieve a political solution or a diplomatic solution. In your opinion, can a political solution succeed if there is not security in Baghdad?

General PACE. No, sir, and vice versa.

Senator THUNE. Mr. Secretary?

Secretary GATES. I agree.

Senator THUNE. The other question I guess I would ask is, do you think that the number of troops that we are putting in there is adequate?

General PACE. For the plan that is being executed and with the other two parts of the plan, the economic and the political, the answer is yes, sir. If one of those two others do not show up, then the military plan as written will not succeed.

Senator THUNE. Do you have in your minds ideas framed about how to measure whether or not the Iraqis are making progress against the benchmarks? Are there measuring devices? Clearly, the number of brigades that come in and the level to which their troops are performing in the lead, but also some of the economic criteria that have been put forward, the reconstruction monies, and provincial elections, which I assume are going to be down the road. I guess what I am trying to find out is are there ways of measuring whether or not they are succeeding? The question was asked earlier how soon we will know that, but I am trying to get at this question because I think it is our responsibility in terms of oversight to ask these questions as well.

Secretary GATES. I think there are four categories of benchmarks that we can have and I think that they are of varying specificity. The first category, and an area where I think that they are perhaps at least early on the most specific, is the military benchmarks: Have the brigades shown up on time with the people that they said would be there or close to on time? Are they allowed to go into all neighborhoods? Is there political interference? I think we will see these things fairly early. Those are examples.

I think a second category of benchmarks will be our success in the hold operations. Has the level of violence been reduced in the areas that have been cleared so that economic reconstruction and other things can be done?

The third category would be in the "build" part of the strategy and that is are the Iraqis spending their $10 billion and are there signs of progress and improvement in those areas? The hold and build phases are probably ones that will take longer to be able to discern whether there has been success, but I think there are some benchmarks there.

Then the fourth in terms of the political benchmarks will be whether the Iraqis fulfill their commitments in terms of oil, the sharing of the oil revenue, setting a date for provincial elections and several of these things that they have committed to do.

So I would say that there are potential benchmarks in each of these four areas and our ability to measure them will vary in terms of how soon we will be able to see something.

Senator THUNE. I appreciate your answers. My sense is that finally, they get it. I think that Prime Minister Maliki and, based on this last trip that we made and our discussions with them and how very blunt we were about the importance of them taking on the militias, about them getting the Iraqis into the lead, about the oil revenues and those sorts of things, it seems to me at least that this is our chance, this is our opportunity, and I do not think we can miss it.

So thank you again for your service and for your testimony.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Thune.

Senator McCaskill.

Senator MCCASKILL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you both for your service to our country and your patience with all of our questions today. I hope I can count on that patience just for a few more minutes.

Is it a fair assessment to say that in fact the Maliki government has made many, many commitments to us that they have been unwilling or unable to keep?

Secretary GATES. I think that is a true statement. But I would remind of an earlier comment that I made, that this is a government that came into existence, not just as political leaders, but the existence of the government itself only came into existence less than a year ago, and I am not sure how much it has been the inability of the system to deliver on promises that have been made because the bureaucracy does not work, because they do not have a banking system, and things like that, and how much it was a conscious decision simply to break a promise.

Senator MCCASKILL. But certainly under those circumstances it would be incredibly important that the leader would remain strong because of the failure of the underlying systems to support that leader in any regard?

Secretary GATES. Yes.

Senator MCCASKILL. Is it an unfair statement to say that Maliki today as a leader is not in as strong a position as he was when he made the commitment for six brigades and only two showed up?

Secretary GATES. Actually, I think that I do not have the kind of in-depth knowledge that probably is necessary to answer your

question, but my impression is that, in fact, Maliki probably is somewhat stronger today than he has been in the past. When he first took the job, he replaced somebody who was politically stronger, as I understand it, but did not have the will or the ability to carry out actions that had been promised.

One has the sense that the other leaders have come in behind Maliki on this program to support him—Talabani, Hashemi, Hakim, and the others. We will see.

Senator MCCASKILL. It is certainly clear that this entire plan is premised on the strength of the Iraqi government at this juncture to, in fact, finally deliver on some of the commitments that they have made?

Secretary GATES. Yes, ma'am.

Senator MCCASKILL. If they fail again to deliver on the commitments, this plan completely fails.

Secretary GATES. It is very difficult to see how this plan could succeed if they fail to fulfill their commitments.

Senator MCCASKILL. Senator Graham indicated a few minutes ago that this is General Petraeus' plan, but it was my understanding in the briefing with Mr. Hadley that this in fact is the Iraqi government's plan, not our plan. Which is it? Is this our plan or is this the Iraqi plan?

General PACE. This is the Iraqi government's initiative, Prime Minister Maliki's initiative, agreed to by our President, that was then given to General Casey and his Iraqi counterpart to work through the military details. General Petraeus' involvement has been in his current position as responsible for counterinsurgency doctrine where he has been an adviser to those in Baghdad who have been doing the work on our side.

For the United States, this is very much a General Casey, General Odierno, General Zilmer plan, and on the Iraqi side, it is their Iraqi counterparts, as a military part of the three-legged stool that was proposed by Prime Minister Maliki.

Senator MCCASKILL. I would like to hone in a little bit now on what some people have said, and I do not think they meant to be flippant and I am certainly not wanting to be flippant. But the billion dollars that is being asked for, for what they call "walking around money," but specifically the money that would be given to the military to try to do immediate things on the ground after areas have been cleared, to try to help stabilize those areas with something other than the brave men and women who we are so blessed to have serve this country. It is also my understanding that there is now a $10 billion surplus that the Iraqi government holds.

If the purpose here is to make the Iraqi government strong enough to stand on its own, and if the purpose here is to strengthen the Iraqi military and the Iraqi police for this work, then why do they not use some of their $10 billion surplus and why are they not spreading that money around, as opposed to us going back to our much beleaguered treasury for another billion dollars of our great-grandchildren's money that frankly is going to follow another at least $16–$17 billion that have been spent without getting any of the results in terms of reconstruction or progress in Iraq?

Secretary GATES. First of all, the Iraqis have committed to spend $10 billion of their money as part of this program, it is that surplus that you described, and that is clearly an important part of it.

I will ask General Pace to describe the value of the CERP money, but it is generally regarded as short-term relief that followed immediately upon the military operation of clearing, to start to get people to work in terms of clearing trash, hooking up sewer lines, and things like that.

But the basic point is the Iraqis, and one of the benchmarks that I mentioned here is, the Iraqis have committed to spend $10 billion as part of this enterprise.

Senator MCCASKILL. How is their $10 billion going to be spent?

Secretary GATES. That is really more in Secretary Rice's bailiwick than mine, but my impression is that we are working with them on that. I think that their original plan was for some longer-term projects and I think we are working with them to try and get them to break it down into smaller, earlier projects that can have an impact in Baghdad in the relatively near-term.

Senator MCCASKILL. I think you understand the point I am making. If the idea of this money is to begin to win the hearts and minds of the people that live in these neighborhoods, these families that are living under incredible pressure every day in terms of the violence that surrounds them, if the idea here is to win their hearts and minds, then why would it be the American military that is distributing this money instead of the Iraqi government distributing their own money, their oil revenue, instead of our revenue?

What would be the military advantages of us doing that as opposed to the Iraqi military doing that?

General PACE. First of all, Senator, I like your premise. I think you are absolutely right that in the long-term and as short-term as possible that it be Iraqi money, with Iraqi leaders who are doing that. So I like that premise.

It is also true that, for the sake of our own force protection, the CERP money that is available to our commanders has in fact made it possible to have immediate impact after we have swept neighborhoods. Before Congress authorized us to do this, what we had was a private first class who had a $90,000 missile that he could fire whenever he wanted to, but he did not have 5 bucks in his pocket to be able to help to do something good immediately on the streets to get an Iraqi employed, for example.

This money is not in the PFC's pockets but it is commanders who then sweep through a neighborhood and are able to, through immediate hiring, provide immediate benefit to the local population, take some of the angry young men off the streets, get things done like showing, in addition to knocking on doors and killing those who resist, that you also have the opportunity here to have sewers cleaned up, trash cleaned up, and the like.

That has worked extremely well for our forces where we have been in the lead. But I agree with you that in fact some of this $10 billion that the Iraqis are planning on would be well used in a CERP-like program for their commanders so that they could have the same kind of impact that we have been having.

Senator MCCASKILL. Better yet, if they would, in return for all that we have spent and all we have done for their country, they

could spend $9 billion and give us $1 billion of it for us to use in our CERP program, instead of us going back to our taxpayers for another billion.

Thank you both very much. I know my time has expired.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator McCaskill.

Just one clarification. Is that $10 billion over what period of time?

Secretary GATES. My impression is that it is immediately available.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Senator Cornyn.

Senator CORNYN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Gates and General Pace, Senator Akaka and I are the last things standing between you and a little sustenance. Thank you for your endurance. Thank you for your service and thanks for discussing what I think is the most important issue facing our generation.

My dad was a B–17 pilot in World War II and part of what Tom Brokaw called "the greatest generation," facing an enemy, Imperial Japan and Nazi Germany—that threatened to completely annihilate our way of life. I think this threat that we are facing today is no less serious.

I am struck a little bit and maybe I confess to a little bit of cognitive dissonance when it comes to, when we start discussing these plans. General Pace, we have had as many as 160,000 American troops in Iraq at one time, have we not, sir?

General PACE. We have. Yes, sir.

Senator CORNYN. So even with this so-called surge of an additional 21,500 troops, we will not reach that previous high level of 160,000, will we?

General PACE. We will not, sir.

Senator CORNYN. There has been some suggestion that the President and his advisers, including you, Mr. Secretary and General Pace and others, have not listened to outside sources and differences of opinion. Yet I quote the ISG, a bipartisan group that I know, Secretary Gates, you advised or you served on until you resigned to serve as Secretary of Defense. On page 73 they said: "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."

Is that essentially what has happened here, General Pace?

General PACE. It is, sir.

Senator CORNYN. It is amazing to me that when a number of members of this body, United States Senators, have over a period of time called for the deployment of more troops, more boots-on-the-ground, on both sides of the aisle, now when finally admitting that mistakes have been made up until this point, but looking forward at how to solve this very different problem, the President and his advisers have finally said, yes, we agree with you, but yet it seems that some simply do not want to take yes for an answer.

You will have to forgive me. In suffering from this cognitive dissonance that I mentioned a moment ago, it seems to me that there are two choices. One is to admit failure and quit. That is 100 per-

cent guaranteed to cause failure in Iraq. The other alternative is to try this last best perhaps plan we have for salvaging the situation in Iraq.

It strikes me that there are so many people, unfortunately too many people, maybe not outside of Washington but at least in Washington, who are ready to call it quits, to throw in the towel, to give up, even though we have just heard earlier that there seems to be more or less a bipartisan consensus that the consequences of failure are simply unacceptable.

It just strikes me as unusual. Thinking back on our own history, I remember reading David McCullough's book 1776 about the Revolutionary War and how improbable the success of George Washington leading the United States Army was and that America would actually be able to establish its independence from one of the most powerful nations in the world at the time. Whether you look at the Civil War history or even World War II or other situations, obviously success is not guaranteed.

But I take it from your testimony today and everything we have heard from the Commander in Chief to the people who are empowered to execute that plan, that you believe that this is the best plan at this time for achieving probable success; is that correct, Secretary Gates?

Secretary GATES. Yes, sir.

Senator CORNYN. General Pace, is that your testimony as well, sir?

General PACE. Yes, sir, it is.

Senator CORNYN. Now let me just ask you for a second about the consequences of failure. Senator McCain mentioned this one consequence of failure. We have considered what if Iraq descends into a failed state, perhaps serving as a place where terrorists can organize, train, and export terrorist attacks, much as al Qaeda did in Afghanistan after the Soviet Union left. We have learned a little bit about the possibility of a regional conflict if, for example, Iran continues its aggressive moves into Iraq and supporting the Shiites killing Sunnis as part of the ethnic cleansing there that Sunni majority nations like Saudi Arabia, might feel compelled to come to the rescue of the Sunni minority in Iraq, just to mention one of the possibilities.

But I would like for you to answer this question if you will. What would be the humanitarian consequences? What would be the likely outcomes in terms of loss of life to innocent men, women, and children in that region if some of these dire consequences do occur, if in fact we fail? Secretary Gates?

Secretary GATES. I think one of the consequences, we are already seeing some internal immigration and to a limited extent ethnic cleansing, and I would suspect that one consequence would be a fairly dramatic increase both in internal immigration, the number of displaced persons, and also ethnic cleansing.

Senator CORNYN. General Pace, do you have any additional comments?

General PACE. Sir, clearly in my mind there would be increased murders and sectarian violence. I do not know how much, but certainly a large increase in that. You would have an impact in Afghanistan as well. I think folks in Afghanistan have made enor-

mous strides, but if we were to fail in Iraq then the forces that would have been victorious in Iraq would turn to Afghanistan next and they would begin to do the same thing in Afghanistan that they are doing in Iraq and eventually if we determine to come home that they would follow us home.

For those who do not believe that this is still a real threat, we need to look no further back than when the United Kingdom was able to thwart a threat of multiple airliners being blown up en route here to the United States. This is a real threat to the United States and collectively we must find a way to deal with it.

Senator CORNYN. If I could just say in closing that many people in this country are justly concerned about the genocide in Darfur where hundreds of thousands of people have died. With others who have traveled to Iraq, I remember traveling with the chairman to Iraq in 2003 and standing on the edge of a mass grave site where the U.N. said in that and similar sites 400,000 perhaps Iraqis lay dead at the hand of Saddam Hussein and perhaps a million more people had simply exited the country during his regime in order to avoid a similar fate.

So I hope that we will focus a little bit more on the consequences of failure in Iraq and that will steel us and encourage us to at least try to heed the advice of the President's most expert military advisers, present company included, to try to avoid that failure, because I agree that the consequences of failure are simply unacceptable and I believe that it will make America endangered as a result.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Cornyn.

Senator Akaka.

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

Thank you, Secretary Gates and General Pace, for your leadership and for responding to our concerns here.

I first want to acknowledge the courageous men and women in our Armed Forces who have served to provide security for our country and the freedom of our country. That also includes the National Guard and Reserves, and I would like to add the veterans of the past as well, for their dedication and service to our great country.

I also want to say that I stand committed to support our troops, as I have since we went into Iraq, and I look forward to continuing that kind of support through the best training and equipment and support that our country can give them and we will continue to do that until we come home from Iraq.

I am very concerned about several things that have been mentioned and discussed already today. One of them is about the National Guard, Mr. Secretary. I am very concerned about the mobilization and/or remobilization of our National Guard units, both nationwide and in my home State of Hawaii. I would like to recall a press conference you had yesterday when you stated that today's global demands will require a number of selected Guard and Reserve units to be remobilized sooner than has been the standard procedure.

My question to you is, what criteria would you use in selecting the Guard units?

Secretary GATES. Let me answer your question broadly and then ask General Pace to respond to the specifics. There is no question that we have had a growing problem in the way that the Guard and Reserve Forces have been used, particularly drawing on individual volunteers rather than mobilizing units. The problem has become more and more serious and I am told that now to put together one unit to deploy often will take going to many units and bringing them together, often people who have not trained together and who do not even know each other for that matter.

So what we are doing is trying to rationalize this whole process, and as part of that rationalization not only make more force available to the military commanders in a variety of potential circumstances, not just Iraq by any means, but also to reestablish greater predictability for the members of the Guard and Reserve.

The transition period while we rationalize this process, this period of some months, will impose, there is no question about it, an extra burden on some selected units. But our hope is to get back to our policy of 1 year mobilized, 5 years demobilized, and 1 year mobilized for the Active Force and 2 years at their home post.

In an effort to mitigate the consequences, I have also directed that the involuntary mobilizations be limited to a year rather than the 18 to 24 months that has been the practice in recent years. We are also looking at additional compensation for those who are being remobilized early or who are being extended in Iraq, and also looking at having the units and commanders look at the hardship waivers to ensure that those are being applied effectively and that we are taking advantage of that for families that are meeting extra hardships.

But let me ask General Pace to address your specific question.

General PACE. Senator, the U.S. Joint Forces Command in Norfolk, VA, has the responsibility to do this on a daily basis. What they will do is, as an example, if there is a need overseas for an engineer battalion, they will look at the entire inventory. They will look at Army engineers, Marine engineers, Navy Seabees, Air Force Red Horse squadrons, and put all that in a pile, Active and Reserve, and take a look at which ones have already been used, take them out of the pile and determine which ones then are next up.

Or if they have all been used, which is what we are getting to, then when we are going to go back for a second deployment on the Active side, and see what is the relationship to that unit's 1 year over and 2 years back; on the Reserve side, we will see what is the relation to 1 year over and 5 years back. They take out two or three units that are the next most likely to go forward because they have the most time home, then work with the Services to see what it is that we do not know about that unit, whether it be manning or training or equipment, and then come forward to the Secretary of Defense and lay out for him the requirement, the proposed solution, and the cost in dollars, but more importantly the cost in human capital with regard to how they have been deployed before, et cetera.

So there is a very strict set of criteria we go through.

Senator AKAKA. Will there be a cap on the number of units that you will be looking for to remobilize?

General PACE. Not a cap other than the time that we would mobilize them would now be 1 year total from the time they left their front door until the time they walk back through their front door, to include training, deployment, and remobilization. But there is not a cap on the number of units because we look at the total force, Active, Guard, and Reserve, and again using those criteria come forward with the units that are next susceptible for a deployment. I should not say "susceptible" because this is not punishment. These Active, Guard, and Reserve units are serving the Nation extremely well and we need to acknowledge what they are doing for the Nation.

Senator AKAKA. I am concerned about the Guard and Reserves because there is a hardship for families that you mentioned as well, and I am glad that attention is being given to this.

I want to wish you well. My time is up all of a sudden, Mr. Chairman. But I want to wish you well in what you are doing and to say that I know everyone feels that what we are trying to do here is to help our country do the best we can with what we committed to do there in Iraq. We are looking for answers, this is an effort to do that, and we are pleased with the kind of leadership you have given and our military leadership as well has really brought us to this point in time.

Also, I am so glad to hear that there is a three-pronged attempt here. It is not only defense, but economics as well. We need to also strengthen our diplomatic efforts there as well, and I look forward to helping them economically, as was mentioned here earlier, to create jobs for young people. We understand they are causing mischief there and to put them to work is one way of bringing about a change in that.

So I am looking forward to finding solutions to the problems we have there.

Secretary GATES. Senator—I think I can speak for General Pace as well as myself in this—there is no doubt in our mind that the members of this body are all trying to do what is best for the United States and also look out for the men and women in uniform.

I would just say, since I may not have another chance, that some nice things have been said to General Pace and myself here today and I would just like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, and all the members of the committee for a very comprehensive, productive, and thoughtful hearing.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

A few clarifications factually. This will be brief. How many units in Iraq have currently been extended beyond the normal 12-month tour for the Army and 7-month tour for the Marine Corps? Do you know the numbers, just the numbers?

General PACE. I do, yes, sir. Currently in Iraq one unit, the First Brigade of the First Armored Division out of Europe, is currently on an extension.

Chairman LEVIN. In the Marines?

General PACE. Currently zero.

Chairman LEVIN. How many additional units will be having their tours extended beyond that normal length under your announcement?

General PACE. Yes, sir. Assuming all flow, on the Marine side of the house there will be one Marine expeditionary unit and two Marine battalions in al-Anbar, and then there will be one National Guard brigade, the First of the 34th, and they got their orders for extension yesterday, and then there will be two Active brigades that will be extended as well.

Chairman LEVIN. Tell us, if you would, there is currently 8,600 soldiers under stop loss. What would that go up to under your announcement?

General PACE. Sir, I do not know, we will find out.

Chairman LEVIN. Get us that for the record.

[The information referred to follows:]

Based on the announcement of five additional Brigade Combat Teams being sent to Iraq (all from the Active component), by the end of the deployment, the five "surge" Brigade Combat Teams will have approximately 1,900 soldiers effected by stop loss. This number added to the average number of Active component soldiers in a stop loss status (~7,500) provides a projection of approximately 9,500 Active component soldiers in stop loss by May 2008. The number of soldiers impacted by stop loss does vary from month to month. As of December 2006, the number of Active component soldiers impacted by stop loss was 7,072 as compared to the November 2006 number of 8,600 accurately stated by Chairman Levin.

Chairman LEVIN. Next, in terms of the number of persons displaced, the numbers that we have say that, due to the violence, there are 2.3 million internally displaced Iraqis now and about 2 million who have fled abroad. Do those two numbers strike you as accurate?

Secretary GATES. I will have to find out, Senator.

Chairman LEVIN. All right, if you could, give us those two numbers as well.

[The information referred to follows:]

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees estimated there were 1.7 million internally displaced Iraqis and about 1.5 million people who have fled Iraq as of January 2007.

I would further recommend the committee contact the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for more details on these figures and this issue.

Chairman LEVIN. You have answered I think it was Senator Bill Nelson who said that there is an agreement among the commanders that for a specific mission and a specific time that a surge would be something they support. Is there a specific time attached to this addition of troops? Have you attached a specific time for the length of this surge?

Secretary GATES. No, sir. But as I said yesterday, I think most of us involved in this process assume that it will be months and not years.

Chairman LEVIN. When is General Petraeus going to be taking over?

Secretary GATES. To a certain extent that depends on the Senate.

Chairman LEVIN. Is he ready to take over in 2 or 3 weeks? We heard April, somebody said. Is that accurate?

Secretary GATES. I do not know the answer to that.

Chairman LEVIN. Could you let us know that, too?

Do you know, General?

General PACE. Sir, it is very much dependent upon confirmation. All three packages have been signed and will be sent over when——

Chairman LEVIN. If we can confirm him in 3 weeks, does he take over in 4 weeks? Do you know? If not, can you let us know?

General PACE. Yes, sir. I will.

Chairman LEVIN. Because that can affect confirmation. If he is not ready to take over until the middle part of February, then we can try to fit in a hearing or otherwise get him confirmed before that time. Let us know what that plan is as well.

Finally, we will keep the record open for 48 hours in case there are additional questions. We know there are a couple of Senators who were on that preplanned visit to Iraq, I believe, and Afghanistan, and others may have questions as well.

Did you have a clarification?

Senator CORNYN. Mr. Chairman, may I just offer something in response to your question? This needs to be confirmed obviously, but I am advised that the State Department has briefed the staff and indicated that there are 1.5 million internally displaced people is the figure they have; 1.1 million pre-2006; 700,000 up to 2003; and 1.5 million asylum seekers, that is people outside of the country. 50 to 60 percent of those were pre-2003. About 300,000 refugees in Iraq is the figure that we have.

But I would be delighted, as you would, to hear what the confirmed figures are.

Chairman LEVIN. We appreciate that.

Senator Akaka, Senator Cornyn, most importantly our witnesses, thank you for being with us today. It has been a very helpful hearing and we appreciate your obvious contribution in making that possible.

We will stand adjourned.

[Questions for the record with answers supplied follow:]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR ROBERT C. BYRD

AUTHORITY FOR AIR STRIKES IN SOMALIA

1. Senator BYRD. General Pace, under what authority was the standing order that authorized the airstrike in Somalia promulgated?

General PACE. [Deleted.]

2. General Pace, was this order issued pursuant to the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force, or under some other authority?

General PACE. [Deleted.]

3. Senator BYRD. General Pace, will you provide a copy of this order to the committee?

General PACE. [Deleted.]

4. Senator BYRD. General Pace, you stated that Under Secretary Cambone briefed members and committees of Congress about the airstrike and reported to you and Secretary Rumsfeld. However, Secretary Rumsfeld left office on December 18, 2006, nearly a month before the airstrikes were carried out. Could you provide a precise written record of which members or committees of Congress were consulted or notified of the airstrike and when?

General PACE. [Deleted.]

5. Senator BYRD. Secretary Gates, the President apparently has not provided Congress with a 48-hour notification for the airstrike in Somalia, as appears to be required by the War Powers Resolution. Does the administration assert that the War Powers Resolution does not apply to this military action? Please explain the administration's view in detail.

Secretary GATES. The presence of combat forces in the Horn of Africa has been reported to Congress, consistent with the War Powers Resolution. Specifically, since

September 19, 2003, the President has informed Congress in his semi-annual reports on the war on terror consistent with the War Powers Resolution, that U.S. combat equipped and combat support forces are located in the Horn of Africa region, and that the U.S. forces headquarters element in Djibouti provides command and control support as necessary for military operations against al Qaida and other international terrorists in the Horn of Africa region. As stated in the President's reports, these actions are consistent with the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force, Public Law 107–40, and have been taken pursuant to the President's constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DANIEL K. AKAKA

NATIONAL GUARD MOBILIZATION CRITERIA

6. Senator AKAKA. Secretary Gates, I am very concerned about the mobilization and/or remobilization of National Guard units both nationwide and in my home State of Hawaii. In your January 11 press conference, you stated that today's global demands will require a number of selected Guard and Reserve units to be remobilized sooner than is standard. What criteria will be used to select these units?

Secretary GATES. There are a number of criteria used to select any unit for mobilization. Some of those considerations are:

- identification of all units that can perform the mission
- length of time since the unit last mobilized
- duration of unit's last mobilization
- location of unit's deployment during last mobilization
- unit's assigned and available strength, to minimize cross-leveling
- number of personnel in the unit who have never mobilized

Our intention is that such exceptions be temporary and that we move to the broad application of the 1:5 goal as soon as possible.

7. Senator AKAKA. Secretary Gates, will there be a cap to the number of units asked to remobilize sooner than is standard?

Secretary GATES. Of course, we must remobilize as few as possible. Our intention is that such exceptions be temporary and that we move to the broad application of the 1:5 goal as soon as possible.

REGIONAL ESCALATION

8. Senator AKAKA. Secretary Gates, during the President's address to the Nation, he asserted that succeeding in Iraq also required defending its territorial integrity. He stated that he had sent an additional carrier strike group to the Persian Gulf area. He then stated that Iran was providing material support for attacks on our troops, that we will interrupt the flow of support from Iran and Syria, and that we will seek out and destroy the networks providing advanced weaponry and training to our enemies in Iraq. I am concerned about how this will be done, and what potential it creates for a regional escalation. In your January 11 press conference, you stated that you believe that if the violence in Iraq goes unchecked, it could escalate. What do you believe is the potential for our efforts to interrupt the flow of support from Iran and Syria to cause an escalation to a regional conflict?

Secretary GATES. The Iranians are contributing to instability in Iraq and promoting the killing of Americans. We are not "provoking" Iran; we are responding to its behavior. Our response is to deter, not to provoke. Regarding engagement with Iran, Secretary Rice has said that she would sit down at any time, and at any place with her counterpart from Iran—if Iran would commit to verifiably end its uranium enrichment programs. In addition, the President has made clear that we are not planning for a war with Iran.

With respect to Syria, the United States and others in the international community have called on Syria repeatedly to stop permitting its territory from being used by those who seek to destabilize Iraq and other countries in the region. A series of U.N. Security Council resolutions make clear that Iraq's neighbors have obligations to assist Iraq in achieving stability and security. The Iraqi and Syrian governments have recently re-established diplomatic ties and are discussing cooperation on stabilizing Iraq. We hope Syria will respond to this opportunity by demonstrating a constructive change in its policies.

9. Senator AKAKA. Secretary Gates, does the administration's new strategy increase the risk of an escalation?

Secretary GATES. We are deterring, not provoking. We are countering Iranian behavior that is endangering and killing our forces in Iraq. With the deployment of the second carrier group to the Persian Gulf, we are reaffirming our long-term commitment to the region, reassuring our allies at a critical point, and demonstrating our resolve to be a presence in the region for a long time into the future. The United States considers the Persian Gulf to be of vital national interest. This has been U.S. policy for decades and under many Presidents.

10. Senator AKAKA. Secretary Gates, what specific strategies have you developed to protect our troops if it does escalate?

Secretary GATES. We have made it very clear to the Iranian and Syrian governments that we do not expect them to engage in behavior that endangers our forces and that we will do what is necessary for force protection. As General Pace said at a January 11, 2007, press conference, we will continue to track the networks that are providing weapons inside Iraq designed to kill U.S. forces regardless of their nationality.

NATIONAL GUARD EQUIPMENT

11. Senator AKAKA. General Pace, the war in Iraq has taken a severe toll not only on the personnel capabilities but also on the equipment that these brave men and women need in order to train and fulfill their mission objectives. Quite often when units return from overseas they are under-equipped for their responsibilities at home as their equipment has been left overseas, destroyed during operations, or is in desperate need of repair upon return. Will additional equipment be sent to Iraq to meet the needs of additional troops? If yes, how will this affect National Guard units' ability to not only train their men and women for future deployments but fulfill their domestic obligations as the National Guard is already facing severe equipment shortages?

General PACE. Yes, there will be additional equipment required for the plus up of Active and Reserve Forces. Any Army unit, regardless of component, that is slated to deploy in support of the global war on terrorism, is the top priority for equipping. These units are equipped to 100 percent of their mission-essential equipment list through use of new procurement, cascaded equipment, theater-provided equipment, and cross-leveling from other units that are not a candidate for deployment. This procedure applies to the ARNG units as well. In sum, all ARNG units in a combat theater will have a full complement of their essential equipment.

Equipment for domestic missions is currently at less than desired levels.

To ensure that the ARNG is able to successfully perform its domestic mission, 342 pieces of equipment have been identified as "dual-use," meaning they are available for both domestic and Federal missions. The Chief of the National Guard Bureau has made a commitment to the States that we will endeavor to leave States with at least 50 percent of their NG forces so as to preserve capability in the Homeland. This is not always possible in all States at all times. In those rare cases, NGB works with States to help assure that capabilities are accessible from other States in times of need.

Governors are also able to access equipment and forces through Emergency Management Agreement Compacts with neighboring States.

JOBS PROGRAM OVERSIGHT

12. Senator AKAKA. General Pace, part of the new strategy includes a jobs creation program in Anbar province and Baghdad to support operations. I am concerned about the implementation and oversight of this program. This war has not been a model for ensuring that the taxpayers' money is not wasted. Can you tell us how this program will be implemented?

General PACE. While assessments vary, unemployment and underemployment are somewhere near 50 percent; we estimate that this translates to somewhere around 1.5 million in need of jobs. While the Commanders' Emergency Response Program (CERP) has been an invaluable tool in the hands of our commanders on the ground, the effects created by these projects in terms of employment and goodwill are often short-lived and must be followed up by mid-term and long-term programs that will provide employment opportunities to Iraqis. U.S. programs such as U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) microcredit programs, agribusiness programs, and temporary jobs programs can be helpful if properly targeted. In the past, coordi-

nation between development and reconstruction programs across agencies and with the military effort has been ad-hoc. The lack of unity of effort has meant that our desired effect—stabilization of these areas—has not been obtained. While coordination significantly increased in support of the Baghdad Security Plan in the summer and fall of 2006, under the direction of Ambassador Khalilzad, security issues in Baghdad (spiraling sectarian violence, lack of political will by the Government of Iraq (GOI) to take on illegal militias, insufficient Iraqi and coalition forces to hold cleared areas) diluted the impact of these efforts. The security strategy laid out in the New Way Forward will reduce violence, creating breathing room for longer-term economic initiatives to take hold. The need for close coordination with our Iraqi and interagency partners is crucial; short-term, medium-term, and long-term jobs creation efforts must be standing by, ready to be employed as soon as areas are cleared by coalition forces.

The addition of Ambassador Tim Carney to oversee economic reconstruction efforts will be key to our success in this area. Ambassador Carney will coordinate economic initiatives throughout Iraq. Admiral Giambastiani, the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has spoken with Ambassador Carney about the need for close coordination to ensure synchronization of effort. He has assured us that he will work closely with General Petreaus to identify target areas and coordinate U.S. Government and GOI efforts to improve economic conditions in those areas. I will defer to Ambassador Carney and my State Department colleagues to answer specifics of the programs they are engaged in and are preparing to support our efforts in Baghdad and Anbar. I will comment that the U.S. Government effort, though critical for short-term and mid-term stabilization, will not be sufficient unless the GOI follows through with their commitment to expend $10 billion for economic reconstruction programs. As you are aware, the GOI has a poor track record of executing its budget. This is something we have addressed with Ambassador Carney and he knows how critical the GOI effort will be. Ambassador Carney told us that Iraqi budget execution is one of his top priorities.

The military effort will create another window of opportunity for the GOI and U.S. Government to improve the lives of Iraqis and convince them that their opportunities are greater if they support the GOI rather than terrorists, militias, or criminal enterprises. Our Iraqi and interagency partners must take advantage of this opportunity if we hope to stabilize Iraq.

13. Senator AKAKA. General Pace, what oversight of the program will be maintained to ensure that the resources provided are utilized in a way that minimizes potential for fraud and abuse?

General PACE. The only effort controlled and executed by the Department of Defense (DOD) is the CERP. This has been an invaluable tool in the hands of our commanders on the ground. In the past, General Accounting Office (GAO) and Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR) identified administrative deficiencies in the CERP program. Those deficiencies and accompanying GAO and SIGIR recommendations are addressed in current OSD Comptroller and Multi-National Coalition-Iraq CERP policy. I will defer to the State Department to answer this question with regard to programs they administer.

GENERAL PETRAEUS' ROLE

14. Senator AKAKA. Secretary Gates and General Pace, last week it was announced that General Petraeus was selected to be the next commander of the Multinational Force in Iraq. It is my understanding that General Petraeus is one of the Army's leading authorities on counterinsurgency. As such, I'm interested in whether or not he was a resource utilized in the development of the new strategy for the surge. Did General Petraeus provide input into the new strategy for the surge? If so, did he make any additional recommendations that were excluded from the new strategy?

Secretary GATES and General PACE. Yes, General Petraeus provided input to the new strategy. He explained his involvement in the development of the strategy in a written statement submitted to the Senate Armed Services Committee in anticipation of his testimony on January 23, 2007. The following excerpt is from General Petraeus' written statement:

> SASC: "What role, if any, did you play in the development of the new Iraq strategy recently announced by the President?"
>
> General Petraeus: "I met with the Secretary of Defense a couple of days after he took office and before he left for his first trip to Iraq, and we discussed the situation there during that meeting. We subsequently talked

after his trip, as well. I also talked to the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) several times during this period, noting that a population security emphasis, in Baghdad in particular, was necessary to help the Iraqis gain the time/space for the tough decisions they faced and discussed the general force levels that were likely to be required. As the strategy was refined, I talked on several occasions to LTG Ray Odierno to confirm that his troop-to-task analysis required the force levels that are part of the new strategy, and I relayed my support for those levels to the CJCS and the Secretary. I also supported the additional emphasis on the advisory effort and the additional resources for the reconstruction effort (both in terms of funding and personnel for Provincial Reconstruction Teams and governmental ministry capacity development)."

I do not know of any additional recommendations on the new strategy that General Petraeus may have made.

15. Senator AKAKA. Secretary Gates and General Pace, did General Petraeus recommend against any of the tactics that are included in the new strategy?

Secretary GATES and General PACE. General Petraeus testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee on January 23, 2007. In that testimony, he articulated the new strategy and his support for it. He made no comments as to recommending against any of the tactics that were included in it.

TROOP FAMILY SUPPORT

16. Senator AKAKA. Secretary Gates and General Pace, in Secretary Gates' opening remarks, he discussed some of the new policies that are being implemented to ease the burden of extended and multiple deployments on our Active and Reserve military. I applaud the efforts in this area. But I must note that the burden of deployments is not only financial, and it is not only a burden to the troops. We must remember that their families also carry the burden of deployments. Can you tell us if you have studied the effects of deployments on the families of our troops, and if so, what is being done to support the families of our troops?

Secretary GATES. Our military families are the heart and soul of troops on the battlefield and clearly our military families sacrifice—especially during wartime. Our Social Compact with families recognizes that families also serve. The most pressing issues for military families involved in the war deployments are communications and counseling support, child care, and education. The Department's Military OneSource service provides troops and families with 24/7 access to professional consultants by toll free telephone and the internet. Thousands of troops and family members now call to get help with issues ranging from locating a reliable source for car repair to help with a child's issues at school. The Department has also made private counseling services available to troops and families to help them cope with stress, ease the reunion period, improve family communications, and maintain financial stability. The availability of child care has been increased, including returning home care, extended hours and weekend care, and free summer camps.

General PACE. With nearly 60 percent of our military personnel having dependents, all the Services understand the importance the families play as we continue to conduct the war on terrorism. A major part of the new policy was the establishment of goals pertaining to extended service in the theater of operations. These goals serve to give an element of predictability to the members and their families. However, as long as we wear the uniform, we stand ready to do what our Nation asks us to do, when they need us to do it. Because we recognize that families also serve, the Department has continued to focus on them and offers many programs and services to assist them throughout deployments. Additionally, each military service has organizations and agencies down to the installation level with a primary mission to look out for the interests of military families. The welfare of our families, especially when the member is deployed, is a priority we all share.

RECRUITING FOR INCREASED END STRENGTH

17. Senator AKAKA. Secretary Gates and General Pace, in Secretary Gates' January 11 press conference, he stated that he recommended an increase in the end strength of the Army and the Marine Corps to the President. To what extent do you believe that meeting the increased end-strength goals will mandate new recruitment strategies and/or revised entry requirements for military enlistment?

Secretary GATES. An increased end strength will necessitate increases in both recruiting and retention. Appropriate resources for recruiting and retention to achieve

numerical and quality goals are essential. Army and Marine Corps funding for recruiting must be sufficient to meet increased goals, and is being requested in the budget documents now before Congress.

New recruiting strategies and entry requirements for enlisting personnel were established in the last year and a half, and facilitated success in fiscal year 2006. Services can now target a larger population by expanding the years of eligibility and increasing the maximum payment bonus using authority granted by Congress.

General PACE. The proposed increases to the end-strengths of the Army and the Marine Corps announced by Secretary Gates will require review of recruiting and retention programs as this fiscal year continues. However, I am happy to report that due to the outstanding professional recruiting force for both Services and the tremendous support of Congress, both Services are enjoying success in recruiting and retention thus far during fiscal year 2007. Through the end of the first quarter, both the Army and the Marine Corps exceeded their Active component recruiting and retention goals. At the current time, there are no plans to revise any entry requirements for military service.

The key components to continued success in this challenging recruiting environment will be adequate funding and the ability to evaluate and adjust incentives and programs as the recruiting situation changes. Both Services are postured to do that. The Marine Corps has already increased their recruiting mission once and are postured to do so again, and the Army is working toward implementation of initiatives approved by Congress in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007.

Lastly, our success in recruiting is also tied to our ability to change the mindset of the influencers (parents, teachers, coaches, et cetera) who are not inclined to recommend military service. It will take the entire Department and our Nation's senior leaders pulling together collectively to ensure the American people understand and appreciate the critical importance that our All-Volunteer Force provides to our Nation. We will continue to closely monitor the progress of all recruiting programs as they proceed during fiscal year 2007 and beyond.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

URBAN OPERATIONS

18. Senator CLINTON. Secretary Gates and General Pace, an additional 21,000 servicemembers are being deployed to Iraq in support of the administration's new Iraq strategy with the stated intent of reducing violence and restoring security. The majority of these troops will deploy to the urban sprawl of Baghdad and conduct high-intensity urban combat operations that will require a 24-hour, 7-day presence. Historically, combat in built-up areas have produced high casualty rates—the assault of Falluja in November 2004 produced the highest casualty rates of the war. The planned disposition of troops either in static positions or while patrolling will expose them to constant insurgent and sectarian threats. What is the force protection plan for units operating under these conditions?

Secretary GATES and General PACE. First, all U.S. forces will remain at all times under U.S. command. This ensures that U.S. units maintain the appropriate level of force protection based on their mission and threat level. Second, as we embed U.S. forces to lower levels, down to the battalion and company level, they will be large enough to protect themselves as they complete the advisory work with Iraqi security forces. As always, a layered approach of physical barriers, check points, and self protection measures will be employed at those locations U.S. units will be housed. In addition, U.S. rules of engagement will continue to be used and enforced at all times.

19. Senator CLINTON. Secretary Gates and General Pace, do the troops have sufficient armored vehicles, materials, training, and logistical support?

Secretary GATES and General PACE. With regard to armored vehicles, the Marine Corps armored vehicle requirements will be met by cross-leveling assets already in theater. The Army, with the larger number of forces involved, will have some equipping challenges with up-armored HMMWVs (UAHs—M1114/M1151), and medium and heavy tactical wheeled vehicles. There is a gap between when the required vehicles can be delivered and when the units are currently scheduled to arrive in theater. To mitigate this gap, operational commanders will redistribute existing vehicles within the U.S. CENTCOM area of responsibility to ensure each unit has the required number of properly armored vehicles to meet their operational require-

ments. In all cases, no one will conduct operations off our bases unless equipped with the very best armored vehicles we have.

With regard to materiel, both the Marine Corps and the Army have as their number one priority the proper equipping of their soldiers and marines. Both Services will meet the needs of the individual. With some cross-leveling of existing assets and the continued delivery of already programmed assets, both Services will meet the overall materiel needs of deploying forces.

The Army and Marine Corps will continue to meet their individual and unit training needs based on the planned deployment timelines. The proper training of individuals and units remains a "red line" for both Services. Troops going outside the forward operating base will have no less than a Level 1 (or Service-approved Add-on-Armor) armored vehicles and command directed individual protective equipment.

Overall logistics support for the additional forces is adequate with some additional enabling capabilities flowing as part of the deploying forces. These additional requirements are still being determined but could include capabilities such as additional route clearance, more convoy security capability, and added base operations support.

20. Senator CLINTON. Secretary Gates and General Pace, who will have command and control of the security posture for these exposed troops? Will they be Iraqi security forces or the U.S. military?

Secretary GATES and General PACE. U.S. forces will remain at all times under U.S. command.

READINESS

21. Senator CLINTON. Secretary Gates and General Pace, as recently as November 2006, General Abizaid testified that "Moreover, we do not have the troops to send. Any attempt to send more troops to Iraq would, at the moment, threaten to break our Nation's All-Volunteer Army and undermine our national security." Against this very public analysis of Army and Marine Corps readiness levels, the President will escalate troop levels in Iraq by 21,000 servicemembers within the next 3–5 months. What impact will these additional troop deployments have on readiness in the Army and Marine Corps?

Secretary GATES. Army and Marine Corps units that have been identified for deployment are given the highest priority of resources in terms of personnel, training, and equipment. This ensures that when units do deploy, they are at the highest level of readiness and fully prepared to successfully accomplish their mission.

Deploying additional forces to Iraq does mean we will have fewer ground-based forces for other contingencies. However, the Department retains sufficient capability to respond effectively anywhere around the globe.

The plus-up of forces will result in a total of 20 Army Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs)/Marine Regimental Combat Teams deployed to Iraq. This represents less than 25 percent of the total combat formations within the Army and Marine Corps. Our Armed Forces will remain ready to protect the Homeland, prevent conflict, and prevail over adversaries.

General PACE. I was not aware that General Abizaid testified to this view, but the Army, to date, has not provided any such assessment of the immediate and dire impact of this plus-up on readiness and national security. This increased demand will, without doubt, exacerbate stress on soldiers, leaders, families, and equipment. Units deploying into combat will continue to be fully manned, trained, led, and equipped for their assigned missions. To meet the combatant commander's immediate needs, the Army will pool equipment from across the force to equip deploying units. This practice, although absolutely necessary to ensure Army soldiers are prepared when they go into harm's way, creates holes in the readiness of next-to-deploy units. This reduced readiness in our next-to-deploy units limits the Army's ability to respond to emerging strategic contingencies and limits the Army's strategic depth.

22. Senator CLINTON. Secretary Gates and General Pace, how will the Army and the Marine Corps man, train, and equip these units for full-spectrum operations in Iraq without undermining U.S. national security?

Secretary GATES and General PACE. All forces committed to Iraq will continue to be manned, trained, and equipped for combat. The commitment of additional forces to Iraq is an acceleration of existing unit deployment schedules and is calculated to enhance the national security posture of our Nation in the long run. However,

under current resource projections, strategic flexibility of the total force is somewhat limited.

All plus-up related units will be fully manned to accomplish their assigned mission. The challenge of providing key leaders to plus-up units before their mission rehearsal exercise will be met. The Army would face a similar challenge in manning non-deployed units to respond to strategic contingency operations.

Soldiers, leaders, and units associated with the plus-up will be trained to standard prior to deployment into Iraq. Adjustments to the original training plan are required but will not impact training standards. Time, force structure, and end strength limitations have caused us to focus training on counterinsurgency operations, which affects our flexibility to respond to other contingencies. Limits on training resources require timely receipt of requested supplemental funding to meet our training objectives.

All plus-up related units will be equipped to execute their assigned mission. There are significant challenges to meet equipment requirements, but acceptable solutions have been developed to address unit needs. Our biggest challenge is in the up-armored medium and heavy tactical wheeled vehicle fleets, where we will have to retask and organize existing armored vehicles within the U.S. CENTOCM AOR to ensure each unit has equal capability. Equipment shortages for non-deployed units exist primarily as a result of three factors. First, the operational needs of commanders in Iraq and Afghanistan conducting counterinsurgency operations differ from the modular equipment set designed for full spectrum operations. Second, the Army has aggressively reorganized and activated units in a standard (modular) design to meet operational requirements. However, the demand for units has outpaced scheduled resources. Coupled with procurement lag time, this mismatch of demand and resources has required the Army to maneuver equipment and accept shortages in nondeploying units. Finally, the Army entered the war with a force that was equipped to a tiered readiness standard, maintaining known equipment shortages in later deploying units. As a result, the Army has been forced to prioritize resources to deploying units at the expense of the remainder of the force.

In sum, forces deploying to Iraq will be trained, manned, and equipped for operations; strategic flexibility will continue to be limited, increasing strategic readiness; and flexibility of Army units will take time and a steady commitment of resources.

23. Senator CLINTON. Secretary Gates and General Pace, under the current Army Force Generation Model and Marine Corps Deployment Guidance, are additional combat BCTs available for other contingencies?

Secretary GATES and General PACE. The U.S. military has 82 brigades in the Active, Reserve, and Guard force. As the new strategy in Iraq is executed, there will be 20 brigades deployed for a period of time. If there were another contingency that required U.S. military action, we could respond appropriately. There are more than 2.4 million Americans in the Active, Reserve, and Guard. 200,000 servicemembers are currently deployed in the Gulf region. Allowances would have to be made with regard to speed of movement and precision, but we would be able to successfully respond to any challenge militarily.

In order to maintain our combat edge, the Secretary of Defense is recommending an increase of 92,000 soldiers and marines in the Army and Marine Corps over the next 5 years (65,000 soldiers and 27,000 marines). The increase will be accomplished in two ways. First, a temporary increase of 30,000 for Army soldiers and 5,000 marines will be made permanent. Second, increases of 7,000 troops per year for the Army, for a total of 547,000 and 5,000 per year for 5 years for the Marine Corps until they reach 202,000.

EQUIPMENT

24. Senator CLINTON. Secretary Gates and General Pace, will every servicemember being deployed to Iraq as part of the increased number of troops be fully equipped? Will they have the same equipment as servicemembers currently serving in Iraq?

Secretary GATES and General PACE. Yes, we are working intently to ensure our servicemembers are equipped fully with our most modern equipment to accomplish their missions. The forces being surged will be treated no differently and will not enter Iraq without adequate force protection equipment, including individual force protection equipment. The number one priority of our Services is the proper training and equipping of their soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines and that will not change.

RESERVES/NATIONAL GUARD

25. Senator CLINTON. Secretary Gates and General Pace, Guard and Reserve members who have already served a year-long tour in Iraq or Afghanistan can now be recalled to Active Duty for a second year's tour. This reverses the policy that limited Guard and Reserve deployment times and kept members' cumulative time on Active Duty to not more than 24 months in a 5-year period. How will this policy reversal impact overall readiness of Active, Reserve, and National Guard units?

Secretary GATES and General PACE. This is not a policy reversal. Secretary Gates' new mobilization policy is compatible with the policy laid down by Secretary Rumsfeld in 2003 for 1:5 utilization/dwell. This new policy provides greater predictability for the Services, States, members, their families, and civilian employers. This new policy coupled with the implementation of Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN)[1] will improve overall readiness for all Army components. The improvement to unit cohesion plus the number of available, experienced personnel will be a force multiplier to unit readiness and reduce the amount of training required prior to a deployment.

26. Senator CLINTON. Secretary Gates and General Pace, what missions at the State level will be short-filled when these Guard and Reserve members are deployed?

Secretary GATES. There should not be any missions at the State level that will not be filled. The National Guard Bureau has stated that their goal is to have at least 50 percent of a State's assets available for use in the State role. All States have in place Emergency Management Assistance Compacts to provide resources in case of a large scale incident. The National Guard Bureau communicates with all the States, territories, and the District ensuring no State mission is at risk.

General PACE. None. To ensure that the ARNG is able to successfully perform its domestic mission, 342 pieces of equipment have been identified as "dual-use," meaning they are available for both domestic and Federal missions. The Chief of the National Guard Bureau has made a commitment to the States that we will endeavor to leave States with at least 50 percent of their NG forces so as to preserve capability in the Homeland. This is not always possible in all States at all times. In those rare cases, NGB works with States to help assure that capabilities are accessible from other States in times of need.

In addition, all States have Emergency Management Agreement Compacts to help their neighbors during natural or manmade crises.

States also have the capability to call on Federal forces and equipment to augment their forces.

27. Senator CLINTON. Secretary Gates and General Pace, how will these Reserve and National Guard units identified for deployment be manned and equipped given the shortage in equipment and personnel?

Secretary GATES and General PACE. All units (Active and Reserve) deploying to Iraq will be fully manned, trained, and equipped to complete their assigned missions. The new policy of deploying as units vice individuals will minimize the need for cross-leveling personnel. Equipment shortages continue to be problematic. The Army's tiered readiness system of the past, war-time losses, and stay behind equipment necessities have drawn our equipment down to unacceptable levels. Short-term: The Army is cross-leveling equipment to units training and deploying to the war fight. Long term: The Army leadership's stated goal is to equip the Army National Guard to 100 percent of its fully modernized "AC like" Modified Table of Organization and Equipment requirement. This new strategy to fully equip the Reserve component to Active component standards represents a major paradigm shift from the Cold War practice of tiered resourcing. As an example of this commitment, during fiscal year 2006, the Chief of Staff of the Army fenced $21 billion for procurement of Army National Guard ground equipment and another $1.9 billion for aviation.

POLITICAL BENCHMARKS

28. Senator CLINTON. Secretary Gates and General Pace, can you describe whether any conditions or benchmarks have been set for the Iraqi government to meet?

[1] ARFORGEN (Army Force Generation)—A structured progression of increased unit readiness over time, resulting in recurring periods of availability of trained, ready, and cohesive units prepared for operational deployment in support of regional combatant commander requirements.

Secretary GATES and General PACE. The Department shares the belief that the Iraqi government must meet the goal it has set for itself—establishing a democratic, unified, and secure Iraq. Believing 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 score, and we expect the prime minister to follow through.

Iraq's Policy Committee on National Security and Presidency Council (in September and October 2006) agreed upon a set of political, economic, and security benchmarks. While the original timeline has not been completely met, the open benchmarks remain valid and should be achieved this year:

- Approve the Provincial Elections Law and set date for provincial elections
- Approve a hydrocarbons law
- Approve de-Ba'athification law
- Approve provincial council authorities law
- Approve a flag, emblem, and national anthem law
- Implement CPA Order No.91 concerning armed forces and militias
- Approve amnesty, militias, and other armed formations law
- Committee amending the constitution ends its work
- Form independent commissions in accordance with the constitution
- Constitutional Amendment Referendum

Additionally, as the President has said, Prime Minister Maliki has made additional commitments:

- Refrain from political interference in security
- Even handed enforcement of the law against all who break it
- Provide three Iraqi brigades to support Baghdad operations
- Use of $10 billion (of Iraqi funds) for reconstruction

29. Senator CLINTON. Secretary Gates and General Pace, if conditions or benchmarks have been set, please describe them. What, if any, consequences will there be if the Iraqis fail to meet these benchmarks?

Secretary GATES. We will know the most important aspects of Iraqi compliance over the next few months as the additional forces begin operations in Baghdad. This will be an indication of the capability and the willingness of the GOI to make the tough decisions, and the ability of the Iraqi security forces to conduct difficult operations.

I understand your concern that you be kept informed on how the Iraqis are meeting their commitments and on how the plan is progressing. We are in the process of developing the appropriate benchmarks and metrics that will allow us to monitor Iraqi performance and track progress in fulfilling the plan's goals, and we will refer to these in our future discussions.

With respect to the military steps for implementing the Baghdad Security Plan, we will meet our U.S. forces commitments and have every expectation that the Iraqis will as well.

As we measure and discuss Iraqi performance, we should bear in mind that the Iraqi government and security forces include many brave and dedicated people who risk their lives daily, as do our forces, to bring a democratic government to the Iraqi people. We are measuring the performance of friends.

General PACE. The conditions or benchmarks are listed in the answer to question 28. We will continually assess Iraq's progress in meeting commitments as well as other initiatives critical to Iraq's development. The President has made it clear to Prime Minister Maliki and other Iraqi leaders that America's commitment is not open-ended. However, in his January 10 address, he also made it clear that after careful consideration he decided that announcing a phased withdrawal of our combat forces at this time would open the door to a collapse of the Iraqi government and the country being torn apart. Short of announcing a phased withdrawal, the U.S. Government can apply incentives and disincentives from across the spectrum of U.S. national power to help the Iraqi government if they are unwilling or unable to make the difficult decisions required to move Iraq forward.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MARK PRYOR

COALITION ADDITION

30. Senator PRYOR. Secretary Gates, has there been any recent effort to add another partner to the coalition forces?

Secretary GATES. We are routinely working with a number of countries to both extend and enhance their coalition participation for both military and nonmilitary missions. We are currently engaged with our colleagues at the NSC and the Department of State to bring other talented countries together with us to expand our collective abilities to provide infrastructure reconstruction and build ministerial capacity.

31. Senator PRYOR. Secretary Gates, is there a nation that could contribute a significant number of troops to those we have in Iraq? It just seems as though there must be another country that would see the importance of the struggle there and want to help us.

Secretary GATES. Currently, 33 other countries are deployed with us in Iraq. 25 are part of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and eight additional countries are part of the NATO training mission. Many of these countries are as committed as we are. However, virtually all of the countries have much smaller populations and correspondingly smaller militaries. Many of these countries have suffered casualties in Iraq disproportionate to the size of their forces. Most of these militaries also have defense of national territory (homeland defense) missions and are bound by legal constraints that limit the number of troops deployable at any given time outside their borders. In addition, many of these countries have forces deployed in support of missions in Afghanistan, the Balkans, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), and other global U.N. peacekeeping missions (Poland, Romania, and Denmark, to name but a few, are deployed in support of all of these missions). While these countries share our views of the importance of the mission in Iraq, they all are still limited by both military capacity and capability. We continue to work with allies and partners on contributions to the mission in Iraq.

IRAN

32. Senator PRYOR. Secretary Gates, what are we doing differently as part of the surge, or just as part of regular operations, to secure the border with Iran, and keep Iranian funds, weapons, and fighters out of Iraq?

Secretary GATES. The GOI has a department totally focused on border security within the Ministry of Interior. The prime minister is considering a plan for border point of entry (POE) closings. The Ministries of Interior and Defense are working on a plan to close all POEs with Iran and Syria, but not Jordan, for 72 hours and re-open them gradually as they increase their inspection procedures and enhance the equipment required to control the border entry points. Further information is contained in the answer to question 53 for Senator Martinez.

33. Senator PRYOR. Secretary Gates, are we seeing more of this type of traffic from Iran into Iraq recently, or are we keeping it under control?

Secretary GATES. [Deleted.]

REASONS FOR PREVIOUS DRAW-DOWN

34. Senator PRYOR. Secretary Gates, last November 3rd we had nearly 147,800 troops in Iraq. The civilian death tolls in October, November, and December were 1,289, 1,850, and 1,930. By January 3, our troop strength had dropped to 128,500. With civilian casualties increasing each month, why did our troop strength drop by 19,000, only to result in the President's request for a surge of 21,500?

Secretary GATES. [Deleted.]

35. Senator PRYOR. Secretary Gates, if sectarian violence was increasing steadily, why didn't we keep the troops there that we needed to fight it, or bring in Reserves from Kuwait when the violence escalated?

Secretary GATES. We have historically adjusted out troop strength based on the conditions on the ground. We have surged in the past for operations against Al Sadr in Najif (August 2004) as well as election support in December 2005. In fact we have made troop strength adjustments since the beginning of the war. Just in the last year (July 2006), General Casey asked to keep the troop strength in the country to 15 brigades, although we had established a plan to reduce to 10. Numerous times we have brought the operational Reserve brigade forward from Kuwait to change the conditions on the ground. Since February 2006 as violence has increased in Baghdad, we have steadily increased our forces in an attempt to quell that violence.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JIM WEBB

IRAN AUTHORITY

36. Senator WEBB. Secretary Gates, is it the position of this administration that it possesses the authority to conduct military operations in Iran, other than in response to direct attack, without the approval of Congress?

Secretary GATES. The President is responsible under the Constitution for the defense of 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.

CONSEQUENCES OF IRAQI NON-COOPERATION

37. Senator WEBB. Secretary Gates, in specific terms, what is this administration prepared to do if Iraqi forces do not live up to your expectations—and when?

Secretary GATES. We will know the most important aspects of Iraqi compliance over the next few months as the additional forces begin operations in Baghdad. This will be an indication of the capability and the willingness of the GOI to make the tough decisions, and the ability of the Iraqi security forces to conduct difficult operations.

We remain committed to the plan, as do the Iraqis. Iraqi force deployments, as well as the command and control arrangements, demonstrate how serious they take this effort. Prime Minister Maliki's January 25, 2007, speech before the Council of Representatives and his February 6, 2007, speech to his military commanders demonstrate his willingness to adhere to his commitments. At this point, we should focus on supporting this plan and ensuring its success.

VIEW OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

38. Senator WEBB. General Pace, Secretary Gates testified that professional military officers in Washington believe in the efficacy of the President's strategy for Iraq and believe it is a sound plan. Was that the unanimous view of the Joint Chiefs of Staff?

General PACE. The Joint Chiefs and I have had a number of discussions with the President regarding Iraq. Each time, the President asked for our views and recommendations, which we then provided. As a matter of principle, however, discussions with the President are intentionally kept private for a number of reasons. Foremost among those reasons is the notion that I want to protect the trust and confidence of all dialog with the President as I execute my legally binding responsibilities under title 10.

EQUIPMENT FOR ADDITIONAL TROOPS

39. Senator WEBB. General Pace, will the additional U.S. military units ordered to Iraq to implement the President's plan be equipped with properly armored combat vehicles in sufficient numbers?

General PACE. Yes, we will equip the troops with the best armor protection we can provide to ensure they are able to accomplish their mission. No one will conduct operational missions from our bases in Iraq without properly armored vehicles.

- Marine Corps vehicle armor requirements will be met by cross-leveling assets already in theater.
- The Army, with the larger number of forces involved, will have some equipping challenges with uparmored HMMWVs (UAHs—M1114/M1151), and medium and heavy tactical wheeled vehicles. To reduce the risk associated with this challenge, operational commanders will redistribute existing vehicles within the U.S. CENTCOM AOR to ensure each unit has the required number of properly armored vehicles to meet their operational requirements and to guarantee that no one conducts operations from our bases unless equipped with the very best armored vehicles we have.

ARABIC PROFICIENCY

40. Senator WEBB. General Pace, for the U.S. units and advisors slated to embed with the Iraqi Army, will you increase the number of personnel proficient in Arabic?

General PACE. Transition teams throughout the theater of operations have requested increased translator/interpreter support to better maintain the increased operations tempo. In response to this requirement, we have increased our requirements for contract linguists for Operation Iraqi Freedom. There are some challenges with providing translators/interpreters with Secret level security clearances, especially to fill immediate requirements. U.S. forces in Iraq have, however, stated they will support an increase in Category (CAT) Is (uncleared personnel) in addition to the CAT IIs (cleared up to Secret) that can be provided. The Department is working to fill these requirements as effectively as possible.

RECONSTRUCTION

41. Senator WEBB. Secretary Gates, please provide a specific accounting of past U.S. investment in Iraq's reconstruction administered by DOD.

Secretary GATES. In Iraq reconstruction, DOD has received funds through direct appropriations and also through both transfer and drawdown authority in appropriations acts.

PL 108–11 (Apr. 16, 2003) provided DOD with transfer authority of up to $489.3 million of Iraq Freedom Fund and an additional (uncapped) authority to transfer from the Defense Cooperation Account to fund the Natural Resources Risk Remediation Fund (NRRRF). A total of $802 million was apportioned to this account for DOD for Restore Iraq Oil.

PL 108–11 also appropriated $2.475 billion to Funds Appropriated to the President, the first Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund (IRRF–1). Of this amount, DOD received $518.2 million for three responsibilities: Restore Iraq Electricity (RIE), Restore Iraq Oil (RIO), and First Responder Network and Drills.

PL 108–11 further provided DOD with the authority to transfer $48.1 million from the Iraq Freedom Fund to train the new Iraqi army.

PL 108–106 (Nov 6, 2003) appropriated to Funds Appropriated to the President, $18.4 billion in the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund (IRRF–2) for providing security, relief, rehabilitation, and reconstruction. Funds could only be apportioned to the Coalition Provisional Authority and four specified departments including DOD. The total amount of IRRF–2 funding that was apportioned to DOD was $13.5 billion.

PL 108–106 also authorized DOD to use up to $180 million of its operation and maintenance funds to fund the Commander's Emergency Response Program, (CERP) for Iraq and Afghanistan. This program enables military commanders in Iraq to respond to urgent humanitarian relief and reconstruction requirements within their area of responsibility. DOD allocated $140 million to Iraq and $40 million to Afghanistan.

PL 108–287 (Aug 5, 2004) authorized up to $500 million in train and equip transfer authority covering both Afghanistan and Iraq. The Department allocated $210 million to this mission in Iraq, with the rest of the authority dedicated to Afghanistan.

PL 109–13 (May 11, 2005) first appropriated funds to train and equip the Iraqi army and police under the Iraq Security Forces Fund (ISFF). A total of $5,490 million (including $99 million for Jordan to establish a regional training center) was appropriated to the ISFF, for Iraq.

PL 109–13 also provided $854 million in authority for CERP, of which $718 million was allocated to Iraq.

PL 109–148 (December 30, 2005) and PL 109–234 (June 15, 2006) provided $923 million in funding authority for CERP for fiscal year 2006; $708 million of this was allocated to Iraq.

PL 109–234 also appropriated $3,007 million to the ISFF.

PL 109–289 (September 29, 2006) provided $1,700 million under Title IX to train the Iraqi security forces under ISFF.

PL 109–289 further provided $500 million in CERP funding authority, of which $375 million was allocated to Iraq.

42. Senator WEBB. Secretary Gates, what U.S. oversight and accountability measures are planned to ensure the administration's increase of $1 billion in reconstruction funding will reach the hands of its intended recipients in Iraq?

Secretary GATES. Since the Coalition Provisional Authority established the Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP) in Iraq and Congress extended the

program to Afghanistan, the Department has had procedures in place to ensure that military commanders properly account for all CERP funding. DOD has issued guidance on the financial management and internal control of CERP. The various implementing organizations have issued additional guidance to include more detailed standard operating procedures. The Commander for Multi-National Force-Iraq (MNF–1) requires that all CERP use be aligned with U.S. strategic objectives for Iraq. The field commanders coordinate CERP-funded humanitarian and reconstruction efforts with other U.S. Government rebuilding efforts ongoing in Iraq and Afghanistan. Approval authority for CERP is tied to total cost and the commander's rank. The Department has internal monthly execution reports and provides Congress with quarterly reports on the execution of appropriated funding. The Army has had its audit agency conduct reviews of CERP and has found no violation of established regulations and guidance with regard to accountability. The Special Inspector General for Iraq (SIGIR) has conducted two audits of CERP covering the fiscal year 2004 and fiscal year 2005 programs, and recognized improvements made between the two program years. They did, however, make some recommendations, including a strengthening of coordination with the State Department and USAID. The SIGIR has also announced that it plans to conduct an audit of the fiscal year 2006 CERP. With help from the various audit agencies oversight and accountability for CERP have been strengthened through the years.

I would like to clarify for the record that DOD is not requesting an increase of $1 billion for CERP. Congress provided $923 million for CERP in fiscal year 2006. In the fiscal year 2007 supplemental request, we are asking Congress to provide the Department with an additional $456 million to fund the CERP in Iraq and Afghanistan through the remainder of the fiscal year. This would be additive to the $500 million that Congress provided in Title IX of the fiscal year 2007 DOD Appropriations Act. If Congress approves the Department's request, the total for CERP in fiscal year 2007 would be $956 million for both Iraq and Afghanistan—$33 million more than the $923 million provided in fiscal year 2006.

IRAN

43. Senator WEBB. General Pace, are U.S. military operations against Iranian networks in Iraq said to be supporting sectarian violence coordinated in advance with the Iraqi government and regional Iraqi government officials?

General PACE. The United States has been clear all along that it will go after all those networks in Iraq that are causing destabilization. Prime Minister Maliki and his senior governmental leaders are fully informed of major military operations by Multi-National Force-Iraq (MNF–I). Prime Minister Maliki is emphasizing throughout the span of the GOI that all parties involved in inciting sectarian violence will be held accountable. Coalition forces in full partnership with the GOI and without regard to nationality or ethnicity will disassemble networks that are providing and employing technologies to kill or maim innocent Iraqis and American soldiers. There are clear signs that Iraqis have begun to take action to stop sectarian violence and secure their capital—and this projection of strength is having a positive impact.

NEED FOR PATRIOT BATTERIES AND CARRIER GROUP

44. Senator WEBB. General Pace, why is it necessary to deploy Patriot missile batteries and an additional carrier strike group to the Persian Gulf at this time?

General PACE. The purpose of deploying these forces is to underscore to our friends as well as to our potential adversaries in the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) area of responsibility that the United States considers the Arabian Gulf and the stability in that region to be a vital national security interest. For example, the Patriot batteries have the mission of conducting tactical missile defense of assets in the region and providing an integrated air defense capability in support of U.S. CENTCOM forces and our regional partners in a bilateral manner. U.S. forces will continue to maintain an unmatched naval and air presence in the region that deters destabilizing activities by nations such as Iran while safeguarding the region's vital links to the global economy.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JEFF SESSIONS

EQUIPMENT DISTRIBUTION

45. Senator SESSIONS. Secretary Gates, what assessments are ongoing within DOD to delineate at what point deployed equipment will be returned to depots, refurbished, and returned to units to fill the requirements of operational units?

Secretary GATES. The flow of equipment to higher levels of maintenance is determined by the respective military Service, synchronizing in-theater requirements with fill requirements of deploying units. Equipment in-theater is divided into two categories: Unit deployed equipment and theater provided equipment (TPE). Unit deployed equipment returns with the unit to home station after an assessment that the equipment is not needed in theater for follow-on forces. The returning equipment is then repaired at a depot or at field level. Determination of the level is based upon technical inspections of the equipment and historical lessons learned regarding the repair effort needed. Following repair, the equipment remains with the unit for training or it may be cross leveled to units preparing to deploy if shortages of those items exist. Equipment repaired at depots is redistributed in priority—first to deployed and deploying units, then to units next to deploy, and then to nondeployed units. TPE is maintained in theater. Refurbishment facilities located in theater repair TPE. When this equipment is damaged to the extent it cannot be repaired in theater, it is redeployed and repaired at the depot.

46. Senator SESSIONS. Secretary Gates, what assessments are ongoing within the DOD to delineate at what point equipment will be put in new prepositioning of material configured in unit sets (POMCUS) sites in theater?

Secretary GATES. The Army Prepositioned Stocks (APS) program provides unit equipment and consumable materiel at locations, ashore and afloat, that enable Army forces to be responsive to combatant commanders' requirements. The POMCUS program was regionally focused on speeding the return of Army forces to Europe during the Cold War. APS is an evolution of the POMCUS program and is intended to provide global capabilities. The stocks in Southwest Asia are referred to as APS–5.

APS–5 was initially issued to support the rapid deployment and employment of the U.S. Army's Third Infantry Division during the opening phase of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

[Deleted.]

47. Senator SESSIONS. Secretary Gates, what assessments are ongoing within the DOD to delineate at what point how much equipment will be turned over to Iraqi or Afghan army units?

Secretary GATES. Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC–I) J–4 maintains situational awareness of all equipment required for issue from the organization's Modified Table of Organization and Equipment (MTOE). The authorized equipment lines of the MTOEs are the basis of issue for equipment to Iraqi forces. This equipment is property of the GOI upon issue from MNSTC–I.

Periodically, as mission requirements and/or changes dictate, equipment requirements are reviewed by either of the Iraqi ministries, coalition forces, or both. Equipment requirements generated by these reviews are sourced using Iraqi or coalition resources as available and agreed upon by senior leaders. Equipment procured for these missions also becomes the property of the GOI upon receipt.

48. Senator SESSIONS. General Pace, we have already experienced accountability problems with equipment transferred to the Iraqi and Afghan armies, and I am concerned about the potential for future fraud or theft of vital military equipment. What measures do DOD and the host nation governments plan to implement to protect the U.S. taxpayer once the equipment is turned over to Iraqi or Afghan army units?

General PACE. U.S. military and contractor personnel remain an integral part of the equipment issuing process. There is a U.S. military member appointed in writing as the accountability officer at the national receiving and issuing depot.

In December 2005, direct control of the Afghan National Army (ANA) logistics system was transferred to the ANA from the Army. To maintain oversight of the process and to mentor the ANA personnel on the proper operation of the new system, both U.S. military mentors and U.S. contractor personnel continue to work side by side with the ANA, at all logistics locations.

All ANA units have assigned unit identification codes, authorized equipment levels, and only selected ANA unit personnel, who must be on an official identification

and signature card at the depot, are allowed to receive material from the ANA depots. There have been regular 100 percent inventory reviews under the new enhanced logistics system that began with weapons in May 2006. Currently, there is a quarterly cycle of 100 percent inventories of weapons, vehicles, communications equipment, and all other assets.

An Army "property book" tracking system has been fielded to each ANA unit that directly receives equipment. There are U.S. military mentors down to these levels who mentor their ANA counterparts on proper "property book" accountability and documentation procedures.

In the near future, a new central maintenance facility and consolidated logistics command and depot facility will be constructed. These new facilities will greatly enhance the overall efficiency, consolidation, and control of the ANA national logistics system and of future U.S.-funded material entering the ANA inventories. The new Consolidated Logistics Command and Depot Facility will allow for the facility to be completely wired for automation and better inventory control and data flow.

The currently geographically separated depots will be closed and moved to this central location. Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan has taken the lead in ensuring command policy guidance enforces the proper control and accountability of all U.S.-funded material transferred to ANA custody. They also provide senior-level mentorship to the Minister of Defense and his subordinate departmental and general staff members on this system.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR ELIZABETH DOLE

IRAQI MILITARY COMPETENCE

49. Senator DOLE. General Pace, if we are going to see an improvement in the security in Baghdad, it is going to manifest itself first in the performance of the Iraqi soldiers serving alongside U.S. soldiers and marines, and the Iraqi units in which U.S. forces are embedded. Do you see appreciable improvement in the performance of Iraqi commanders and their troops, particularly their willingness to aggressively patrol through insurgent strongholds?

General PACE. We assess Iraqi security forces monthly. Over the last year, we have seen a very measurable improvement in the performance of Iraqi units. For instance, there are 8 Iraqi Army divisions, 31 Iraqi Army brigades, and 93 Iraqi Army battalions that have the security lead in their areas, up from 1 division, 4 brigades, and 23 battalions in October 2005. Further, the GOI has aggressively replaced incompetent commanders as well as those identified with severe sectarian biases.

With respect to operations in insurgent strongholds, Iraqi security force units are either independent or in the lead in more than 60 percent of operations across the country. They have shown a willingness to conduct aggressive operations in areas that are historically contentious and have acquitted themselves well.

50. Senator DOLE. General Pace, what are the metrics used to assess their performance?

General PACE. We assess Iraqi military unit capability in six areas called the Transition Readiness Assessment. This assessment is done monthly by our embedded transition teams and BCTs. We assess personnel, training, equipment, logistics, command and control, and leadership down to the battalion level. The transition teams also provide a subjective narrative about each unit, which also is considered in the evaluated level of readiness. The monthly assessments are rolled up into an overall report that is briefed to the Multi-National Force-Iraq Commanding General. These assessments are the primary tool in determining if and when the Iraqi Ground Force Command will assume operational control of Iraqi Army divisions.

CONSEQUENCES OF WITHDRAWAL

51. Senator DOLE. General Pace, what do your intelligence experts predict would occur in Iraq if the United States were to withdraw substantial numbers of troops over the next several months?

General PACE. [Deleted.]

52. Senator DOLE. Secretary Gates, a precipitous withdrawal of American forces from Iraq would, I believe, have profound and negative implications for the region. What in your view would the impact of such a withdrawal be for the countries in the region, particularly for Israel and its relations with Hamas; for Jordan; for Leb-

anon, and the threat posed by Hezbollah; for Iran and its support for terrorist groups in the region; for free and unimpeded access by the west to the Persian Gulf and its importance to U.S. security; for Afghanistan; and for Pakistan?

Secretary GATES. I agree. The violence in Iraq, if unchecked, could spread outside its borders and draw other states into a regional conflagration. In addition, one would see:

- an emboldened and strengthened Iran;
- a safe haven and base of operations for terrorist networks in the heart of the Middle East;
- a humiliating defeat in the overall campaign against violent extremism worldwide; and
- an undermining of the credibility of the United States.

One consequence of a precipitous withdrawal from Iraq is clear: radical extremist groups would grow in strength. As a result, they would be in a better position to topple moderate governments, such as Jordan and Lebanon, and create chaos in the region.

One of the basic aspects of our bilateral relationships with Afghanistan and Pakistan is to assure them that the U.S. commitment is enduring. A quick withdrawal from Iraq could undermine our credibility with these governments.

As to access to the Persian Gulf, the United States has long had, and will continue to have, a long-term strategic presence there.

Hezbollah and Hamas both receive substantial funding and political support from Iran. A stronger Hamas could pose an increased threat to Israel, further destabilizing relations between Israel and the Palestinians.

The actors in this region—both friends and adversaries—are watching closely what we do in Iraq and will draw conclusions about our resolve and the reliability of our commitments. Should we withdraw prematurely, we could well leave chaos and the disintegration of Iraq behind us. Further, governments in the region probably are already asking themselves: if the Americans withdraw in defeat from Iraq, just how much farther, and from where else, might they withdraw?

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MEL MARTINEZ

BORDER SECURITY

53. Senator MARTINEZ. Secretary Gates and General Pace, we understand that a significant amount of material support for the anti-coalition forces is coming from outside Iraq. What is currently being done and what more can be done to halt or reduce that support?

Secretary GATES. As the President said on January 10, 2007, 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 materiel support for attacks on American forces. We will protect our forces and disrupt the attacks against them. We'll interrupt the flow of support from Iran and Syria. We will seek out and destroy the networks inside Iraq that provide advanced weaponry and training to our enemies.

We have already taken actions in Iraq to counter the flow of Iranian-supplied weapons. These weapons are used to attack the coalition, the Iraqi population, and Iraqi security forces. At the same time, the GOI has been trying, through diplomatic means, to persuade the Syrian and Iranian governments to cease their unhelpful activities in Iraq. Whatever the Iranian and Syrian governments say in response to these Iraqi efforts, the real answer will be whether there is a change in behavior.

General PACE. Improvements in border security are being implemented to reduce support to insurgents from outside of Iraq. The objective of the Iraq Borders Security Plan is to eliminate or significantly reduce the flow of external support to the insurgency from across Iraq's borders. In order to create the conditions for success in this effort, the Iraqi government must demonstrate that it is capable of controlling its own borders and of effectively reducing threats to its sovereignty. Tactical and operational integration between Department of Border Enforcement (DBE) and Iraqi Army (IA) forces is central to an effective Border Security Plan. Border control includes completing and manning planned border forts, integrating DBE efforts with IA to create depth, enhancing port of entry (POE) capabilities, and influencing border tribes to support the effort. Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC-I) has trained almost 30,000 DBE personnel to execute the border security mission. The DBE is also supported by 28 Coalition Border Transition Teams

(BTTs). The 11-man BTTs mentor and support the development of the border units. The BTT members are trained in various specialties, including logistics and communications, and provide critical assistance to the border force commanders in the areas of personnel management, intelligence, operations, budgeting, equipment accountability, and maintenance. Additionally, Department of Homeland Security Customs and Border Support Teams mentor and monitor ISF at critical POEs. The Customs and Border Support Teams are critical to the development of the POEs. The ISF is in the lead on Iraq's borders, with DBE along the border, backed up by IA units in depth. This arrangement will require continued mentoring, and DBE will not likely take the lead for border security until December 2007. DBE leadership has its own Iraqi-led plan, approved through MOI, to expand the number of border forts and structures over the course of the next 6–10 years. This will fill critical gaps along the 2,750 kilometers of international border surrounding the country of Iraq between the existing 258 coalition-funded border forts.

54. Senator MARTINEZ. Secretary Gates and General Pace, should more coalition troops be employed along the border with Syria or Iran in order to gain greater control over Iraq's borders?

Secretary GATES and General PACE. The expanse of Iraq's borders is considerable. Eleven of 18 provinces have international borders. Multi-National Force-Iraq is developing plans to put coalition forces at all Iranian and Syrian points of entry (POEs) in support of a GOI-initiated closure of POEs to be followed by a period of enhanced enforcement of POE regulations. This initiative is pending a decree from the prime minister to initiate the closure. No firm date for closure has yet been agreed to. Coalition forces that have been identified to support the mission have retained an on order task to support a closure within 72 hours of notification. MNF–I is also refining a plan to send training, enforcement, and oversight teams to POEs to work with the DBE in an effort to initiate enhanced operations. A key element to this effort will be the Department of Homeland Security Border Support Teams, the 28 coalition BTTs, and the almost 30,000 Iraqi DBE and POE forces.

55. Senator MARTINEZ. Secretary Gates and General Pace, what are Iraq's neighbors doing to help secure their common borders with Iraq?

Secretary GATES and General PACE. Most of Iraq's neighbors have improved their security efforts along their common borders with Iraq. Of course, borders are difficult to seal off completely, but we believe Iraq's neighbors are doing their best. However, Syria and Iran need to do more. Although Syria has made some improvements, significant numbers of foreign fighters and resources still flow through Syria to Iraq. While Prime Minister Maliki's government has recently engaged Syrian counterparts to redress the flow of foreign fighters from Syria into Iraq, the Syrian regime continues to provide safe haven, border transit, and limited logistical support to Iraqi insurgents, especially former Iraqi Baath Party and other former regime elements. Iran is supporting Shia militant groups in Iraq and is, as a matter of policy, moving weapons and munitions across its border to supply these groups.

IRAQI INTELLIGENCE

56. Senator MARTINEZ. Secretary Gates, we know that one of the keys to winning an irregular war is having intelligence dominance. The ability to infiltrate enemy strongholds, mix with the populace, and determine capabilities and intentions of enemy forces are particularly important. In some ways, despite our technological and technical capabilities, the Iraqis may do the human intelligence mission better than Americans. Does the Iraqi government understand the importance of intelligence and how to get it and use it?

Secretary GATES. [Deleted.]

57. Senator MARTINEZ. Secretary Gates, what is your/their vision of what an Iraqi intelligence service might look like and where they are in developing that capability?

Secretary GATES. [Deleted.]

IRAQI ARMY TRAINING

58. Senator MARTINEZ. General Pace, can you outline the general concept we are using now to train the Iraqi army?

General PACE. The institutional training base provided by Multi-National Security Transition Corps-Iraq accounts for basic and military occupational specialty training

for soldier, squad leader, and platoon sergeant courses for NCOs, and initial-entry cadet and staff officer training for the officer corps. As these personnel move to their units, embedded transition teams and partner units directed by Multi-National Corps-Iraq oversee and mentor collective training in counterinsurgency-oriented mission-essential tasks. Newly recruited soldiers and officers go through initial training in the same manner as U.S. soldiers and officers. These new recruits are trained in Iraqi training institutions by Iraqi officers and noncommissioned officers with coalition forces' oversight. There are 18 training institutions across Iraq, and each of them is now led by Iraqis. Once the new soldier or officer graduates from the training academy and is assigned to an operational unit, his training continues under the guise of our embedded military transition teams. These teams assist their Iraqi Army counterparts with the development and execution of training plans from platoon to division level. The transition teams ensure Iraqi Army leadership at all levels is competent to conduct the training and, where applicable, will conduct the training themselves. Training is also conducted by coalition counterpart units while conducting operations, specifically at platoon and company level.

59. Senator MARTINEZ. General Pace, what changes do you anticipate over the next 6–9 months to improve the program?

General PACE. As the Iraqi military increases its institutional capability, the quality of training will increase as well. The de-Baathification Reform Act that is currently before the Iraqi Council of Representatives will allow former Baath Party-affiliated Army officers to return to service unless they were individually involved in the former regime's crimes. This act may bring back a corps of trained and experienced former officers that will have an impact on the training competency of the Iraqi training institutions. Further, as the tactical situation dictates, coalition forces units will begin to increase the size of embedded transition teams, which will provide greater coverage at all echelons than is currently available.

60. Senator MARTINEZ. General Pace, have you explored the possibility of bringing Iraqi army trainees to secure third countries or to the United States to provide a more productive training environment?

General PACE. We have explored training opportunities outside of Iraq. Western European nations, such as Germany, have offered to conduct specialized training for the Iraqi Army. The GOI, however, specifically desires to keep all Iraqi soldiers in Iraq for training. All Iraqi Army training institutions have been turned over to Iraqi control, with coalition forces oversight. We believe this enhances the sovereignty of Iraq.

However, we have trained more than 46,000 Iraqi policemen at the Jordanian International Police Training Center. There are currently more than 2,000 Iraqi policemen still training in Jordan.

[Whereupon, at 1:53 p.m., the committee adjourned.]

THE CURRENT SITUATION IN IRAQ AND ON THE ADMINISTRATION'S RECENTLY ANNOUNCED STRATEGY FOR CONTINUED UNITED STATES ASSISTANCE TO THE IRAQI GOVERNMENT AND FOR AN INCREASED UNITED STATES MILITARY PRESENCE IN IRAQ

THURSDAY, JANUARY 25, 2007

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:32 a.m. in room SD–106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator Carl Levin (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Senators Levin, Lieberman, Reed, Bill Nelson, E. Benjamin Nelson, Bayh, Clinton, Pryor, Webb, McCaskill, McCain, Warner, Inhofe, Sessions, Collins, Chambliss, and Graham.

Committee staff members present: Richard D. DeBobes, staff director; and Leah C. Brewer, nominations and hearings clerk.

Majority staff members present: Daniel J. Cox, Jr., professional staff member; Michael J. Kuiken, professional staff member; and Michael J. Noblet, research assistant.

Minority staff members present: Michael V. Kostiw, Republican staff director; William M. Caniano, professional staff member; Ambrose R. Hock, professional staff member; Gregory T. Kiley, professional staff member; Derek J. Maurer, minority counsel; Christopher J. Paul, professional staff member; Lynn F. Rusten, professional staff member; and Sean G. Stackley, professional staff member.

Staff assistants present: Fletcher L. Cork, Micah H. Harris, and Benjamin L. Rubin.

Committee members' assistants present: Frederick M. Downey, assistant to Senator Lieberman; Elizabeth King, assistant to Senator Reed; Caroline Tess, assistant to Senator Bill Nelson; Eric Pierce, assistant to Senator Ben Nelson; Todd Rosenblum, assistant to Senator Bayh; Andrew Shapiro, assistant to Senator Clinton; Scott D. MacConomy, assistant to Senator Pryor; Gordon Peterson, assistant to Senator Webb; Nichole M. Distefano, assistant to Senator McCaskill; John A. Bonsell and Jeremy Shull, assistants to Senator Inhofe, Mark J. Winter, assistant to Senator Collins; Clyde A. Taylor IV, assistant to Senator Chambliss; Jennifer Olson and

Matthew R. Rimkunas, assistants to Senator Graham; Lindsey Neas, assistant to Senator Dole; Stuart C. Mallory, assistant to Senator Thune; and Brian W. Walsh, assistant to Senator Martinez.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARL LEVIN, CHAIRMAN

Chairman LEVIN. Good morning, everybody.

Today, we are very privileged to hear from three distinguished witnesses as we continue to examine the President's new strategy for Iraq: Dr. William Perry, former Secretary of Defense, most recently a member of the Iraq Study Group (ISG), and currently a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution; Ambassador Dennis Ross, former Middle East Coordinator in the Clinton administration, and currently Counselor and Ziegler Distinguished Fellow with the Washington Institute for Near East Policy; and General John Keane, former Vice Chief of Staff of the United States Army and a man who is well known to members of this committee from his many visits with us.

We welcome you all and we give you great thanks for your willingness to join us this morning.

Prime Minister Maliki himself said, on November 27, that, "The crisis in Iraq is political, and the ones who can stop the cycle of aggravation and bloodletting of innocents are the politicians." The addition of more than 20,000 American troops to the nearly 140,000 now there does not address that fundamental problem.

General Abizaid, before this committee in November, put it this way, "I 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?' They all said no." Now, that goes to the heart of the matter.

There actually seems to be an agreement that an Iraqi political settlement is the key to ending the violence in Iraq. The principal difference of opinion exists on whether Iraqi politicians need breathing space, as President Bush has said, to reach required political compromises or whether, as many of us believe, Iraqi politicians need to be pressured to make those compromises, and that the addition of 20,000 more troops doesn't make a political compromise more likely, while just getting us deeper into a civil conflict.

The President has recently said that, "America will hold the Iraqi Government to the benchmarks that it has announced." I've tried twice to get this administration to provide a list of those benchmarks. The Department of Defense (DOD) indicated that the Department of State (DOS) would provide them. Secretary Rice has not even answered our letters in that regard. I have no idea why the administration appears to be stonewalling Congress on such a critical issue.

In any event, unless there are mechanisms to force Iraqi politicians to be Iraqi leaders and make the essential political compromises, then any benchmarks are just marks on a piece of paper—empty promises no more likely to be kept than previous Iraqi commitments.

What is going to pressure the Iraqis to meet those benchmarks? What are the consequences if they don't meet them? That was the point General Abizaid was making in November, when he said that more American troops now would not add considerably to our ability to achieve success in Iraq. In that same hearing, he went on to explain the following: "It's easy for the Iraqis to rely upon us to do this work. I believe," he said, "that more American forces prevent the Iraqis from doing more, from taking more responsibility for their own future."

General Casey emphasized that same point on January 2 saying, "The longer United States forces continue to bear the main burden of Iraq's security, it lengthens the time that the Government of Iraq has to make the hard decisions about reconciliation and dealing with the militias."

These two military commanders have testified, on numerous occasions, that there must be a political solution, that Iraqi politicians need to make the political compromises on constitutional issues, on federalism, and on sharing oil revenues, which are integral to changing the dynamics in Iraq and defeating the insurgency and quelling the sectarian violence.

The Iraqi track record on meeting benchmarks and carrying out commitments is not encouraging. The Constitutional Review Commission has yet to formulate recommendations, the national reconciliation milestones have not been met, little meaningful action has been taken to curb militias, and Iraqi support for previous Baghdad security plans has fallen way short of what was promised. The lack of willingness to compromise has led me to believe that Iraqi politicians will not make those compromises unless they are convinced that U.S. forces are not there, as the President has said, as long as the Iraqis want, and unless the Iraqis conclude that our troops cannot save them from themselves. Unless so convinced, they will continue the political gridlock, which isn't caused by the violence, but, in the words of Prime Minister Maliki, is the main source of the continuing cycle of bloodletting of innocents.

Again, our thanks to our witnesses for taking the time to address these and other issues and to take our questions.

Senator McCain.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN McCAIN

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank you for scheduling this hearing. I also join you in welcoming our distinguished witnesses, all three of whom have great records of public service and are going to be very helpful, I think, to this committee as we debate this ongoing, very difficult issue.

Last week, we heard experts from the intelligence community discuss the security situation in Iraq. Earlier this week, we heard from Lieutenant General Petraeus, who will soon command the multinational forces in Iraq. Mr. Chairman, I want to congratulate you, because I think this series of hearings has been very useful.

Today we have the benefit of an outstanding panel of senior national security experts who have decades of combined experience both in and out of Government, and we're appreciative of the impressive history of service that these witnesses have provided to our Nation.

In his State of the Union Address on Tuesday night, the President noted, "This is not the fight we entered in Iraq, but it's the fight we're in." This statement captures the dire circumstances that characterize Iraq today. I regret that we have come to this point. In the past, I have been vocal about how this war has been mishandled. The many mistakes we have made in Iraq have been catalogued in various books, articles, and, indeed, in the prepared testimony of our witnesses today. All of us agree that the situation in Iraq is bad and getting worse, and I hope that we could agree that the consequences of a failed state there are potentially catastrophic.

Regional stability, the international economy, America's world standing, and the fate of the Iraqi people are at stake. Iraq, the nation liberated by the United States and our coalition partners after decades of dictatorship, is living on borrowed time.

In addressing Iraq, all policymakers have an obligation to conduct themselves with the seriousness the situation there deserves. I have commended the President for recognizing the mistakes of the past and for outlining a new strategy earlier this month. The administration is, at last, moving toward a counterinsurgency strategy that focuses on protecting the population and securing areas, rather than on killing insurgents, and transitioning to Iraqi responsibility. This approach does not, as some have argued, presume that there's a military solution alone to the situation in Iraq. On the contrary, the solution will be found as much, if not more, along political and economic lines, but it is a simple reflection of reality that, without security, political and economic activity cannot go forward. Security is a precondition for everything we wish to see the Iraqis accomplish. By holding territory with combined U.S. and Iraqi troops, we can allow the economic and political process to move ahead, and Iraq can at least have some prospects for a brighter future.

Those prospects, at this moment, hinge largely on securing Baghdad. Baghdad is the epicenter of Iraq's political power and its political violence. It is the center of gravity in this war. In this exceedingly difficult situation in its historic capital city, it has proven very difficult for the new government to develop capacity and to address the issues that must be resolved.

On Tuesday, General Petraeus said that the citizens in Baghdad, "take risks incalculable to us just to get to work, to educate their children, and to feed their families." We cannot expect the government to achieve political reconciliation and economic recovery when such circumstances prevail in its capital city. We can expect, however, and must demand, that if we're able to bring down the violence, the government of Prime Minister Maliki meet the political and economic benchmarks to which he has committed. It is not certain that this new approach will succeed. The only guarantee is that, if we do not try, we will certainly fail. It is imperative that we understand the likely consequences of failure, and it is imperative that we understand that.

I hope our witnesses will share their views on this matter, but already many experts have predicted a failed state in Iraq, with extreme levels of sectarian violence well beyond those we see today. They predict larger refugee flows, a terrorist safe-haven, greater

Iranian influence, and the potential for regional war. The mission on which our country is sending General Petraeus is critical and this is likely the last chance for success. I have great confidence in General Petraeus. I think he's one of the finest generals that our military has produced. He told the committee this week that the task ahead is, "clear cut, though difficult." He reminded us that he will need support from all elements of the United States Government.

The degree to which Federal agencies and departments are assisting our military as they carry out this difficult mission is a matter on which this committee must keep close watch and I hope that we, as Senators, will apply the same standard to ourselves. General Petraeus says he cannot carry out his mission without additional troops. He must have them. He needs the support of Congress to give this new strategy a chance and I urge my colleagues to give him that too.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator McCain.

Dr. Perry?

STATEMENT OF WILLIAM J. PERRY, SENIOR FELLOW, HOOVER INSTITUTION; AND FORMER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Dr. PERRY. I have submitted a written statement for the record and, with your permission, I will only give highlights of that testimony.

Chairman LEVIN. It will be made part of the record, as will all the testimony.

Dr. PERRY. In December, the ISG concluded 9 months of study and proposed a new way forward. Earlier this month, President Bush announced his new way forward that is significantly different from the ISG recommendations. So, in my talk today, I will briefly explain the differences in the two approaches and why I continue to believe the ISG proposals serve our country better.

We are in a very deep hole in Iraq. We may never know whether our goal of achieving a democratic, stable government in Iraq was, in fact, feasible since the administration's attempts to do so were burdened with strategic errors. We failed to get support from regional powers and key allies. As a consequence, U.S. forces comprise about 90 percent of the coalition, as opposed to about 50 percent in Operation Desert Storm or Bosnia. The administration did not send in enough troops to maintain security after the Iraqi army was defeated, giving the insurgency a chance to gain a foothold. They disbanded the Iraqi army, police, and civil servants a few weeks after the Iraqi army was defeated. As a result, 500,000 angry young men were turned loose on Iraqi towns with weapons and with no jobs, and Iraq was left with no security force except for an undersized coalition military force. Finally, the administration pushed the Iraqi Provisional Government to establish a constitution and hold elections, which was good, but in a faulty process that did not adequate protect minority rights; thus, setting the stage for a bloody power struggle between Sunnis and Shias. The cumulative effect of all of these strategic errors is the disastrous security situation in Iraq which continues to deteriorate.

This committee knows all too well that, to date, more than 25,000 U.S. military personnel have been killed, maimed, or wounded, and that, last year, more than 30,000 Iraqis were killed in the sectarian violence sweeping the major cities in Iraq. Not so well known is that more than a million Iraqis already have left the country, including large numbers of teachers and doctors, and the violence is still trending upward. Last Saturday, 27 American servicemen were killed, and last Sunday, 100 Iraqis were killed in multiple suicide bombings. As grim as this situation is, it could become even worse when U.S. soldiers leave. But, in the absence of political reconciliation, that could be true whether we leave a year from now or whether we leave 5 years from now.

In the face of this growing disaster, the U.S. Congress commissioned an independent bipartisan study charged to reach consensus on a way forward in Iraq. The ISG Report called for a change in mission, a reinvigoration of diplomacy in the region, a strengthening of the Iraqi Government, and the beginning of troop redeployments. The change in mission proposed was key to everything else in the report.

We believed that we should try to strengthen the ability of the Iraqi Government to hold off a full-scale civil war. We believed that we should continue our efforts to defeat al Qaeda in Iraq. Although al Qaeda was not a significant factor in Iraq before the war, it has since established a strong foothold, specializing in mass killings. We believed that we should reduce the commitment of our ground forces in Iraq and reestablish their readiness for other missions. The United States has important security responsibilities outside of Iraq which cannot be met if our ground forces are tied down in Iraq for the indefinite future.

We recommended the following actions to carry out these missions: shift the mission of U.S. troops from combat patrolling to training the Iraqi army, including embedding some U.S. soldiers so that they can provide role models and on-the-job training for Iraqi soldiers; begin pulling out American combat brigades, with the goal of having all out by the first quarter of 2008, except for a very strong rapid-reaction force needed for force protection and needed for continuing fight against al Qaeda in Iraq; continue to support Iraqi forces with intelligence, logistics, and air support; provide both positive and negative incentives for the Iraqi Government to accelerate the reconciliation process and the oil revenue-sharing so the Sunnis have a stake in a stable Iraq; and mount an intense diplomatic effort to persuade friendly regional powers to assist economically, politically, and with training, and to put pressure on unfriendly regional powers to stop arming militias and fomenting violence.

If the recommendations of the ISG were to be followed, many of our combat brigades would pull out of Iraq this year. As our Army combat brigades and Marine Corps units returned to their bases in the United States, the Defense Department would have a huge budget and management problem in restoring them to full combat readiness. The Army, all of whose brigades were at high readiness levels at the beginning of the war, is dangerously close to being broken. Today, less than a third of these forces are at readiness levels needed to meet military contingencies, and lower readiness

levels invite such contingencies. Indeed, our security has already suffered because of the perception of Iran and North Korea that our forces are tied down in Iraq.

The DOD also needs to reconsider the role of the National Guard since the compact with these citizen soldiers has been shattered by the extended deployments that have caused many of them to lose their jobs and some of them to lose their families. This committee has a special responsibility to deal with restoring the combat capability of the U.S. military forces.

Earlier this month, the President proposed what he called "A New Way Forward in Iraq." His strategy calls for adding more than 20,000 combat troops, the bulk of them to be employed in securing Baghdad. When the ISG was in Baghdad, we discussed the Baghdad security problem with General Casey and General Chiarelli, as well as General Dempsey, and asked if they could increase the likelihood of success if they had another three to five American brigades. Both generals said "no." They argued that the problem of conducting combat patrols in neighborhoods of Baghdad had to be carried out by Iraqi forces. They said that they believed that bringing in more American troops could delay the Iraqis assuming the responsibility for their own security. They said that any solution to the security problem required the Iraqi Government to start making real progress in programs of political reconciliation that they had earlier committed to do. This assessment was consistent with what we had heard from General Abizaid in an earlier briefing in the United States. Of course, not all of our military leaders agree, including General Petraeus, but I think the views of our commanders with recent on-the-ground experiences carry special weight.

The best chance of bringing down the violence in Iraq lies with the Iraqi army, and we can improve their chance of success by using American ground forces to provide the on-the-job training that results from embedding American troops in Iraqi combat units as proposed by the ISG. Moreover, none of this military action will be effective unless the Iraqi Government moves promptly to carry out the programs of political reconciliation that they have committed to do. This involves the sharing of power and the sharing of oil revenues with the Sunnis. The Iraqi Government has delayed carrying out these programs for almost a year now.

The ISG proposal puts maximum pressure for timely action on the part of the Iraqi Government; whereas, sending in additional American troops provides them with a rationale for further delays that effectively avoids making the fundamental changes that are necessary.

The President's announced strategy also entails diplomatic actions that are far less comprehensive than envisaged by the ISG, and none at all with Syria, which plays a pivotal role in the region and with whom we could have considerable leverage.

In sum, Mr. Chairman, I believe that the President's diplomatic strategy is too timid and his military strategy is too little and too late to effect the lasting and profound changes needed. His strategy is not likely to succeed, because it is tactical, not strategic, because it does not entail real conditiality for the Iraqi Government, and because it will only deepen the divide in this country.

The ISG proposal has a better chance because it recognizes that the key actions needed in Iraq to effect lasting results must be taken by the Iraqi Government and the Iraqi army, and because it provides the incentives for those actions. Most importantly, the recommendations of the bipartisan ISG provide an opportunity for Americans to come together again as one Nation, indivisible.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Perry follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY HON. WILLIAM J. PERRY

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

It has become clear to the American public that we need a new way forward in Iraq. In December the Iraq Study Group (ISG), a bipartisan group formed by Congress, concluded 9 months of study and proposed a new way forward. The ISG proposal recognized that the key actions needed in Iraq must be taken by the Iraqi government and the Iraqi Army, and provided the incentives for those actions. The ISG proposal also recognized that we needed to begin the redeployment of our overstretched ground forces in order to meet our security responsibilities outside of Iraq.

Perhaps most importantly, the recommendations of the bipartisan ISG provided an opportunity for the Nation to come together on Iraq. Last week President Bush announced what he called a "New Way Forward" in Iraq that does not follow the ISG recommendations. He has instead chosen a course of action that I believe is not likely to succeed because it is tactical, not strategic; because it does not entail real conditionality for the Iraqi government; and because it will only deepen the divide in the country. So in my testimony today I will explain the differences in the two approaches, and why I believe that the ISG proposals better serve the interests of the United States.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

But before I discuss the ISG and its new way forward, I will first look back to consider the disastrous situation in Iraq.[1]

The administration gave three reasons for the invasion of Iraq. The first was the alleged imminent danger from Iraq's weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programs. I believe that military action to stop an illegal nuclear program would have been warranted, but it would have been targeted against nuclear facilities, and not entail the occupation of Iraq. In any event, there was no imminent or even gathering danger from Iraqi nuclear weapons or other WMD. It appears that the United Nations inspections had, in fact, been working.

The second reason was the alleged imminent danger to the United States from Iraq's support of terrorism. Military action to defeat al Qaeda could have been justified, as it was in Afghanistan. But while al Qaeda used Afghanistan as a training area, it had no significant presence in Iraq prior to the invasion, and had no relationship with Iraq's government.

The third reason was to bring stability to the Middle East by creating a democratic government in Iraq. Certainly a democratic government in Iraq could be a blessing to its people and a boon to the region. But the task of imposing a democratic government in Iraq turned out to be substantially more difficult than the administration imagined. Indeed, it is not clear that any strategy could have fully succeeded in achieving a democratic, stable government in Iraq. But we may never know whether it was possible, since the administration's attempts to do so were burdened with serious strategic errors.

In particular, four errors were the most consequential:

a. The administration failed to get support from regional powers and from key allies. As a consequence, United States forces comprise almost 90 percent of the coalition, as opposed to about 50 percent in Operation Desert Storm or Bosnia.

b. The administration did not send in enough troops to maintain security after the Iraqi army was defeated. Thus, after the Iraqi army was defeated and Iraq broke out in looting, the United States did not have enough troops to maintain control, giving the insurgency a chance to gain a foothold.

c. The administration disbanded the Iraqi army, police, and civil servants a few weeks after the Iraqi army was defeated. As a result, 500,000 angry young

[1] References for my assessment include "Squandered Victory", Larry Diamond; "Assassin's Gate," George Packer; "Fiasco," Tom Ricks; and "State of Denial," Bob Woodward.

men were turned loose on Iraqi towns with weapons and no jobs, and Iraq was left with no security force except for the undersized coalition military force.

d. The administration pushed the Iraqi provisional government to establish a constitution and hold elections, but in a faulty process that did not adequately protect minority rights, thus setting the stage for a bloody power struggle between Shias and Sunnis. The cumulative affect of all of those strategic errors is a disastrous security situation in Iraq, which continues to deteriorate:

- More than 25,000 United States military personnel have been killed, maimed, or wounded.
- This past year more than 30,000 Iraqis were killed in the sectarian violence sweeping the major cities of Iraq.
- Well over a million Iraqis have left the country, including large numbers of Iraqi professionals.
- The violence is still trending upward.

As grim as this situation is, it could become even worse when U.S. soldiers leave. But that could be true whether we leave a year from now or 5 years from now in the absence of political reconciliation.

THE IRAQ STUDY GROUP

In the face of this growing disaster, Congress commissioned an independent bipartisan study charged to reach consensus on a way forward in Iraq. Jim Baker and Lee Hamilton were named as the co-chairmen and each of them selected four other members from his own party. Additionally they recruited 40 expert advisors. Neither the members nor the advisers received any compensation. We met 2 to 3 days each month from March to August of last year being briefed by military and political experts. A very important part of our factfinding was consulting with the Iraqi government. So we went to Baghdad in September, and spent 4 days meeting with all of the top officials of the Iraqi government, as well as our military commanders in Iraq.

After we returned from Iraq, we spent 6 intensive days trying to reach a consensus. This process was very difficult, and it is a tribute to our co-chairmen that we were able to succeed. All of our members were motivated by the belief that Iraq posed a serious problem for our country, and that to be of constructive help we had to reach a bipartisan consensus on how to move forward.

The ISG report was released to the public on December 6. It called for a change in mission, a reinvigoration of diplomacy in the region, a strengthening of the Iraqi government, and the beginning of troop redeployments.

The change in mission proposed was the key to everything else in the report. We believed that we should try to strengthen the present government's ability to hold off a full-scale civil war. We believed that we should continue our efforts to defeat al Qaeda in Iraq. Although al Qaeda was not a significant factor in Iraq before the war, it has since established a strong foothold, specializing in mass killings. We believed that we should reduce the commitment of our ground forces in Iraq and reestablish their readiness for other missions. The United States has important security responsibilities outside of Iraq, which cannot be met if our ground forces are tied down in Iraq for the indefinite future.

We recommended the following actions to carry out these missions:

- Shift the mission of U.S. troops from combat patrols to training the Iraqi army, including embedding some U.S. soldiers so that they can provide role models and on-the-job training for Iraqi soldiers.
- Begin pulling out U.S. combat brigades, with the goal of having all out by the first quarter of 2008, except for a strong rapid reaction force needed for force protection and the fight against al Qaeda in Iraq.
- Continue to support Iraqi forces with intelligence, logistics, and air support.
- Provide both positive and negative incentives for the Iraqi government to accelerate the reconciliation process and oil revenue sharing so that Sunnis have a stake in a stable Iraq.
- Mount an intense diplomatic effort to persuade friendly regional powers to assist economically, politically, and with training and to put pressure on unfriendly regional powers to stop arming militias and fomenting violence.

IMPACT OF IRAQ ON GROUND FORCES READINESS

If the recommendations of the ISG were to be followed, many of our combat brigades would be out of Iraq by the first quarter of next year. As our Army combat brigades and Marine units return to their bases in the United States, the Defense

Department will have a huge budget and management problem in restoring them to full combat readiness. This problem is of special concern to this committee because of the constitutional responsibility of Congress in constituting and equipping our Armed Forces. The Army, all of whose brigades were at high readiness levels at the beginning of the war, is dangerously close to being broken. Today, less than a third of these forces are at readiness levels needed to meet other military contingencies. And low readiness levels invite such contingencies; indeed, our security may have already suffered because of the perception of Iran and North Korea that our forces were tied down in Iraq. The Defense Department also needs to reconsider the role of the National Guard, since the compact with these citizen soldiers has been shattered by extended deployments that have caused many of them to lose their jobs or even their families.

A COMPARISON OF THE PRESIDENT'S NEW STRATEGY WITH ISG PROPOSALS

Last week the President announced what he called a new way forward in Iraq. I fully agree with the President's assessment that failure in Iraq could have serious consequences for security in the region and, ultimately, American security. I agree that we should make a serious effort to avoid such a failure. But I firmly believe that the bipartisan proposal made by the ISG gives us a better chance of avoiding that failure than does the President's proposal. The new way forward proposed by President Bush differs from that recommended by the ISG in several important respects. It calls for adding more than 20,000 combat forces, the bulk of them to be employed in securing Baghdad. When the ISG was in Baghdad, we discussed the Baghdad security problem in some detail with General Casey and General Chiarelli. In particular, we noted that Operation Together Forward (designed to establish security in Iraq) was not succeeding, and asked if they could increase the likelihood of success if they had another three to five American brigades. Both generals said no. They argued that the problem of conducting combat patrols in the neighborhoods of Baghdad had to be carried out by Iraqi forces, and that bringing in more American troops could delay the Iraqis assuming responsibility for their own security. They also said that there was no purely military solution to Baghdad's security. Any solution to the security problem required the Iraqi government to start making real progress in the programs of political reconciliation that they had earlier committed to do. They argued that more American troops tended to fuel that part of the insurgency that was fighting against American occupation forces. Finally, they noted that bringing in more American ground forces would be unlikely to have positive results on Baghdad's security, but very likely to have negative results on the readiness of American ground forces. These assessments were consistent with what we had heard from General Abizaid in an earlier briefing in the United States.

Subsequent to our discussions in Baghdad, the President has replaced these generals and adopted a new strategy that is contrary to the advice they gave us. I note that the situation in Iraq has dramatically changed with the intense sectarian violence that was sparked by the bombing of the Blue Mosque about a year ago, and that our recent commanders' assessments reflect on-the-ground experience with this intensification. Consequently, I believe we should stay with the recommendations of our most recent commanders in Iraq and not send in more American combat forces. The best chance of bringing down the violence in Iraq, if indeed it still can be done, lies with the Iraqi army, and we can improve their chance of success by using U.S. ground forces to provide the on-the-job training that would result from embedding American troops in Iraqi combat units, as proposed by the ISG. Moreover, none of this military action will be effective unless the Iraqi government moves promptly to carry out the programs of political reconciliation they have committed to do—this involves the sharing of power and the sharing of oil revenues with the Sunnis. The Iraqi government has delayed carrying out these programs for almost a year now—not surprising given their desire to maintain full control of the government and given the political difficulty of implementing these programs even if they wanted to. The ISG proposal puts maximum pressure for timely action on the part of the Iraqi government, whereas sending in the additional American troops provides them a rationale for further delays that effectively avoid making the fundamental changes that are necessary.

Finally, the ISG proposed a comprehensive diplomatic initiative involving all of the neighboring countries. We fully recognized that those diplomatic goals would not be easy to achieve. They would require the dedicated efforts of the best American diplomats, both in and out of government. And even with such an effort, we probably would not succeed in all of our diplomatic goals. But we will never know how much, in fact, can be accomplished through diplomacy unless we give it such a dedicated effort. Two noteworthy precedents of successful American diplomacy in the

face of equally daunting odds were the diplomacy by the first Bush administration that facilitated a peaceful ending of the Cold War, and the diplomacy by the Clinton administration that ended the Bosnian War. The President's announced strategy entails diplomatic actions far less comprehensive than envisaged by the ISG and none at all with Syria, which plays a pivotal role in the region and with whom we could have considerable leverage.

CONCLUSIONS

In sum, I believe that the President's diplomatic strategy is too timid and his military strategy is too little and too late to effect the lasting and profound changes needed. His strategy is not likely to succeed because it is tactical not strategic; because it does not entail real conditionality for the Iraqi government; and because it will only deepen the divide in the country.

The ISG proposal has a better chance because it recognizes that the key actions needed in Iraq to effect lasting results must be taken by the Iraqi government and the Iraqi Army and because it provides the support and the incentives for those actions. Most importantly, the recommendations of the bipartisan ISG provide an opportunity for Americans to come together again as one Nation, indivisible.

Chairman LEVIN. Dr. Perry, thank you so much for your testimony.

Ambassador Ross?

STATEMENT OF AMBASSADOR DENNIS B. ROSS, COUNSELOR AND ZIEGLER DISTINGUISHED FELLOW, THE WASHINGTON INSTITUTE FOR NEAR EAST POLICY; AND FORMER DIRECTOR FOR POLICY PLANNING IN THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE UNDER PRESIDENT GEORGE H. W. BUSH AND SPECIAL MIDDLE EAST COORDINATOR UNDER PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON

Ambassador ROSS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I too have submitted a statement for the record and I'm just going to summarize some of its key points.

I start with a premise, and the premise is that the answer to Iraq is going to be found within Iraq. Many of Iraq's neighbors have leverage and influence, we obviously have leverage and influence, but the fact of the matter is, it's going to depend on what Iraqis decide, and not what we, or others, ultimately decide.

When I listened to President Bush as he laid out his plan for a surge, he also seemed to take this into account, because, after all, he said the surge was dependent upon an Iraqi security plan, and he also laid out what were a series of commitments that Prime Minister Maliki had made to him: commitments in the security area, the political area, and the economic area. These were important, and they included the following: (1) that the Iraqis would, in fact, provide forces for us to partner with; (2) that there would be equal protection for Sunni neighborhoods and Shia neighborhoods; (3) that there would not be interference, political, or sectarian considerations would not interfere with security operations; (4) that there would be a new law for sharing of oil revenues, and, presumably, that it would then be implemented; (5) that you would actually have a new law on de-Baathification—in effect, if it was implemented, that you would rehabilitate former Baathi officials; (6) that there would be $10 billion worth of reconstruction monies, and those reconstruction monies would go to Sunnis in Anbar province, as well; (7) there would be a fair process for amending the constitution; and (8) that there would be empowerment at the local level by having elections for provincial governors.

That isn't all of them, but I highlight these because if those were carried out, they'd be very important. Now, the problem is, we've heard many of these promises before, and the critical question is, what's going to make it different this time?

Presumably, from my standpoint, it could be different this time if Prime Minister Maliki really does believe that Iraq is on the brink of the abyss, if he really does believe that, if Iraqi leaders don't finally take these actions now, or at least act to try to take these actions now, the situation in Iraq, though bad, is going to become vastly worse and imperil not only him, but the Shia, as well. Maybe he would take these moves if he heard from the President, in private, that, while the President was making these surge commitments himself in public, in private he was making clear to him that if there wasn't a good-faith effort to act on Maliki's promises, the President, in 6 months, would then decide to begin to draw down, and he would not continue to provide security assistance or arms to the forces that Maliki most wants.

My point here is, the key thing to get Iraqis to make decisions they haven't been prepared to make up until now is to create a stark set of consequences for them if they don't. My experience in dealing with historic conflicts is that you rarely induce parties who are part of a historic conflict, especially sectarian conflicts, to make what are excruciating decisions for them—decisions that require them to confront history, confront legacy, confront mythology—it is very hard for them to cross those thresholds unless, in fact, they see the consequences, in their eyes, of not doing so. What we see today, I think, in Iraq are Shia who are a majority but fear that they will lose power at any moment. They are convinced that the Sunnis have not made a decision to reconcile with the Shia having a dominant position—Sunnis who don't believe that the Shia are, in fact, prepared to give them a piece of the pie—and at a time when, I would say, Sunnis continue emotionally to find it difficult to adjust to a reality where they're no longer the dominant force. So, if there's going to be a change, it seems to me there's going to have to be an unmistakable sense of consequences, in their eyes, if they don't make the kind of changes that are necessary.

That's the context, I think, in which the President has made his decision. I would just make a general observation, then suggest, I think, there are basically three options for where we go from here.

The general observation, I'm afraid, is that, if we look at Iraq, I suspect that we could have a civil war that goes on for another 10 or 15 years and that eventually, at the end of that time, after enormous cost—with every neighbor in the region intervening, because they're going to try to protect their equities or the groups that they identify with—and after exhaustion, maybe we will end up with an Iraq that has a central government with limited powers, with provinces with extensive autonomy, with some formula for sharing the wealth there.

Now, the alternative to that is some kind of a transition that doesn't go through that incredible pain, with all the instability in the region. The issue here is whether we can manage that transition.

It seems to me that the President is offering one option to try to do it, but it still depends upon Iraqis making political decisions that they haven't been prepared to make for the last several years.

So, one question is, can you forge a new national compact? Will it come if there isn't a set of consequences? I don't think it will come if there isn't an unmistakable set of consequences. If the President has privately warned Maliki about the consequences, maybe he'll change, maybe others will. If he hasn't made that warning, then I would suggest that Congress should focus on how it can identify what would be key consequences.

My suggestion to you would be the following: You said, Mr. Chairman, that you haven't been able to get the benchmarks from the administration. I outlined eight or nine promises that were made that the President has publicized. Now, it seems to me, if, in fact, those were acted upon, that would be a pretty good indication that we now see an Iraq that is trying to do what is required to cross the political thresholds that are necessary to produce a new national compact. Pick out the ones you consider to be the most important.

The ones I would focus on are the provision of forces; not just the law on sharing oil revenue, but the actual implementation of it; the de-Baathification; and the equal protection. Those strike me as being the most important. I didn't mention the disbanding of the Shia militias, not because I don't think it's important, but because I don't believe, in the next 6 months, that's even a possibility. This is not only for emotional reasons, but for practical reasons. Yes, it would be very important. But the other measures that I identified would be an indication that there was a genuine commitment to trying to forge a new political reality within Iraq.

Now, if that's not done by this government, then you can be in a position to say the consequences, from the congressional standpoint, would be putting a cap on the forces or reducing security assistance—because, in a sense, that was the crux of what the ISG was suggesting: "Fulfill your political responsibilities and we support you; don't fulfill those political responsibilities, and, in a sense, we begin to reduce our support for you." So, it seems to me that this would be what Congress could do, and it fits what I see as the most desirable option, at this point, which is, you are forging a new political reality in Iraq. We are providing the means to help the Iraqis through that transition but they have to step up to the plate themselves.

Now, what if they're not prepared to do that? Then there is an alternative. One alternative would be what is called, or referred to, as a "soft partition." Senator Biden, Les Gelb, and Michael O'Hanlon have talked about it. In the past, those who were critics of a soft partition, or a Bosnia kind of option, were critics of it because they said, "While in Iraq you can see areas in some places that are clearly distinct from a sectarian standpoint, there are plenty of areas in this mosaic that are mixed, and to produce a soft partition, you're going to have to have extensive ethnic cleansing, and it's going to be so ugly and so bloody that it simply is too painful to try to go down that path." The problem is that we're seeing about 100,000 Iraqis displaced a month, which means the reality of a soft partition is beginning to emerge. Prime Minister Maliki

himself is now talking about having people allowed to go back to their homes. But I think people are voting with their feet, because they're forced to, the death squads are acting in a way that leaves them no choice and they're not likely to return. So, the question is whether the soft partition, the Bosnia approach, is an alternative if they're not prepared to forge the kind of political compromises that are necessary and that they haven't been willing to take up, up until this point.

If this were something that was seen as a possibility, then you would look for ways to create financial incentives and safeguards to make it possible to carry this out. If that's not possible, it seems to me the other fallback is a containment strategy because we cannot stay in the midst of a civil war.

Now, truth be told, a containment strategy sounds good, but it's really hard to execute, from a military standpoint. Again, I would say the implications of the ISG were moving in that direction, but the fact is a containment strategy is one that depends on what I would describe as a political/military approach. Here is where I would put the emphasis on a regional forum or a regional conference that includes the Iranians and the Syrians. I wouldn't single the Iranians and the Syrians out; I would treat them as neighbors. All the neighbors have something to contribute.

If you had a regional conference, where you could really bring all the neighbors together and they would decide to play a constructive role, in theory, they could help with the first option, of trying to use their leverage to promote what would be a political set of understandings, a new national compact. I'm afraid, once again, that we see that all the neighbors are much more capable of agreeing on what they're afraid of in Iraq, and much less capable of agreeing on what they want for Iraq.

So, even though I would go for this in a context of trying to forge a political set of understandings, I think it probably makes more sense in the context of a containment strategy because the neighbors themselves have reason to fear millions of refugees. I would say, the Iranians and the Saudis have an equal fear in this regard; they have a reason to fear that there is competition from each of the neighbors to go in to make sure that they don't lose out; they have a reason to fear that Iraq doesn't become a platform for terror against them; and they have a reason to fear that instability in Iraq doesn't suddenly create a kind of situation that radiates out and affects the whole region.

So, it's conceivable to me that a containment strategy that is governed by a political/military approach could be an ultimate fallback.

The point is, there aren't a lot of good options at this juncture and we face an unfortunate paradox. As bad as the situation is in Iraq today, the reality is, it isn't bad enough for most Iraqis who are in leadership positions and most of the neighbors to change their behavior. For those who say that the Saudis and the Jordanians aren't helping because they're held back by the Palestinian issue, in a sense I would say they're not helping because they don't want to promote Shia dominance within Iraq and they don't want to promote what they see as Iranian dominance in Iraq, but they will intervene if they think everything's going to fall apart.

So, we're in this paradoxical situation where we help to keep the lid on—and we want to keep the lid on, because having it come off is actually, in many respects, unthinkable but, in keeping the lid on, we don't create enough discomfort so anybody on the inside or anybody on the outside is prepared to change their behavior.

The trick for us is to find a way to create the impression that the lid could come off without having it come off and to position ourselves to try to create what will be a political outcome that manages the transition, but positions ourselves, if we can't do that, for a containment strategy which at least prevents the absolute worst from happening and doesn't keep us sucked into what would be a worsening civil war.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Ross follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR DENNIS ROSS

The challenge today in Iraq is internal. Iraq's leaders must find salvation by reaching across sectarian lines, not waiting for their neighbors or anyone else to take care of their internal adversaries or do for them what they are unwilling to do for themselves. While Iraq's neighbors certainly have influence on different sectarian groups within Iraq, their influence is limited and cannot be exercised in a way that will end the conflict. Iraq's neighbors may be able to contain the conflict, assuming they are prepared to work together, but they will not be able to resolve it.

Nor can the United States resolve the conflict in Iraq. Surely, our troop presence gives us leverage. But it is more limited now than previously. Iraqi governmental or sectarian leaders view our troop presence almost exclusively in terms of how our forces can be used to serve their particular interests. Today, Sunnis seek our protection and our readiness to go after the Shia militias and their death squads. The Shias want our forces to go after the Sunni insurgents and leave theirs alone.

President Bush's decision to provide a surge of American forces, principally for Baghdad, is designed to provide security in Iraq's largest city. However, in explaining his decision, the President explained that the surge was tied to an Iraqi security plan and to Prime Minister Maliki's commitments on a number of security, political, and economic issues. According to President Bush, Prime Minister Maliki has committed to:

- Provide significant Iraqi forces to partner with ours in Baghdad.
- Assume security responsibility in all provinces by November.
- Ensure equal protection for Sunni as well as Shia neighborhoods.
- Pursue those who threaten security and stability without political interference or regard for sectarian concerns.
- Adopt a new law for the sharing of oil revenues and see it implemented.
- Pass new legislation to correct the abuses on de-Baathification.
- Guarantee a fair process for amending the constitution.
- Deliver a $10 billion fund for reconstruction and assure that monies will also go to Sunni areas, including Anbar province.
- Empower localities by conducting provincial elections.

Even if the Shia militias, particularly the Mahdi Army, are not likely to be seriously confronted any time soon, all of the aforementioned commitments would be very meaningful if carried out. The problem is that most Iraqis are unlikely to believe them. They remember only too well that Prime Minister Maliki's first big initiative was to provide security in Baghdad. He is, by my count, on his third national reconciliation plan. He will have to act on these commitments not merely talk about them.

The irony is that, had he performed on his previous promises, we would not need a surge of American forces today. Unfortunately, if he fails to deliver on these commitments now—either because they are too hard or his heart isn't in them or the sectarian divide is simply too deep—it is difficult to see how the surge can make much difference.

Inevitably we are driven back to what Iraqis have to be willing to do for themselves. If Maliki is willing to change course and now take hard steps and press his colleagues and counterparts to do likewise, the surge might be helpful in reinforcing new Iraqi behaviors and showing that there is a payoff for them, particularly in

terms of increased security. But if the Sunnis remain emotionally unwilling to accept a subordinate position to the Shia and the Shia continue to act as if they are a majority who can lose power at any moment and can ill afford to accommodate any Sunni needs as a result, neither will adjust, and the surge will be one more failed tactic.

The only tactic that even potentially has the chance of changing Iraqi behaviors at this point is one that demonstrates the cost of nonperformance. For the different Iraqi leaders, the current situation, while bad, is not intolerable. In any case, it is preferable to having to cross historic thresholds on reconciliation. Iraqi leaders have to see that they run the risk of everything unraveling because the United States won't keep the lid on much longer.

In my experience, deep-seated conflicts are not transformed by simply offering inducements to the parties. Inducements, on their own, are never sufficient to confront history and mythology; on the contrary, it takes an unmistakable awareness of the daunting costs of continuing to hold out that finally motivates parties to cross historic thresholds and change their behavior. From this standpoint, I believe the surge only makes sense if President Bush has explicitly told Mr. Maliki in private that he has 6 months to act credibly on his commitments, and if he does not, we will begin to withdraw forces and we will stop the process of bolstering those Iraqi forces that Maliki most wants to receive arms.

If President Bush has not conveyed such a warning in private and remains unwilling to create consequences for nonperformance, I would suggest that Congress identify which of the Maliki commitments are most critical for indicating a readiness on the part of the Iraqi government and sectarian leaders to transform themselves and actually forge a national compact. While taking on the militias and the Mahdi army might be the best measure, I would not create an impossible standard. Instead, I believe a number of other measures would offer better indicators of the Iraqi government's intent to make reconciliation a genuine priority: the sharing of oil revenues and the rehabilitation of former Ba'athi party members (and not just the adoption of laws which might never be implemented); the actual investment of monies in Sunni areas; and the provision of protection to Sunni neighborhoods.

If these or other measures that Congress decides are important and reasonable are not met—and once again Maliki has promised but not delivered—then I would cap our forces, limit security assistance, and begin to develop a strategy for containing the conflict within Iraq. We cannot remain in the midst of a civil war and yet we don't want the conflict within Iraq, particularly if we are going to reduce our presence over time, to give rise to a wider war in which nearly all of Iraq's neighbors are intervening to protect their equities or those sectarian groups who are their natural partners.

In circumstances where Iraqi leaders are not willing or able to forge national reconciliation, a Bosnia-model might offer a tolerable outcome for Iraq. Previously, the argument against any kind of soft partition or Bosnia-type outcome was that inevitably the areas of mixed Sunni-Shia populations were too numerous and population transfers would inevitably turn ugly and very bloody. I took those arguments seriously, but when 100,000 Iraqis are being displaced every month, population transfers are already taking place. Shia death squads by design or through retribution are forcing Sunnis out of mixed neighborhoods and Sunni insurgents and militias have done the same to Shia in Sunni dominated areas. Like it or not, the landscape of Iraq is changing and a soft partition is beginning to emerge and become a reality.

The irony is that international forces might become far more available in a context in which they are safeguarding a soft partition or Bosnia-type outcome. To be sure, this should not be our first choice; however, desirable outcomes in Iraq appear less and less likely. One thing is for sure: we must begin to position ourselves to make the least bad choice in Iraq—namely, containment of a civil war—possible if hopeful outcomes cannot be engineered.

Whether positioning ourselves for a containment strategy, a Bosnia-type approach or a new national compact in Iraq, Iraq's neighbors can play an important role. But for any of these different outcomes to materialize, they will have to behave differently. Iraq's Sunni neighbors have not provided the political or economic help that we have long sought. Saudi Arabia and Jordan, in particular, have much potential leverage with the Sunni tribes, but they have not exercised it. It is not because they have no stakes in Iraq; Saudi leaders are now contemplating the construction of a $12 billion security barrier along their border with Iraq to prevent terror and instability in Iraq from bleeding into their country. Jordan, which has already absorbed 750,000 Iraqi refugees, cannot afford to absorb any more.

It is also not because of the Palestinian problem. Some argue that the Saudis, the Gulf States, and Jordan cannot do more in Iraq because the sense of grievance over the Palestinians holds them back from appearing helpful to us in Iraq. That creates

a linkage where none exists. The principal Sunni neighbors have not been helpful because they have no interest in promoting Shia dominance in Iraq. The Sunni-Shia divide in the Middle East is becoming more acute. Look at the fixation in the Arab world—as expressed in the Arab media—on how Saddam Hussein was executed.

But it is not only their reluctance to see Shia dominance in Iraq that produces their hesitancy. It is also their view that Iran will dominate a Shia-run Iraqi state. Were there a readiness on the part of the Maliki government to truly reach out to the Sunnis within Iraq, that could alter the behavior of the Saudis, Kuwaitis, Jordanians, and others.

Of course, a complete convulsion within Iraq might also alter their behavior. None of Iraq's Sunni neighbors are likely to remain on the sidelines if there is an all-out civil war. They will not remain indifferent if the Sunni population's survival in Iraq is more fundamentally threatened, if there is the danger of millions of Iraqi refugees approaching their borders, or if Iran intervenes more openly in such a circumstance.

The same is true for Iran and Syria. Presently each is content with an Iraq in which the United States is tied down, preoccupied, and less able, in their eyes, of threatening them. But like Iraq's other neighbors, they have little interest in an Iraq that begins to unravel. A convulsion in Iraq that might be precipitated by a rapid American withdrawal represents a danger for the Iranians and the Syrians. Neither wants to face huge streams of Iraqi refugees, instability that radiates out of Iraq, the need to compete with the Saudis and others who may intervene within Iraq, and the dangers of Iraq becoming a platform for terror against them.

Much like the different sectarian groups within Iraq, all of Iraq's neighbors might be motivated to change their behavior by their perception of the costs of not doing so. They might cooperate in a containment strategy—with understandings worked out in a regional forum—if they became fearful that the United States was leaving and an all-out civil war would ensue. Ironically, so long as we keep the lid on in Iraq—or at least it is perceived that we will do so—none of Iraq's neighbors or its leaders will likely feel sufficient discomfort to change their behavior.

Our challenge is to create the impression that the lid is going to come off without actually having it come off. That is a hard balance to strike. But that is also why it is important to establish measures on Iraqi performance and to create real consequences for nonperformance. I continue to believe that one way to impress both Iraqis and Iraq's neighbors that there is a consequence (and that the lid might come off) is to declare that we will negotiate a timetable for our withdrawal with the Iraqi government and Iraqi performance will influence how we approach the timing of our drawdown.

Ultimately, our objective in Iraq is still to change the politics to the point that a transition to a new Iraq is possible without massive bloodshed and without an all-out civil war. In these circumstances, our presence would help to manage the transition and gradually be reduced. That objective may no longer be achievable—or if it is, changes in the behavior of Iraq's government and sectarian leaders must be revealed in the very near future. If it is clear that the objective is not achievable, we need to fall back either to a Bosnian model or a containment alternative. But none of these objectives from the most desirable to the least objectionable is likely to be achievable if Iraq's leaders and neighbors believe that the United States will continue to keep the lid on in Iraq. The trick is convincing them of that without making the worst outcome—an all-out civil war, with every neighbor intervening to ensure that their Sunni or Shia partner does not lose—a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Chairman LEVIN. Ambassador Ross, thank you so much.

General Keane?

STATEMENT OF GEN JOHN M. KEANE, USA (RET.), FORMER VICE CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES ARMY

General KEANE. Senator Levin, Senator McCain, and members of the committee, it's good to be back here and see you all in this forum again.

I feel privileged and honored to sit here next to Secretary Perry and Ambassador Ross, and to share the panel with them.

We all agree that the situation in Iraq is grave; it's of crisis proportions, and time is running out for the Maliki government and also for ourselves and our allies.

In my judgment, the lack of security is the central issue, and it subsumes all these other issues. It's that harsh reality that we have to come to grips with.

The political strategy that we had, as ambitious as it was, has failed to stem this violence. Probably, if we admit it, it's based on our naiveness about the political culture in Iraq. The Iraqis really don't have the art of compromise as part of their culture. I think it's pretty surprising, as educated a society as they are, how many things they choose to resolve with violence. The level of violence that they tolerate in their society is pretty shocking to all of us. When you lose in Iraq, you lose forever, and revenge is very important. I think we underestimated the psychological and emotional impact of 35 years of Saddam Hussein's repression on that society. While everybody understands the historical differences between Shias and Sunnis, the applications of those differences in everyday life in Iraq, I think, is something we underestimated as well.

So, in terms of not understanding the political culture, we've rushed to a representative government and we clearly do not have one. They have been incapable, because the Sunnis are truly not participating, of stopping this violence.

I've been on the Defense Policy Board, so I've stayed involved, from an intelligence perspective and an operational and policy perspective, with what's taking place in Iraq, and I've made multiple trips. In the fall and winter of 2004, we first saw evidence that the Sunnis believed that they were winning this insurgency. This is in their discussions with each other, this is not bombastic conversations on Al Jazeera; this is eavesdropping on what they're doing and document exploitation. That clearly continued on into 2005 and 2006. That's very instructive, because, I totally agree with the Ambassador, we are here about changing behavior and if the Sunni insurgents believe that they are winning, we have to change that attitude and that behavior and show that they cannot win, that they cannot continue to achieve their political objectives through armed violence, which is where they are right now. They have every evidence to believe, as we sit here today, that they are winning, particularly with the erosion of political and moral will in our country and the great debate that's raging in our country, as well, in terms of our commitment to Iraq.

We continuously talk about a political solution, and we want Maliki to do many of the eight things that the Ambassador laid out, but, quite frankly, even if we have an oil law, the Sunnis do not want to share the revenue. Even if we talk to them about reconciliation and amnesty, they're not coming to the table. That's the reality of it. We want to modify the de-Baathification program, as we should, but right now, while they believe they're winning, they're not coming to that table. That's the harsh reality of what we're dealing with, with this insurgency.

The military strategy has also failed; it failed in the sense that it did not stem the violence. We made a decision, in the summer of 2004. At the time, we thought it was an informed decision and, at the time, I was supporting that decision. The decision was to transition, as a centerpiece of our military strategy, to the Iraqi security forces and let them defeat the insurgency. We never had it as a mission, ever, for the United States military to defeat the in-

surgency. I think many people in Washington—I think maybe even the President of the United States—believed that we were defeating the insurgency; and thus, you hear talk of victory and winning, et cetera. But the military never had it as a mission to defeat the insurgency. The military made a conscious decision to give that mission to the Iraqi security forces and train them up to a level so that they could, in fact, defeat that insurgency. We have continued with that mission up until today.

What is wrong with that is that each succeeding year, the enemy exploited the fact that we were never protecting the people. The only way you can reasonably defeat an insurgency is by protecting the people and we made a conscious decision not do that. They exploited that conscious decision so the level of violence in 2005 was considerably higher than it was in 2004, and, despite the fact that in 2005 we began discussions about withdrawing. The enemy exploited our vulnerabilities, because the Iraqis did not have the capability to protect the people, and we chose not to do it ourselves. Therefore, the people were vulnerable and you saw that exploitation. That's the harsh reality of what took place in 2004 and, of course, in 2005.

That doesn't mean that we didn't have success with the Iraqi security forces. I think we have. Quite frankly, we started to have some success when General Petraeus got hold of this thing and made some remarkable success in a relatively short period of time. It should be a credit to the Iraqis and also to ourselves in what we did in making progress. But the problem is that the level of violence continued to rise beyond the capacity level of the Iraqi security forces' capability to reach that level of violence so they could control it. We have been chasing that ever since. That is why that strategy, in fact, has failed, because we have run out of time to wait for the Iraqi security forces to get to that level, because the violence is too high for them to cope with. That's the harsh reality of this military strategy and what has been wrong with it. When you look back on it, we probably should have made the adjustment in 2005, when we realized that the enemy was exploiting us and exploiting our vulnerabilities.

I don't like admitting it, but we have consistently underestimated this enemy from 2003 to the present. That's the harsh reality of it and we have to come to grips with that.

So we find ourselves, then, with a political strategy that has not been able to stem the violence and a military strategy that has not been able to do that. We have not been able to protect the Sunnis and the Shias, and Maliki has no leverage. He has absolutely no leverage with the Shia militias whatsoever. In fairness to the Shia militias, despite the horrific nature of the killing that they are doing and despite the political advantages that their leaders are seeking for themselves in advantaging their position and using the level of violence against their people as excuses to gain that political leverage, despite all of that, the harsh reality there is that they waited 2½ years for the United States or the Iraqi security forces to protect them. The fact is, we did not. Now we have this high level of sectarian violence, which frustrates all of us. But that is the tangible explanation of what has happened. It's also the reason why Maliki has no leverage with them, because he has not been

able to protect them. They all know that he cannot. We can flog Maliki all we want, but the harsh reality of those militia leaders is they know that the Iraqi security forces don't have the capability to protect them. They know what their capabilities are. That's why Maliki has no leverage.

So, we have a political strategy that hasn't worked. We have a military strategy that hasn't worked, as well. This is a difficult, challenging, complex problem, but it is a human problem. But I think if you break it down into some of the components and truly understand it, you can begin to resolve some of this. I've looked at a number of alternative issues, just like you have, and I looked seriously at what the ISG proposed and what others have proposed, and, while there's merit in a lot of the recommendations here and merit in what the two gentlemen next to me have said, the problem is, you have to deal with the central issue; and the central issue, that is ignored in many of these recommendations, is the simple reality that the overarching problem is security, and we have to change that. We have to gain control of the situation, and the only way you're going to be able to do that is to apply some force to gain a political solution. We all want a political solution but I would suggest to you that the conditions are not there to get a political solution unless we change the security situation. That is why, I believe, an additional use of force here to obtain that security situation by protecting the people, finally doing the mission that, in hindsight, we should have done from the beginning, offers us an opportunity. I believe that opportunity is certainly a political solution.

Now, Iraq really is a regional problem and I think we should approach it as a regional issue. It has global implications for us and it should be treated as such. I agree with everybody, in terms of what the consequences of failure are. They are absolutely unacceptable—what they mean in the region. Ken Pollack, from the Brookings Institute, made a presentation that I listened to. He did a historical analysis of civil wars and what the conditions were and tried to make an analogy to the situation in Iraq. His conclusion is that the situation in Iraq is ripe for a spillover regional civil war. Certainly none of us want that. There are also other implications of Iranian hegemony and our own credibility in the world, and the al Qaeda sanctuary. We all understand how difficult this situation is if we let Iraq spin out of control.

In doing something about it, in my judgment, it has to be a combination of political, economic, and diplomatic initiatives, many of which have been discussed at this table already, and it has to be a comprehensive strategy. I have concerns about the political, economic, and diplomatic initiatives. I'm not certain we have enough visibility in what they all are, and, given our track record, and using the interagency effort in Iraq, and our diplomatic initiatives, I share the frustration that many military leaders have, that much of this effort has been far too disproportionately military, and the other elements of national power by our Government have not been nearly as effective. I'm not confident, sitting here in front of you today, that, even with a new strategy, that part of it is going to be effective. I'm not sure, because of the track record that we've had for the last 3-plus years. The interagency effort has not been

effective and numerous people have talked about it and spoken about it more eloquently than I, but I do have an overriding concern about it.

In terms of the military initiative, as you've been told, it is a fundamental change in mission. Yes, we are going back to Baghdad, and that has a painfully familiar ring to it, particularly in view of the fact that we've failed there twice before. But you have to understand why we failed. We failed because we never applied the correct mission and we never applied the correct force level as well. We're also going back to al Anbar province, obviously, to do pretty much what we have been doing, but at least increase the level of force so that the sanctuary of al Qaeda there and the base of the Sunni insurgency cannot undermine the operation in Baghdad. That's why that supporting operation is taking place.

But the military mission has two major objectives. The first one is to obtain a political solution. It is to take the people away from the Sunni insurgency so that they can no longer exploit them and to begin to move the people and connect them to local officials and also, indirectly, to a central government for the first time—by protecting Shias and Sunnis in doing that. By doing that, we begin to move the attitude and behavior of the Sunnis, where they can be conditioned to come to a reconciliation table, because they believe that armed violence will not achieve their political objective.

So, that is very important, in terms of why we're doing this military operation. It is to seek a political objective. By protecting the Shias, it also gives Maliki the leverage that he does not have now to deal with the militia leaders to stop their offensive operations. I believe, at the same time, we can target some of these militia leaders who are responsible for these horrific deaths and horrific assassinations. You can see some of that targeting going on right now. Obviously, we're not moving into Sadr City in any wholesale fashion, but we are targeting certain leaders, because we know where they are, and we certainly know what they've been doing, and we should be doing that.

The second part of the military mission is to buy time for the growth and development of the Iraqi security forces, bring the level of violence down to a level that permits their capacity levels, their organization, their skill, and their leadership to cope with it. We need time to be able to achieve that.

Those are the two overriding objectives of what the military initiative is about. So, from my perspective, the underlying reality is, is that the security issue has subsumed all other issues, and, by obtaining security in Baghdad, which is the center of gravity, mostly because of what the enemy has chosen, we can begin to make political, economic, and social progress.

The economic package is very important. The Ambassador mentioned it, and it's something, also, that senior military leaders worry about, because if the economic package shows up, and it's free of bureaucracy and red tape and the rest of it so that we can get the money into the hands of the people and start making a difference in improving the quality of their life experience, then that will also mitigate the success of the military initiative.

But we will also be challenged by a dual chain of command that has just been announced in Iraq. By that, I mean that the Iraqis

are in the lead. I think it's unfortunate that with the most decisive military operation we're going to conduct since the invasion in 2003, we've decided this time, to put the Iraqis in the lead, which sets up a dual chain of command on the streets of Iraq for U.S. forces and Iraqis. From a military perspective, that violates a very important principle called "unity of command." What is wrong with that is that it doesn't get you unity of effort.

Can we mitigate against that? Yes, certainly. There are ways to do it with joint headquarters and liaison teams, but it'll be very frustrating for our people on the streets doing that. When a platoon or company of U.S. forces and a platoon or company of Iraqi forces, both involved in action together, are reporting to different chains of command, it makes no sense to you and makes no sense to me, but that's exactly what we're going to do. That'll be a problem for General Petraeus and his commanders to sort out. Hopefully, they'll be able to get that resolved, at least at the tactical level.

We need all five of these brigades and I don't believe they should be held hostage by benchmarks by the Maliki government. I think that's a strategic mistake to do that. If this military operation is going to succeed, it has to have the right level of force to be able to get in there with Iraqis and protect the people.

Listen, war is a test of wills when you really get down to it, and the psychological impact of this is important. We already have started to see some handwringing going on among the Sunnis and the Shias, based on this level of force. It looks like we're serious. "It looks like the United States is really going to make a difference this time, we have to rethink what we're doing." I don't want to get Pollyannaish about this, but it's interesting to see that kind of reaction. It's a psychological reaction to the level of commitment. So, the level of force is important in practical terms on the streets of Iraq, but it's important in terms of the message we're sending to them about our intentions and how serious those intentions are.

We're going to make some progress initially, and I would not take that progress that we make to start thinking about withdrawing our forces or start changing the military mission. We should not do that. This mission—it'll take some time to secure Baghdad, most of 2007—it'll take them some time to secure the population in al Anbar, which we're not doing. That'll take well into 2008, including some of the other provinces where conflict is being contested. So, the operation will take some time, and I would ask you to have some patience and let this operation pan out in front of you. You'll know whether it's making some progress or not, that'll be obvious to all of us. You have a commander in General Petraeus who's going to come in here and tell you what he thinks about it anyway. You already know that; he's told you that. He'll tell you whether this thing is working or not, and, if it's not working, why it's not, and can we still do something about it.

But I believe this military initiative can work. I think it can work and set up some political solutions for us that we're all seeking. It is a definable mission. It's achievable, and it's also measurable.

We also have a new team, one that believes in the mission, understands what the problems were in the past, and knows why we have failed in the past. That new military team is General Odierno,

the operational commander on the ground—General Petraeus will sit on top of him, as the Iraqi commander—and Admiral Fallon, who will be the new Central Command commander. We also have confidence in the new Ambassador, in terms of his reputation and his experience. I think this bodes well for us. It is a new strategy and we have a new team to execute it, with the passion to get it done. There are no guarantees in this war. There never are. But this military initiative has a good chance to work, and certainly to be able to assist us in getting the political solution we want and desire for the Iraqis and their people, and for our own national interests.

I look forward to your questions. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. General, thank you very much.

Dr. Perry, your testimony purports that you had conversations, as a member of the ISG, with the two generals on the ground there, and that both generals said that it would not increase the likelihood of success if they had another three to five American brigades. Was this a military success they were talking about, security, or was this military and political success combined?

Dr. PERRY. In all of our conversations with General Casey and General Chiarelli, they emphasized the importance of the political, as well as military. They always thought of it as a package.

Chairman LEVIN. In other words, even five additional brigades would not help achieve either or both?

Dr. PERRY. That was the view that they expressed both in the group and to one-on-one discussions that I had with both General Casey and General Chiarelli.

Chairman LEVIN. All right. That's your own conclusion and the ISG's conclusion?

Dr. PERRY. That's our conclusion and that conclusion was certainly fortified by what we heard from those two generals, not only from the fact that they held that view, but for reasons they gave for holding the view we found compelling.

Chairman LEVIN. Now, the argument the President made the other night is he has a new strategy, why not give it a chance? What's your comment on that?

Dr. PERRY. I think time is running out in Iraq. We proposed a strategy in the ISG. We said, "Why not give that a chance?" So there are two different strategies being considered here. I must say, in all candor, Senator Levin, I'm not sure any strategy, at this stage, is capable of stopping the civil war. But I do believe the importance of doing that is so great that we should make every effort to try to do so. But I firmly believe that the strategy outlined in the ISG report has a better chance of doing that.

Chairman LEVIN. Now, Ambassador Ross, you've heard the President's decision that he's going to have five additional brigades go to Iraq. Do you think that's a successful strategy?

Ambassador ROSS. I think the number of brigades, at this point, is basically less relevant, in some ways. I understand what General Keane was saying about, "You need security first," but I'm looking for some manifestations that there's a political will to change behavior on the side of the Iraqis. The fact is, we are 3¾ years into this war now, and, at this juncture, I'm afraid what's happened is that the sectarian divide has deepened. I look at what happened

with the execution of Saddam Hussein. Here was a moment for Prime Minister Maliki to send a signal to the Sunnis that, "We are Iraqis now. We all suffered. We were all brutalized. That was the past. We're going to write a new chapter." He could have sought to reach out. He didn't seek to reach out.

So, for me, the most important measures, at this point are, what are the signs that there is a genuine decision being made to act? I don't doubt, by the way, that Maliki has real limitations, but the fact is, we need to see some unmistakable manifestation that there's a new political will to match the will that we're now offering. The surge can work only in the context that you see some change in political behavior.

Chairman LEVIN. The argument is that you're not going to see a change in political behavior unless there is security in Baghdad. That's the argument. Putting aside for a moment whether or not five brigades will achieve security in Baghdad, there's obviously a difference of opinion on that. You've talked to generals there in Baghdad that don't think it'll make a difference, Dr. Perry. General Keane and others think it will make a difference. Obviously, the new commander going there thinks it will make a difference, too. Lay that issue aside for the moment. Is the reason they have not reached political settlement because of a lack of security in Baghdad?

Dr. Perry?

Dr. PERRY. I think they haven't reached a political settlement because the political group in power, the Shia, do not want to give up that power; they're not interested in political sharing and I understand why they are not.

So I believe that, in order for them to be willing to share power, there have to be substantial incentives for them to do it. I thought it was very important for our Government to give both negative and positive incentives to the Iraqi Government to make them take the actions to do this very difficult task. They don't want to do it, and it's very politically difficult to do it, so they keep putting it off, even though they have, in fact, committed to do so.

Chairman LEVIN. But the argument is that they're not going to be able to do that while there is political insecurity and chaos in Baghdad. Is that the reason they haven't reached a political accommodation, in your judgment?

Dr. PERRY. That's, of course, a chicken-and-egg problem. I think the lack of political accommodation has been a fuel for the military conflict and sectarian violence we're seeing today.

Chairman LEVIN. Now, on that chicken-and-egg problem, Ambassador Ross, is the lack of security in Baghdad the reason they have not reached a political settlement?

Ambassador ROSS. I think it is a factor. It's inescapable as a factor. But I think you're also now dealing with a legacy. The question is, do they want to share power? I don't see a lot of signs that they want to share power. One of the important factors here is that Maliki has made a series of promises. He's made promises before. We should try to hold him to the promises and make those promises measures. If the argument is that security in Baghdad is going to make a difference, then we ought to see him acting on the promises he's made.

Chairman LEVIN. We are in the middle of a vote now in the Senate, and we're going to have, by the way, an 8-minute round here—I should have announced that—on the usual early-bird basis.

Ambassador Ross, what about the argument, "Give this a chance to work?"

Ambassador ROSS. I'm sympathetic to the idea of "give it a chance to work," but, again, I think, given where we are at this point, I tend to focus much more on, "what are the demonstrations that there is a change in behavior now on the part of Iraqis?" If there's no change in behavior on the part of the Iraqis, it doesn't matter how much time you give them. If there is a change in behavior on the part of Iraqis, then actually you can manage a transition. So, I'm looking for signs that there's a change in behavior. At this point, I see some symbols; I'm not sure I see real signs.

Chairman LEVIN. Now, the President has said that the presence of the United States will be in Iraq so long as the Government of Iraq asks us to be in Iraq. That sounds like, to me, an open-ended commitment, not putting the kind of pressure on the Government of Iraq that at least the two of you have talked about. There are no consequences, as you've described, in the statement that the President has made that we'll be there as long as the government asks us to be. There's no conditionality, as I believe one of you has said. Dr. Perry, I think you used that word. Do you believe the position of President Bush contributes to the kind of pressure which you both describe, which you believe is essential to the Iraqis coming up with a political settlement?

Dr. PERRY. I think that's the wrong statement to make. I do believe the President is backing away from that statement. I think his more recent statement, that we will not make an open-ended commitment in Iraq—that we cannot make an open-ended commitment—is tending to walk away from that statement.

Chairman LEVIN. So, you think he intends to walk away from——

Dr. PERRY. I think he intends to walk away, but I'd like him to be more explicit in the conditionality.

Chairman LEVIN. All right. Do you believe, Ambassador Ross, that that statement contributes to the kind of pressure which you've described as being necessary?

Ambassador ROSS. I do not.

Chairman LEVIN. All right.

Now, in terms of consequences, the President has said that, "The consequences of failure are that extremists would grow in strength, gain new recruits, they'd 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." That's the description. Those are the consequences of failure. Do you agree, Dr. Perry, that our goal should be to maximize the chances of success in Iraq?

Dr. PERRY. I agree with that, but I think we need some discussion about what "success" means.

Chairman LEVIN. But, however you define "success," do you agree that that should be our goal in Iraq and that the plan that

you've outlined is the best way of maximizing chances of success, however you define it, in Iraq?

Dr. PERRY. I would say that our goal should be to maximize U.S. security, but one element of that security is to have some success in Iraq.

Chairman LEVIN. All right. Would you say that the plan that you've outlined is the best way of maximizing the chances of U.S. security being increased?

Dr. PERRY. I think it has a better probability of doing that, yes.

Chairman LEVIN. Ambassador Ross, would you agree that we should maximize the chances of success in Iraq?

Ambassador ROSS. Absolutely.

Chairman LEVIN. Would you agree that increasing the military presence by adding troops is not the way to maximize chances of success?

Ambassador ROSS. I think it only maximizes success if it's tied to a set of consequences.

Chairman LEVIN. Consequences for the Iraqis? Expand what you mean.

Ambassador ROSS. The consequences that, if they don't perform on what they themselves have promised, that we should consider then, in fact, moving in a different direction.

Chairman LEVIN. What would that direction be?

Ambassador ROSS. That direction would be capping forces. That direction would be redeploying forces. That direction would be making the kind of assistance we provide contingent on whether, in fact, they're prepared to do what they say they're prepared to do.

I just want to add one point here. I wouldn't create impossible standards for them, because the truth is, we don't want to see a convulsion in Iraq. That isn't in our interest. That would be, I think, quite disastrous. But a measure of where they make a genuine effort, even if they can't fully succeed at it, we can ourselves see how difficult it is, at times, to succeed. So, don't create standards that no one could meet. But we ought to hold them to what they say they're going to do. I don't want to use this necessarily as an analogy, but we used to have a measure with the Palestinians on security. It was 100 percent effort, it wasn't 100 percent success. Let's see 100 percent effort. I haven't seen anything approaching 100 percent effort.

Chairman LEVIN. Should that be made explicit to them?

Ambassador ROSS. Absolutely.

Chairman LEVIN. Has it been, do you know?

Ambassador ROSS. I don't believe so.

Chairman LEVIN. Finally, General Keane, you said that it is "unfortunate" that there will not be unity of command of American forces in Baghdad. You said it will be "frustrating." Those are the two words that you've used because General Petraeus is going to Baghdad with this dual-command structure. In addition to being "unfortunate" and "frustrating," is it also "dangerous" for our troops, unless there is unity of command?

General KEANE. Yes, it is more dangerous. What'll happen is, our commanders will mitigate that danger by establishing joint command posts with the Iraqis and maximize the number of liaison teams. You can work around it, but usually when we do an autopsy

on why operations don't succeed, many times this unity-of-command issue is one of the reasons why they do not succeed. So, it's a fundamental precept and it's unfortunate we have to deal with it. General Petraeus has the skill sets with General Odierno to mitigate it quite a bit, I believe, but, nonetheless, it is a problem and we shouldn't try to hide it. It is a problem.

Chairman LEVIN. Even if you mitigate it, there's still increased danger to our troops.

General KEANE. Sure. As I said, we can mitigate it, but there'll be more danger to the troops. Certainly, when you have Iraqis on the same street with them responding to another authority, troops can be moved around at will if they want to be, and the 60 or 70 people that were going to help you do this task all of a sudden are gone, so you have more exposure. We can come up with all sorts of hypothetical situations to characterize that danger, but yes.

Chairman LEVIN. Okay, we're going to adjourn after my final question unless someone comes back here who's already voted.

The press reported that when Prime Minister Maliki met with President Bush in Jordan in November, he proposed that U.S. troops withdraw to the outskirts of Baghdad and let Iraqis take over security. He allegedly said that he did not want any more U.S. troops at all; he just wanted more authority over Iraqi troops. Have any of you heard that that is the case? If so, what is your reaction to the press report that Maliki allegedly said that he doesn't want U.S. troops to leave, but he did not want more U.S. troops? Do you have a reaction to it? Have you read those reports?

Dr. PERRY. Mr. Chairman, all I know on that subject is what I read in the newspaper.

Chairman LEVIN. Do you have a reaction to Maliki saying he wants no additional U.S. troops, if he said that?

Dr. PERRY. If he said that, it was similar, probably, from the same point of view that the American generals were saying, that it puts an American face on the war, and, in that point of view, it contributes to the political problems in the country.

I must say, though, I do not believe the Iraqi army then, or even now, is capable, by itself, of taking over the security of Baghdad.

Chairman LEVIN. Ambassador Ross?

Ambassador ROSS. I see it more, again, in terms of wanting to unleash what would be Shia forces against the Sunnis within Baghdad.

Chairman LEVIN. General Keane?

General KEANE. I think it's well known that, ever since Prime Minister Maliki assumed his duties, he's been pressing to gain control of his own military. I think it's a badge of honor for them and I think he feels some pressure within the political constituency. But I have not heard that recent statement at all. I know that there's lots of collaboration that's taking place between Maliki's military leaders and our military leaders, in terms of how to execute this upcoming operation.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Okay, Senator Reed will preside.

Senator REED [presiding]. First let me thank you gentlemen, not only for your testimony this morning, but for your extraordinary

service to the Nation in so many different ways. Thank you very much.

General Keane, you said in your remarks that we made a conscious decision not to protect the population of Iraq. Who made that conscious decision?

General KEANE. That was a strategy that was put together in the summer of 2004 by General Casey, acceded to by General Abizaid and also Secretary Rumsfeld. It became the campaign plan for Iraq and I don't know how it made its way to approval. But, logically, I'm sure General Casey made the proposal to General Abizaid and he agreed to it as did Secretary Rumsfeld and it became, in a sense, our military strategy.

Senator REED. You suggest that the President might not have been aware of that strategy?

General KEANE. I don't know. It's always been a mystery to me, whether people really understand what we are doing in Iraq, and, just as important, what we are not doing? That's why I was suggesting that there may be, even, leaders in our Government that don't understand this important subtlety that's taking place, that we never took on the mission to defeat the insurgency with our coalition allies; we had given that mission to the Iraqis so that they could do it, at some point, when they had the capacity to do it.

Senator REED. One of the points you mentioned was the lack of unity of command, which is a concern that I share, and many others share. But there's another significant issue, in terms of doctrine, and that is sufficient forces. You're well aware that General Petraeus labored for many months with his counterinsurgency manual which would call for a minimum force of approximately 120,000 effective combat troops in Iraq. By my calculation, based on General Pace's testimony, we'll have about 85,000, but 55,000 of those troops are Iraqi forces, which, I presume, are not all combat effective. Will we, 6 months or 6 years from now, look back, as we are looking back at 2003 and 2004, and say we didn't have enough forces on the ground, regardless of the strategy?

General KEANE. Yes, that's a great question, Senator. I've looked at this, myself. The operation is going to begin in the mixed Shia/Sunni neighborhoods east of the Tigris and west of the Tigris. The population base there is about 1.8 million. The operation will focus there, because that's where most of the violence is and it also gives the military operation the opportunity to demonstrate evenhandedness to both the Sunnis and the Shias.

In the Sunni enclaves to the west, which come close to about 2 million in population, there's not that much violence. There would be a minimum amount of military presence and certainly a strong economic package because they deserve to get that just as much as anybody else does. Then you have the other 2 million, which are Sadr City, to the east. It occurs to me that if we're able to protect the Shias and the Sunnis evenhandedly and do that for a number of weeks or months, for the first time, Maliki has a political instrument and leverage with the Shia militias, demonstrating that we can, in fact, protect their people—and they'll know whether we're effectively doing it or not—so that we, hopefully, can resolve the situation in Sadr City politically. At least it offers us the opportunity to try that. If we cannot resolve it politically and we have

to contest the Shia militias because they're continuing to stay on the offense, then we would have to go into Sadr City. It's certainly militarily feasible to achieve our objectives there but I don't think it's desirable to do it if we can solve it politically.

All that said, you're not dealing with a population of 6 million, so you don't need the 120,000 to do that. You're dealing with a population, possibly, of 1.8 million, primarily with the other possibility that you'll have to deal with the additional 2 million in Sadr City. So the force level is appropriate for what you're dealing with in Baghdad.

Senator REED. You can refresh my memory, but I believe your proposal with Mr. Kagan was a minimum of 30,000?

General KEANE. Right. We were sizing our units differently. We were adding all the support forces into the brigades, and I think our number of brigades for Baghdad were the same, to be frank about it, and there is a difference in the size of them. We had also recommended two Marine regiments for al Anbar, and the military mission is two Marine battalions. So that is the difference in the units.

Senator REED. I think you've raised another issue which should be of concern; you were also counting support personnel—enablers. The critical issue here, and I addressed it to General Petraeus, is, where the translators are coming from, the civil affairs officers, and the noncombatants. That is a constrained resource in our military. Without them—particularly in this type of operation, where you disperse small units into neighborhoods—these units are marginally effective. Frankly, General Petraeus—I was surprised—said he really doesn't have a handle on that today, that General Odierno is working on it. But without these enablers—and I'm just talking now about the military—operations of this nature are very difficult to perform.

General KEANE. There are a number of conditions, I think, for any military operation to succeed at the tactical, operational, or strategic level—certain conditions that should be in place to help with success. You've put your finger on one of them. Detention facilities are another one. At the operational level they are wholly inadequate and detention is going to go up. Also, how we control the population—these are issues out there. So there are a number of these kinds of things that should be in place.

Now, General Odierno is aware of them, he's put them down in writing. He's told people what they are. With some of them, I believe, there are at least indications from him that those conditions are being met and some of them are still to be resolved. But it's an important issue. What are the necessary conditions to have tactical, operational, and strategic success for a military operation? What you've identified is certainly very important.

Senator REED. General, your opinion is very valued by me, obviously, by all of us on this committee, but I just have this nagging fear that, once again, we're defining the mission to fit the force, rather than the force to fit the real mission. We're ignoring some critical military elements we have to have in place, like translators and civil affairs officers.

I will move to Ambassador Ross, but you've also expressed the deep concern I've had. It is that DOD shows up, but nobody else shows up.

Ambassador Ross, you've been in the State Department. You've seen the interplay of military forces and diplomatic forces. Do you think that there's a significant change in the culture and the commitment of non-Defense departments here that will vigorously and actively support, with personnel on the ground, what has to be done?

Ambassador ROSS. I would like to be able to say yes. I wish I could say yes. At this point, I don't see it.

Senator REED. I don't want to put words in your mouth, General Keane, but you've said that this is a multifaceted approach and that it could fail if one leg of the stool is not there—and it could be military, because we don't have the enablers, it could be economic or political, because we don't have the resources. I'm not talking about General Odierno and General Crocker, I'm talking about agricultural experts, legal experts, people who will set up judicial systems—if they're not there—and they have not been there for 3 years now. This 20,000, regardless of the politics, makes a headline, but doesn't make an impact. I'm deeply concerned that we can do this.

Dr. Perry, my time is expired, but do you share the concern about our ability to marshal not just additional military forces but additional diplomatic and governmental expertise from our Government?

Dr. PERRY. Absolutely.

Senator REED. I think, General Keane, you'll agree that we have never been able to fill up the provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs), and we've never been able to put State Department officials down at the local level in sufficient numbers. We've never been able to do these things and I don't see anything that this administration is doing to fix that.

General KEANE. I think those are real concerns and definitely challenges in front of us. The PRTs are going to go down to brigade-level, now, and I think that's a very good plan. They'll be down on the street, they'll have protection, and I think they'll be considerably more effective than what they have been. But that means they have to be properly manned. We need the numbers, and they need to have access to resources to make a difference. That's all, a check that has to be issued. It is based on the track record that I raised a concern, because, in the past, we haven't been successful at it.

Senator REED. Those checks have bounced.

General KEANE. Yes.

Senator REED. Senator Warner.

Thank you.

Senator WARNER. Gentlemen, may I say, first, thank you for your long public service, each of you, and your willingness, even though you're not in an official capacity today, to remain a viable and vibrant part of the infrastructure that does come forward and help our Government, irrespective of who might be President or who may be in the Congress. It's been valuable for us.

I yield to you, Senator McCain.

Senator MCCAIN. Since you have already begun, please go ahead.

Senator WARNER. All right, thank you very much.

Now, I'd like to start with you, General. I've had the privilege of knowing you for some time. I've had the privilege of serving on this committee for many years and have gotten to know many fine military officers. I have the highest respect for General Abizaid. I have a respect for General Casey. You said with a great deal of enthusiasm—and I think I copied it down clearly: "We have a new team. They believe in the mission." I remain of the view that both of those distinguished officers believed in their mission and believed they were doing the right thing, unless Secretary Rumsfeld had directed them to take actions and to follow a mission which was inconsistent with their own professional judgment. I would have to think, if that were the case, that they would have gone to the Secretary and said to him, "We do not think this mission is working. We should change it." Can you amplify on your statement, "new team who believe," in contrast to those two officers and their performance?

General KEANE. Certainly. It's an awkward situation, certainly, to talk about my friends here in full public view.

Senator WARNER. It has to be done, frankly.

General KEANE. I understand, and I'm going to do it.

Senator WARNER. This committee sits, year after year, hearing after hearing, and we have to place a high degree of confidence in our senior military leaders as we formulate our own decisions.

General KEANE. Right.

Senator WARNER. So, let's have it. I think the sooner we get it out, the sooner that the American people can better understand this complicated situation.

General KEANE. General Casey and General Abizaid believed very strongly in that strategy. The military strategy was to transition to the Iraqi security forces, to get them to a level where they can stand on their own, and then they would be able to prosecute a counterinsurgency. They believe in that strategy, I think, probably right up to this day. But I don't want to speak to them, in terms of what their views are right now, because I'm not sure what they are. But I do know what their views have been, and certainly, they were committed to that strategy. They formulated it. I believe that there was compelling evidence, beginning in 2005 and certainly in 2006, that the strategy was not working, and they did not change it. I think it is compelling, in terms of what the facts are, that we probably should have made some adjustment to that strategy. We have not.

What I meant by my comments about the new team is, well, there is a new strategy here. We can argue how much new it is. I realize that. But from a military perspective, it is a change of mission, and there's no denying that. We have new leaders, who are going in to do that mission, and believe very strongly in the mission. That's what I was suggesting. In General Petraeus, we have probably the foremost military leader who understands irregular warfare and counterinsurgency—proven practices and techniques—to execute that mission. So that's where my comments were coming from.

Senator WARNER. All right. Let's talk about it. It has been said here, and I agree, that war is a test of wills. We have trained up several hundred thousand Iraqi military. By my understanding, the net figure is about 188,000. Do you agree that it is somewhere in that amount?

General KEANE. In terms of the Iraqi military, I think it's a little bit less than that, but 150,000——

Senator WARNER. Give or take.

General KEANE. Yes.

Senator WARNER. Now, they're dispersed and serving in a number of areas in Iraq, correct?

General KEANE. Yes.

Senator WARNER. Why couldn't this mission—call it the third Baghdad surge—have been composed almost entirely of Iraqi forces with some embedding on our area, some support continuing, and then our forces, if we bring new ones into the country, could go into those geographic areas where their Iraqi forces have been moved to Baghdad? Was that ever a consideration?

General KEANE. Yes. The answer to that is yes, it has been. We relied on Iraqi security forces twice before, in Baghdad, in those previous operations. Both of those operations failed. They failed primarily because we relied too heavily on Iraqi security forces and we did not have enough U.S. forces to be able to deal with it. So, that's number one. Senator, we've made some real progress with the Iraqis, in terms of the training programs that we have for their noncommissioned officers (NCOs), their officers, and their young soldiers. We put them in units together and give them operational experience with advisors to do that. I think the initiatives to strengthen our advisory program, and increase it, make a lot of sense to me.

But the overwhelming reality is that those Iraqi security forces cannot take on the lion's share of this mission by themselves to be able to deal with the level of violence that's there. They still do not have the organizational depth and breadth to deal with that. They don't have the skill sets to deal with all of that. I think they're a work in progress, and it is steady progress that we're making here.

Senator WARNER. All right. Then I'd have to say to you, I think this committee and Congress has been misled because, time and time again, military officers have sat there and said, "Here's the number of battalions. They're growing and they're training, and here is the status of their equipment" and so forth. There has been a breakdown in communication then, because I had placed a high degree of confidence in the representations that this army was up and standing and ready to work. Now, I have to move along here.

Several of us here have joined in a resolution that is on the floor. It is highly criticized today but we're hanging tough on it. We clearly come down to this point of benchmarks, and the need to not just have words, as Ambassador Ross has mentioned many times, but deeds to confirm the commitments of Maliki and the Iraqi military forces. One of them has been that the Iraqi forces said, "We want to take the lead. We can take the lead. We'll take the point." Now, in my very modest military career, I've had some experiences. What is "taking the lead?" In training, what is "taking the point"?

Give me your military definition. How do you match that assertion with what you've just said?

General KEANE. I think "taking the lead" means that they clearly want to be in charge and be responsible.

Senator WARNER. Let's go down to the tactical platoon/company level and then move up to taking charge.

General KEANE. Yes. I think what we'll see unfold there is that when we put forces in to protect people in their neighborhoods, those forces will be combined forces. That is, there'll be U.S. and Iraqis together. Under the current arrangement, the Iraqis will respond to their own chain of command, and not to our chain of command; we certainly will respond to our chain of command and not to theirs. There will be an Iraqi commander who's in charge of the entire operation in Baghdad, and then there will be another commander who is in charge of each one of the nine districts.

That's how that's going to be layered.

Senator WARNER. When you're moving in on a mission, is it the Iraqis out on the point who are the first in the field of fire and we're in the support role? Or are we out on that point? Are both of us out on that point?

General KEANE. Both. At the tactical level, we'll both be doing it together.

Senator WARNER. Well then, that's not, in my judgment, what I meant by "take the lead."

My last question goes to the distinguished Ambassador. You, I think, really struck on a chord that I've been interested in, and that is, at what point does the situation become so serious that there's a realization among the Iraqi leadership and the Iraqi people, that they have to come to terms with it and accept our offer of support and make certain that their forces match up and do what they're supposed to do? I think you said Iraq is "not bad enough to force either Iraqis or their neighbors to make the tough decisions." I think that's very sage advice.

Now, if we move in, as we are now proposing to do in Baghdad, we begin to level that bad situation. That's our mission, to bring about a greater amount of security. So, to follow through on your equation, it has to be bad before they're going to act, and here we are taking this mission to relieve some of that pressure, namely, to try to improve the security. What happens to your theory that they simply will not step up and deliver?

Ambassador ROSS. I'm not against creating security. I'm against acting in a way where we act, and they never have to. We act, and basically it's always up to us, and even when they make promises and they don't fulfill their promises, it doesn't change our behavior. At some point, they have to see there's a consequence for nonperformance.

Senator WARNER. How will we make judgments as this operation unfolds? I've indicated that perhaps we take a section of Baghdad and go in according to the President's plan. By the way, our resolution does not say to the President, "You should not add troops." It was just the level of troops. Perhaps we should go in and try it and see whether they deliver before you start the second and third and fourth of, whatever, nine different areas in Baghdad. Does that make sense?

Ambassador ROSS. It could. Look, I'm not going to try to look at the specific military tactics. What I'm trying to get at is that where Maliki now has made explicit promises, which, by the way, as I said, are not necessarily new, it's time to say, "You have to perform." Now, performing doesn't mean you're 100 percent successful, but performing means there's an unmistakable effort. What we've seen up until now is very little effort. What we've seen—and you quoted me—we've seen lots of words, but we haven't seen performance on the words. There comes a point where they have to know there's a consequence for nonperformance.

Now, I laid out simply eight areas where he's made promises, each of which, in my mind, constitutes a kind of measure.

Senator WARNER. A benchmark.

Ambassador ROSS. Yes. Let's hold them to it.

Senator WARNER. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN [presiding]. Senator McCain.

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

This morning in the Washington Post it says, "Our guess is that General Petraeus' concept will govern U.S. actions on the ground. Until now, General Petraeus had been the most successful American commander in the war. In that sense, Senators are right to support him and quickly approve his nomination,"—which I believe we will do today or tomorrow. "But legislators need a better way to act in their opposition to the current policy than the passage of nonbinding resolutions that may cover them politically, but have no practical impact, other than perhaps a negative one suggested by the General."

Ambassador Ross, you've been appointed to be our Special Envoy in one of the most controversial and difficult parts of the world, haven't you? I think you've carried out those responsibilities incredibly well. How would you have felt if, when you were sent off on your mission, Ambassador, we had a resolution that disapproved of your mission or in some way circumscribed your mission? How would you have felt?

Ambassador ROSS. I probably would have been able to restrain my enthusiasm for that.

Senator MCCAIN. There you go.

Ambassador ROSS. But I would say this. There is value, when you're dealing with people in this part of the world, where they know that, in a sense, there is a pressure to perform.

Senator MCCAIN. Oh, I understand that. I want to get into that. But what about one that disapproved your mission or told you, you could not do certain things? My friend from Virginia said, "We should not add troops"—just the level of troops. So, now with this resolution, we in Congress are going to set the level of troops? General Keane, in your many years in the military, have you ever heard of a resolution of Congress that set the level of troops when a conflict is going on?

General KEANE. There are precedents for capping troops. I think we had the numbers capped in El Salvador. I think we've capped troops in Colombia.

Senator MCCAIN. Yes.

General KEANE. But those are very small military commitments, by comparison to what is taking place in Iraq.

Senator MCCAIN. I think the record shows that capping the troops in El Salvador was an impediment to the progress that we made, in retrospect, rather than any kind of assistance to it, would you agree?

General KEANE. I would agree. I certainly don't agree with capping our forces here, because it takes away the flexibility that the commanders need to prosecute those forces.

Senator MCCAIN. If we cap the troops, basically what that says is that we are pursuing the failed policy of not having enough troops—I mean, read any book; we didn't have enough troops there from the beginning. Now, we are going to cap the troops. Would it not be better to just get the hell out of there?

If you cap the troops, you have no way to succeed, you have no way to implement General Petraeus' strategy, where we are sending him with a unanimous vote from the United States Senate. This is an Orwellian experience.

General KEANE. If we don't permit the proper level of forces to be applied, then we will not be able to secure the population in Baghdad, and we'll continue on the track that we are on, toward the government being fractured and a failed state. But the violence will increase. It's predicted to increase in 2007.

Senator MCCAIN. It's increasing as we speak today.

General KEANE. Right.

Senator MCCAIN. There are mortar shells landing in the Green Zone as we speak.

Ambassador Ross, I totally agree with many of your comments and I also agree with what might be the best fallback strategy. I am not prepared yet to employ that strategy but I think it makes perfect sense. But, most importantly, I agree with your thoughts about benchmarks. Tell me how we would write those benchmarks into a resolution. By the way, I think we are in agreement that Congress has not sufficiently exercised its oversight, perhaps, of this conflict. How do you do that? In other words, how do you gauge whether the Maliki government is cooperating or not? How do you gauge whether the countries in the region, which I think should be a benchmark, are being of sufficient assistance? How do you gauge some of the other parameters that you described in your opening remarks, which I am totally in agreement with?

Ambassador ROSS. Look, some of them lend themselves much better than others. Have they actually passed a law on the sharing of oil revenue? Have they set up a mechanism to act on it? That is something you can see. Have they revised the law on de-Baathification? Again, if you're trying to reach out to Sunnis, that is something you can see. So, I would pick those that are not subject to different interpretations where you can simply see whether they've done them or not.

Have they provided forces that they said they would provide? You're going to get reports on whether those forces are showing up. Are they performing? Here again, it doesn't seem to me that those are necessarily the kinds of things that are subject to wildly different interpretations.

In terms of the countries who are neighbors, that's a different kind of benchmark. I would say that's not something I would focus on, with regard, obviously, to the Iraqis; that's something for us. Do we try to put together some kind of regional conference? I've said I'm not keen on singling out either the Iranians or the Syrians. I think that exaggerates their role. I think they're much better at spoiling than fixing. Nonetheless, they're neighbors, and the Iranians clearly have the capacity to exert influence, if they want to, in a positive way although we haven't seen it. In a context where you have a regional conference, you basically would focus on, what are the measures that you would want all countries who are neighbors to do? How would you identify or create means of noninterference? Could you create a mechanism for monitoring? Who would be the monitors? Here again, it seems to me, you're trying to create a basis of leverage on the outside, you're trying to put a spotlight on the behavior of those who haven't done what they could, including some of our friends, who haven't done what they could have done.

Senator MCCAIN. I would like for my staff to work with you as we try to come up with a list of benchmarks that we think need to be accomplished, and perhaps even a timeframe associated with them. I don't know, like you said, whether they are going to share the oil revenues. We expect that law to be passed by such-and-such a date.

General Keane, would you have a problem with that?

General KEANE. No, I would not. I really, truly believe that Iraq should be looked at as a regional issue. I don't think there is a neighboring country that wants a failed state in Iraq, regardless of what their political motivations and regardless of how different their political motivations may be from ours. Certainly there's something to be gained by bringing these people together.

Senator MCCAIN. Mr. Chairman, I understand your frustration about the failure to receive the information on benchmarks. I am not sure you are going to get them, but I would like to work with you and maybe we could set up a series of our own that we could consider in this committee—by the way, the resolution that's at the floor should have been through this committee—and maybe we could come up with something that might gain some broad bipartisan support and give some comfort to the American people that there are tangible goals that they have every legitimate right to expect to be met.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to commit publicly to working with you to achieve that goal. It is clear that the American people need something along those lines when we are going to go through this increase in troops. There's not going to be a cutting off of funds, although I respect my friend Russ Feingold, who admonished many that, "If you're really serious, then you should go ahead and vote to cut off funding rather than send the wrong message to our troops who are going to be over there fighting." I look forward immediately to working with you on this issue.

Chairman LEVIN. I've asked the State Department twice now to get us the benchmarks which the President of the United States says the Iraqis have agreed to. You haven't seen those benchmarks, have you, Ambassador Ross?

Ambassador ROSS. No.

Dr. PERRY. Mr. Chairman, I have seen the benchmarks.

Chairman LEVIN. You have seen the actual benchmarks the Iraqis have agreed to?

Dr. PERRY. When we were in Baghdad, Maliki gave us the benchmarks. They have dates tied to them. They have performance tied to them.

Chairman LEVIN. Do you have copies? Does the ISG have copies?

Dr. PERRY. I imagine, in the files of the ISG, they exist, yes.

Chairman LEVIN. Could you get us a copy of those?

Dr. PERRY. I will try to do that.

[The information referred to follows:]

The benchmarks that Maliki provided are the same as the ones printed on pages 62–63 of the Iraq Study Group Report. They are as follows:

Milestones for Iraq

The government of Iraq understands that dramatic steps are necessary to avert a downward spiral and make progress. Prime Minister Maliki has worked closely in consultation with the United States and has put forward the following milestones in the key areas of national reconciliation, security and governance:

NATIONAL RECONCILIATION

By the end of 2006–early 2007:

- Approval of the Provincial Election Law and setting an election date
- Approval of the Petroleum Law
- Approval of the De-Baathification Law
- Approval of the Militia Law

By March 2007:

- A referendum on constitutional amendments (if it is necessary)

By May 2007:

- Completion of Militia Law implementation
- Approval of amnesty agreement
- Completion of reconciliation efforts

The Way Forward—A New Approach

By June 2007:

- Provincial elections

SECURITY (pending joint U.S.-Iraqi review)

By the end of 2006:

- Iraqi increase of 2007 security spending over 2006 levels

By April 2007:

- Iraqi control of the Army

By September 2007:

- Iraqi control of provinces

By December 2007:

- Iraqi security self-reliance (with U.S. support)

GOVERNANCE

By the end of 2006:

- The Central Bank of Iraq will raise interest rates to 20 percent and appreciate the Iraqi dinar by 10 percent to combat accelerating inflation.

- Iraq will continue increasing domestic prices for refined petroleum products and sell imported fuel at market prices.

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Chairman LEVIN. Then we'll also send a letter to the Secretary of State.

Dr. PERRY. We argue, in the report, that the support of the U.S. Government ought to be conditioned on if not meeting those benchmarks, at least showing a best effort on trying to achieve them.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Senator MCCAIN. Mr. Chairman, I think we can do a pretty good job of using theirs, but we should come up with our own, with the advice and counsel of others.

Chairman LEVIN. We surely want to see the benchmarks the Iraqis have allegedly agreed to. Senator McCain, perhaps you and I could send a letter today to the Secretary of State expecting those benchmarks to be delivered this week. We'll try again. We've been trying it very hard.

Senator MCCAIN. As importantly, if we are going to exercise our oversight responsibilities, Mr. Chairman, we ought to have benchmarks. Maybe we could use some of those, maybe not.

Chairman LEVIN. I think the first step will be to get the benchmarks the Iraqis have allegedly agreed to and I have no problem in trying to work out benchmarks. In fact, both resolutions talk about benchmarks which are needed, benchmarks which have not been complied with in the past by the Iraqis, commitments they've made and have failed to keep. Everyone agrees that they ought to keep them.

Senator MCCAIN. If you want to look back, that is fine, Mr. Chairman, but the fact is, I am trying to look forward. I am trying to stop from sending the wrong message to the men and women who are going to be at risk—some of whom are going to die—that we disapprove of their mission, but, at the same time, exercise the oversight responsibilities and the expectations that we, as a Congress have, and that the American people have, so they can have some comfort in what is going to happen, that we are exercising our legitimate responsibilities. Now, if your focus is on digging up what the old benchmarks are, fine. But I would like to work with you on trying to set some parameters and benchmarks that can be passed by this Congress so that we could give the American people some confidence.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. We are not just focusing on old benchmarks. The President of the United States, a few days ago, said that the Iraqis are going to be held to the benchmarks they have agreed to. We want to know, as a starting point, what the Iraqis have agreed to and you've agreed that you would join with me.

Senator MCCAIN. Yes, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. In terms of the message, we're going to argue over what the right message is, but I would think our troops and their families want us to use our best efforts to try to have a successful end to this matter, and, according to the public opinion polls, a significant number of the troops that are there want us to change the direction in Iraq.

So it's not us sending a wrong message. The troops and their families have indicated very strongly, in large numbers, that the message that they want to get to the Iraqis is to get on with their own government and get on with their own nation.

Senator MCCAIN. Mr. Chairman, I think I am familiar with the sentiment of many of the troops, and the fact is, they want to win.

Chairman LEVIN. We all want to win.

Senator MCCAIN. That's what they want and that is why we are changing the strategy, Mr. Chairman, and I am sorry you don't support the strategy.

Chairman LEVIN. It's a strategy which has failed. Finally the President acknowledged that he did not have a winning strategy. So, I'm glad we have not, many of us, supported what has proven

to be a failed strategy. I'm delighted the President has acknowledged that he wants to change that strategy, finally, after 2 months ago saying, "We're absolutely winning in Iraq."

Senator Ben Nelson?

Senator BEN NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Perry, you heard Ambassador Ross tick off a list of the kinds of conditions or could-be benchmarks that he thinks we ought to consider as part of the ongoing operation in Iraq. Do those comport with the kinds of benchmarks that you saw that Prime Minister Maliki gave to you?

Dr. PERRY. Yes, they do, Senator.

Senator BEN NELSON. Very comparable?

Dr. PERRY. Yes.

Senator BEN NELSON. Okay.

General Keane, you listened to those benchmarks as well. If those benchmarks were put into place, and we all agreed that those are the kinds of benchmarks we ought to have, do you have a timeframe to evaluate whether Iraq is achieving those benchmarks?

General KEANE. Yes. There certainly are ways to know if there are means to implement those and monitor the implementation of that. I think that would probably take 6 to 8 months to observe all of that.

Senator BEN NELSON. You think it'll take 6 to 8 months to know whether their troops are going to show up?

General KEANE. Oh, I don't mean that. In terms of the more complicated issues like dealing with the de-Baathification.

Senator BEN NELSON. What about the basic ones? Can you give us some idea of how long it would take to know whether Iraq would enter into an oil agreement?

General KEANE. If they're going to do oil revenue-sharing, and they're going to pass a law to do that, that'll be obvious. Then we would have to look at what the implementation of that is and see if that really does make sense, and what the passage of time will be to do that.

That's all observable. That's all within oversight to be able to determine what that is. That would not take very long to see if there really is something there that makes sense in terms of implementation.

Senator BEN NELSON. Do you have any idea how long it might take to evaluate whether the Prime Minister is willing to go to Sadr City and take on, or take out, Muqtada al Sadr and the Mahdi army?

General KEANE. My own view of that is that I don't think he has much leverage to do that now, because he hasn't been able to protect the Shia people, and that's the catalyst that prompted the sectarian violence. I think U.S. forces as well as Iraqi forces have to protect the Shia people for a number of weeks so that he has some leverage to do that. I think it will probably take into the summer to prove that we are doing something that's worthwhile in terms of securing the population.

Senator BEN NELSON. How long do you think it will take for the Prime Minister to be able to provide the level of security that the parliament will begin to show up again? They've taken roll day-in and day-out, and gotten as many as 65 members of parliament.

Without parliament showing up, they're not going to be able to pass the laws. Is that correct?

General KEANE. It goes to all the agencies of government. The legislature is one of them. The judicial system, the lack of judges, as well, and detention facilities—it reaches into every aspect of government. Every agency that you put your finger on in Iraq pales by comparison to anything that we know in our own government, certainly. But even by their standards, it is wholly inadequate. Their bureaucracies do not function. They don't have the talent or the number of people. It will still take time to grow and develop that. You can't get people to willingly participate in government if their basic security is at risk to the degree that it has been. Certainly, our adversaries there have exploited that, they've assassinated large numbers of people who have been willing to come forward and participate in the government. They have killed judges who have participated in the judicial system. We have to get that under control so we can get people to come forward to participate in the government.

Senator BEN NELSON. What would be, according to Ambassador Ross's description, an unmistakable demonstration of effort that would make us all feel more comfortable that the Prime Minister is willing, as well as able, to move forward to protect his people?

General KEANE. What would be unmistakable?

Senator BEN NELSON. Right. What would you look at as an unmistakable effort on the part of the Prime Minister to protect his people?

General KEANE. He has to commit the appropriate level of forces to do this and that has not happened in the past. The two other times that we tried to do something in Baghdad—admittedly, the mission was different—we were dependent on some of his forces and they did not materialize.

They have to materialize this time. The early indications of this, Senator, are that that is going to take place. We have to wait for the final result, here, certainly. Everything is more complicated in Iraq. But the fact is that, in talking to the commanders there, the indications they have is that the forces that have been promised, to date, have arrived.

Senator BEN NELSON. If they arrived, will that be evidence of an unmistakable effort on the part of the Prime Minister to begin to achieve what is going to be required in Iraq?

General KEANE. I think it's a step in the right direction, but I don't think we could sit here and be completely comfortable about it. I won't hide from you; I don't know who Maliki is, and I'm not going to suggest I do. I don't think anybody in government knows. I don't know what that government truly stands for. We will find out, in time. I don't know whether they truly want to have a representative government where the Sunnis are truly a part of that and are willing to share not only oil revenue but also the basic qualify of life with those people. I'm not sure that's what they want. We're going to find out. That is the truth of it, and every one of these steps will be a indicator.

The rhetoric is certainly right, but, as we've seen before, the actions do not par with the rhetoric.

Senator BEN NELSON. I share your concerns about it. I'm more reluctant to think that we ought to send our troops in to do battle between the Shias and the Sunnis in order to give time until we can find out whether the Maliki government will step forward and show these unmistakable efforts. There just may be a difference of opinion, but I do share your view that this government is shadowy, hard to understand, and we can't pinpoint where they are. Some of the lower government leaders will be undermining what this surge is all about with their own public comments, as well as, apparently, private comments. So, it's a very difficult situation for us.

Ambassador Ross, what would you describe as the first and most important unmistakable effort that we could determine and evaluate whether or not they're prepared to move forward?

Ambassador ROSS. I think the most important one is whether their forces show up? Will they, in fact, provide equal protection for Sunnis, as well as Shias? When General Keane talks about his not knowing exactly what this government and Prime Minister Maliki are about, for me the greatest area of doubt and suspicion relates to how they approach the Sunnis, whether they have any interest at all in reaching out to them.

Senator BEN NELSON. If they don't, as an underlying premise, everything else begins to topple, is that correct?

Ambassador ROSS. It does for me, because it suggests there is no political intent to forge any kind of national compact.

Senator BEN NELSON. Which is necessary.

Ambassador ROSS. Without a national compact—we've been talking a lot, and it goes back and forth; it is a chicken-and-egg issue, no doubt.

Senator BEN NELSON. Maybe both.

Ambassador ROSS. Maybe it's both. But for sure, you can't succeed if there isn't going to be a national compact. What we've seen so far is, there isn't the will to produce it. There is a terrible legacy. The war, in the last 3¾ years, has deepened the sectarian divide. I think if you look at the way Ayatollah Sistani was actually trying to promote a kind of restraint on the part of Shia for the first couple of years, there's no doubt that there was a point at which a threshold was crossed. Then you began to see the emergence of death squads. So, I agree with General Keane that the Shia militias have emerged because they are seen as being a source of protection from the Sunnis. But they've gone from being a source of protection to wreaking a lot of vengeance, sometimes in response, oftentimes in anticipation. Unless there is some unmistakable demonstration on the part of the government that they want to be a government of all of Iraq and not just of the Shia, it's hard to see how you can succeed.

So, when I ticked off his promises—and these were what the President said in his speech when he laid out his explanation for the surge—those promises, even though not new, do embody, at least rhetorically, what would be a commitment to creating some kind of national compact. Having forces show up is obviously the first manifestation, but acting on the other promises of sharing oil revenues, of changing the de-Baathification law, of having a fair process on amending the constitution—bear in mind, Sunnis showed up to vote, and they supported the constitution, because

there was an understanding that there would be a 4-month process where the constitution would be amended in three basic areas. It hasn't happened yet. The President identified, as one of the areas of a new commitment, a fair process for amending the constitution. So, it seems to me, these are pretty clear. I see no reason why, in fact, we shouldn't look for ways to hold them to that.

Senator BEN NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Nelson.

Senator Inhofe.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think someone watching this might come to the conclusion that the only area in which we all agree is that mistakes were made. I know that we believe that. At this panel, I think the three of you believe that. Certainly the President has said, many times, that he believes that, and that's why he wants the new course.

But I think there are other areas where we agree, also. I would say this, Dr. Perry, when you listed your things—with the exception of the second point—the first thing you were talking about was the embedding of U.S. soldiers so they can be role models in on-the-spot training of Iraqi soldiers; continue the support of Iraqi forces with intelligence, logistics, and air support; and provide both positive and negative incentives, et cetera, et cetera—with the exception of your pulling-out point, I think we agree.

I found myself agreeing, and you too, Ambassador Ross, when you clicked off, very skillfully, your eight points. You had a lot more points in your quiver, but there wasn't time. I'm asking my staff to get those, so we can review them again. I agree with what you're saying. I had different conclusions, but I do agree with what you said—and I wrote this down—you said, "If he really knows this is his last chance," talking about Maliki, "if he really understands what the consequences will be"—and maybe just the President alone isn't enough to explain those consequences. Maybe that should come also from Congress. I think that's probably right.

But I would like to consider the areas where we don't agree and I have a reason for wanting to do this. I am talking about a drawdown. One of the generals I'm very close to is General Maples, because he was at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, for a period of time. The other day, he made this statement, and I'm going to ask you if you agree or disagree with it. If it's not a yes or a no, then you can do it on the record. He said that, "A continued coalition presence is a primary counter to a breakdown in central authority. Such a breakdown would have grave consequences for the people of Iraq, stability in the region, and U.S. strategic interests."

Dr. Perry? Ambassador?

Dr. PERRY. Yes, I agree with the continued presence for some period of time.

Senator INHOFE. Ambassador Ross?

Ambassador ROSS. I agree, as well. That's what I was trying to get at. There is an interesting paradox that we hold it together and, as long as we make it tolerable, they're not going to change their behavior. I'm saying it's a paradox and you have to find a way to find a balance.

Senator INHOFE. Yes. General Keane, do you agree with that? You've already stated you do.

General KEANE. Yes.

Senator INHOFE. John Negroponte and General Hayden also gave the analysis and I'm going to quote them now. He said, "We know Iran and al Qaeda would see it as a victory and continue to expand their influence in the region. The Middle East and the entire world would be threatened by a new terrorist base of operations." Do you agree with Negroponte and Hayden?

Dr. PERRY. I think both Iran and the terrorists are already emboldened by what's happening in Iraq.

Senator INHOFE. All right. Good.

I'm going to cover a couple of things here that Senator Lieberman asked when General Petraeus was here.

It bothers me when people start quoting generals. There are so many generals out there. I recognize that certainly General Abizaid, who's one that knows the culture, knows all these things, but, nonetheless, I think there's general agreement that some things went wrong. The guy now who's going to be in charge is General Petraeus. I would remind you that he was unanimously confirmed by our committee yesterday, and I suspect he will be when that reaches the Senate floor. Anyway, Senator Lieberman asked him, "Do you fear that there would be disastrous effects for Iraq and the region and the world economy if we were to exit or draw down prematurely?" He said, "That's correct." Next, Senator Lieberman got a little bit more specific, and he asked, "Do you believe that this new strategy, as outlined by the President, is a new strategy? Because a lot of people are saying, 'no, this isn't a new strategy, this is just warming up some of the old ideas.'" He said, "It is," and he elaborated for quite some time. Then he was asked a question, "Am I correct to conclude that you believe this new way ahead and new plan is something that can work?" He said, "Yes, this is something that can work."

Lastly, they talked about a resolution of disapproval. It's too long to get into, but he did ask the question, and the response from General Petraeus—the guy that we're entrusting to run the show over there—was, "It would have a disastrous effect on our troops and would embolden the enemy." Now, we're talking about a resolution of disapproval.

Do you agree with General Petraeus? Do you agree, Dr. Perry?

Dr. PERRY. I do not agree. I do not think this enemy needs emboldened.

Senator INHOFE. Hmmm.

Dr. PERRY. It's as emboldened as——

Senator INHOFE. All right.

Ambassador Ross?

Ambassador ROSS. I also agree that the enemy is already pretty bold.

Senator INHOFE. General?

General KEANE. It's just not helpful. It contributes to what the enemy sees as an erosion of the political and moral will of the American people. I think it's tough for our soldiers who are Americans first. They clearly understand that there's a political process in this country that they clearly support, and there's disagreement here. But, at the end of the day, they are going to go out and do a tough mission. I certainly would like to see them supported in

that mission as opposed to declaring nonsupport for a mission that they're going to do, but yet they have to do it anyway.

Senator INHOFE. I believe it would embolden the enemy. I think our troops believe that as well. One of the problems that I have, General, is maybe I've been in the Iraqi area of responsibility (AOR) too many times. I've been there 12 times. Each time, I've spent a lot of time talking to our troops—without any supervision, just talking to the troops—as well as the Iraqi security forces. I was in Tikrit when they blew up the training headquarters. Not many people in America know that the families of those Iraqi security forces-in-training who died were replaced by another member of their family, the support that they have from within. I'm glad that you came out and said that the Iraqi security forces have been a success. They're not quite there yet, but the training has been a success.

We saw, in Afghanistan, when the Afghan National Army (ANA) started taking over the training of their own people, the success was visible. They got to that point. We're not there yet in Iraq. But when you talk to them, and you talk to our troops who are embedded with them and are training with them, they say that they're getting very close to being successful.

They don't have as good of equipment. I disagree with some of the generals who have said we're already there on the equipment; I don't think we are, in terms of the light arms, in terms of the armor and some of the things that they're going to have to have to make this thing work but I really believe that you are right when you say—and this is confirmed by my conversations with our troops on the ground who are embedded with them—Senator Warner, I don't think it's a real problem saying, "What do you mean by 'taking the lead'?" That means they go in first. That's what they said.

General Keane, in needing the five brigades, you said the handwringing by the Shias and the Sunnis is already evident. What do you mean by that?

You said they're nervous about the fact that we are going to be sending in more troops to support the Iraqi security forces and continue our training, and you're seeing handwringing.

General KEANE. We had some early indications from Shia militia, Sunni insurgents and to a lesser degree, al Qaeda, that the military operation that's about to unfold is, from their perspective, different, and more decisive on our part, and something that they're going to have to contend with and reevaluate their strategy and how they're doing. All I was demonstrating today, and I don't want to make too much of this, but I was demonstrating that what you do has a psychological impact on an adversary, as well, and it's very important if you believe that war is a test of wills and you're trying to beat an opponent physically and materially, but also want to beat them psychologically. So, you start to impact them, even without having done anything yet, just by intent. It has some impact. So, the seriousness of it, the size of the force and how fast we move the force are important for us to gain control of Baghdad militarily but they are also important psychologically.

Senator INHOFE. All right. I agree.

My time has expired, but I do agree wholeheartedly with you. My opinion comes from experience with the people on the ground and I just think it's absolutely necessary to continue on this course.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Inhofe.

Senator Lieberman.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks, Mr. Chairman. Thanks also to the three witnesses.

I think you have very thoughtfully reflected, in some ways, the range of opinions on this committee, as well as throughout Congress, and I thank you very much for that.

I do want to pick up on something. Senator Inhofe went back to a line of questioning I did with General Petraeus. I know that the answers he gave troubled some of my colleagues on the committee and maybe my colleagues outside. I do want to say clearly for the record that I know that none of those who are supporting the resolution that was reported out of the Foreign Relations Committee yesterday intend to discourage our troops. I know their feelings are quite the contrary. I know that they don't intend to, to use General Petraeus' words, give any hope to the insurgents and the terrorists, our enemies there. But I raise the question because I think that is one of the consequences of it. The reason I raise it is because the resolution will have no effect on American policy in Iraq. The President has made that very clear. In fact, most of my colleagues in the Senate don't want to use the constitutional prerogative we have of cutting off funding because they don't want to undercut our troops in the field. That's why I have raised the question of whether people who are supporting this resolution would think about stepping back. Look, when I asked General Petraeus about the impact on the enemy, he said what you said today, "War is a test of wills." They know they can't beat us on the battlefield in Iraq, but they're trying, also, to diminish our will.

Senator Lugar, yesterday, in the debate/discussion in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said, as I understood it, that he really didn't think this surge would work. He didn't generally support it but he thought that, although everyone in the world, including our enemies, knows there's disagreement here in America about what we're doing in Iraq, the resolution would quantify that disagreement. It is a nonbinding resolution, but the people around the world don't know the difference. In that quantification, we would more clearly reflect the division here and the divided will than we have, previously. General Keane, in your comments today in response to Senator Inhofe's questions and in your opening testimony, you reflect some of the same sentiment.

So I wanted to clarify my respect for my colleagues who are offering the resolution. They certainly don't intend that result, but I fear that will be the result and it will have no result on our policy in Iraq, because the President, I repeat, is going forward with it.

I will express what undoubtedly is a naive wish, I wish we could come together on something that will matter. I thought that the discussion, spirited as it was, between Chairman Levin and Senator McCain, offers a different course. Why don't the members of this committee see if we can come forward with a resolution that does set benchmarks for the Iraqis? I think most of us want that

to happen. Let's step back and give General Petraeus and this very new strategy a chance to work.

Now, let me just say that I think the kind of agreement reflected on this committee is also reflected among the three of you. It seems to me you all agree that we have a vital national security interest in how Iraq proceeds and how our involvement concludes. You all are absolutely right to agree that there ought to be the eight benchmarks that Ambassador Ross pulled out of the President's statement. I certainly agree that those benchmarks are critically important. I think the difference is how we get there, and what is the best way to get the Iraqis to meet those benchmarks. I just feel that General Keane, on this one, makes the convincing argument and it's a very practical argument from a person who's had that kind of operational military responsibility.

Those who are committing sectarian violence and terrorist violence think they're winning. Unless we show them that they can't win by changing the dynamic, which this plan intends to do, they're going to keep doing it and there's not going to be any incentive for the Iraqi Government, or even the possibility for the Iraqi Government, to meet the benchmarks, and those million people that Secretary Perry quite rightly says have left Iraq—including a lot of doctors and teachers—they're not going to come back because they're going to be afraid to come back. There are leaders in the Iraqi parliament who are not in Baghdad today because they're frightened by the violence. How can we expect the government to function, let alone meet the benchmarks we want, if people are afraid to go to their jobs in the parliament?

So, General Keane, I want to ask you a few quick questions. In the proposal that you made with the military historian, Fred Kagan, which is, in many ways, similar to "The New Way Forward" the President recommended—you recommended more troops than we're sending, approximately 35,000, if I remember. Is this enough? Can we succeed with the 21,000 or 22,000?

General KEANE. Yes. We recommended the same number of brigades for Baghdad and two Marine regiments for al Anbar. The difference is the two Marine regiments for al Anbar. The President is executing two Marine battalions for al Anbar. So, we have a difference in numbers, but not in terms of the number of units. That difference comes since we were counting more of the support troops, I think, than the Army leaders are counting. So, our numbers were off a little bit because of that, but not in terms of the substance of it. The answer to your question is, yes, I do believe it's enough troops to deal with the security issue in Baghdad and also the follow-on mission in al Anbar, which would be a security mission also, but not initially.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Okay. That's important.

Second, I want to ask you again—I think you said this in your opening statement. Let's assume for a moment we all agree on what the benchmarks should be. You feel very strongly that we should not phase in the deployment of additional troops based on the Iraqis' meeting of benchmarks in a month or two or three, because that will impede the military effectiveness, the goal that you have of restoring security. In other words, if I hear you correctly, you think we should send the whole new deployment in there and

whatever benchmarks we agree on should be, effectively, after that period of time.

General KEANE. Yes, the military mission is attempting to gain security in Baghdad so that you can enable political, economic, and social progress. Once you accept that that's the mission—to gain security in Baghdad—then if you slow down the deployment of those forces, you begin to risk the mission because you give the enemy too much flexibility to move around on you. While you're securing certain neighborhoods, they can create havoc and undermine what you are trying to do, because you are not able to bring the amount of force and mass together to shut them down.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Good.

General KEANE. That has always been our problem in the past. We bounce around from one neighborhood to another and clear them out, but we've never been able to stay and prevent them from terrorizing, intimidating, and assassinating those who have been cooperating with us.

The pacing item for the deployment of these brigades will be their equipment. We are where we are there, in the sense that they have to get this equipment refit and the Army will try to move them as quickly as possible. But I don't think we should put any constraints on this force other than that equipment. The Army should move it as quickly as we can so we can get that security done also as rapidly as we can and take the initiative away from the enemy. If you gear that to the benchmarks, then you begin to undermine the success of the military operation and defeat the very purpose for which it's intended, which is to get security, so you can enable a political solution.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you.

My time is up.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Lieberman.

Senator Sessions.

Senator SESSIONS. I know a number of people have taken to suggesting that the families of our soldiers don't support what we do and I don't believe that's true. I had the sad duty, last night, to call a father, Paul Milliken, in Alabama, whose son, Jonathan, a private first class in Iraq, was killed. He told me, "Senator, you tell President Bush we support him 100 percent. You tell him that our son, Jonathan, who was 15 or 16 at the time September 11 occurred, made a decision then that America needed to do something, and he chose to join the military. He was doing what he believed in, and we have to take comfort in that."

So, I think it is the responsibility of this Congress to help develop the policies of the United States. We have the funding capability of affecting those policies dramatically anytime we wish to, but we have an absolute responsibility not to undermine the idealism and the courage and the dedication of those who serve us.

General Keane, I think it is plain to anyone that you are correct to say that this is a question of will in many, many ways. It's a psychological thing. A resolution that undermines the positive psychological impact of a step-up in forces can't be helpful. We'll just leave it at that. I think it's unwise.

I know there's a tension here between how to proceed in dealing with the Sunni and Shia situation. General Keane, I'll ask you—

it seems to be clear to me that the driving force, from the beginning, for this violence did not come from the Shia side, but really came from the Baathist, predominantly the Sunni, al Qaeda side. Would that be correct?

General KEANE. Yes, that's true. It's an important distinction to remember, because we get caught up in what's in front of us, and it's the sectarian violence, but it's always important to understand what started this, and it was certainly the fact that the Sunni leadership, the former regime element, the Saddamists themselves, did not want to accept the U.S. occupation. They wanted to return to power. I think that our occupation helped grow an insurgency among the Sunnis as well. I think some of the ways we were doing military operations, if we're honest with ourselves—and we should be—also helped grow that insurgency in the early days, in 2003.

But then came al Qaeda, enabled by the fact that the Sunni-based insurgency existed in al Anbar. They had a foothold there. Then, of course, the Sunnis and al Qaeda, after the general election, in 2005, made a conscious strategic decision to provoke the Shias by the mosque bombing and also the assassination squads. What they wanted was a fairly predictable overreaction on the part of the Shia militia to raise the level of violence that would lead to the fracturing of this fledgling government. The Shia militias accommodated them.

But in solving the problem, it's instructive, I believe, to understand how it got started, because you have to stay focused on the Sunni insurgency. I believe we can stop the Shia militias and get them back behind their barricades but the main problem will remain and that is the insurgency itself and the fact that they are refusing to accept any political accommodation because they believe they can win. It's unclear how they get there out of a fractured and a failed state and that level of chaos with an 80 percent Shia and Kurd majority in the country. But, nonetheless, that's somewhat irrelevant. The fact is that they believe it. That reality is something we have to deal with.

Senator SESSIONS. General, it goes on top of what I had heard. I had not heard that they thought they were winning, although I guess their step-up in activities indicates they believe they have a chance to win. But I had heard that—and it seemed to me somewhat irrational—that the Shia thought that they might lose, that they were insecure, that they'd never been in control in Iraq, and the Sunnis had been in control. So this adds to the difficulties, I guess, for Mr. Maliki. We say he must do A, B, C, and D, but there's so much violence that we can't get a quorum in the parliament. People are afraid to act in government positions and to demand certain benchmarks before we bring security to the country, I can see, as you've suggested, might be premature. We have to have some more security before some of the things that we want him to do can be accomplished. He may want to do them today but may not be able to do them. Is that part of the problem?

General KEANE. It definitely is part of the problem. We have to get some basic security for the government itself to function and certainly equally important, for the people themselves to be able to have a basic level of existence so children can go to school and businesses can begin to grow. We cannot get this economy moving and

we cannot reduce this staggering unemployment unless we can start to grow some small businesses, open some of the former state-owned factories, and get some foreign investment. None of that can happen with this kind of chaos that's on the streets. That's the reality of it.

Look, I share everybody's frustration about the government and the desire to hold them to task. I think we should, and I like the idea of this body doing something to hold this government to task. I think it's an appropriate thing to do. But the fact of the matter is, we have to get some basic security so that Maliki can function and do some of the things that he needs to do. I think they can be done in correlation, while we're attempting to do this security, as well, because we'll see some early results from this and there'll be some indications of progress. It's just that we should not create some false expectations, based on that, either. We've done that in the past because we wind up overselling the progress that we're having. This will still take some time. But I do think there are opportunities there for Maliki to move politically while the military is moving to establish basic security in Baghdad as well.

Senator SESSIONS. General Keane, thank you for making reference to the law enforcement problem and detention problem. That catch-and-release cannot continue. It demoralizes our soldiers, and clearly—and I have a number of examples of it—demoralizes Iraqis when they see people that are part of the insurgency be released from prison and back on the streets again. I believe we need to make that a benchmark and the only way it can be done is—I'll just offer this, and I've offered it to the administration—we have to have a military tribunal to try those who are threats against the state. We cannot expect a local judge to try a terrorist organization because he and his family will be threatened and he cannot do that effectively. If we do that and have prompt trials, we could make a difference, in my view.

Ambassador Ross, just one brief comment and thought. I believe the interagency process is not where it needs to be. We're in a very unusual circumstance. It seems to me, just from my observation, that the one entity that's under the gun every day, and has the most intense interest making things happen on time, is the military, because their people are most at risk. It appears to me that the other government agencies oftentimes have the responsibility to do these things but don't have the same intensity of effort or the personnel to do it. Don't you think that the other agencies have to step up and we have to have a stronger unified effort in Iraq across the board?

Ambassador ROSS. I think there is no question. That's certainly true. One thing is very clear, that many of the objectives the administration has on the nonmilitary side are going to be very hard to achieve right now, because it's pretty hard to put together people on the ground in Iraq to do them.

Senator SESSIONS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Sessions.

Senator Bill Nelson.

Senator BILL NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you to the panel. I've had the privilege of hearing the General and the Ambassador, in the last few days, in the Foreign

Relations Committee. Your testimony was excellent. Dr. Perry, as usual, you give us a great deal of insight.

As I have already indicated privately, I wanted to respond to one my best friends in the Senate, the Senator from Connecticut, because I am one of those who voted, yesterday, in the Foreign Relations Committee, for the resolution on Iraq.

All of you make compelling arguments and it's a question of whether you believe that the Maliki government can get it together and whether or not we are getting accurate information. Of course, what this Senator has experienced received over, now, some number of years, is misleading and inaccurate information, from the get-go, with regard to weapons of mass destruction, troop levels, the cost of the war, and the sectarian violence. I, as other members of this committee, have served in the United States military, and that's a part of my background that brings me to the conclusions that I have now. So it's a question of whether or not you believe that this plan will work in that crucible of sectarian violence.

Now, Senator Coleman and I were there just before Christmas and we were just stunned at some of the comments by high-ranking government officials whose minds were so focused on their sectarian position that it was hard for us to get them to see that, in essence, there ought to be reconciliation. This Senator's conclusion is that this plan isn't going to work. General, I hope you're right, and you had a great deal of input into advising the administration on what they should do. I hope you're right. I hope what General Petraeus said to us was right and my parting comment to him was, "Godspeed, General." I hope he's right, and I hope he's successful. But I don't think the conditions on the ground, Senator Lieberman, are going to allow this to occur.

So, what is the alternative? There's an alternative, presented by the ISG, done in a bipartisan way by some of the most eminently respected people in the country. When you look at what we're facing with the treasure of lives and money, then it seems that we have to change course.

Now, early on I found Senator McCain to be quite persuasive, saying "If we're going to get in, let's get in with sufficient force," which, of course, we know now was one of the mistakes, also, from the get-go. General Shinseki was "dissed," as we say on the street. Yet, we are where we are. I happen to think that this is the way.

So, I would ask all of you just for your comments. What really troubled me, on my recent 2-week trip, was that while talking to all the heads of states in the neighborhood, we saw no unity. I'd get one head of state to say, "We ought to do this," and another one that would say, "We ought to do that." I went there, at the request of General Hayden, to talk to the Saudi King about using their Sunni tribal contacts to try to bring about reconciliation within. I talked to the King, and then talked to the Princes who were carrying out the policy and I didn't get the impression that they were really foursquare engaged in doing that. So, regarding this neighborhood, which we all feel would help the United States so much if they would get diplomatically involved, I would like you all to comment on that. Please also comment on whether or not you think Senator Biden's three-part plan might help.

Dr. PERRY. Senator Nelson, I believe that the regional players could play an important and a positive role, but only if the Iraqi Government has first embarked on a political reconciliation program. If they have a political reconciliation program, then the regional powers have something to support. In the absence of that, I don't think the regional powers can have that much influence.

On the so-called "soft partition," by Senator Biden and Les Gelb, when the ISG was in Baghdad we raised that question to each of the government people we talked with. That was the only issue on which they were unanimous that this is a bad idea, and they would not support it. So, my only comment is that I, myself, think the partition is a very well thought out idea and a very sensible idea, which perhaps we could have imposed 2 years ago or so. It is quite clear now that we cannot impose that on the present government. If we want to go ahead with the partition, the first thing we have to do is remove the present government.

Ambassador ROSS. Senator, so much of how one looks at this comes from where you put the emphasis. Where I tend to put the emphasis is more on the internal Iraqi side of the equation and that's why I focus more on what we have to do to try to change their behavior.

When I say that, it means I haven't given up on changing their behavior, although I have to admit, at this point, I have increasingly low expectations that their behavior is going to be changed. But I haven't given up on changing their behavior and I think you have to exert leverage. They have to understand there's a consequence for their nonperformance.

Now, it relates specifically to your question about the neighbors, and the Saudis as an example. The reason the Saudis don't do what we would like them to do is because they're not interested in seeing the Shias dominate Iraq. They're not interested in seeing Iran, through the Shias, dominate Iraq. One of the reasons one of the benchmarks that I identified is so important is because if the Saudis actually saw this government beginning to reach out to the Sunnis in an unmistakable way, in ways they haven't done up until now, then it would give us greater leverage to go back to them and it would increase the possibility that they might change their behavior. So, again, so much of where I come from—and maybe it's because of my own experience—is looking at the internal dynamics here and the need to change those dynamics.

With regard to soft partition, when I talked about it earlier, I said that believe somewhere down the road you may end up with something like that. The question is whether there is a practical way to do it. Until now, there hasn't been a practical way to do it, but Michael O'Hanlon talks about how you do have 100,000 Iraqis a month being displaced, which is beginning to create that reality whether anybody likes it or not. So, it may not be so far-fetched now. It certainly wouldn't be where I would start, but I think it has to be one of the positions that you at least consider as you look at what might transpire over the coming year.

General KEANE. My view is that there's always been an opportunity to deal with Iraq as a regional problem. Certainly, there are divergent interests there. The Sunni Arabs are cheerleading this insurgency for all the obvious reasons. I'm not suggesting that

they're directly aiding and abetting it but they are cheerleading it. The Syrians are aiding and abetting the insurgency for all the reasons we know. The Iranians are directly aiding what's taking place with the Shia militias. They want us to fail and they would love to have a proxy state there for themselves I'm sure.

But, nonetheless, the one thing they all have in common is, they don't want a failed state. It's not in their mutual interest, even the Iranians, to have a failed state, certainly in Iraq. Even for the Syrians, the two polar extremes here. So, if that's the case, we go in there with our eyes wide open to what we're dealing with, in terms of the Syrians and the Iranians. But I do believe that there is some basis to have some rather important discussions. I think the Iraqis should be the ones in the lead in doing this, not us, because I think we're somewhat radioactive here in dealing with it. I think they should take the lead.

I agree strongly with the Ambassador, that the influence on the Sunni Arabs clearly will come as a result of Maliki's commitment to the Sunnis inside his own country. In my own mind, we have to change the behavior of those Sunnis quite a bit because of what their intent is, and military force will help change that behavior. But I think Maliki has to make the political commitment as well or we're not going to get there.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Nelson.

Senator Chambliss.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would simply say to my good friend and my neighbor to the south that he and I have a disagreement about this particular issue and, like you, I've been to Iraq a number of times. Like you, I've visited with men and women wearing the uniform after they've come back, as well as before they have been deployed to Iraq. I know how badly those troops want to win this conflict. It really bothers me when we see a resolution that came out of the Foreign Relations Committee yesterday and says, basically, as policymakers to the Army, "You can't win." We're going to take a policymaking position, telling our troops that. I have some real problems with that. But that will be the debate that we'll undertake next week.

Dr. Perry, I notice in your comments, as well as in the Iraqi report that you participated in, that you call for the withdrawal of combat forces, beginning immediately and being completed by the first quarter of 2008. What, in your opinion, is going to happen inside of Iraq beginning in the second quarter of 2008?

Dr. PERRY. I believe what happens for the rest of the year will depend on whether the Iraqi forces are successful and come up to proficiency. I have argued from the beginning that we had too few troops in Iraq to carry out this mission. I strongly believe that. In my testimony, I said that the other 20,000 are too little and too late. We need perhaps twice as many, total, to do the job that needs to be done there. At this stage, that extra 150,000 troops are clearly not available from the U.S. ground forces. The only chance of getting them is from the Iraqi army. Therefore, the focus in our report was on trying to get the Iraqi army up to proficiency. It is not proficient enough to do the job today. We were focusing on having U.S. troops embedded in their units, down to the company level, to try to have a crash course of improvement in leadership

and proficiency. But if that does not happen, then I think we're going to be in deep, deep trouble in Iraq.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Would you agree with Ambassador Ross that the chances are pretty good that we're going to have an all-out civil war for 10 to 15 years following that pullout?

Dr. PERRY. I think we should do anything reasonably we can to avoid that outcome, but, at this stage, it is not clear to me that either of the strategies we're talking about will be successful in doing that. In particular, I think the strategy of adding another 20,000 troops has a very low probability of avoiding that.

Senator CHAMBLISS. So, are you committed to the fact that there is going to be an all-out civil war in Iraq and that it's okay for that to happen?

Dr. PERRY. No, I'm not, Senator.

Senator CHAMBLISS. I'm not sure what you're saying.

Dr. PERRY. The whole purpose of the thrust of the ISG recommendation was to recommend a strategy which had a good probability of avoiding that.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Every military expert that we've had come testify before us in the last few weeks has indicated, just as Ambassador Ross has said, that there's going to be then more of an extremist situation than others, but they've all generally agreed that there will be ethnic cleansing, that there will be an all-out civil war, and that, in effect, there will be much more violence inside of Iraq after we vacate our combat forces there. I'm not sure, still, with your response, where you come down on that, as to whether or not you say that's okay or whether these other measures are guaranteed to ensure that doesn't happen.

Dr. PERRY. No, my position is that, at such time as U.S. combat troops leave, there's a probability that the violence will increase in Iraq, but I believe that is true whether they leave a year from now or 5 years from now, unless we can effect a political reconciliation. To my judgment, everything hinges on being able to get the political reconciliation to try to avoid that.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Ambassador, I agree with you that these benchmarks out there ought to be imposed on the political side rather than the military side and you are dead on with respect to your points as to what should happen. As Secretary Gates said 2 weeks ago before this committee, and as the President confirmed to several of us in a private conversation, Maliki actually came forward with proposals, some of which have been incorporated into this strategy. We've not gotten a definite opinion from anybody that he can produce, or he will be able to do what he said he was going to do. I'd like your thoughts on that. These are commitments that have been made by Iraqis that, "we will do these benchmarks that have been set out there." If I'm hearing you correctly, if they can produce, there is the opportunity for some sense of success with this operation. Am I understanding you correctly?

Ambassador ROSS. Yes, I guess what I was saying is that this is not the first time he's made these kinds of promises, so I don't have high expectations that he's necessarily going to act on them. I have put a focus on trying to hold him to it. I have put a focus on trying to create a set of consequences for nonperformance because I still think there is a possibility—that's my point—there is a possibility.

I understand the consequences of what happens if things all just fall apart.

What I was suggesting is that I don't have high expectations that this is going to work. I would try to create consequences for nonperformance to increase the probability that it would work but I would also begin to position ourselves for alternatives, including a containment strategy, so we prevent the absolute worst from happening if this doesn't work.

Senator CHAMBLISS. General Keane, you have been involved in the decisionmaking process in this over the last several years. You've been very close to the situation. What, in your opinion, will happen inside of Iraq if we do complete a withdrawal of our combat forces in the first quarter of 2008? In your opinion, do the Iraqis have the capability of doing what they have said they are willing to do relative to these benchmarks we just talked about?

General KEANE. I've spent a lot of time on that issue. You're making the assumption that we would not conduct this operation and we would begin a withdrawal in 2008?

Senator CHAMBLISS. Yes.

General KEANE. Is that what you're suggesting?

Senator CHAMBLISS. Yes, sir.

General KEANE. Yes. The problem with that scenario is that the Iraqi security forces in 2008 will not be ready to protect their people and keep the level of violence down so we can make political, economic, and social progress. That is the reality of it. We may not like that but that's the reality of it. So, once we start to withdraw, the level of violence will rise above what it currently is. There'll be increased chaos in that country. I believe the intent of the leaders who want the chaos is to fracture the government and I believe they will be able to get at doing that over time, which will lead to an all-out civil war. We won't have to debate whether it is or not because it'll be blatantly obvious that the institutions have broken down completely and that we have complete anarchy on the streets, and it leads to a failed state. That is why my analysis is that there is something else you can do to prevent that from happening. Thus, the recommendation we're dealing with here today, in terms of a military initiative whose single purpose is to buy time for the Iraqi security forces, but, equally important, is to get a political solution.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Chambliss.

Senator Clinton.

Senator CLINTON. Thank you.

I want to thank each of our witnesses for their lifetime of service to our country. Thank you very much for spending so much time with us and with other committees.

Obviously, you can see clearly the anguish of members of this committee and other committees before whom you have appeared. No one wants to see this situation descend into even greater bloodshed and violence or a failed state. We understand that this is a direct threat to American national interests as well as a very tragic outcome for the intervention that we commenced.

The problem we're having, and the reason for this debate, is to try to figure out what Congress can usefully contribute to this. Again, we have no illusions of whether the President is going for-

ward with his policy. Several of you said that. The troops are moving and the policy is being implemented. But I have three concerns that I would just like you to briefly respond to.

General Keane was eloquent, and I know how much it pains him to describe the failures of this strategy in the past. I would personally appreciate any insights any of you might have into why the strategy failed and why we allowed that failure to continue. Clearly, I have strong opinions about the failure of oversight and accountability in Congress, but within the decisionmaking circles of both the civilian and military leadership of our country, why was this failed strategy maintained when it became evident to many people that it was not working? Because I think if we don't understand that, we're going to be sitting here in a year once again talking about another strategy that, for whatever reason, has not yet succeeded.

Second—and this, perhaps, goes directly to General Keane—what is behind the decision to have joint command? You were right on point about the necessity for unity of command. There's an article in today's New York Times that I think illustrates the difficulty our forces are going to confront. Once again, it is a joint U.S./Iraqi patrol on Haifa Street, which has changed hands so often they can't keep up with it, and it became very clear that it was hard to know who was in charge, who was supposed to be making the decisions, who the enemy was. There is a troubling quote from a sergeant first class: "who the hell is shooting at us? Who's shooting at us? Do we know who they are? Is it Sunni? Is it Shia? Is it some of the Iraqi soldiers who showed up and then disappeared?" There is a very strong argument, just based on this one story, turning and expecting to have that cooperative unity with no unity of command instead of having the kind of command structure that I think that you would recommend, we're going to have a chaotic command structure, which I think plants the seeds of disaster from the level of the street fighting all the way up.

Third, I believe strongly in trying to hold the Iraqis to the benchmarks or conditions. I absolutely agree with Ambassador Ross that we've had no consequences for nonperformance and we have squandered a lot of the leverage that we have had. I think that our failure to impose any kind of conditions on our continued funding of the Iraqi security forces and even the personal security for members of the Iraqi Government is one piece of leverage that we've abdicated.

I understand the argument that the proponents of this policy are making. We use military force, putting our young men and women into situations like the street fight in Haifa, to try to quell the insurgents and change the behavior of the Sunnis who are supporting them, so that we can get the Maliki government secure enough to decide that it's willing to reach out to the Sunnis, who, having been, in some respect, quelled, are going to be more responsive to such efforts on political reconciliation and that's how we're going to reach the point where we can begin to resolve these outstanding differences. It sounds like a very complicated process that I am dubious can have success.

Could you just comment on some of those points? Perhaps, Dr. Perry, you could start?

Dr. PERRY. I must say that I am appalled by a decision to move forward on the Baghdad operation without a joint command. The operation is called Operation Together Forward. To be together forward, we really need to have a joint command. So, General Keane has said—and I hope he is right—that General Petraeus will do what he can to mitigate that problem, but it's still a problem.

Second, as I have testified before, I think even with the troops that are being added, there will be too few to do the job. Again, General Keane has said that there's a strategy for dealing with that problem—and I think it's a very innovative strategy—which is to focus on the mixed Sunni/Shia neighborhoods, in which there are fewer than 2 million people. So, if you focus on 2 million people, then maybe you will have enough to do the job. I think that is our best chance of success there and I wish General Petraeus well in being able to achieve that. But it is a long shot and I wish so much was not hinging on what I consider to be a long shot.

In any event, whatever we do militarily, if we cannot get the Maliki government to move forward meaningfully and effectively on political reconciliation, I think it doesn't matter whether we have three brigades or five brigades or seven brigades, it will not be enough to deal with the problem.

I strongly believe that we need to move forward with the political reconciliation and security jointly, and not do the security, hoping we can do the political reconciliation later.

Thank you.

Ambassador ROSS. I'll just make two quick comments.

On your first set of observations about why the strategy failed and why we held onto a failed strategy for so long, I think there's no doubt we went in with far too few forces, we went in with far too optimistic assumptions, and we ignored the nature of the real sectarian divide and how we were going to have to cope with that. Which really leads me to the last set of observations you made.

The fundamental problem we face today—and Bill Perry was just saying it—is the lack of reconciliation, and the lack of a prospect for it. I see little sign that this Shia government is interested in it and the only way to change their behavior is for them to see that they have a lot to lose if they don't. So we have to find a way to strike the balance between not necessarily having the lid come off, because they aren't sufficiently uncomfortable with where things are, and yet, convince them that they're going to end up producing the very scenario that could end up threatening them. Somehow, we have to produce consequences and we have to hold them to a standard of performance—and I'd say, since they have promised it, let's hold them to what they themselves have said. I see no reason why Congress can't, in fact, use their own words now as the standard by which to judge their performance and to create a set of consequences if they don't act.

General KEANE. I appreciate the thoughtful questions. They're not easy to deal with.

Why the failed strategy? I think, right from the beginning, we were executing the ideology dealing with the level of force, of taking the minimal application of force. This happened in Afghanistan, in my judgment, when we put the force levels in there, following the collapse of the Taliban, and we were only willing to commit the

minimum force to deal with it. Actually, in my own view, it was a lack of sufficient force. It wasn't even enough. It's not surprising that the Taliban are able to resurge and commit and exploit the vulnerabilities that exist because of it.

So, here comes Iraq, and a very successful invasion with what I believe was the appropriate level of force. Not everyone agreed with that but the Joint Chiefs all had their fingerprints on the level of force that was applied for the invasion. We backed into the insurgency in the sense that we did not see it coming. I think you can hold us, as senior leaders, accountable for not at least reasoning that this was one of those options that they could select and we should have had plans to deal with that. If we had plans, we would have intellectually thought about how to do this, and, much more importantly, we would have had a force list of the kind of forces and the size of forces we would need to deal with it. Then, when it began to materialize, we would have been ready with a much different size of force and also a different character of the force, in terms of its content, would have been different. So, that was wrong.

But then as we got into this thing, I believe this minimal ideology, in terms of applying force, was in play. We developed what I call a short-war strategy, designed to rush to a political objective when the political culture was not ready for a truly representative government. That's one of our challenges that now we're trying to get them to do this. But the truth is that they don't have the political maturity to deal with a true representative government. So that was one issue, and, I think it was a mistake.

The second one was the military strategy. I believe, without publicly saying so, we made up our minds if we go after this insurgency and try to defeat the insurgency with U.S. forces in the lead, this, by every sense of the word, will be a protracted conflict that will go on for years. It will eventually erode the American people's will, we'll have to keep high force levels for a long time there, and the adverse impact on the Army and the Marine Corps will be significant. I think that was in play, without ever being put on the table. So we had a short-war strategy politically, and then a short-war strategy militarily, because we made the conscious decision to turn it over to the Iraqis to let them do it, thinking that we could get them trained up in sufficient time so we could then exit and their readiness would be our exit strategy.

The problem when I look at it—and I was still supporting it, myself, in 2005—is that I knew it had risks associated with it. But in 2005 we began to have enough evidence to know that the enemy was exploiting that strategy because we were not protecting the people ourselves, and the Iraqis could not. They began to raise the level of violence beyond anything that we had envisioned that the Iraqis would have to be able to deal with. So, right then, I think, in hindsight, we knew the strategy had failed. Even before the general election we knew that the military strategy was failing and we should have started to make an adjustment to it and say, "Look, the only way we can bring this level of violence down is to begin to secure this population and keep these thugs and killers off of them." To do that would have meant what? More troops. I just think that was off the table, clearly. It was just not an item that was on the table.

I also believe, Senator, that the military leaders, themselves—I don't buy this argument that Rumsfeld was muscling our generals and they didn't have the moral courage to request more forces, but somehow they all knew they needed more forces. I believe that General Casey and General Abizaid are thoughtful people; they were committed to the strategy, and they believed it could work. When you commit yourself to something and you're working an 18-, 20-hour day, and you have nothing nurturing your life whatsoever, except this one singular mission that you're absorbed with, and there's nothing else in your life but this, and you're looking for some measures of success for all of this effort that you're expending—not just yourself, but this entire force—you're going to see some things that are looking okay to you, and you have a tendency to fall prey to that and to make more out of that than what it should be. You deny seeing some of the harsh reality of what's taking place.

I'm not making excuses. I'm just trying to explain the human dynamics of this thing, how very good people who have had good judgment in the past can make mistakes.

Chairman LEVIN. If we could interrupt you right there. Because there are only a few minutes left on the vote, we're going to have to recess, if you're done Senator Clinton, for 10 minutes. If you could all stay with us, we would appreciate it. If you're not able to stay and you have to leave, we understand that.

We'll stand in recess for 10 minutes. [Recess.]

The committee will come back to order.

I believe Senator Graham would be next.

Senator Graham.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to compliment you on a well-timed hearing that's, I think, very instructive for us all here in Congress and the country, to think through the problems we have.

I guess the basic dilemma I have is that I do realize that we have to change people's behavior. I used to be a divorce lawyer and I found that to be very hard to do at times. It's probably the best analogy I have for the Middle East, hard-hearted people who don't want to give an inch.

But, anyway, the consequences of my action as a Senator are going to be viewed by a lot of audiences. I'm trying to make a list of the audiences that we're dealing with.

Domestically, I think some of the resolutions that are drawn up—the nonbinding resolutions, in particular—to make a domestic political point and that's not lost upon me. I'm not criticizing people for doing that, because we want to keep our jobs. When the war is at 65–35, I think a lot of people want to be on record with their constituents saying, "This is not going well. I see it like you do. I'm not so sure this war is going to work out well and I want to be on record saying that." Regarding too little, too late—Dr. Perry, some people feel that—so you want a resolution for your own political needs. That's just a reality. I'm not criticizing anybody. That's just politics.

There's another audience and that's the President. I think people want to tell him, particularly on the other side, "Your past mistakes are not going to be tolerated in the future, and we're going

to put them on the record; we're going to hold you accountable; we're going to question whether or not anybody should follow your new lead, based on your failure to perform in the past; you don't have an open-ended commitment; and your ability to maneuver and operate in Iraq is not going to be unchallenged." So, the resolution is designed to put the President on notice. I think that's part of what's going on here.

Do you all agree with that, so far? All right, good. Just be patient, there's more.

The other audience, the most important audience to me, is Maliki. I'm trying to figure out who he is, what would motivate him, and what is his agenda. The central question for me—and, I think, for the country—is, does this guy, Maliki, desire to unify his country, or does he desire a Shia-dominated state where he's the leader?

What do you think, Dr. Perry?

Dr. PERRY. Based on his actions to this date, they provide evidence that he favors a Shia-dominated state.

Senator GRAHAM. Would you agree there's also some evidence that he wants a unified country, because he's willing to talk about democracy?

Dr. PERRY. Yes.

Senator GRAHAM. Would you agree with me that al Qaeda considers him the enemy, not an ally?

Dr. PERRY. Yes, I do.

Senator GRAHAM. So, let's start with that proposition that al Qaeda sees Maliki as an enemy. Does that necessarily mean he's our friend? No, but that's a good start.

Ambassador, how do you see Maliki and what his agenda might be?

Ambassador ROSS. I think that Maliki basically is a Shia leader. I don't think that he's motivated only by keeping himself in power, but I think he's motivated by having the Shia reverse all the historical abuses and the historical oppression of being an underclass, and dominating Iraq. He favors democracy, but, in no small part, because the Shia are 60 percent of the country.

Senator GRAHAM. You know what we would call him here? A Democrat or a Republican, because that's what we try to do. We try to capture enough seats in Congress to influence policy, but we've done it through the rule of law, in a different way. I agree with you.

So what I'm trying to do is to bring out the best in Maliki and communicate that the best hope for the Shia majority is to live in peace with the Sunni minority and the Kurd minority; and that if you really have hopes and dreams for the Shia future, those hopes and dreams are best achieved with a stable Iraq that shares the revenue, where you don't have to fear sectarian violence, you can practice your religion openly, without fear; and you can have an influence on the decisions to be made in your country. So, I think that is exactly his agenda and my hope is that we can convince him that the best hope for his Shia population is to do deals with the Sunnis and the Kurds.

That gets me to my basic point. I've come to the conclusion, rightly or wrongly being a politician, myself, that I do have some

ability to influence people, or I wouldn't be here. I have some skills in influencing the other side, and they have like skills. Sometimes we do it through tough commercials and sometimes we do it through back-room negotiations, but I've come to the conclusion that none of us would be able to reconcile the differences that exist in Iraq with this level of violence. It is my basic proposition, Dr. Perry, that, no matter how skilled a politician you might be, no matter how good a heart you have, the violence is too high, because it's hardening the hearts around those that you have to deal with.

So, I've decided, as a Senator in our Congress here, that my number one goal is to restore order to the point that we can do everything that all of you have talked about. Dr. Perry, the reason I disagree with the ISG's way of restoring order is because of the other audiences that are listening out there include al Qaeda, extremists groups, and insurgency groups within Iraq. I think if you set a timetable to reduce combat capability by 2008 on the American side—and I may be wrong—I think it emboldens those forces who are friends of chaos. That's just an honest, healthy debate. I understand what you're trying to do. You're trying to get the Iraqi army out front sooner rather than later, and that's the ultimate goal of us all.

General Keane, let's talk about how the surge, as a new strategy, would accommodate some of the needs we have in Iraq.

Seventy percent of our casualties come from improvised explosive devices (IEDs), is that correct?

General KEANE. I'm not sure what that number is, but the overwhelming majority are IEDs.

Senator GRAHAM. I think it's 70-percent-plus. That tells me something. That means that when we get into firefights, we do pretty well. The enemy has withdrawn from those confrontations. As someone mentioned, there is not really any possibility that the enemy will beat us militarily. They know that. So, they're trying other ways to accomplish their agenda. They've been pretty clever about it, particularly al Qaeda.

Now, one way to suppress the IEDs anew would be to go to the root cause of the problem. I think there are three problems that are associated with these attacks. One of those problems is a failed economy. I would argue that there are some people involved in the IED business that are not committed jihadists or insurgents, but there's no other way for them to make money and the militias are preying on their economic problem. Is that true, General Keane?

General KEANE. Yes, absolutely true.

Senator GRAHAM. Do you think that's true, Ambassador Ross?

Ambassador ROSS. Yes.

Senator GRAHAM. Dr. Perry?

Dr. PERRY. Yes.

Senator GRAHAM. I think that is true. If you're having to raise a family and there's no hope, economically, around you, and someone comes along and says, "Here's $500," and that gets your family through some hard times, you're likely to do it. So, the economic part of this surge, to me, makes a lot of sense.

I'm already out of time. I'm sorry.

The bottom line is that the economic part of the surge makes sense to me to take that off the table. The rule-of-law part of the

surge makes sense, and that is, if you catch somebody making IEDs, the new goal is to punish them severely, openly, and swiftly, and have more military capacity to put the IED bombmakers on the run. So, it makes military sense.

I appreciate all of you being here. If I knew how to influence people to get what I want, I would have had a more successful private life. But I do believe this, that our only opportunity to push through these problems is to side with the moderates, as imperfect as they may be, and never let the extremists get America on the run, because if you're on the run in the Middle East, your days are numbered.

Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Senator Graham, thank you.

We'll have a second round, with a few minutes each, unless the witnesses can't stay on. We'll just proceed, let's say, with a 3-minute second round. There are just a few of us here.

Dr. Perry, the ISG talked to Generals Abizaid and Casey, and they indicated, apparently, to the ISG that additional brigades would not increase the likelihood of success. I want to make sure that I got that right. Can you tell us why it is they did not feel that additional forces would make the difference there?

Dr. PERRY. They said that the key to success was to put an Iraqi face on the war, not an American face, and that adding more troops obviously reinforced the American aspect of it. Second, I think a very important point here was that it would delay the Iraqi Government doing the actions that it needed that could lead to real success. All of the generals we talked to there emphasized that political reconciliation was the key and that you could not expect military success if you could not get the political reconciliation. They feared that any action, such as bringing in more troops, would only give the Iraqi Government a rationale for delaying moving forward with that political reconciliation.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you. Is that also your personal view?

Dr. PERRY. Yes, it is. I found them very persuasive on that point.

Chairman LEVIN. Ambassador Ross, Secretary Rice has said that direct negotiations with Syria and Iran would put the United States in a position of being a supplicant. Do you agree with that?

Ambassador ROSS. I don't believe you become a supplicant unless you go into the negotiations and act like one. So, I don't think that direct negotiations with them is necessarily something that would make us a supplicant.

I would say, I don't want to send either of them a message that what they're currently doing is working. So, my own preference, in each case, would be to deal with them, as it relates to Iraq, not bilaterally, but as part of a regional conference.

Chairman LEVIN. So, at least dealing with them as part of a conference does not put us in the position of being a supplicant by the fact that we're present at such a meeting?

Ambassador ROSS. Absolutely, it doesn't, number one. Number two, the value of doing it in a multilateral setting is that you're not exaggerating their significance within Iraq. Yes, they each have an impact, the Iranians much more than the Syrians, but if you put them in a regional setting, or in a multilateral setting, then, by

definition, you're treating them as one of the neighbors, you're not singling them out and making them more important.

In general, I would say, in dealing with both Iran and Syria, the approach ought to be what I call a "sticks-and-carrot approach," meaning they have to understand that there is a price for what they're doing, and then they also have to understand what they can gain if they stop. I think it's better to concentrate their minds on what the price is first rather than trying to induce them first, because I think they read inducements incorrectly.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

General, my last question. The Army Times, I believe, on December 29, published a poll of our troops. This was one of the questions which was asked of our troops in Iraq: "how likely is the United States to succeed in Iraq?" The answers were the following: 50 percent felt we are either very likely to succeed or somewhat likely to succeed; 13 percent said very likely; 37 percent said somewhat likely; and 41 percent said we're either not very likely or not at all likely to succeed. Now, does the publication of that kind of a poll that's taken among our troops undermine the morale of our troops?

General KEANE. No, I think it's an honest reflection of how they feel. The American soldier, as I said before, is an American first. Even when it comes to how a war is proceding. Thank God they are who they are. They have their own views about it and they question it, but they perform their duty under enormously stressful conditions. So their thoughts on this are healthy, in my judgment. I would share that majority view that you just said. I think it's probably an accurate description of how people feel about it. I feel the same way about it given that question.

Chairman LEVIN. The fact that 41 percent feel that we're not very likely to succeed or not at all likely to succeed—that's a large percentage.

General KEANE. It is a large percentage.

Chairman LEVIN. Does the publication of that opinion poll undermine our troops because 41 percent have a different view from the 50 percent?

General KEANE. I think whenever you bring a group of troops together and whatever the issue is, they're not a homogenous group in that sense. They are thinking people and they're going to have their own views about how that war's being fought. I think they're entitled to that feeling, frankly, given their participation in it.

Chairman LEVIN. So do I.

General KEANE. What's good about that is they can have that view and they can question it. I was like that when I was a young kid in the Vietnam war. I knew something was wrong. I wasn't smart enough to figure it out as a young platoon leader and company commander, but I knew we weren't getting at this right. It didn't look like we were going to be able to finish it completely either. So, I think they honestly reflect that view.

If you asked them, also, "Is there a way we can do something about this, and what it is that we can do about it?" That would be interesting too.

Chairman LEVIN. Did the election results—which pretty clearly indicated, by most observers, that the American people wanted to change direction in Iraq—undermine the morale of the troops?

General KEANE. I'm not an expert; you all here know much more about it than I do, but I think when it came to Iraq, it had a lot to do with the lack of progress and the lack of success, and their frustration with that.

Chairman LEVIN. All right, thank you.

Senator Graham.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think these are very good questions to be asking. I'm of the opinion that Senator Lieberman is here for a reason. He's here in spite of his support for the war in Iraq, because people in Connecticut saw in Senator Lieberman an honest, decent man who was following his own conscience. If you consider the last election a referendum that we should all just leave Iraq tomorrow, I think it would be a mistake.

But the point is that we all understand the consequences of a failed state and we're trying to avoid it. I would like to continue along the lines that I was asking before.

Baghdad, I just don't believe it's possible to have political reconciliation in a capital where you cannot take your kids for a walk down the street or go to the store with any certainty of coming back. Now, does anyone deny on this panel that Baghdad is an extremely dangerous capital? Do you all agree that political reconciliation would be best achieved if Baghdad were a more secure place?

Dr. Perry?

Dr. PERRY. Senator Graham, what we're trying to do in Baghdad is pour water on the fire that's burning, to put it out. But, while we're doing that, it would be nice if somebody would not feed any more coals to the fire.

Senator GRAHAM. Absolutely.

Dr. PERRY. The political problem is adding the coals that are making the fire worse. We need to do them both together.

Senator GRAHAM. I could not agree with you more, and here's where we diverge. General Keane has come up with a way to make up for past mistakes. You're coming up with a way that I think compounds past mistakes. I may be wrong.

What are those past mistakes? Economic progress in Iraq has not been what we would like it to be. How would you like to be Governor of a State where 40 percent of the people in your capital are unemployed? The Maliki government is 8 months old. We declared our independence in 1776, and it took us to 1789 to ratify our Constitution. So, you have Mr. Maliki, who's imperfect, but he's presiding over a capital where there is in parts of it, 40 percent unemployed. So, with the new strategy, General Keane, isn't it to address some of the unemployment problems?

General KEANE. We believe you cannot make the economic progress you need until you get some basic security. There's going to be no foreign investment, you can't get small-business loans, you can't even get the state-owned factories opened and working until you get some basic security going.

Senator GRAHAM. Ambassador Ross, what percentage of money on reconstruction projects goes to security?

Ambassador ROSS. I don't know the precise percentage, but, unfortunately, an awfully high percentage goes to that.

Senator GRAHAM. It is over 40 percent.

Ambassador ROSS. Yes.

Senator GRAHAM. Mr. Chairman, we have made many mistakes in Iraq. We underestimated how hard it would be to build a democracy out of a dictatorship. We've never had enough troops. I can go on and on and on. But what we're trying to do is rectify those mistakes. To me, economically the new strategy will help economic reconstruction. The military part of the new strategy will control the violence, at least it is our best hope to control the violence.

Finally, political reconciliation. I'll end on this thought. If there was a deal on the oil revenue in the next 6 months where the Sunnis felt like they had a piece of the economic pie, what impact would that have on the overall opportunity for political reconciliation? Dr. Perry?

Dr. PERRY. That would be a very important development, particularly if it happened 3 months from now instead of 6 months from now.

Senator GRAHAM. Yes, sir, I agree with you. Let's say 3 months, that's better.

Ambassador ROSS. It would be, because of what it would symbolize.

Senator GRAHAM. General Keane?

General KEANE. As a practical matter, unless you change the Sunnis' behavior and their attitude—I'm talking about the Sunni insurgency, who believes that they're winning—they don't want some of the oil, they want all the oil, and you have to change that. The security operation is a step towards changing it. You need to do both but you have to change that attitude and that behavior of that Sunni leadership.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you. Thank you, Senator Graham.

Senator Reed.

Senator REED. General Keane, when we were talking before, I got the impression that you attributed the previous strategy almost entirely to the recommendations of military officers like General Casey and General Abizaid. My understanding—and I might be wrong—is that strategy-making is interactive, certainly, but flows from command guidance, from the national command authority, and that guidance involves not only the mission, but also the resources. So, I'm just confused about how these two general officers could be free agents. They certainly weren't free agents to determine the invasion of Iraq.

General KEANE. I'm sorry if I gave that impression. It is certainly a shared responsibility. General Casey did put together a campaign plan in the summer of 2004.

Senator REED. Was that at the direction of the Secretary of Defense and with some guidance?

General KEANE. We did not have a campaign plan before, under General Sanchez, in 2003–2004. The ingredients of that campaign plan were approved by General Abizaid and also by Secretary Rumsfeld. Listen, this is a collegial, collaborative relationship that these men have. They talk to each other frequently and share their thoughts. I think all I was suggesting is that there's a shared responsibility here for the development of the strategy.

Senator REED. I appreciate that, but I think there's also, unless I'm mistaken, the Secretary of Defense not answering to General

Abizaid or to General Casey; they, indeed, were answering to the Secretary of Defense.

General KEANE. No, there's no doubt about that. Clearly they were answering to the Secretary of Defense and also to the Commander in Chief.

Senator REED. Right.

You talk about General Odierno and General Petraeus, and I have respect for them. They're good officers. General Odierno was criticized publicly in the press about his operations with the 4th Infantry Division. The criticism—I'm simplifying it—was: "You're sending people in to kick down doors and grab people," et cetera. Is that what we're going to have to do in Baghdad? How do we avoid that? Haifa Street, yesterday, was American GIs and Iraqis running through and kicking down doors.

General KEANE. No, General Odierno was criticized, particularly in—I think it was Tom Ricks' book, "Fiasco." I think the criticism was overdone, but, also, some of the criticism, I think, is fair. If General Odierno—and I don't want to speak for him—but I know he certainly has looked back on that and recognizes that there were some mistakes made. I happened to see some of those mistakes. I was there at the time observing it. We were conducting very aggressive offensive operations in the Kirkuk area where he was doing cordon-and-search operations. I do think that they helped to grow the insurgency—the aggressive nature of those operations. But look, I went home on the airplane from that visit, and it was a sobering trip for me, because I knew that, intellectually, the United States Army, in terms of its education and its training and its doctrine, was ill-equipped to fight a counterinsurgency. We have not been training our officers and our senior NCOs to deal with that kind of irregular warfare. We were training them to deal with conventional campaigns to defeat other armies and we became preeminent in the world at that. But I knew, also, we're Americans and we're going to learn very quickly, and very quickly we have learned.

I think General Odierno, along with a lot of others, to include myself, has learned an awful lot that we didn't know back in 2003. In this operation in Baghdad, to be specific about it, we will have to go house-by-house. We will do that with dignity, respecting the people that are there, but also understanding that there is enemy in their midst. We know how to do this. We've been doing this for 3-plus years now. So we know how to do that, be firm about it, and also do it without undue harm to the population we're attempting to secure, as well. So, we know how to do this operation. I think initially we struggled with some of this but our forces are experienced and our leaders are educated and much better trained to do this when they come in to the area of operations than what they had been initially.

Senator REED. I have additional questions, Mr. Chairman, if you'll allow it.

Chairman LEVIN. If you don't mind, we'll call on Senator Warner and then come back to you.

Senator Warner.

Senator WARNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'll pick up right where my distinguished colleague left off, aggressive operations, the nature of the operations, and kicking down doors in private homes. This troubles me greatly and it's why I feel that the Iraqi forces should be doing this. It doesn't take a lot of training to teach a person to kick down a door, particularly when they understand the language that the people inside will respond with, and when they understand the culture. Why can't the Iraqis take that part of the operation and we simply be there, embedded to work on, maybe, plans and tactics and to supply them?

General KEANE. I think they can, Senator, but they just cannot do it entirely by themselves. It'll be a shared experience. We'll be there with them, as we do combined operations right now in various parts of Iraq. This is not new to us. But what is new is bringing this amount of force to Baghdad to secure that population. The density of the operation and the mass of it is new. The fact that there'll be Iraqis and Americans operating together, advantaging each other's strengths, and certainly having Iraqis as opposed to Americans go through doors, makes a lot more sense. I'm sure the tactical commanders will take advantage of that as much as they can. Iraqis are able to isolate friend from foe much faster than what we can, for all the obvious reasons that you're familiar with. But, in the same respect, there are not enough of them, and they're not trained to the standard that our forces are, in terms of coping with the enemy, in terms of the violence that's there and having to deal with al Qaeda, Shia militia, and the insurgents. Our skill sets are at a higher degree to deal with that and we also need the density of the mass to deal with it.

Senator WARNER. Let's get back to that: "there's not enough of them." We just, in our earlier colloquy, said there are 150,000 of them. That's quite a few. I don't see why we couldn't have just allowed them to take this operation on, and, to the extent that we had to take added forces and put them elsewhere in the nation of Iraq to replace their absence, that's what worries me about this plan, that not enough emphasis has been put on the Iraqi forces.

Now, you've been very forthcoming in saying that, in your judgment, they're not up to it. But that astonishes me. We've been at this training now for over 2½ years, and, time and time again, people have come before this committee to testify about the progress that's being made. Here we are at the juncture of a very critical campaign, a needed effort to try and reduce the violence, and we're learning some details that had not been shared with us before—the professional judgment of yourself and, I think, others, that they're just not up to the task of kicking down a door and inquiring of the people, or ascertaining the level of presence in there, as to whether or not it's enemy. For myself and, I think, the American people, this is what's most troubling of all. I really do.

General KEANE. I understand your concern and the frustration that you feel about this. But growing and developing an army from scratch does take time, Senator. We have to train the NCOs, we have to put the officer education programs in place before.

Senator WARNER. Okay, you've been through that, and you've made it clear.

General KEANE. We train, obviously, the basic recruits and marry them up in units. They need to get operational experience. It does take time, and we've made progress.

Senator WARNER. I know, but I came through the training camp—commands in World War II in the last year of the war, and then again in Korea. Boy, I'll tell you, I saw others whipped in to shape in 6 or 8 months and into the face of battle and they were brave soldiers. We've been over 2 years working with this Iraqi group. I recognize the NCO concept and the officer concept. That is important to us. But I tell you, I have a hard time understanding why they can't be the ones that promulgate this campaign. It's an important campaign. They know the language. They know the culture. They know the neighborhood.

General KEANE. I share your desire and I wish they were, but the harsh facts are, they're not ready for it.

Senator WARNER. All right. Now let's go to this dual chain of command. Would you describe how we've been operating thus far as we work with Iraqi forces? Is there a dramatic change as we shift into this plan from what we've been doing for several years?

General KEANE. By and large, the way we've been operating before is that as the Iraqi security forces are trained and battalions and brigades and divisions are developed, they certainly command those organizations. But when we go out on operations, particularly with U.S. forces, they fall under our command. So, U.S. commanders can direct and employ those forces. What we cannot do and what we find frustrating is, if we need five Iraqi brigades to do X, we may not get five Iraqi brigades to do X, because the Minister of Defense, for whatever the reason, cannot get those forces there. So those are things that we've been incapable of doing. But, at the tactical level, we have been controlling those forces.

What will happen now is that, at the very top, there's an Iraqi commander in charge of Baghdad. This is a new command structure and it's just evolving. Below him will be a commander for the new redistricting that has taken place—the nine districts. There'll be a commander there. Then there will be Iraqi troop commanders below that commander. They will respond to that chain of command. Where that gets problematic is at the very bottom.

Senator WARNER. Down at the company platoon level.

General KEANE. Down at the bottom where you're on the street with the U.S. forces.

Senator WARNER. You have to make decisions in a split second.

General KEANE. That's right. So, that's where that's a problem. The second place it's a problem is that they can control the number of forces that are going to be in each one of those districts, and move them around at will, which may at times be very different from what we believe is necessary to deal with the enemy situation. So, you could have a brigade or two that's moving to some other district, at the frustration of the American commander who needs those Iraqi units in this district for X reason.

So, those are the two problems, I think, that will manifest themselves. One is at the tactical level: Who's in control at the point of contact where the shooting's going on? You need one commander.

Senator WARNER. All right.

General KEANE. Then the Iraqis are going to be able to move their forces around at times where we will disagree with that movement.

Chairman LEVIN. Senator Warner.

Senator WARNER. Now, at that tactical level——

Chairman LEVIN. Could we switch back and forth now?

Senator WARNER. All right, let me just finish this question, then. At that tactical level, if there's a dispute, who is to resolve the dispute between, say, the American company commander and the Iraqi company commander, or the two platoon lieutenants? Who resolves the dispute? The Iraqis say, "No, we should go here," and the Americans say, "No, to get this target, we have to go there." Who resolves that dispute?

General KEANE. What they'll do is try to resolve it between them. There'll be human dynamics at play.

Senator WARNER. Is there any precedent in history for putting our U.S. forces in a comparable situation of such duality of command at the tactical level all the way up? I can't think of it.

General KEANE. I don't have it at my fingertips, if there is a precedent for it.

I think what they'll also do is, they'll join the headquarters together. So, the Iraqi battalion commander and U.S. battalion commander will bring their headquarters physically together and they'll do that up and down the chain of command, as much as they possibly can, to preclude this.

Now, what I'm hoping, to be quite frank about it—and I didn't say this before—is that when General Petraeus gets on the ground over there, I hope he puts his two big feet right in the middle of this thing and tries to get this resolved, to get it out of this situation we've just been talking about and get it into something that's much more practical militarily. I hope he has his way with the Iraqis to convince them that, while it may be desirable on their part to flap their wings a little bit and demonstrate some control here while we're doing this decisive operation, it actually risks the success of the operation.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

General KEANE. I hope he can convince them of that.

Senator WARNER. I share that, but I don't want a lot of finger-pointing—no one wants that—and the Iraqis laying the blame and saying, "We failed to achieve that goal because of what this American captain said over here." The next thing you know, we're going to have incident after incident after incident of that sort of cross-claim and no one accepting the accountability for the ultimate decisionmaking.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Warner.

Senator Reed.

Senator REED. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General, I want to follow up on a couple of points. As I understand this operation, because of the limited number of forces we have and because of political reasons, we cannot blanket the city, we won't blanket the city of Baghdad. But an alternate view, because we're dealing with a very innovative, adaptive enemy, is that they will seek sanctuary in those areas where we're not operating,

they will reduce their profile, and they will distribute their activities into other communities if they have to.

The real difficulty I think we all have is that if the mission is to go and surge and seek out these insurgents and take them out, that's one mission, but essentially they will just continue to blow up vehicles, they'll continue to have suicide bombers going in, and they will continue to get the headlines. Their whole purpose is to create this instability and violence. Unless, in my view, you have this decisive, overwhelming force going in that literally shuts the whole city down—what we did in Tal Afar was build a wall around the entire city, channel people in and out, and then put in a huge force, relative to that population, or at least a significant force. How is this going go work?

General KEANE. As I said before, we will start in the mixed Shia/Sunni neighborhoods. The force in there will be overwhelming, to be quite frank about it. They will control the population. The population will not be able to move freely around. They'll segment and control that population. That force will have a significant presence that it has never had before.

So, the force ratio is right for what we're dealing with. As I mentioned in my earlier comments, fortunately we do not have to deal with the 6 million all at the same time. There is key terrain in Baghdad, and in my judgment, it is the Shia/Sunni neighborhoods on each side of the Tigris River. That's where we would start. Now, that's a significant population, in and of itself—it's about 1.8 million—that we would have to deal with, and we can start to protect that population rather significantly. If they attempt to contest us there, whether they be Shia militia or al Qaeda or insurgents, our troops will have shoot-to-kill orders, or capture them, when they contest us. I think there will be some of that.

But based on the intelligence reports that I've seen, I think you're right, they will try to avoid that, at least initially, because they lose those fights, by and large, when we're on the scene. They'll try to go underground and wait us out. That is why this strategy has to continue over time. Waiting it out actually will be a losing strategy for them, because as we start to bring in economic packages and start to deal with basic services and bring security back, it's much more difficult for them to get back in and maintain the level of influence they had in those communities in the past. We'll still be there. Time then starts to work in our favor, in my judgment, at that point, if their strategy is to wait us out. If they contest us, so be it. We'll deal with that.

Now, will they be able to create incidences other places that we are not? To a certain degree, they will always have a capacity to do some of that in Iraq, because we can't be every place all over Iraq at the same time. But we will be able to bring down that level of violence rather significantly. I'm not suggesting for a minute that we'll eliminate all violence, but we'll bring it down rather dramatically so that people's lives start to change. That's the most important thing here.

Senator REED. Just a final point, and that is that in my view, the President had two ways he could have gone with his strategy choices. One would be to adopt a phased redeployment, as suggested by the ISG, the other was to mobilize a significant portion

of the American Government, not just American soldiers. I've seen no evidence that he's mobilizing anybody in the State Department, the Justice Department, and the Department of Agriculture to complement what everyone agrees is a necessary element of the strategy, which is the economic recovery, the employment, et cetera.

Dr. Perry or Ambassador Ross, have you seen any evidence, or do you have any suggestions of the top two or three things that the President could do to get the rest of the Government engaged?

Dr. PERRY. I've seen no such evidence.

Senator REED. Ambassador Ross?

Ambassador ROSS. I've seen no such evidence, and I think that the plans they have for the PRTs are based on an illusion. They don't have the people to fill them.

Senator REED. Thank you, gentlemen.

Let me just add a personal note. I've had the privilege to work with all of you and my respect and admiration is immense. I thank you for being here today.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Reed.

Just a couple of final questions from me.

General Keane, General Schoomaker has been quite vocal recently in meetings and testimony about the growing readiness problems in the Army, especially in the nondeployed units. Do you share that concern?

General KEANE. Yes, most definitely. The problem is that the United States Army and the Marine Corps are too small. We self-imposed on ourselves a 1-year rotation. We don't have to fight wars by rotations, so that's self-imposed. We did it to maintain the cohesion of our forces.

But, second, the commitment of 130,000–140,000 troops to Iraq should not put the strain on the United States Army that it is doing. The Army has that level to strain because it's just too small to be able to have forces that are nondeployed, that not only are preparing to deploy to Iraq, but are also training to be able to deploy to other types of war in the event that those emergencies arise. That is not happening, quite frankly, and that's a serious problem.

Chairman LEVIN. When we had Secretary Gates here discussing the question of commitments not being kept and the need for benchmarks, he represented to the committee that this was going to be a phased-in introduction of these five brigades and that, along the way, we could have off-ramps for the further deployment of the 21,000. In other words, they're not going in all at once for the reasons that you give in terms of equipment, but they will go in perhaps one per month on the average and that we can look at each moment along that continuum as to whether or not commitments have been kept by the Iraqis. Because he said that would give us a good opportunity to see whether or not their commitments have been kept, and that would give us the opportunity to "reevaluate our strategy" if they haven't been keep, to use his words. He said we're trying to construct this in such a way that there are off-ramps in this increase so that if conditions change, you don't necessarily have to go to the full extent of the buildup.

You seem to disagree with that approach. You seem to feel we ought to just put the 21,000 in there, regardless of whether or not their commitments have been kept along the way. Is that fair?

General KEANE. I'm not suggesting that Maliki should not be held to the benchmarks, but I don't believe we should use the military force as the lever to do that, because it has a mission to perform, and we should get it in there so it can perform its mission.

Chairman LEVIN. All right.

Then, Ambassador Ross, as I understand your testimony, you believe we must apply maximum pressure on the Iraqis to step up to the plate, basically, and to solve their political differences. Is it fair to say that, in your judgment, adding additional troops is not the way to supply that additional pressure?

Ambassador ROSS. On balance, that is my view, although I am assuming the additional troops are going. So, given that reality, from my standpoint, that puts even a greater premium on being able to show that there are going to be consequences for nonperformance; and then, identifying what those consequences should be. It should be quite clear.

Chairman LEVIN. Do you believe that in our resolution we should add those benchmarks and consequences?

Ambassador ROSS. I absolutely would put the benchmarks in, and as I said, I think already the benchmarks exist, in terms of the commitments that the President articulated publicly that he had when he announced the surge, to hold them to their own words.

Chairman LEVIN. Which makes it more wondrous as to why it is we can't get a copy of what the Iraqis have agreed to. It makes it more incomprehensible, since they've agreed to them. The President has, in general, described them but why can't we get a copy of them? Senator McCain is going to join me in a letter today to the Secretary of State insisting that we get those benchmarks.

Dr. Perry—and I'll ask this of each of you—is there anything, in addition, that you would like to add, subtract, or whatever, in terms of your testimony today? It's been extremely helpful and extremely thoughtful. I know how appreciative we all are. So, the hour is late, but I want to give you and the other witnesses an opportunity, if you'd like, to add anything.

Dr. PERRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The questions have been very comprehensive and I don't want to add to that.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Ambassador?

Ambassador ROSS. Nothing.

Chairman LEVIN. General?

General KEANE. Nothing.

Chairman LEVIN. Let me, as I bang my gavel again, thank you all. This has been extraordinarily helpful, and every colleague who I've had a chance to interact with, either running to the floor to vote or otherwise, has felt this has been a very helpful hearing. We thank you all.

We are adjourned.

[Questions for the record with answers supplied follow:]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JOHN THUNE

CONSEQUENCES OF A "PRECIPITOUS PULLOUT"

1. Senator THUNE. Ambassador Ross, in October 2006 you published an article titled "A Plan for Iraq." In the article you stated: "Staying the course is a prescription for avoiding reality. But simply setting a deadline and withdrawing might also constitute a form of denial—denial of what will happen in the region after a precipitous pullout." As a Middle East expert, can you expand on what you mean by "what will happen in the region after a precipitous pullout?"

Ambassador ROSS. I believe that the effects would be seen in Iraq and the region. In Iraq, the fighting would escalate with militias—Sunnis and Shias alike—anticipating attacks and preempting against real and imagined enemies. The escalation and the increasing threats to Sunni or Shia areas most exposed and vulnerable would also likely induce intervention from Iraq's neighbors. Jordan and Saudi Arabia in particular would fear for the survival of certain Sunni areas and might increase their material support for them, and, in some cases, the actual deployment of their forces to these areas cannot be excluded. The same could apply to the Iranians as well. Though more likely to simply increase their material support and resupply Shia militias, the Iranians will not sit on the sidelines if they see the Saudis or Jordanians sending troops into Iraq. The irony, of course, is that mutual fears of everyone intervening could lead Iraq's neighbors to some understandings on how to limit a convulsion in Iraq that could draw them in, in the aftermath of an American disengagement.

2. Senator THUNE. Ambassador Ross, would the outcome of a precipitous pullout be limited to Iraq?

Ambassador ROSS. Instability in Iraq and the surrounding areas would certainly be the near and intermediate consequences. Certainly an al Qaeda presence and dominance in Anbar province could be a consequence. Though in the end, the Sunni tribes there and the Saudis and Jordanians would have their own reasons to fight and prevent that. I suspect that al Qaeda would find it difficult to have a long-term foothold there in the face of such opposition. Much would depend on how long it took Iraq's neighbors to come to some understandings on containing their conflict in Iraq. Over time, a new modus vivendi might emerge but how stable it would be remains unclear. The perception of the United States and its reliability would be very low. We would be perceived as having created the mess and then left it for those in the region to have to live with it.

3. Senator THUNE. Ambassador Ross, what would be the long-term consequences of a precipitous pullout for the region?

Ambassador ROSS. See answers to questions 1 and 2.

REGIONAL DIPLOMACY

4. Senator THUNE. Ambassador Ross, in the article quoted in question 1, you also state that, "a long-discussed regional conference with all of Iraq's neighbors should be held. None of them—Iran, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Syria, Turkey—want the Bush administration to succeed in Iraq." Comparing this with your testimony today, I hear a similar message, that Iraq's neighbor states do not want us to succeed but neither do they want a failed state on their borders. I am not against diplomacy, but I would like to hear what you believe should be the outcome of speaking with nations like Iran and Syria. Would we negotiate with them or should we send a clear ultimatums that their actions leading to the death of American soldiers will not be tolerated?

Ambassador ROSS. The two points are not mutually exclusive. The fact is in most negotiations one is likely to be more successful if he/she has leverage. We should never have tolerated Iranian or Syrian behaviors that led to the death of American soldiers with impunity. But one should only issue ultimatums if one is prepared to act on them. Our problem with both Iran and Syria has been a tendency to threaten but not to follow through on our threats. I have publicly said that our posture toward Syria is one of being tough rhetorically and soft practically. I would reverse that. I am not against negotiating with either, provided we know what we want and we employ a stick-and-carrot approach: concentrate their respective minds with what they lose and then show them what they can gain from changing their behaviors.

FAVORITISM

5. Senator THUNE. Ambassador Ross, my colleague from Virginia, Senator Warner, introduced a resolution calling for a new strategy in Iraq. In paragraph 7, his resolution states, "the Senate believes the United States should continue vigorous operations in Anbar province, specifically for the purpose of combating an insurgency, including elements associated with the al Qaeda movement, and denying terrorists a safe haven." Based on our lessons learned from Lebanon in the early 1980s, are you concerned that this paragraph could send the message that we are favoring the Shia over the Sunni?

Ambassador ROSS. No, we should define our most important interests and then explain them. Presently, we have problems with both Sunnis and Shias in Iraq. Sunnis see us as favoring an Iraqi Government that is dominated by the Shia. The Shia see our calls for national reconciliation and inclusion of Sunnis as designed to limit Shias and protect Sunnis who are not prepared to accept a leading Shia role. Al Qaeda represents a threat to the Sunni tribes in Anbar province and to Shias everywhere. We ought to be able to frame our policy and actions in a way that singles out al Qaeda even while our objective should be to foster national reconciliation in Iraq. Without such reconciliation, every military strategy in Iraq is doomed to fail.

EMBEDDING

6. Senator THUNE. Secretary Perry, in your testimony you disagree with the President's troop increase plan and instead call on the President to follow a different path. You state, "The best chance of bringing down the violence in Iraq, if indeed it still can be done, lies with the Iraqi army, and we can improve their chance of success by using U.S. ground forces to provide on-the-job training that would result from embedding American troops in Iraqi combat units, as proposed by the Iraq Study Group (ISG)." However, on page 8 of the ISG Report, the group found that, "Significant question remains about the ethnic composition and loyalties of some Iraqi units—specifically whether they will carry out missions on behalf of national goals instead of a sectarian agenda." If you were Secretary of Defense today, how confident would you be about embedding American troops in Iraqi units that a blue-ribbon panel had found has serious questions of loyalty?

Dr. PERRY. American officers in charge of the embedding that has already taken place say that there has been no instance in which Iraqi soldiers betrayed the embedded soldiers. The primary point of our recommendation for embedding American troops in Iraq units was to enhance the capability of Iraqi units with on-the-job training they would get from the role model of American troops. The on-the-job training could also be effectively performed by pairing Iraqi units with American battalions.

7. Senator THUNE. Secretary Perry, why do you feel that embedded troops would be more successful in providing Iraqi units on-the-job training as opposed to pairing Iraqi units with American battalions or brigades?

Dr. PERRY. See response to question 6.

8. Senator THUNE. Secretary Perry, by pairing Iraqi and American units, couldn't they train together and focus on larger issues raised by the ISG like unit cohesion and organizational leadership?

Dr. PERRY. See response to question 6.

[Whereupon, at 1:40 p.m., the committee adjourned.]

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