

**IRAQ TRANSITION: CIVIL WAR OR CIVIL SOCIETY?
[PART I]**

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

UNITED STATES SENATE

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IRAQ TRANSITION: CIVIL WAR OR CIVIL SOCIETY? [Part I]

TUESDAY, APRIL 20, 2004

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:34 a.m. in room SH-216, Hart Senate Office Building, Hon. Richard G. Lugar (chairman of the committee), presiding.

Present: Senators Lugar, Hagel, Chafee, Brownback, Alexander, Biden, Feingold, Boxer, and Corzine.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR RICHARD G. LUGAR, CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN. This hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee is called to order.

I will give an opening statement, and then I'll recognize the distinguished ranking member of the committee, Senator Biden, for his opening statement. We look forward to hearing from our witnesses.

At his nationally televised press conference last Wednesday, President Bush unequivocally asserted that the United States was committed to advancing freedom in Iraq. He stated, and I quote, "Now is the time, and Iraq is the place, in which the enemies of the civilized world are testing the will of the civilized world. We must not waver." This expression of his personal determination was welcome and necessary.

The President was right when he underscored that "the consequences of failure are unthinkable." American credibility in the world, progress in the war on terrorism, our relationships with our allies, the future of the Middle East, and the fate of the Iraqis themselves depend upon the resolve of the U.S. Government and the American people in achieving a positive outcome in Iraq. In short, moving the Iraqi people toward a secure, independent state is a vital United States national-security priority that requires the highest level of national commitment.

The President and other leaders, including Members of Congress, must continue to communicate with the American public on this point, because the work that must be done in Iraq will test our national fortitude. American lives will continue to be at risk in Iraq, and substantial American resources will continue to be spent there for the foreseeable future. During this endeavor, we will debate every aspect of United States strategy in Iraq. This is necessary in our democracy, and such debate can strengthen our national purpose, but this debate must be constructive. What happens in Iraq

during the next 18 months almost certainly will determine whether we can begin to redirect the Middle East toward a more productive and peaceful future beyond the grip of terrorist influences. Congress does not have to agree with the President's policies, but our differences of opinion must be focused on improving our chances for success.

For its part, the Bush administration must recognize that its domestic credibility on Iraq will have a great impact on its efforts to succeed. On some occasions during the past year and a half, the administration has failed to communicate its Iraq plans and cost estimates to Congress and to the American people. During the weeks leading up to the war, in early 2003, the Foreign Relations Committee held multiple hearings in pursuit of answers to basic questions about plans for Iraq reconstruction. Administration officials often were unable or unwilling to provide adequate answers.

In one notable case, in March 2003, General Jay Garner, Director of the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance at the time, chose not to testify or to send his deputy, even though he briefed the press at the same time our hearing was occurring.

This week, the administration may again have missed an opportunity by declining to send the highest Defense Department official possible to testify at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's hearings. We are appreciative of the officials who will be here, and we look forward to their testimony on Thursday.

Our experiences with inadequate planning and communication related to Iraq contribute to the determination of this committee to impose a very high standard on the information provided about Iraq. We understand that some information is classified and cannot be dealt with in open session. We also understand that not every official we would like to testify will be available for every hearing. But within the substantial bounds of our oversight capacity, we will attempt to illuminate the United States plans, actions, and options with respect to Iraq, both for the benefit of the American people and to inform our own policymaking role. The administration must present a detailed plan to prove to Americans, Iraqis, and our allies that we have a strategy and that we are committed to making it work.

This will be the first of three Foreign Relations Committee hearings this week on Iraq. We intend to explore whether Americans and Iraqi authorities are ready for the transition to Iraqi sovereignty on July 1, and what steps are required to fill out a comprehensive transition plan.

In our current series of three hearings, the committee, first of all, will attempt to discover the details of Ambassador Lakhdar Brahimi's plan for an interim Iraqi Government to which a transfer of sovereignty is planned on June 30, 2004. Specifically, what executive and legislative positions will be established in the interim government, and how will these positions be filled? Who will choose the people? Are we confident that Iraqis will support the United Nations formula for a new government? What will the United States do if Iraqis reject the Brahimi plan?

Second, what status-of-forces agreement will make clear that the United States and Coalition Armed Forces will continue to provide internal and external security for the new Iraqi Government? Will

that agreement make clear the chain of command and the relationship of Iraqi police, reserves, and army personnel with United States and Coalition forces?

Third, will United Nations Security Council resolutions undergird the international legitimacy of the new Iraqi Government and all of the security arrangements that it will require? Continuing and expanded support of the new Iraqi Government by other nations may require additional Security Council resolutions.

Fourth, will elections for the Transitional and Permanent Iraqi Government's—scheduled for no later than January 2005, and December 2005, respectively—be held under the auspices of the United Nations or some other authority? How will that authority provide security for the elections and assemble a registration list or otherwise determine who is eligible to vote? How will we deal with elections that are postponed or deemed to be fraudulent? Will the National Assembly, which is to be elected in January 2005, have full authority to write a constitution and construct the framework of a permanent government?

Fifth, we were pleased to learn yesterday that President Bush has designated Ambassador John Negroponte as his nominee to be the United States Ambassador to the new Iraqi Government. What will be the composition and the time of arrival of all of the U.S. personnel associated with the new embassy?

And, sixth, will the costs associated with the new diplomatic presence be covered by a transfer of funds under the umbrella of the \$87 billion appropriation enacted by Congress last year? If not, what is the plan for providing the necessary funding?

Clear answers to all of these questions would constitute a coherent transition plan for Iraq. Americans should have the opportunity to view this plan and carefully monitor its progress. To help spell out such a plan is an important responsibility for a congressional committee, as part of a well-functioning constitutional system of checks and balances.

We will also want to discuss how Iraqis are preparing to take over the police and security functions of a sovereign state. Equipment and training for these forces are needed urgently. Contracting problems have delayed delivery. Reports that some Iraqi units refused to be deployed, and others actually supported insurgent factions, are part of a sober assessment of the Iraqi role in a security plan.

The Iraqis need to know that there is a difference between an occupied Iraq and a sovereign Iraq. Our public-information efforts must become a lot better in demonstrating to Iraqis the advantages of new freedoms. We must find more effective ways of spurring the public dialog in Iraq and supporting the aspirations of the majority of Iraqis who want peace and democracy, but who have been intimidated by purveyors of violence who cloak their actions in false nationalism. Bands of insurgents, terrorists, and murderers have made the process more difficult, but must not be allowed to determine the outcome in Iraq.

To begin our examination of these questions, the committee is pleased to be joined by two impressive panels of witnesses today. On the first panel, we welcome Dr. James Schlesinger, former Secretary of Defense, former Secretary of Energy, and now senior advi-

sor at Lehman Brothers. Dr. Schlesinger recently served as co-chair of a Council on Foreign Relations Task Force that published a comprehensive report entitled "Iraq: One Year After." We also welcome Mr. Sandy Berger, the former National Security Advisory for President Clinton, and currently chairman of Stonebridge International.

On our second panel, we will welcome Dr. Richard Perle, of the American Enterprise Institute, Dr. Toby Dodge, of the International Institute for Strategic Studies, and Dr. Juan Cole, of the University of Michigan.

We look forward to the assessments and recommendations of our witnesses. We appreciate their presence this morning.

I turn now to the distinguished ranking member of our committee, Senator Biden.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.,
RANKING MEMBER

Senator BIDEN. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. As they say in this business, I'd like to associate myself with your opening statement, and I'll try not to repeat some of the specific questions that you acknowledge at the front end, that we need answered to determine whether or not there is a policy.

But it's difficult. Over the last 31 years, we've both experienced being in the majority and the minority. We've experienced being in the majority when we've had a President of our own party. We've been in the minority with a President of our own party. And I just want to compliment you on not just holding these hearings, but the way in which you have been steadfast and frank and straightforward in sharing your considerable—considerable—knowledge and experience with the Senate and the American people.

And you are, to state the obvious, more diplomatic than I am. I think it's outrageous the administration has not provided every witness we've asked for. I do not find it acceptable that there is a single witness that is unavailable to us that we've asked. Not a single one. This administration has taken this committee and this Congress for granted.

Someone should have them read the Constitution of the United States of America and understand that, Article II, there is a legislative body. We do not work for the President. I serve with the President. I served before him, and I'll serve after him. And it is outrageous that they're making the same arrogant mistake they made when we held hearings the first time, and that is not providing every witness we ask for.

You know, there was a famous member of this committee years ago who said, "If the President wants us in on the landing, he'd better have us in on the takeoff." Well, this administration, and every administration, including the previous one, makes mistakes. It is virtually impossible not to make mistakes, and, in some cases, make serious mistakes. I've been here for seven Presidents.

The fact of the matter is that if they had had witnesses show up at our first hearings, they might have actually had to answer questions that would have caused them to think about the premises upon which they were responding and which they based their policy.

This committee, when I was Chair, and then, when you took over as Chair, immediately thereafter, has been consistent. People say to me, Mr. Chairman, "I wish Washington weren't so partisan." Take a look at this committee. I don't see any partisanship in this committee. There hasn't been any partisanship on this committee. You and I both voted for giving the President the authority to go to war. We've tried to be constructive. The fact of the matter is, they're making it very difficult. And here we go again, at this critical juncture.

And, you know, we've been in this business a long time, and there's a tendency—and the press probably tunes it out, and I don't blame them—to say, this is the most important moment. The truth of the matter is, this may be the last best chance to get this right for a generation. For a generation.

This June 30 date is going to be one, I say to the witnesses, that historians are going to look to like they did 9/11, and 3/11 in Madrid. And they're going to look at June 30 to figure out whether we got it right. And this warrants not a partisan disagreement, but an honest engagement with the outfits that have to come up with the money, the outfit that has to sign the American people onto this, the U.S. Senate and the House of Representative and the administration. And the fact that they're not prepared to send a witness either means they are totally incompetent and they don't have anything to tell us, which would constitute incompetence, or they're refusing to allow us to fulfill our constitutional responsibility. And there's always a price to pay for that. Not a price to pay that's vindictiveness; a price to pay. When you shut out a bipartisan group of United States Senators from asking hopefully intelligent questions and probing a policy, you're doing yourself and the Nation a significant disservice.

Mr. Chairman, after that statement, you may not like my next statement. I am proud to serve under you, as chairman of this committee. I am proud that you are the chairman, and I'm proud to be a part of it.

Many of the challenges identified in the hearings that you and I held as the transfer of congressional power took place, many of those things we identified have turned out to be absolutely accurate, on the button, not because we did it, but because we had witnesses like the men before us, and the women who will come before us. The best minds in the country sat here, and they said that every basic premise upon which we were told—and Mr. Perle will testify next—he's not part of the administration—was going to happen was not likely to happen. We'd be greeted with open arms, there would be enough oil revenues to pay for everything, there would be an Iraqi army to stand up immediately, there would be an Iraqi police force to be able to maintain peace and security, and there would be a civil service that would be stood up immediately to be able to keep every function of government operating very quickly. The result is that we may soon be confronted with an untenable situation—American forces caught between an increasingly hostile Iraqi population, notwithstanding the Secretary of Defense's reference in private and public meetings—with me, anyway—to quote, "flare-ups"—flare-ups—implying that this is something that's going to pass very quickly, like a brush fire—that these

forces are caught between hostile Iraqi populations that they were sent to liberate, and an increasingly skeptical American public, whose support we badly, badly, badly need.

I'll editorialize by saying, I think there's virtually little comparison to Vietnam here, in terms of what's at stake. When I ran for office in 1972, I disagreed with that war, and I said, "Even if I win, if it turns out the Russian fleets end up in Cam Ranh Bay, I'll resign," because I was so certain that was not what it was about.

But I am certain the President's right about how important it is to succeed. This is a seminal event in the Middle East. This is a seminal event. This is of incredible consequence. Walking away from this is not an option, in terms of our security.

And I'm convinced, though, we can still succeed if we level with the American people about the costs and the risks. I know this is, sort of, getting it backward, I say to my colleagues that are about to testify, but I think we've got to make sure we've got American support first. First. We've got to go shore it up. No foreign policy can be sustained in this country without the informed consent of the American people, and it has not been an informed consent yet, because we have not leveled with them that it's going to cost several hundred-billion more before this is over; it's going to take tens of thousands, if not a hundred-thousand or more, troops for an extended period of time, even if we get help from other folks; that we're going to be there even if things go very well, which they're not going now, for the next 3 to 5 years, and maybe longer.

And the second thing we have to do is, we have to bring along the Iraqi people. I know Jim Schlesinger knows better than anybody—he's been around a long time, and he's a brilliant guy academically, he was brilliant in terms of his service to the country, and continues to be—I know he understands the simple proposition—even though sometimes he and I have disagreed in the past, in the last 15 years, on some specific items relating to our national security—that if we can't find an Iraqi middle, if we can't find a bulk of the Iraqi people who are willing to fight and die for their own democracy, then this doesn't matter. This doesn't matter. We cannot do it.

So, Mr. Chairman, we need to create an environment where the American people think this is doable and worthwhile, and the Iraqi people think—if the polling data is correct, and I believe it is—that fewer than 15 percent of the Iraqi people want a religious theocracy, like exists in Iran, which means 85 percent of the people want something else. We've got to convince them that there's a possibility of that happening, that we've got a plan, that there's a plan. Because absent that, they're not going to stick their heads up, and we're going to lose—without them investing in their own future.

It's the President's responsibility to do both those things—level with the American people and provide a plan. He needs to explain the hard road ahead and the commitment we have to make, in terms of times, troops, and treasure; and he must convince the American people, the Iraqi people, and the international community that he has a strategy for success.

I've used this joke so long to make a serious point; now I find other people using it. I had a baseball coach who used to tell that

story about the kid who played centerfield—I was a center-fielder—and I remember the coach saying one day—after an error, saying—you know, the story about George, who played centerfield in the first three innings? He had five errors. The coach calls timeout, pulls him out, and says, “Dick, you’re in.” First pitch, routine fly ball to Dick, hits Dick’s glove, he drops it. Coach goes ballistic, calls Dick out. Dick comes running across the third-base line and says, “Coach?” And he says, “What’s the matter with you, Dick?” And Dick looks at the coach and says, “Coach, George screwed up centerfield so badly, no one can play it.”

Well, I’m joking, but I tell you, that’s what they think in France, Germany, England, Portugal and Spain. And we’ve got to change that. We’ve got to change the notion that this thing is so badly broken it can’t be fixed, because, as the witnesses will tell you, Europe needs us to succeed even more than we do.

About 10 percent of France’s population is Arabic-speaking. The Germans are deathly afraid of population flows that would come from a Kurdish-Turkish war. And the list goes on. They have a keen interest in seeing success. And, in my judgment, the most important ingredient for success is the emergence of that silent majority of Iraqis who can provide an alternative to the extremes and who can create a participatory republic when we leave.

Equally important is getting the help that we need from outside Iraq, in term of troop, money, manpower, to see this mission to completion.

There are three things, in my humble opinion, the President should do immediately.

First, he needs to send more troops, which is now happening, to gain control of security, to give other countries confidence that they will not be walking into a centerfield that is screwed up so badly no one can play it.

Second, he should bring together the major powers with the most at stake in Iraq to form an international board of directors, in some form or another, responsible for overseeing the political transition so everyone’s invested—everyone’s invested and has a stake in the outcome. It could be the U.N. Security Council, but it doesn’t have to be. It could be an ad hoc group like the kind we formed to deal with Bosnia, or a contact group like we tried to deal with Middle East peace. It should include our European allies, probably Russia, and our friends in the Middle East. A senior representative of that board would replace Ambassador Bremer in the CPA as Iraq’s primary partner, and speak with the authority of the international community, not just the United States, when they speak.

Brahimi has begun to play that role, informally. I’ve found it fascinating. The President and his administration have downgraded the value of the United Nations, and yet in a press conference, when asked who we’re going to turn power over to, the President of the United States says, “Well, we’re waiting for Brahimi to tell us.” That’s real leadership.

Let’s make it formal, with a clear, authoritative mandate from the major powers, starting now, carrying through till Iraq ratifies a constitution and subsequently elects a government. This would maximize a Brahimi, or whoever would follow him, leverage and our prospects for success.

Third, the President should ask the U.N. to bless the agreement—not be in charge, but bless the agreement with a new resolution. None of us has any illusions about the United Nations. But its central involvement would, to quote George Will, of all people, “usefully blur the clarity of U.S. primacy.”

The President and everybody says we’ve got to get an American face off of this. We’re not asking, like some of my right-wing friends in my home state, say, “Well, Biden wants to give power to the United Nations, one world government.” This is about allowing other nations to do what is difficult to do. They opposed the war. Ninety percent of their populations don’t want any part of providing for the peace, and they need some excuse to be able to give them some cover to do what they know they have to do in their own interest. Foreign leaders need this political cover.

The Iraqis are more likely to listen to a partner who speaks for the world than to heed an American ambassador hunkered down in a new super embassy. And I have great respect for Mr. Negroponte. I really do. But as one of my staff sitting behind me said, “Going from Paul Bremer, with a CPA, that at least has international involvement in it, to a super Ambassador, is like going from Clark Kent to being Superman.” Talk about taking an American face off it, we’re saying, here we are. All us, all alone.

If the President does these three things, I believe several major benefits will follow. First, other countries will be much more likely to contribute resources to reconstruction. Second, NATO is more likely to get engaged, spreading the security risk and freeing up as many as 20,000 American troops to focus on the hot spots. We’re not going to get 20,000 NATO forces immediately. But in my travels, which are now 3 months old, throughout the capitals of Europe, every major power said they would vote to allow this to be a NATO operation. Probably wouldn’t get more than 5,000 to 7,000 thousand troops to begin with, but speaking with General Jones, the Supreme Allied Commander, that would free up the ability of the Americans to not do border patrol, and allow NATO troops to support the Poles in the south and/or the Kurds in the north, thereby freeing up significant American forces and building on this NATO operation, and, by the way, convincing the American people we’re not in this alone. If NATO’s in the deal, they know everybody else has a stake in it, as well.

The President should immediately convene, in my view, a summit of our traditional allies in Europe, and our friends in the Arab world and Asia, to talk about what they think is needed.

You know, I’ve found it fascinating, Mr. Secretary and National Security Advisory Berger—I’ve found it fascinating—I was making the case several months ago to President Chirac that, look, the President of the United States has made serious concessions here. He’s moved up the date to June 30, he says we’ll transfer power then, and he’s backed off the insistence—that I initially agreed with, by the way; I think I was wrong—of saying that there had to be a constitution before there were elections, and there had to be—and so on and so forth. And he sat there politely and listened—and he is no box of chocolates, in terms of the problems he’s caused us and how he’s taken advantage of us—but he looked, and he said, “Senator, it would have been nice had the administration

told us they were going to do this. We read it in the paper.” That’s a good way to win friends and influence people.

And throughout Europe, to the best of my knowledge, from Javier Solano on, no one, based on what I was told, was told, before they read it, that we had made this change in policy.

It’s time we start talking to people. We should tell them that we need their help. We should acknowledge that success in Iraq requires centrist Iraqis to step up, the world to step in, and the Middle East countries to take a chance on a representative government in Iraq, or they’re likely to be gone. Then the President should ask each of them what they need in order to participate. He should work with them to forge a common plan in Iraq that they can support.

And, Mr. Chairman, let me conclude with something I talked about in a speech I made last week on this subject, which is the most critical speech I’ve openly made of this administration thus far. I come from Delaware. I have been to Dover Air Force Base many times. The men and women there, who receive our soldiers and their families in that last long flight home from the battlefield know what this is all about.

When those planes fly over Dover in the middle of the night, press not allowed to be there when they land, they remind us that this is not about politics. This is not about whether with every fiber in our being, we think we’re right, or that someone else is dangerously wrong. It’s not about that. This is about something bigger. It’s not about assigning blame, it’s not about partisanship. It’s about that last long journey to the Dover Air Force Base. It’s about those brave Americans who are doing everything in their power to get it right. They’re doing everything in their power to get it right over there. And we owe them no less than to do everything in our power to get it right here, to acknowledge—not publicly, just privately, by policy—what’s not working, acknowledge that we went with too little power and too little legitimacy. And the only way to get this right, for their sake, is to give them enough power and enough legitimacy. Because if we don’t do that, those flights home to the only mortuary on the East Coast are going to be places where there are going to be a lot of not just sullen people, but sullen, angry people, that we were unwilling to try to get it right, knowing what’s not working.

I apologize for the length of the statement, Mr. Chairman, but I have not attended a hearing in my 31 years that I think is more consequential than what we’re attempting to get right here.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Senator Biden follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

Mr. Chairman, I commend your leadership in calling these hearings. They come at a critical time in Iraq and for our interests in the region.

I am proud of the partnership we’ve forged on Iraq, starting with the hearings we held in the summer of 2002.

Many of the challenges identified in those hearings have been borne out. Now, I am deeply concerned that time is rapidly running out on our ability to get it right in Iraq.

The result is that we may soon confront an untenable situation: American forces caught between an increasingly hostile Iraqi population that they were sent to lib-

erate and an increasingly skeptical American public, whose support they need and deserve.

I'm convinced we can still succeed if we level with the American people about the costs and the risks. If we develop a coherent plan for success and if we bring the Iraqi people and the rest of the world with us.

It is the President's responsibility to level with the American people about what will be required to prevail.

He needs to explain the hard road ahead and the commitment we must make in terms of time, troops and treasure.

And he must convince the American people, the Iraqi people, and the international community that he has a strategy for success.

I hope that our witnesses this week will help to fill in that strategy.

In my judgment, the most important ingredient for success is the emergence of that silent majority of Iraqis who can provide an alternative to the extremes and can create a participatory republic when we leave.

Equally important is getting the help we need from outside Iraq—in terms of troops, money and manpower—to see this mission to completion.

There are three things the President should do immediately:

First, he needs to send in more troops now to gain control of security and to give other countries confidence that they will not be walking into a quagmire.

Second, he should bring together the major powers with the most at stake in Iraq to form an international board of directors responsible for overseeing the political transition in Iraq.

It could be the U.N. Security Council. It could be an ad hoc group, like the kind we formed to deal with Bosnia. It would include our European allies, Russia and our friends in the Middle East.

A senior representative of that board would replace Ambassador Bremer and the CPA as Iraq's primary partner, and speak with the authority of the international community, not just the United States.

Lakhdar Brahimi has begun to play that role informally. Let's make it formal, with a clear, authoritative mandate from the major powers starting now and carrying through till Iraq ratifies a Constitution and subsequently elects a government. That would maximize Brahimi's leverage and our prospects for success.

Third, the President should ask the U.N. to bless this arrangement with a new resolution. None of us have any illusions about the U.N. But it's central involvement would, to quote George Will, "usefully blur the clarity of U.S. primacy."

Foreign leaders need political cover to convince their people who opposed the war to help build the peace. The Iraqis are more likely to listen to a partner who speaks for the world than to heed an American ambassador hunkered down in a super embassy.

If the President does these three things, I believe several major benefits would follow.

First, other countries would be much more likely contribute resources to Iraq's reconstruction.

Second, NATO is more likely to get engaged, spreading the security risk and freeing up as many as 20,000 American troops to focus on the hot spots.

At this late hour, it will take some powerful persuasion to get all these players in the game. But one man has the power to do just that—to change the dynamic—to finally make Iraq the world's problem, not just our own. That man is the President of the United States. Now is the time for him to lead.

The President should immediately convene a summit with our traditional allies in Europe, our friends in the Arab world and Asia, the U.N. and NATO, and Iraqi political leaders.

He should tell them that we need their help. He should acknowledge that success in Iraq requires centrist Iraqis to step up, world powers to chip in, and Middle East countries to take a chance on representative government in Iraq.

Then the President should ask each of them what they need from us in order to participate. And he should work with them to forge a common plan for Iraq that they can support.

Mr. Chairman, let me conclude with something I talked about in a speech last week. I come from Delaware. I have been to Dover many times. The men and women there who receive our soldiers and their families on that last long journey home know what this is about.

When those planes fly over Delaware and land in the middle of the night, we are reminded that this is not about politics, about whether we believe with every fiber of our being that we are fundamentally right or that someone else is dangerously wrong.

This is not about assigning blame or about partisanship. This is about that last journey home to Dover Air Force Base. It's about those brave Americans who are doing everything in their power to get it right. We owe them no less than to get it right ourselves.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Biden.

We call now upon our witnesses. I will ask you to testify in the order in which I first introduced you. This would mean, first of all, Secretary Schlesinger. Welcome to the committee.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES R. SCHLESINGER, SENIOR
ADVISOR, LEHMAN BROTHERS**

Dr. SCHLESINGER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I thank the committee for its invitation to discuss the continuously unfolding situation in Iraq and the actions required to achieve a successful transition. I shall touch on some of the themes, Mr. Chairman, Senator Biden, that you have touched upon.

Since I am dealing with the successful transition and what is required, I shall pass over the many notable achievements, including acceptance of the Transitional Administrative Law, the restoration of power production, the rehabilitation of schools, the renovation of hospitals, and the like, in order to focus on such additional requirements.

Before I proceed further, I need to underscore why it is that the United States is so deeply engaged in the Middle East and what is at stake in Iraq, for I fear there is some public uncertainty regarding these issues.

Mr. Chairman, you mentioned the need to communicate with the American people. For that purpose, I recommend a re-reading of Osama bin Laden's declaration of war against the Americans issued in 1998. In that declaration, bin Laden states, "The Defense Secretary of the crusading Americans has said that the explosions at Riyadh and al Khobar had taught him one lesson, that is not to withdraw when attacked by cowardly terrorists." Need I point out that in 1998, the Defense Secretary in question was not Donald Rumsfeld, but, rather, your old colleague, Bill Cohen.

Bin Laden continues, "We say to the Defense Secretary that his talk could induce a grieving mother to laughter, and it shows the fears that have enveloped you all. Where was this courage of yours when the explosion in Beirut took place in 1983? You were transformed into scattered bits and pieces. Two-hundred-and-forty-one soldiers were killed, most of them marines. When tens of your soldiers were killed in minor battles and one American pilot was dragged in the streets of Mogadishu, you left the area in disappointment, humiliation, and defeat, carrying your dead with you. Clinton appeared in front of the whole world, threatening and promising revenge, but these threats were merely a preparation for withdrawal. You had been disgraced by Allah, and you withdrew. The extent of your impotence and weakness became very clear."

As bin Laden had earlier explained in the declaration, "Efforts should be concentrated on destroying, fighting, and killing the American enemy until, by the grace of Allah, it is completely defeated." The task is stated quite simply. Killing Americans and other infidels.

In June 2002, bin Laden's spokesman, Suleiman Abu Gheith, placed this statement on the al-Qaeda Web site, "We have the right to kill four million Americans—two million of them children—and to exile twice as many, and wound and cripple hundreds of thousands."

They may be fanatics, but they are deadly serious and thoroughly persistent. We must anticipate, therefore, a conflict that will continue for many years. Osama himself has opined that, "When the people see a strong horse and a weak horse, they naturally gravitate toward the strong horse." Consequently, this nation must conclusively demonstrate that we are not the weak horse. Withdrawal from—before we have successfully stabilized Iraq is, therefore, not an option. It would be dramatically more visible throughout the Middle East and elsewhere than were those earlier retreats cited by Osama.

I recognize that inevitably debate will continue regarding at least the timing of our move into Iraq. Nonetheless, we must not allow the political contentions of an election year to create any impression that we are anything but united in our determination to persevere and to prevail in Iraq. Success is the only acceptable course of action.

How, then, are we to be successful in sustaining order and stability in Iraq? Only by embracing certain fundamental realities. First and foremost, establishing reasonable security is the prerequisite for achieving the goals of political stability. In principle, we have come to accept that reality; but, in practice, we have been too slow, effectively, to act upon it. Second, neither the American nor the Coalition forces can, by themselves, impose security on Iraq. Iraqis themselves must provide indispensable support. Only Iraqis can gather the intelligence to identify the regime remnants and the foreign terrorists who must be largely neutralized before adequate security can be ensured. Moreover, it will be essential for Iraq's security forces to be the principal element in rooting out terrorists and destroying their cells, with the Coalition military increasingly in a supporting role. "We will stay the course" may be a necessary guideline or an exhortation, but it is not a strategy. We will stay the course until we have an Iraqi force capable of providing reasonable security for the people of Iraq is a strategy. But that implies a viable plan to create such a force. It also implies that we should not expect the level of security in, say, Denmark or Japan.

Regrettably, we have allowed almost a year to pass without creating an effective Iraqi security force. While we have recruited several hundred-thousand Iraqis into the security force, those forces have tended to melt away in times of difficulty. It may be that this behavior reflects a problem of morale, though that was not the judgment of those who had observed at least the CDC as it was being organized. Possibly, it reflects a deep unwillingness to use force on recalcitrant fellow Iraqis. But the most obvious answer is our own failure properly to train and properly to equip these security forces.

On the equipping issue, all too many months have gone by without appropriately vetted forces being appropriately equipped with weapons, protective gear, and communications. That is a reflection,

in part, of our own cumbersome budgetary and procurement procedures, which have imposed a high long-run cost on our operations.

On the question of training, we have not allowed sufficient time for the training of individuals and the organizing of units with a high degree of cohesion; nor, by the way, have we had, to this point, an Iraqi chain of command, because Iraqis like to be ordered into battle by Iraqis rather than Americans. The task of training Iraqi security forces should be a principal obligation of American and Coalition forces in country. Other nations, such as India, even if they have not contributed military forces, may be prepared to participate in training these security forces.

Second, we must focus more effectively on economic problems. There is a correlation between the high prevailing unemployment in Iraq and the restlessness and low morale spreading among the populace. Admittedly, initial expectations regarding an immediate magical boost in living conditions were unrealistic. Yet months have gone by without the improvement in living conditions that might realistically have been expected. The \$18.4 billion that the Congress appropriated for reconstruction should have already begun to alleviate the problem—improving living conditions and expanding employment. It is a shame that so little of that \$18.4 billion has been obligated to this point, and even significantly less has been spent. We must get that money flowing. Delay makes the problem worse.

Yet, once again, it is our procurement procedures that have imposed these costs upon us. We cannot afford normal peacetime procurement procedures, with 60 days to submit responses to requests for proposals, and another 60 days to assess them, et cetera. Congress can act quickly. It should assess whether existing requirements result in a penny-wise/pound-foolish outcome, and help ease self-defeating restraints.

Now let me turn to the political transition, while bearing in mind that effectively dealing with the security and economic conditions will necessarily remain the foundation for a successful political transition.

As this committee well knows, since November of last year we have committed to transferring of sovereignty to the Iraqis after 30 June. The President has firmly reiterated that he intends to stick to that date. The administration has indicated that it is inclined to accept Ambassador Brahimi's proposals for the new Iraqi regime. Both Chairman Lugar and Senator Biden have noted that we would pay a high cost if we fail to abide by that date. That does not mean, by the way, that we cannot wait an extra 10 days or 2 weeks, but we cannot wait an extra 10 weeks or 2 months.

While nothing is ever set in concrete, especially if the conditions within the country were to deteriorate substantially, I would expect that the date for transferring sovereignty to the Iraqis will be met. At that point, the Iraqis themselves will be making decisions regarding the civil order.

Yet, once again, time's a-wastin'. There are only some 10 weeks left before the transfer is to be made. The new American ambassador was announced just yesterday, John Negroponte. I think John Negroponte is a superb choice. I have known him for the last 30 years. But, still, the embassy team reportedly amounting to

4,000 people, has obviously not yet solidified. The overall team has not had a chance to work with each other, to learn their respective roles, in effect to put on "training wheels" for the tasks ahead. The less time available will certainly detract from a smooth takeover from the CPA by the new team.

I do not wish to overstate this point. One must recall that the critical issue of security will remain largely in American hands and under the control of a selected four-star general. Under U.N. Security Council Resolution 1511, Iraqi armed forces will be a principal partner in the multinational force operating in Iraq under unified command, in accordance with the Transitional Administrative Law. Thus, even if the transfer of sovereignty on several issues does not proceed perfectly smoothly, in the crucial area of security, which remains the largest challenge in Iraq, there will be less change. Contrary to a widespread public impression, which I hope that you gentlemen and Ms. Boxer will help counter, the transfer of authority on June 30 does not mean that the American role is ending, or that we are somehow washing our hands of Iraq. This last must effectively be conveyed to the Iraqi public at large.

As we look beyond June 30, we should expect a closer collaborative relationship between State and Defense than has been our experience to this point. The relationship between the civilians and the CPA, mostly buttoned down in the Green Zone, and the military, who have been out in the field interacting with the Iraqis, has been something less than ideal. After all, it is the CPA that has maintained tight control over the resources, but it is the division commanders that have been in close contact with the Iraqis and know what the local needs are, and have too frequently been obliged to fund local activities out of their quite-limited discretionary funds. The civil-military relationship worked out far better in Vietnam, after General Abrams took command in 1968. He and Ambassador Bunker worked intimately in deciding what the needs were for the pacification program, and how to allocate resources. We should seek to achieve that degree of collaborative behavior once the new embassy team comes into play this summer.

One final, but crucial, point. To date, our efforts to communicate with the Iraqis have been inadequate. We have failed to convey to the Iraqis what our intentions are, or have conveyed them belatedly. Consequently, all too many excellent and well-intentioned actions on our part have not gotten through to the Iraqi public. It is almost as important that such plans or such actions be understood as that they be executed. The American-sponsored television station has not been well designed to attract an audience, and has, thus, been peripheral for Iraqi listeners.

The upshot has been that al-Jazeera and al Arabiya have filled the void. It must be remembered that al-Jazeera's general manager was on Saddam's payroll. Al-Jazeera seems to have been regularly tipped off regarding any clashes in country, so that the television cameras would be present, and, indeed, may have staged such events. It must be recognized that with unemployment as high as it is, it is easy to buy a demonstration. Indeed, simple payment in cash has been a principal motive for many of those engaged in attacking either Americans or Iraqis.

Mr. Chairman, the decision to go into Iraq was a fateful one, not only for Iraqis, but for the larger Middle East and for the credibility, and you've mentioned, of American foreign policy. We must see it through. Coalition forces, as well as Iraqi forces and government officials, are now under assault—some calculated and deliberate, but some emotional and mindless. It is time for us to remind Iraqis, "If you want a decent life, you must not support the elements that are destroying your country and may actually be seeking a civil war." We must persuade Iraqis to foresee the consequences of frustrating Coalition efforts, in their behalf.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. After Sandy is through, I shall be happy to respond to any questions of you or the members of the committee.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Schlesinger follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES R. SCHLESINGER

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

I thank the Committee for its invitation to discuss the continuously unfolding situation in Iraq—and the actions required to achieve a successful transition. Consequently, I shall pass over the many, notable achievements, including acceptance of the Transitional Administrative Law, power production restored and expanded, schools rehabilitated or newly built, hospitals renovated, and the like, in order to focus on such additional requirements.

Before I proceed further, I need to underscore why it is that the United States is so deeply engaged in the Middle East and what is at stake in Iraq—for I fear that there is some public uncertainty regarding these issues. For that purpose, I recommend a re-reading of Usama Bin Ladin's DECLARATION OF WAR AGAINST THE AMERICANS, issued in 1998. In that Declaration, bin Ladin states that:

the Defence Secretary of the Crusading Americans had said that the explosions at Riyadh and Al-Khobar had taught him one lesson: that is not to withdraw when attacked by cowardly terrorists.

(Need I point out that in 1998 the defense secretary in question was not Donald Rumsfeld but rather your old colleague, Bill Cohen.) Bin Ladin continues:

We say to the Defence Secretary that his talk could induce a grieving mother to laughter! And it shows the fears that have enveloped you all. Where was this courage of yours when the explosion in Beirut took place in 1983 . . . You were transformed into scattered bits and pieces: 241 soldiers were killed, most of them Marines.

When tens of your soldiers were killed in minor battles and one American Pilot was dragged in the street of Mogadishu, you left the area in disappointment, humiliation, and defeat, carrying your dead with you. Clinton appeared in front of the whole world threatening and promising revenge, but these threats were merely a preparation for withdrawal. You had been disgraced by Allah and you withdraw; the extent of your impotence and weaknesses became very clear.

As bin Ladin had explained earlier in the Declaration: "Efforts should be concentrated on destroying, fighting, and killing the (American) enemy until, by the Grace of Allah, it is completely defeated."

The task is stated quite simply—"killing Americans" (and other infidels). In June, 2002, bin Ladin's spokesman, Suleiman Abu Gheith, placed this statement on the al Qaeda Web site:

We have the *right* (italics added) to kill 4 million Americans—2 million of them children—and to exile twice as many and wound and cripple hundreds of thousands.

They may be fanatics, but they are deadly serious and thoroughly persistent. We must anticipate, therefore, a conflict that will continue for many years.

Usama himself has opined that, "when the people see a strong horse and a weak horse—they naturally gravitate toward the strong horse." Consequently, this country must conclusively demonstrate that we are *not* the weak horse. Withdrawal before we have successfully stabilized Iraq is, therefore, not an option. It would be dra-

matically more visible throughout the Middle East and elsewhere than were those earlier retreats cited by Usama. I recognize that inevitably debate will continue regarding at least the timing of our move into Iraq. Nonetheless, we must not allow the political contentions of an election year to create any impression that we are anything but united in our determination to persevere and to prevail in Iraq. Success is the only acceptable course of action.

How then are we to be successful in sustaining order and stability in Iraq?—only by embracing certain fundamental realities. First and foremost, establishing reasonable security is the prerequisite for achieving the goals of political stability. In principle, we have come to accept this reality, but in practice we have been too slow effectively to act upon it. Second, neither the American nor the coalition forces can, by themselves, impose security on Iraq. Iraqis themselves must provide indispensable support. Only Iraqis can gather the intelligence to identify the regime remnants and foreign terrorists who must be largely neutralized before adequate security can be insured. Moreover, it will be essential for Iraqi security forces to be the principal element in rooting out terrorists and destroying their cells—with the coalition military increasingly in a supporting role.

“We will stay the course” may be a necessary guideline or exhortation, but it is not a strategy.

“We will stay the course until we have an Iraqi force capable of providing reasonable security for the people of Iraq”—is a strategy. But that implies a viable plan to create such a force. It also implies that we should not expect the level of security in, say, Denmark or Japan.

Regrettably, we have allowed almost a year to pass without creating an effective Iraqi security force. While we have recruited several hundred thousand Iraqis into the security force, those forces have tended to melt away in times of difficulty. It may be that this behavior reflects a problem of morale—thought that was not the judgment of those who observed at least the CDC, as it was organized. Possibly it reflects a deeper unwillingness to use force on the recalcitrant fellow Iraqis. But the most obvious answer is our own failure properly to train and properly to equip these security forces.

On the equipping issue, all too many months have gone by without appropriately vetted forces being appropriately equipped with weapons, protective gear, and communications. That is a reflection of our own cumbersome budgetary and procurement procedures, which have imposed a high, long run cost on our operations. On the question of training, we have not allowed sufficient time for the training of individuals and the organizing of units with a high degree of cohesion. The task of training Iraqi security forces should be a principal obligation of American and coalition forces in country. Other nations, such as India, even if they have not contributed military forces, may be prepared to participate in training these security forces.

Second, we must focus more effectively on economic problems. There is a correlation between the high prevailing unemployment in Iraq and the restlessness and low morale spreading among the populace. Admittedly, initial expectations regarding an immediate and magical boost in living conditions were unrealistic. Yet, months have gone by without the improvement in living conditions that might realistically have been expected. The \$18.4 billion that the Congress appropriated for reconstruction should have already begun to alleviate the problem—improving living conditions and expanding employment. It is a shame that so little of that \$18.4 billion has been obligated to this point—and even significantly less has been spent. We must get that money flowing. Delay makes the problem worst. Yet, once again, it is our procurement procedures that have imposed these costs upon us. We cannot afford normal peace time procurement procedures—with 60 days to submit responses to Requests For Proposals and another 60 days to assess them, etc. Congress can act—quickly. It should assess whether existing requirements result in a penny-wise, pound-foolish outcome—and help ease self-defeating restraints.

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As this Committee well knows, since November of last year we have been committed to transferring sovereignty to the Iraqis after 30 June. The President has firmly reiterated that he intends to stick to that date. The Administration has indicated that it is inclined to accept Ambassador Brahimi’s proposals for the new Iraqi regime. Both Chairman Lugar and Senator Biden have noted that we would pay a high cost, if we fail to abide by that date. While nothing is ever set in concrete, especially if the conditions within the country were to deteriorate substantially, I would expect that the date for transferring sovereignty to the Iraqis will be met. At that point, the Iraqis themselves will be making decisions regarding the civil order.

Yet, once again, time's-a-wastin'. There are only some ten weeks left before that transfer is to be made. The new American Ambassador has not been chosen—or at least announced. The Embassy team, probably amounting to 4,000 people, has obviously not yet solidified. The overall team has not had a chance to work with each other, to learn their respective roles, in effect to put on “training wheels” for the tasks ahead. The less time available will certainly detract from a smooth takeover from the CPA by the new team.

I do not wish to overstate this point. One must recall that the critical issue of security will remain in American hands—and under the control of a selected four-star general. Under United Nations Security Council Resolution 1511, Iraqi armed forces will be “a principal partner in the multinational force operating in Iraq under unified command,” in accordance with the Transitional Administrative Law. Thus, even if the transfer of sovereignty on several issues does not proceed perfectly smoothly, in the crucial area of security (which remains the largest challenge in Iraq) there will be little change. Contrary to a widespread public impression, the transfer of authority on 30 June does not mean that the American role is ending or that we are somehow washing our hands of Iraq. This last must effectively be conveyed to the Iraqi public at large.

As we look beyond June 30th, we should expect a closer collaborative relationship between State and Defense than has been our experience to this point. The relationship between the civilians in the CPA, mostly buttoned down in the Green Zone, and the military who have been out in the field, interacting with the Iraqis, has been something less than ideal. After all, it is the CPA that has maintained tight control over the resources, but it is the division commanders that have been in close contact with the Iraqis and know what the local needs are—and have too frequently been obliged to fund local activities out of their quite limited discretionary funds. The civil-military relationship worked far better in Vietnam—after General Abrams took command in 1968. He and Ambassador Bunker worked intimately in deciding what the needs were for the pacification program, and how to allocate resources. We should seek to achieve that degree of collaborative behavior once the new Embassy team comes into play this summer.

One final but crucial point. To date, our efforts to communicate with the Iraqis have been inadequate. We have failed to convey to the Iraqis what our intentions are—or have conveyed them belatedly. Consequently, all too many excellent and well-intentioned actions on our part have not gotten through to the Iraqi public. It is almost as important that such plans or such actions be understood, as that they be executed. The American-sponsored television station has not been well designed to attract an audience and has thus been peripheral for Iraqi listeners. The upshot has been that al-Jazeera and al-Arabiya have filled the void. It must be remembered that al-Jazeera's general manager was on Saddam's payroll. Al-Jazeera seems to have regularly been tipped off regarding any clashes in country, and, indeed, may have staged such events. It must be recognized that with employment as high as it is, it is easy to buy a demonstration. Indeed, simple payment in cash has been a principal motive for many of those engaged in attacking either Americans or Iraqis.

Mr. Chairman, the decision to go into Iraq was a fateful one—not only for Iraqis, but for the larger Middle East and for the credibility of American foreign policy. We must see it through. Coalition forces, as well as Iraqi forces and government officials are now under assault—some calculated and deliberated, but some emotional and mindless. It is time for us to remind Iraqis—“if you want a decent life you must not support the elements that are destroying your country and may actually be seeking a civil war.” We must persuade Iraqis to foresee the consequences of frustrating coalition efforts—in their behalf.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I shall be happy to respond to any questions that you or the Members of the Committee may have.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Secretary Schlesinger. We appreciate that testimony.

Mr. Berger, would you proceed.

**STATEMENT OF HON. SAMUEL R. BERGER, CHAIRMAN,
STONEBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL, LLC**

Mr. BERGER. Chairman Lugar, Senator Biden, members of the committee, thank you for inviting me to join Secretary Schlesinger

and be a part of these important hearings at this very important time.

It was one year ago that Saddam Hussein's statue crashed to the ground in Baghdad; 4 months ago that he was captured. Yet since the start of this month, 105 U.S. troops and over a thousand Iraqis have been killed. Civilians from a number of countries have been taken hostage. Suicide attacks, roadside ambushes, and heavy fighting have dominated the news. Even before what President Bush called these "tough weeks," Coalition troops were facing down dozens of attacks each day.

That is not to say that many good people in Iraq, American and Iraqi, are not accomplishing good things in many parts of the country. Under the most trying circumstances, our troops have shown truly inspiring skill and courage. The Coalition Provisional Authority has worked tirelessly to move reconstruction forward. But the Iraqi people have high hopes and expectations for their future, and we should have nothing less. But we'll never be able to meet those high hopes if we don't get security and governance right, and I think it's clear that pressures in Iraq are reaching, now, the boiling point.

Mr. Chairman, the outcome of this enterprise will help define our world for a generation. We could have a stable, secure, peaceful, and pluralistic Iraq, which will have a positive impact on the entire region; or we could have an Iraq that is slipping into chaos, civil war, or radicalism, redefining not only Iraq, but the region and our relationship with it. Imagine if Iraq becomes a failed terrorist state. Imagine a fundamentalist nation next door to Iran. Imagine a country that fragments, drawing in its neighbors. Imagine the shadow such an Iraq would cast on our security. We cannot permit this to happen.

The President passionately and properly declared in his press conference last week that "we cannot cut and run." But, honestly, Mr. Chairman, I don't hear many people saying we should. The American people don't want to "cut and run;" they want to know how we get from here to there. And the fact is, many of the choices that brought us to here do not fully inspire confidence.

We ignored the cautions of people like General Eric Shinseki, who said the peace would be harder than the war. If we had put the same number of troops in Iraq per capita as we did at the outset in Kosovo—6 to 1 instead of 20 to 1—we would have 500,000 troops there today; or, compared to Bosnia, 350,000 troops. Instead, we left ourselves ill-equipped to stem looting, establish order, even protect our own troops. Meanwhile, the notion that we could create and train an effective Iraqi army or police in a matter of months never made sense to me.

At the core, we put a higher value on maintaining control than on sharing risk. We and the British declared ourselves occupying powers. As a result, we are bearing close to 90 percent of the costs and the risks.

As Secretary Schlesinger pointed out, we've fallen way behind on our own schedule for reconstruction. Of the \$18.4 billion supplemental for aid to Iraq, only \$2.1 billion has been obligated, and 20 percent of that now will go to security. As you've said, Mr. Chairman, many Iraqis don't understand how the most powerful nation

in the world could defeat their armed forces in 3 weeks and still have trouble getting the lights on.

And despite the uncertain situation on the ground, we set an arbitrary date for transferring sovereignty before we knew to whom, and before we had broad agreement on a formula for multi-ethnic rule.

Mr. Chairman, what I find most disconcerting is the administration's jarring certainty about June 30, and this jarring uncertainty about July 1. We have been told where we want to go—Iraqi sovereignty, American-led security, and, eventually, Iraqi elections. We haven't been told how we plan to get there. The American people need to know we have a confident and workable plan. There is too much at stake in Iraq to lose the American people.

As I see it, we have three basic options: apply more force, hunker down, or make a serious effort to internationalize this enterprise.

First, applying more force. This may be necessary in some cases. If our military commanders say they need more troops, they will have them, they should have them. But we also must recognize the risks of military solutions in the absence of a clear political strategy. Attempting to crush the opposition can create its own dangerous backlash. Our military strategy will be no better than our political strategy; and our political strategy, while allaying the concerns of the Sunnis and the Kurds, must empower legitimate and respected Shia moderates. If we lose the Shia population's support, then we will lose Iraq.

Our second option is to hunker down—to replace the CPA sign with one that says "U.S. Embassy," turn sovereignty over to as-yet undetermined group of Iraqis, and try to stay out of harm's way.

I continue to fear the temptation of this option, Mr. Chairman, it is a prescription for chaos. It is unrealistic to think a new Iraqi leadership will be equipped to govern on July 1, much less prepared to send troops to this or the next Fallujah. As Lieutenant General Sanchez has said, "We know that it's going to take us a while to stand up reliable forces that can accept responsibility."

A third option is one that many of us have been advocating all along. It would have been easier to implement a year ago, 6 months ago, last month. That is a genuine, non-grudging effort to internationalize the enterprise in Iraq, both military and civilian.

I welcome the fact the administration is finally coming to that view, inch by inch—painful inch by inch. By last week's press conference, the President was deferring critical decisions on Iraq's future government to U.N. representative Lakhdar Brahimi.

Mr. Brahimi has proposed a caretaker government and a consultative assembly. These make sense to me. But, as Senator Biden has noted, there's a gap in what Mr. Brahimi is suggesting. On the civilian side, there will be some new Iraqi authority, hopefully broad-based and more widely supported than the current one we selected. There will be a large U.S. Embassy presence. But in the absence of some sort of an international high commissioner supported by a consortium of key countries—not only the United States, but also European and Arab and Asian—this newly formed Iraqi government will not have the capacity to act strongly, and they will be reluctant to cooperate too openly with our behemoth American Embassy, even in the hands of someone as capable as

Ambassador Negroponte. There needs to be an international mechanism that reinforces the exercise of Iraqi executive authority and, quite honestly, facilitates the ability of the United States to function more effectively with the new Iraqi leadership.

We also need a troop presence in Iraq that is genuinely international. Some have concluded that it's too late to obtain help from the allies. I disagree. Like us, our partners in Europe and the Arab world will bear the full brunt of an Iraq in turmoil. The fact that they did not participate in the invasion will provide them, in the end, no comfort.

Senator Biden, I support your proposal that President Bush call for an immediate summit with our European and Arab and Asian friends, representatives of the U.N. and NATO. Say, we need your help, and ask what their meaningful engagement would take. So far, we've said, in effect, we welcome your troops and your money, but largely on our terms. We've got to be prepared to give up our hammerlock on decisionmaking in exchange for genuine burden-sharing.

To conclude, Mr. Chairman, let me say that we will not meet any of our goals in Iraq if we lose the public at home. Today, the question on the public mind is, what is our strategy for success in Iraq, and is it achievable? Too often today, it seems to be improvised. And while, yes, we are willing to stay the course if we know what that course is. My fear, to borrow Yogi Berra's famous words, is, "If we don't know where we're going, we will wind up somewhere else."

More troops and more money is not a strategy. Steadfastness is an imperative, but it is not a strategy. Americans need to hear a plan to stem the insurgency, disarm the militia, hasten reconstruction, and, most important, enable Iraqis themselves to forge consensus on the future of their country.

Sitting here today, Mr. Chairman, I still believe we can do this. I still believe the Iraqi people can do it. But success requires international support, and we don't have a moment to waste.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Berger follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. SAMUEL R. BERGER

Chairman Lugar, Senator Biden, Members of the Committee:

Thank you for inviting me to be a part of these important hearings, at this very important time. Much is riding on the next few months—for Iraq, for America and for the world.

It was one year ago that Saddam Hussein's statue crashed to the ground in Baghdad; four months ago that he was captured hiding in a hole. Yet, since the start of this month, 105 U.S. troops and over 1,000 Iraqis have been killed. Civilians from the United States, Japan, China, the Czech Republic, Russia, Ukraine and more have been taken hostage. Suicide attacks, roadside ambushes and heavy fighting have dominated the news. Even before what President Bush called these "tough weeks," coalition troops were facing down dozens of attacks each day.

That is not to say that many good people in Iraq—American and Iraqi—are not accomplishing good things in many parts of the country. Under the most trying circumstances, our troops have shown truly inspiring skill and courage. The Coalition Provisional Authority has worked tirelessly to move reconstruction forward. The Iraqi people have shown impressive resilience. They have high hopes and expectations for their future. We should have nothing less.

But we'll never be able to meet those high hopes if we don't get security and governance right. And I think it's clear that pressures in Iraq have reached the boiling point.

Mr. Chairman, the outcome of the enterprise in Iraq will help define our world for a generation. We could have a stable, secure, peaceful and pluralistic Iraq, which will have a beneficial impact on the entire region. Or we could have an Iraq that is slipping into chaos, civil war or radicalism, redefining not only Iraq but the region and our relationship with it. Imagine if Iraq becomes a failed, terror state. Imagine a fundamentalist nation next door to Iran. Imagine a country that fragments, drawing in its neighbors. Imagine the shadow such an Iraq would cast on our security. We cannot permit that to happen.

The president passionately and properly declared in his press conference last week that we can't "cut and run." But honestly, I don't hear many people saying we should. The American people don't want to "cut and run." They want to know how we get from here to there.

And the fact is, many of the choices that brought us to "here" do not fully inspire confidence.

We ignored the cautions of people like General Eric Shinseki, who said the peace would be harder than the war. If we had put the same number of troops in Iraq per capita as we did at the outset in Kosovo—6 to 1 instead of 20 to 1—we would have 500,000 troops there today. Instead, we left ourselves ill-equipped to stem looting, establish order, even protect our own troops. Meanwhile, the notion that we could create and train an effective Iraqi army or police in a matter of months never made sense.

At the core, we put a higher value on maintaining control than on sharing risk. We and the British declared ourselves occupying powers. As a result, we are bearing close to 90% of the costs and risks.

We've fallen way behind on our own schedule for reconstruction. Of the \$18.4 billion supplemental for aid to Iraq, only \$2.1 billion has been obligated. As you've said, Mr. Chairman, many Iraqis don't understand "how the most powerful nation in the world could defeat their armed forces in three weeks and still have trouble getting the lights on."

And despite the uncertain situation on the ground, we set an arbitrary date for transferring sovereignty—before we knew to whom, and before we had broad agreement on a formula for multiethnic rule.

I find disconcerting the administration's jarring certainty about *June 30* and its jarring uncertainty about *July 1*.

We have been told "where" we want to go—Iraqi sovereignty, American-led security and eventually Iraqi elections. We haven't been told "how to get there." The American people need to know we have a confident and workable plan. There is too much at stake in Iraq, Mr. Chairman, to lose the American people.

As I see it, we have three basic options: Apply more force, hunker down or make a serious effort to internationalize the enterprise.

First, applying more force. This may be necessary in some cases. If our military commanders say they need more troops, then they should have them.

But we also must recognize the risks of military solutions in the absence of a clear political strategy. Attempting to crush the opposition can create its own dangerous backlash. We need to be careful as we deal with the threat Moqtada al-Sadr poses that we do not turn him into a hero . . . or transform a fringe militia into a popular political movement.

Our military strategy will be no better than our political strategy, and our political strategy, while allaying the concerns of the Sunnis and the Kurds, must empower legitimate and respected Shia moderates. If we lose the Shia population's support, then we will lose Iraq.

Our second option is to "hunker down"—to replace the CPA sign with one that says "U.S. Embassy," turn sovereignty over to an as-yet undetermined group of Iraqis, and try to stay out of harm's way.

Mr. Chairman, this option is a prescription for chaos. It is unrealistic to think a new Iraqi leadership will be equipped to govern on July 1, much less prepared to send troops to Fallujah or to quell a violent uprising. We've already seen Iraqi divisions refusing to fight, and Iraqi soldiers defecting to the Mahdi Army. As Lt. Gen. Sanchez has said, "We know that it's going to take us a while to stand up reliable forces that can accept responsibility."

Our third option is one that many of us have advocated all along. It would have been easier to implement a year ago . . . six months ago . . . last month. *That is a genuine, non-grudging effort to internationalize the enterprise in Iraq*, both military and civilian.

I welcome the fact that the administration is coming around, belatedly, to that view. By last week's press conference, the president was deferring critical decisions on Iraq's future government to UN representative Lakhdar Brahimi.

Mr. Brahimi has proposed a caretaker government and a consultative assembly. These make sense. But there is a gap, in my judgment, in what Mr. Brahimi is suggesting. On the civilian side there will be some new Iraqi authority—hopefully broad-based and more widely supported than the current one we selected. There will be a large U.S. Embassy presence. But in the absence of an international High Commissioner of some sort, supported by a consortium of key countries including not only the United States but also European and Arab, the newly formed Iraqi government will not have the capacity to act strongly . . . and they will be reluctant to cooperate too openly with our behemoth American Embassy, even in the hands of someone as capable as Ambassador Negroponte. There needs to be an international mechanism that reinforces the exercise of Iraqi executive authority and, quite honestly, enables the United States to function more effectively with that Iraqi leadership.

We also need a troop presence in Iraq that is genuinely international.

Some argue it's too late to obtain help from the allies. I disagree. Like us, our partners in Europe and the Arab world will bear the full brunt of an Iraq that fails—an Iraq in turmoil. The fact that they did not participate in the invasion will provide them, in the end, no comfort.

Senator Biden, I agree with your conviction that President Bush should call for an immediate summit with our European and Arab friends, representatives of the UN and NATO . . . say we need their help . . . and ask them what their meaningful engagement would take. So far, we've said we'd welcome their troops and their money—but largely on our terms. We've got to be prepared to give up our hammerlock on decision-making in exchange for genuine burden-sharing.

The future of Iraq cannot be divorced from the future of the region as a whole. It is not sufficient to trumpet that a mission is to bring freedom and democracy to the Middle East. We need to align ourselves with the indigenous forces of reform in the region—instead of trying to impose our own. We need to help Arab partners build opportunity societies. We need to redouble our efforts with Israelis and Palestinians. We need to start putting as much energy into this region as we've taken out—but energy of the diplomatic, economic, political and intellectual variety.

To conclude, Mr. Chairman, let me say again that we will not meet *any* of our goals in Iraq if we lose the public at home.

Today the question on the public mind is: What is our strategy for success in Iraq, and is it achievable? Our current policy seems to involve a significant element of improvisation. And while yes, we are willing to stay the course if we know what that course is, my fear, to borrow Yogi Berra's words, is that if we don't know where we're going, we will end up somewhere else.

More troops and more money is not a strategy. Steadfastness is an imperative—but it is not a strategy. Americans need to hear a plan to stem the insurgency, disarm the militias, hasten reconstruction, and, most important, enable Iraqis themselves to forge consensus on the future of their country.

Sitting here today, I still believe we can do that. I still believe the Iraqi people can do it. But success requires international support . . . and we don't have a moment to waste.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Berger.

Given the number of members here, and the need for all members to participate, let me suggest that we'll attempt a 7-minute question period, and then perhaps have a second round. We have a distinguished panel to follow. We want to take cognizance of that, as well as the time constraints of members.

Let me begin the questioning. Mr. Berger, you mentioned several things in your testimony: a European summit on Iraq, internationalizing the foreign presence and a need to consider deploying troops in greater numbers to meet the needs of our commanders. You also said that you perceive a gap between our large embassy establishment and the new Iraqi government, that it's important to fill with some sort of international mechanism that may facilitate the work of the U.S. Ambassador.

Now, those of us who attended the Munich Security Conference this year noted that although Europeans might have 2½ million men and women under arms, barely 65,000, under the best cir-

cumstances, were called expeditionary forces—that is, able to go anywhere. Of that number, many countries prefer to deploy only a third at a time. That is they choose to keep a third in the field, a third back for rehabilitation, and a third for training. This further cuts down the available numbers considerably. The requirements of NATO, and of Lord Robertson in Afghanistan have absorbed a good number of those troops. This begs the question, who is there left to send? In other words, in the event Europeans come to a conclusion that they would like to play a role comparable to the United States, or at least along side us, in this situation, what can they provide? Their participation might enhance the legitimacy and international flavor of the effort.

Mr. BERGER. Well I have no illusion, Mr. Chairman, that they are going to be able to provide large numbers, but there's the label and there's the contents; and I think the label here is as important as the contents. The label is "American occupation." And even when we transfer to a new Iraqi government, the label will be "Iraqi Government, American Embassy," and on the security side, will be "Coalition," read "American." I don't believe that it is too late for that label to be NATO—"American-led, NATO-backed, U.N.-blessed force." And even if it means, as Senator Biden was suggesting earlier, that the numbers are not overwhelming, I think the perception that Iraqi radicals are fighting the international community, not fighting the American occupation, will, in and of itself, have some dissuasive effect.

The CHAIRMAN. As you pointed out, the President, in his press conference, indicated the importance of Mr. Brahimi's plan, and the fact that we are relying upon it. Let me just ask either one of you for a comment about how this is likely to work in the nitty-gritty of Iraqi politics, including the selection of the personnel. The Council on Foreign Relations, in an updated memo of April 16, 2004, has provided some of the best sheets of paper I've seen on speculation on how the Brahimi plan might work. It comes down to a president, two vice presidents, a prime minister, and an advisory council that would be smaller than the Loya Jirga in Afghanistan, and strictly advisory, but, nevertheless, broadly representative. The obvious question is, who will occupy the chairs, and who selects the committee?

The idea, at least as the Council suggests, is that the Iraqis would provide suggestions to Brahimi and the United Nations Council. The United States and Great Britain and others would have at least some advisory capacity, as might some other countries that are involved in the Coalition. In any event, ultimately, the U.N. group, Mr. Brahimi, or his designee, would determine the president of the country, as well as the two vice presidents. The question then is, how are the Sunnis, the Shi'ites, and the Kurds represented, and do they accept this division? Furthermore, do all the people accept the thoughts of the Council? Given the fact that the current Governing Council is to be dismissed, some of these people may be unhappy over that, and may wish to be reappointed. This is not certain.

At the end of the day, the President has indicated that we're waiting for Mr. Brahimi. Brahimi is going to consult some more, because he's been inhibited by a lack of security in going around

the country. He's had to deal in Baghdad. He is going to other countries. Now he'll come back to the United Nations. But time is passing, and, ultimately, as you pointed out, this is going to be a pretty fledgling group of folks.

Just to play the devil's advocate, what if Iraqis decide they don't like these people? What if the basic parties—the Shi'ites, the Kurds, and the Sunnis—decide that they are not adequately represented? For example, the Ayatollah al-Sistani had reservations with regard to the Transitional Administrative Law that the Governing Council passed. They may or may not have all been fulfilled at this point. As I understand it, Brahimi has talked to al-Sistani's son—not al-Sistani, at this point. But a Sunni of comparable stature to al-Sistani has yet to be found, as I understand it, to give some blessing to this proposal.

What would you suggest as a fallback position in the event that we get close to the 30th and, as a matter of fact, these people appear to be unacceptable to each other or to the parties? What should the United States do at such a hypothetical juncture in history? Does anyone have a thought about that?

Mr. BERGER. One of the reasons why I think it's so important for us to stand up what we called the PIC in Bosnia, the international friends of Bosnia, so to speak—same thing in Kosovo—is that it may be—even if they are able to agree, Ayatollah al-Sistani has made it very clear that he expects the powers of this caretaker government to be rather limited until there's an election. He's read about majority rule, believes actually that the Shias should dominate the new government, wants to make sure that happens.

So I think we're either going to have your situation, which is no consensus, or one step beyond that, which is a very weak government. And I think standing up a international enterprise, an international board of directors that—to use Senator Biden's word, an international group—could take the edge off the June 30 deadline, to some degree, because we would be relinquishing sovereignty. It would reside with some incipient Iraqi authority, but bolstered, reinforced, and strengthened by an international body that was present, that was not dominated by the United States and did not have an American high commissioner.

The CHAIRMAN. Dr. Schlesinger, do you have a comment?

Dr. SCHLESINGER. Well, my comment goes to the question of the various groups within Iraq. Happily to this point, Ayatollah al-Sistani has demonstrated a high degree of responsibility. He has not necessarily agreed with everything that the Americans proposed. But he has been responsible. And that is true for a bulk of the Shi'ites. Sandy mentioned earlier the need to make sure that the moderate Shia continue with the hopes for a future Iraq. I think they are there. Al-Sadr and his units have not been successful. He continues to be a marginal element. And his units, which are made up of the dispossessed from Baghdad, have looted in al Kut, in Kufa, and in Najaf, and that has not increased their popularity. So I think that the Shia will continue to see their stake in seeing a successful transition.

The Kurds are reasonably protected, Mr. Chairman—or feel themselves to be reasonably protected. The long-run problem, of course, is the Sunni, who now feel politically dispossessed with the

departure of Saddam. That is part of the reason that we have not been able to discover a senior Sunni. Many of the senior Sunnis were part of the Ba'athist regime, and there were few that were outside of it. We hope that sooner or later, we will find an Adenauer in the Sunni community, but, as yet, he has not appeared.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Biden.

Senator BIDEN. Thank you both very much.

Let me say, Secretary Schlesinger, you coauthored two very important reports—one, “Iraq: The Day After,” March 2003, and then one entitled, “Iraq: One Year After,” March 2004—along with Ambassador Thomas Pickering. And the project consultant was Eric P. Schwartz. I'd like to read a portion of the last page of the 2004 report.

It says, “The task force believes that sustaining this public consensus is essential, especially as the political will of the United States will continue to be tested in months and years to come in Iraq. These tests, which would include more high-profile attacks on U.S. troops, could come at a time of heightened political debate in the United States as we enter the final phase of the 2004 campaign. Iraq will unavoidably be the subject of debate during the U.S. Presidential campaign. This debate will almost certainly encompass the original decision to go to war, as well as the postwar political transition and reconstruction efforts. Nonetheless, the task-force members, who represent broadly diverse political perspectives, are united in their position the United States has a critical interest in a stable Iraq, whose leadership represents the will of its people. Civil conflict in Iraq, the alternative to peaceful political competition, would risk intervention by, and competing for, influence among Iraqis' neighbors,” et cetera.

Last paragraph, “Although U.S. engagement cannot guarantee success, a diminished U.S. commitment to Iraq during the transfer of sovereignty would increase the likelihood of political failure. In fact, in the months ahead U.S. Government will have to sharpen its approach and increase its commitment of resources in several critical areas. As one analyst has written, the U.S. Government must recognize that the future of Iraq and, through it, the future of the entire Middle East is very much in our hands. If the United States is unwilling to shoulder the burden of leading the reconstruction economically, politically, and militarily for years to come, it will fail.”

Preceding that conclusion, you call for, as you did in your first report in March 2003, the need for international involvement, the need for training of Iraqi forces that will take a lot longer, and you point out that the failure to provide funding in the 2005 budget—that is the budget we're voting on this year—and the administration's assertion that we don't know what we'll need, but we'll know it when we see it—we'll provide a supplemental—you point out on page 12 of the report that this has a very negative consequence. You said, “At the same time, the absence of any clear projection of anticipated medium-term military or economic commitments creates uncertainty and enables officials to defer the process of building public consensus in support of continue U.S. engagement.”

Could you elaborate very briefly on what you mean by that? It's not just that—the money. But you're arguing that the failure to say what we'll need for fiscal year 2005 creates a sense of uncertainty. What's the consequence of that uncertainty?

Dr. SCHLESINGER. The report, which was a year ago, points, I think, primarily to the issue that unless we clearly indicate to the American people how substantial a commitment this is and how large the financial costs are likely to be, and, although we have uncertainties about the troop levels, that those will continue to be very large, that unless we convey this to the American people, we could lose the American public, as we have previously; and, therefore, clarity with regard to the degree of commitment, the costs, and so forth, would be helpful, and we urge the President to make that clear.

Senator BIDEN. You also make that point in this year's report, which was published March 4, just this last month, 2004. I wanted you to reiterate that point because I think, again, we take for granted that the American people are automatically, by the exhortation of the President, going to be there, without either an explanation of what the cost will be to stay or what the price of leaving would be. The President's finally laid out the price of leaving. I noticed, in his press conference, he did not use that same trite expression, if we don't—I'm paraphrasing—if we don't fight 'em in Baghdad, we'll have to fight 'em in Boston, as the rationale for being there. He laid out a much more coherent and straightforward reason why we had to succeed.

Both of you have referenced the fact that it is possible that we would be able to get assistance from other countries in training Iraqis. My recollection—and it was pointed out to me in my meeting with European leaders several months ago—immediately after Saddam's statue came down in that square, that rotary that we all saw and cheered—immediately after that occurred, the French and the Germans stepped forward and said, "We are ready to participate, in a major way, and we are prepared to train Iraqi forces, but we need a U.N. resolution. Sanction this."

And, as usual, Mr. Berger, you succinctly say things that I mean to say and can't say as well. You said we need "an American-led, NATO-backed, and U.N.-blessed"—not U.N.-run; U.N.-blessed.

Is there any reasons why the administration, in either of your views, would not be able to get a U.N.-blessed—a U.N.-blessed—resolution that would allow—whether it's France and Germany, still, or India and others, who are capable of the training—to get them in and do the training?

Mr. BERGER. I think if we demonstrated clearly the political will to make this an international enterprise, which I don't really think we've done to this—notwithstanding saying, well, we'll do what Brahimi says—I've not seen this administration say to our allies, what will it take to get you guys here? How can I help your politics? Because I understand your politics makes this very, very difficult. That's why your idea of going to Europe as a gesture, I think, makes a great deal of sense.

I talk to Europeans all the time, European officials, and if we put this question right—we've made it very easy for them to say no—but if we basically say, listen, we need your help, we cannot fail,

you're not going to be immune from the consequences of failure, what do you need to—in the way of U.N. support or otherwise, to make this possible, I believe, to this day, that our European allies and the Arab neighbors would participate in some fashion.

Senator BIDEN. Jim, what do you think would happen if we made a genuine effort?

Dr. SCHLESINGER. Well, I think that pursuit of international support is desirable, particularly on the training side. I believe that, at one point, the Indians, India, suggested that they would be prepared to train Iraqi forces. Now, India is, of course, the largest Muslim country in the world, 100-million-plus Muslims, and they have had great experience in the training of Muslims. And, therefore, that is something that, at least at this point, should be reexamined.

Senator BIDEN. Let me close, Mr. Chairman, by saying that many of you saw Monday's New York Times. On the front page, it says, "Security Companies Shadow Soldiers in Iraq." I imagine it came as a shock to a number of Americans to realize that we have a private army in Iraq. Larger than any other force beyond ours—larger than the Brits, larger than any other country; a 20,000 strong private army. And this private army is providing security. These are armies hired by contractors, funded by the \$18 billion we're talking about, of which 15 percent was going to go to the Iraqi police; now it's estimated as much as 25 percent of the \$18 billion will go to pay companies—I'm not criticizing, I'm just observing it—to pay companies to hire essentially the equivalent of the French Foreign Legion. We're paying, for example, former Navy SEALs somewhere between \$500 and \$1,500 a day, out of that money that we have appropriated, for a private army, which is needed for security, when we have young Navy SEALs who are actually employed by the Federal Government making that much a month, and National Guard kids over there, and people who are trained and competent and capable, who are making 30 to 50 percent less than they'd be making at home, and still have the same mortgage payment, still have the same tuition payment, still have the same car payment. And this is a prescription for disaster here if we don't get some additional help.

I would offer this as evidence that even the administration acknowledges we need more force. This is the force they're prepared to pay for, though—private security forces. And it's guarding, by the way, Bremer, guarding the consulate—I mean, this is amazing. We'd better get to the business of figuring out how we get more forces in there.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Biden.

Senator HAGEL.

Senator HAGEL. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Gentlemen, thank you for your testimony. It has been noted this morning that you each have contributed so many years to this country, its security interests as well as other interests, and we are grateful for your continuation of wise counsel, thank you.

I actually would like to pick up on where Senator Biden left off, on the troop issue. We have before us, as has been noted, a former National Security Advisor, a former Secretary of Defense, CIA Di-

rector. And here is my question, because I think you two are eminently qualified to answer this question. To continue with what Senator Biden has noted that was included in the New York Times article, and what I have heard this morning from each of you—and I think this is a fair assessment of where you believe our future force-structure needs are going to be—we’re going to be in Afghanistan, we’re going to be in Iraq, we are still in the Balkans, we’re going to be in Korea. We’re all over the globe with new commitments that we are taking on constantly. Now over 40 percent of our force structure in Iraq is represented by National Guard and Reserve units. We are going to face, as we already are, a retention/recruitment issue with the National Guard, Reserves, active Army and—at least it’s this Senator’s assessment that our continued commitments over the next few years are probably not going to be any less, if we all believe what you’ve stated and I certainly know that you do believe it; I think everyone on this panel—that the threat of terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and all that goes with that are going to require a tremendous amount of resources and intense leadership and focus. Now if that is the premise, and I assume you agree with, generally, what I have said, my question to you both is, where, then, do we continue to get those forces? How are we going to meet the obligations and commitments that we are making not only to American citizens, to the future of this country, but to our allies?

Now, certainly one option, which, a year ago, a year and a half ago, I didn’t think was much of an option, for a couple of reasons, was a draft. And I think you all understand why that probably isn’t an option, but I’m not so sure. Now, here’s why. I’m not so sure that isn’t a bad idea—societal, sociologically, defense-wise—that we shouldn’t be requiring our citizens to understand the intensity and depth of the challenges that this country faces. The President calls himself a “war president.” We’re having hearings in the Armed Services Committee in the Senate, and the Foreign Relations Committee today, on Iraq. There’s not an American, unless he or she has been asleep for the last few years, that doesn’t understand what we are engaged in today, and what the prospects are for the future. So if that’s the case, why shouldn’t we ask all of our citizens to bear some responsibility and pay some price?

Now, the other sociological issue is—and it was noted in a Atlantic Constitution editorial this weekend—not unlike Vietnam, that those who are serving today and dying today in Iraq are the middle class, lower-middle class. I think the only Member of the U.S. Senate who has a child in the Armed Forces who was in Iraq—Afghanistan—was Senator Johnson, from South Dakota. So why shouldn’t we, then, have some responsibility, as our children should have some responsibility?

So I’ve given you a broad canvas here to paint on, but it’s, I think, a legitimate question that we haven’t even come close to answering. And the real focus is—and Senator Biden brought it up—are we going to continue to pay mercenaries, essentially? And what we’re doing—and this is the point—is that these kids aren’t stupid, so if they can make this kind of money as private-protection people, versus having a hard time making the car payments and the house

payments in the established military, then where do you think we're going to go?

Let me close it down at this point and listen to our learned panelists here.

Secretary Schlesinger.

Dr. SCHLESINGER. Well, that is a full range of questions, Senator. Let me start where you started, which was the structure of the U.S. Armed Forces. In part, that still reflects the structuring to deal with the threat from the Warsaw Pact. The U.S. Army is now adjusting to what will be a much more likely future than the inherited or the legacy forces from the past. And the Air Force has made some adjustments of a similar nature.

Now, it's not only the Warsaw Pact, it was also the structure that we created after Vietnam, of which I was a part, which ensured that we would never go to war again without having to call up the Reserves. I think that the consequences of that were some of the support for U.S. Army divisions—to take the most notable example—were in the Reserves. We need to—and we are, in the process of reexamining that whole concept.

Finally, let me say that in dealing with the Warsaw Pact, it was anticipated to be a war of heavy tank movements from the Warsaw Pact, and heavy artillery movements. What we are dealing with now requires much more in the way of infantry units that are prepared and trained to deal with the local peoples, because we are going to be engaged in whatever you may want—peacekeeping operations, nation-building, so on—and those are not well handled by armored units. So we're going to have to look at that.

With regard to the draft, I was reluctant, in 1969, to see the end of the draft, and we preserved, as you will remember, the Selective Service System, although we never called, after the 1970s, for any people to be called up. I think that the points that you have raised about that sense of national service are well taken. In World War II, we essentially drafted 16 million people. It's easy to have a draft if, one, almost everybody is called up. It's not so easy to have a draft if you're calling one in a hundred. They would have more of the reaction that Senator Biden ascribed to folks who are in the SEALs now looking at others who have left the SEALs and are receiving much more remunerative pay packages. So I think that you might well have an adverse reaction. And you know, far better than I, the difficulty of getting a renewal of draft through the Congress.

Senator HAGEL. Politically, probably impossible.

Mr. BERGER. Yes, Senator, I'd make three quick points in response to your question. No. 1, I do believe we have to increase the end-state size of our military. I don't know what that number is. It's in the neighborhood of 40,000 troops, I believe. We've been involved in seven peacekeeping missions in the last 10 years. This thing is—it's not going away.

I used to have an argument with my friends in the military, in the 1990s, saying, "we've got to train better for peacekeeping." And they would, in effect, say, "if we train better, you'll ask us to do it." But the problem is, we're asking them to do it without really preparing them to do it. So, No. 1, I would be looking at increasing the end-state of our military.

No. 2, I think we have to reassess—and the Congress can play an important role here—the Reserve/Guard role and its—I worry very much about retention rates. People are getting something very different than they signed up for.

With respect to the draft, I think that the extraordinary professionalism of our military today is inextricably bound up in the fact that we have a volunteer force. Now, you're saying it may be that we can't afford that anymore. I guess my pragmatic answer to that, Senator Hagel, is, it's not an issue I'd like to raise right now, in the middle of Iraq, because it seems to me if you entangle the issue of draft to the issue of Iraq, you have a good chance the American people will say no to both. But I think you raise a very, very—a question that's not going to go away simply by virtue of my pragmatic judgment that this is not the right time to debate it.

Dr. SCHLESINGER. Experience has shown, by the way, that recruitment into the active-duty forces has held up very well. There is the question mark that you discerned with regard to the Reserve and the Guard.

Senator HAGEL. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Hagel.

Senator Feingold.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Senator Biden, for calling this set of important hearings this week. Many Members of Congress and many of my constituents continue to be dismayed that the administration went to war in Iraq with what is obviously only a half-baked plan for the post-conflict phase of the operations. Today, over a year after the war began, our headlines speak of the deadliest month for U.S. troops in Iraq yet. Today, we are trying to comfort the families of troops whose service has been extended in Iraq beyond the anticipated 1 year.

Today, this country continues to spend about \$3.7 billion a month on military operations in Iraq, and we find the billions appropriated for reconstruction activities are not likely to be as effective as we had hoped because of the high cost of security are actually siphoning off the resources. Today, we know that the Coalition Provisional Authority will cease to exist on June 30, but it will give way to a massive embassy operation, and Iraq will still be depending on U.S. troops for security.

Mr. Chairman, it's high time to put this half-baked plan back in the oven and come up with something viable and clear, a plan to stabilize Iraq that also prioritizes easing the burden borne by American service members and taxpayers. A date for the nominal transfer of sovereignty is not a plan. Wishful thinking about how the U.S. presence in Iraq is perceived is not a plan. Acknowledging that the current situation is difficult, and resolving to simply "tough it out" is not a plan. We owe it to this country, and especially to the U.S. military, to insist on something more.

So I have appreciated hearing the perspectives so far, Mr. Chairman, and looking forward to the further testimony. Let me use my time to ask a couple of questions.

Without saying that we should simply "cut and run," I do believe that we need to be frank about the hard truths before the United States. And given the course we're on to date, I'd ask each of you, what should the American people anticipate, in terms of how many

years U.S. troops will be responsible for the security of Iraq? And how many years can we anticipate spending multiple billions of dollars on reconstruction projects in Iraq?

Mr. Berger.

Mr. BERGER. Senator, I would say quite a number. Obviously, the ultimate exit strategy is training an Iraqi police, an Iraqi security capability that is able—has both the will and the ability to take over this responsibility, under a government that has the will and the ability to exercise that authority.

My own experience, from Bosnia, from Kosovo, from Haiti, is that it takes a great deal of time to build an army or to build a police force—3 to 4 to 5 years—and I think that we need to be thinking of that time horizon, at least, in which we will have a heavy share of responsibility, No. 1.

Now, in terms of money, I suspect the administration will come back to the Congress for a supplemental, perhaps at the end of the year, which I would believe would be in the neighborhood of \$50 to \$70 billion. I don't see why the delta for next year should be much less. So I think we're talking about, you know, another \$200 billion, at least, in the next 3 years. Again, there's not going to be—hopefully, over time we can ramp this down, we can bring in others, there'll be a greater degree of political stability.

But I do believe—to answer your question, and Senator Biden's—why not level with the American people? I think, you know, the American people are a bit like an elastic band, and at some point they're going to snap. And I remember the “sticker-shock” when the President said \$87 billion. You remember that speech? And he said \$87 billion, and it took people's breath away because he'd never used a number before.

Well, you know, we just can't wait until the very last moment, when we're running out of ammunition, and, say, \$70 billion more, without running a real risk that we're going to have “sticker-shock” in the American people, and a tremendous pressure to move out of there prematurely.

Senator FEINGOLD. Let me follow with a question relating to, sort of, the emerging Iraqi leadership. What should be the standard of legitimacy for emerging Iraqi leadership? From the beginning, I and others have been concerned about the likelihood that our democratization efforts will succeed in Iraq, not because I don't believe that Iraqis desire and deserve the same basic civil and political rights enjoyed in democratic states, but I've wondered from the beginning how a political culture in which ideas about humiliation are so prominent could accept any model that is proposed by a foreign occupier. How likely is it that resistance to the United States presence in Iraq will, sort of, become the new standard—ideological standard of legitimacy for Iraqi leaders who seek to appeal to constituents on other than religious or ethnic grounds?

Dr. Schlesinger.

Dr. SCHLESINGER. Let me talk a little bit about the resistance. I think that it would be premature to leap to conclusions about the duration of that resistance. This may be a flare-up similar to a small Tet in 1968. What we have seen is an explosion of activities, particularly in the Sunni area, that have been well organized. And what may have been the case, and we suspect may be the case, is

that these organized activities were planned to take place closer to June 30, just at the time of the transition—with al-Sadr’s militia moving in the south, it seemed appropriate to trigger this organized set of attacks. We have faced platoon-sized attacks against U.S. forces, which had experienced—over the course of the last 6 months, say—much smaller attacks. So it may be that once this flurry of attacks is over, that there will be a subsiding. I hope that is the case, but I cannot guarantee it.

That will bear heavily on whether or not we are in this for 3 years or 5 years. We are going to be there for an extended period, unless we decide to “cut and run,” which I trust will not be the case. And that means that the extent of expenditures will depend on two things—whether or not the resistance is now a flash in the pan, reflecting the heavy organization that existed in Fallujah and, to a lesser extent, in Ramadi, and whether or not the marginalization of al-Sadr’s militia takes place. If that’s the case, expenditures would be lower.

The second point, of course, is that we are now dealing with Iraqi oil production of 2½ million barrels a day, which we did not have a year ago, and that means that there’s, at least at present prices, something like \$17 or \$18 billion a year coming in, which likely will reduce the level of expenditures for the American taxpayer.

Senator FEINGOLD. Thank you, you answered my first question. I know my time’s up, but I’d like to hear Mr. Berger’s answer to my second question that had to do with the inherent issues of legitimacy of a government that we, in effect, have set up, if you could respond.

Mr. BERGER. I think we’ve seen, Senator Feingold, that the current Iraqi governing authority does not have broad legitimacy in the country. I think a number of them are doing yeoman service in trying to diffuse some of these situations, in Fallujah and Najaf and elsewhere, but everything I have seen suggests that they do not have wide support. Nor will any government that is perceived as hand-picked by the United States have broad support.

And so this next iteration, this caretaker government, has got to emerge from some process that has a great deal of Iraqi content, a great deal of Iraqi participation, under the supervision and leadership of Mr. Brahimi and the international community.

Dr. SCHLESINGER. Much of the government was, of course, in exile—much of the present Governing Council came from those who were exiles—and they have, what shall I say, less natural appeal to Iraqis who stayed and suffered under Saddam Hussein. It will be necessary to move in the direction, sharply, of getting more people who have been in country and have suffered under Saddam Hussein. Now, I mentioned earlier finding an Adenauer is not going to be easy in Sunni country, and it’s not going to be much easier elsewhere.

Senator FEINGOLD. I would simply say—and I know my time’s up—that I think the problem may be the notion that we are going to find the Adenauer, which that is not for us to do.

Dr. SCHLESINGER. Mr. Brahimi, presumably—

Senator FEINGOLD. I understand.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Feingold.

Senator Chafee.

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

I join with you, also, in regretting that in 3 days of hearings, we will not have a single administration official appear before us.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, we will have administration officials in coming weeks. My lament was that our request to the Defense Department did not result in the highest-ranking person who might have been available there.

Senator CHAFEE. All right. Well, I know these gentlemen have good opinions but they don't speak for the administration. Those are people we're going to get the answers from ultimately.

But, nonetheless, Secretary Schlesinger, in your opening comments you quoted some very chilling testimony from Osama bin Laden. Why use that testimony at a hearing on Iraq?

Dr. SCHLESINGER. The mention of that is to discuss why it is that the United States is engaged in the Middle East. Because we were attacked. Because of a declaration of war against Americans.

The question of Iraq, which is what you point to, it may or may not have been, as some stated, central at the time we went in. It may have been secondary or peripheral at the time we went in. But the administration is quite right that it is now the central front in the war against terrorism, because much of what we see in Fallujah today are terrorists who have come from the outside world. They are the ones, primarily, who have been setting the car bombs and have been doing the training. So it has now become central, even for those who might, at the outset, not have thought it central.

Senator CHAFEE. Well, it's become central because we invaded; but, certainly, I think you would even agree, there's never been any connection between Osama bin Laden and Iraq, and they're very, very different issues an Afghanistan's a long way from Iraq.

Dr. SCHLESINGER. I think you've had testimony from—or a letter, at least, from George Tenet talking about the contacts between al-Qaeda and Saddam, going back at least a decade.

But that is—we are there where we are, and the consequences of not winning, of not being successful, would be disastrous, not only for the United States—

Senator CHAFEE. Well, I agree with that, but I don't think there's any connection with al-Qaeda. We're there, and now we have to be successful, I agree with that.

Secretary Berger, Mr. Berger—never a Secretary, is that right? No? Honorable—

Mr. BERGER. "Mr. Berger" is fine.

Senator CHAFEE. Honorable Berger.

Mr. BERGER. I've been called worse.

Senator CHAFEE. You said, in your opening statement, that we need to redouble our efforts with the Israelis and Palestinians. And some members of the administration, advocates of the war, have written, as far back—in 1996—and, in fact, next appearing on the panel, Mr. Perle, in particular—advocating, way back then, an Iraqi war, the destruction of the Oslo peace process, and a refusal to ever return the West Bank, and now we seem to be heading in that direction. Do you think that's been the plan all along?

Mr. BERGER. Well, you'll get to ask Mr. Perle, in person. I'll let Richard answer for himself, in terms of what his plan has been.

My own view here, Senator, is that the Arab world views Iraq through a different prism that we do. They view Iraq—the narrative of Iraq right now, being defined on al-Jazeera and elsewhere, is that—the narrative of civilian casualties and victim-hood—and the prism through which they view Iraq is affected by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Now, I happen to think that the step that Prime Minister Sharon announced this week is a positive step. He's unfrozen a situation that was frozen, and I think he's opened up some opportunities, if we seize upon them, perhaps to move toward a more peaceful future. But I think that that will depend upon whether it is the first step toward something that goes farther, both with respect to change in Palestinian and with respect to what happens on the ground, and whether the United States stands off and watches this from a distance, as we have for the last 2½ years, or whether or not we seek now to help the Palestinians, for example, take control of Gaza, take control of the violent groups, build some kind of a governing operation there that has legitimacy, and can live peacefully. I think that opportunity now exists; but, again, only if America leads.

And I guess the last thing I'd say is, we have always been Israel's closest ally—I hope we always we will be—but that has been acceptable to the Arab world because it's been a second pillar to our policy. We've always been—

Senator CHAFEE. Could I just change tacks a little bit?

Mr. BERGER. Sure.

Senator CHAFEE. Just for the sake of argument, if I agree with you that recent positions might be beneficial—but what you said is the Arab world views our foreign policy through the prism of the Arab-Israeli conflict. So, therefore, wouldn't it be true that we're making it more difficult in Iraq if what we're doing by giving up the original American position that we negotiate on the 1967 boundaries that's a big change. Six administrations have—past administrations, Republican and Democrat—and this administration is a new policy, new American policy, that the settlements are now, on the West Bank, open to Israeli occupation, permanent occupation. Don't you agree—whether that's right or wrong, would you agree—that it's going to hurt us in Iraq?

Mr. BERGER. I think that if the Arab world sees us sitting on our hands, disengaged, letting this thing simply play itself out on the ground, I think it will hurt us. If they see us taking advantage of the step that Israel has taken to try now to create a new momentum, a new leadership in the Palestinian—in Gaza—if they see us engage with that second pillar, which is not just our steadfast alliance with Israel, but our unrelenting effort to find a more peaceful and secure future, then I think we can walk that line. But if we drop out of the picture on the Arab-Israel conflict, I think it will create the kind of animosity that you're referring to.

Senator CHAFEE. Thank you very much.

Dr. SCHLESINGER. A comment on that question. What is true elsewhere in the Arab world is not necessarily true in Iraq. Iraqis, for understandable reasons, are very much concerned within the

country and are less concerned about the situation regarding the Palestinians; though it may damage our image in the Arab world, generally, but I don't think that it's significant in Iraq, itself.

Second, as Mr. Berger has indicated, this may have a beneficial effect, ultimately, with regard to the Israel-Palestinian peace process, or what passes for a peace process. I am concerned that we have not gotten control and that there is not high confidence that the Palestinians can get control of the violent groups— Hamas—inside of the Gaza Strip. And I would be quite concerned that it turn into a lawless area, which becomes a place of refuge, as it were, for terrorist organizations, as Afghanistan was.

Senator CHAFEE. I'd just like to say, I just wish that the Geneva Accords had gotten more attention. That seemed to be a Palestinian involvement and agreement—a large section of the Palestinian population's agreement of the Geneva Accords.

And I will take issue, also, with the—that the Arab-Israeli issue doesn't resonate in Iraq. When I was there, in October, the graffiti in Mosul and Baghdad was all about the Palestinian cause, and the people who were taking us around recognized that. And I think, after the assassination of Sheikh Yassin, if I'm saying it right, we see the Sunnis and the Shias banding together, who had previously had turf wars back and forth—they're banding, coming together. So I would disagree that the Israeli-Palestinian issue doesn't resonate very deeply in Iraq.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Chafee.

Senator Boxer.

Senator BOXER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I consider your holding these hearings somewhat an act of bravery, considering what a hard time we seem to be having getting people from the administration. And I know they have reasons—they had schedules, they had this, they had that.

And I just want to associate myself with the comments of Senator Biden, when he said he was dismayed by it. On behalf of my people, I have to tell you how many we've lost just this month, 46 of the 105 dead, are from California. So what am I supposed to tell my people back home? Oh, I had a wonderful chance to talk to two people I really respect and admire, but they don't have power now in the administration. And you are helping us, and I appreciate that, and this is important, but think of how much—just as important it would be to have—if not more—the people who are making the policies.

And then we see, "Bush officials deny money was diverted for Iraq war. Book asserts Congress was left in the dark." Who knows what's right or wrong. I sure would like to be able to ask Bush administration witnesses these questions. So I just wanted to say, at the start, that I'm dismayed on the point.

I want to pick up on the point that was made by Senator Chafee, when he looked at Dr. Schlesinger, who has had such amazing experiences in the Department of Defense, CIA, and said, why were you talking so much about bin Laden, when this is a hearing about Iraq? It had that same strange ring to me when you started. And I agree with you on everything you said about bin Laden. That's why I gave the President my full vote to go to war against bin

Laden. There are two wars out there. The one against bin Laden in Afghanistan, the one in Iraq.

Now, I would just like to tell you, Dr. Schlesinger, that to open up with a big attack on bin Laden, sort of leads people to believe that's what the war in Iraq is about. I have here a book called "The Network of Terrorism," put out by this administration's State Department. And on this page—this was right after 9/11; it was October—"Countries where al-Qaeda or affiliated groups have operated." There's 42 countries listed here. Iraq isn't mentioned. The United States of America is mentioned. So if you believe the administration, there were more al-Qaeda cells in America than there were in Iraq.

Now, what has happened since we went into Iraq. The war was to get the weapons of mass destruction. That's why I, and some others on this committee, didn't vote to do that because we felt, better to get the weapons of mass destruction with intrusive inspections with the whole world with us, and, by the way, while we're at it, grab Saddam and bring him before the world courts, something we've done 92 times with people who have committed war crimes. So you have, on this committee—in a bipartisan way, I might say—a few dissenters on that point.

The fact is, we're there, so let's go to today. My question is about the resistance. You're not the best people to ask this, but that's what I got. And you're very smart, and you probably have conversations with people in the know. I'm going to ask this to see if you can help me.

We've been briefed—and I'm not disclosing anything from secret briefings—and it's been in the press—that there are three parties to the resistance. The former Ba'athists, who are still going after us because Saddam is gone, which is a good thing. The religious zealots, as a group, have an opportunity here to go after us. And now you've got remnants of al-Qaeda; you've got foreign terrorists in there. So now, where we had none of them, we now have them there. OK.

I look at the press reports, and I look at some of the photographs—I don't have the one I wanted to show you today—but there's a photograph in the New York Times—a photograph of a horrible explosion, with black smoke and red flames, and some of our tanks were set ablaze, and a young man running from the scene, laughing, waving his arms in the air. Now, to me, this did not look like someone from any—he didn't have a black hood on, he looks happy to be in the picture. My sense is—are we misreading this resistance?

A poll that was taken in Fallujah said seven out of ten people thought it was OK to kill Americans. It wasn't OK to burn them; they didn't like the fact that they burned them and hung them from a bridge, but it was OK to kill them. The overall polling in the country, I heard, is 20 percent of the people think it's OK to kill Americans.

Another article in the New York Times—and I'd ask unanimous consent to place it in the record, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. It will be placed in the record in full.

Senator BOXER. It was 2 weeks ago. It's a very in-depth story. And at the very end, it quotes people who are our friends, who

want us to succeed, Iraqis, and they say they fear that the hatred of the occupation is bringing together the Sunnis and the Shias, in concert, to defeat us, and that that overwhelming, quote/unquote—they use the word “nationalism” now—is overwhelming the differences between the Sunni and the Shia, which we know are deep.

So, looking ahead—and perhaps I’m just asking you an impossible question, but, to me, we could have the greatest plan in the world, and I so support what Brahimi is doing, and I’m glad the President said he’s working with him, and I want to put an international face on this, and I am working to do that—I’ve worked to do that since the beginning—and I think Sandy Berger has been a brilliant voice on this, and Joe Biden has been a brilliant voice on this, and Dick Lugar, as well, to put an international face—but are we up against a resistance that is deeper and broader than some in this administration seem to feel?

Mr. BERGER. Well, Senator, let me take the first stab at this. I think we’re at a tipping point in Iraq. And this is based upon my conversations with people who have been there, people in the Pentagon and elsewhere who are dealing with this on a daily basis—I don’t think that we now have, what we face today, one would describe as a nationwide popular uprising. I think that it is a serious insurgency, with the three elements that you have described. But the reason I say that we’re at a tipping point is that—you know, here’s the dilemma we face in Najaf, if we cannot get a political compromise. Do we go into that city and get the Mahdi army and get al-Sadr—something that al-Sistani has made clear is a red line—will that be the tipping point? Will that be the point at which this no longer becomes what I would call a serious insurgency and becomes a popular uprising? I think we’re right on the knife’s edge. And obviously our commanders recognize that today in Iraq, which is why they’re trying to get a political settlement in Fallujah, and a political resolution, even, with al-Sadr.

But there’s no question in my mind that most Iraqi’s, while they are grateful that Saddam Hussein is gone, they want this occupation over. I don’t know of any country that has ever welcomed an occupation. And so we’d better get the “occupation” word off of this, the “American” word off of this, even though there’s going to be a heavy American responsibility, and let Iraqis see this as the world trying to create a new Iraq, not American trying to impose its vision of Iraq.

Senator BOXER. I think that your words are words of wisdom.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Boxer.

Senator BOXER. I just wondered if Secretary Schlesinger had anything to add?

Dr. SCHLESINGER. Well, the answer is, we are not—as yet, certainly—facing a national resistance. The Shia moderates have not sided with al-Sadr. Al-Sistani has indicated his concern about the Medina in the city of Najaf. And we have behaved scrupulously in that regard. The forces that al-Sadr has recruited have been falling away, and the outcome in the south may be quite healthy. I cannot say that it will be.

We are, as Sandy has indicated, at a critical point. I don’t think we’re on the knife’s edge, but we are looking at a continued problem in the Sunni area, and that—the outcome depends on our effec-

tiveness in suppressing organizing forces. The organizing forces are primarily former Iraqi intelligence and Republican Guards, who have organized these platoon-sized operations against us. What you saw of young people running away cheering, is not part of that organization.

Senator BOXER. That's my point. Thank you.

[The New York Times article Senator Boxer referred to follows:]

[From The New York Times, April 9, 2004]

THE STRUGGLE FOR IRAQ: UPRISING

AS FIGHTING RAGES, INSURGENTS IN IRAQ KIDNAP 3 JAPANESE

(By John F. Burns)

BAGHDAD, IRAQ, April 8.—As American forces continued battling Sunni Muslims in Falluja and other troops began deploying south to challenge insurgents who have seized control of three major Shiite cities, rebels kidnapped several foreign civilians on Thursday and threatened to execute them.

Three Japanese civilians appeared in a video broadcast on al-Jazeera news channel blindfolded, while their black-garbed captors threatened them with guns, knives and swords.

A statement by a previously unknown group calling itself the Mujahedeen Brigades gave Japan three days to withdraw its 550 troops from Iraq before the hostages—two aid workers and a journalist—would be killed. In Tokyo, the chief cabinet secretary, Yasuo Fukuda, called the abductions “unforgivable,” but said they did not justify a withdrawal.

Besides the Japanese seized as hostages, Israel announced that two Israeli Arabs were kidnapped Thursday. Several abducted South Koreans were released. A Canadian aid worker was reported kidnapped, and a British citizen was seized in the southern city of Nasiriya.

Meanwhile, the interim Iraqi interior minister, Nun al-Badran, announced his resignation in response to a request by L. Paul Bremer III, the chief American administrator. While the move was presented as necessary to balance Sunni and Shiite ministers on the Iraqi Governing Council, many Iraqis suspected Mr. Badran was paying the price for the widespread desertion by Iraqi police and civil defense units in the face of the violence.

As the war took a menacing turn, Gen. John P. Abizaid, head of the Army's Central Command, visited Baghdad to assess calls for reinforcements and declared that he would use all necessary force to quell the insurgency sweeping the country.

Falluja, 30 miles west of Baghdad, is enduring the heaviest fighting since American-led forces swept across the country and captured Baghdad a year ago on Friday. Accounts by reporters accompanying United States Marine units said they were fighting street-to-street on Thursday, taking heavy rocket, mortar and small arms fire from factories, homes and mosques.

Two American soldiers were killed Thursday, according to Central Command, raising the number of United States troops killed in less than a week of fighting to nearly 40. Reports from Falluja hospitals suggested that more than 289 Iraqis had been killed, although that figure could not be independently confirmed.

In an interview at the American command's headquarters near Baghdad airport, General Abizaid issued a stark warning for the Iraqi fighters, from the minority Sunni as well as the majority Shiite populations, who have changed the landscape of the war dramatically since the ambush and killing last week of four American security guards in Falluja. Over the weekend, Shiite militiamen in Baghdad and elsewhere struck against American and allied troops across a wide swath of central and southern Iraq in what has become a broad uprising against the American-led occupation.

“First, we are going to win,” General Abizaid said, seated alongside Lt. Gen. Ricardo S. Sanchez, the American field commander in Iraq. “Secondly, everyone needs to understand that there is no more powerful force assembled on earth than this military force in this country that's backed up with our naval and air forces in near proximity.”

In a message directed at the insurgent leaders in Falluja and at Moqtada al-Sadr, the cleric who has led the Shiite insurrection across southern Iraq, the general added: “The fact that we have been so judicious in the use of this force should not be lost on anybody. This country will not suffer intimidation by the United States

of America. But those who oppose moving democracy forward will have to pay the consequences if they don't cease and desist."

General Abizaid said that in his discussions with General Sanchez and with Washington, "everything is on the table," including accelerating the return to Iraq of the Third Infantry Division, whose troops led the capture of Baghdad last year.

"There's all sorts of combinations and permutations," he said. "And you need to say that, because the decisions have not been made."

At a news conference earlier Thursday, General Sanchez said there were about 125,000 American troops in Iraq, out of a total allied force of 145,000. For several months until this week, with American forces under pressure across the Sunni areas north, south and west of Baghdad and with Shiite areas enduring a wave of suicide bombings and other attacks aimed at worshipers in mosques, police stations and other military and civilian targets, American commanders here insisted that troop strengths were adequate.

Now, the emphasis is on building up American forces to cope with the widening conflict, and on using American forces anywhere in Iraq there are insurgent threats, including areas of the south that have until now being assigned to troops from more than 30 other nations that have joined in the effort to pacify Iraq.

Asked in the interview about American troop movements toward Kut, Kufa and Najaf, the three Shiite cities that are under Mr. al-Sadr's control, General Abizaid replied, "It's safe to say that U.S. units will be used anywhere in this country to deal with any threat that's presented, that requires their presence."

In the latest blow to the fragile stability that prevailed across many Shiite towns in the south until the last week, Ukrainian troops were forced to withdraw from bases in Kut on Wednesday after coming under attack by Mr. al-Sadr's militia force, the Mahdi Army. General Sanchez said. "We will retake al Kut imminently," suggesting that American forces had already reached the city.

In yet another challenge to the occupation, Polish and Bulgarian troops fought through the night on Wednesday to drive off al-Sadr militia forces that attacked them near the city hall in Karbala.

A Polish military spokesman, Lt. Col. Robert Strzelecki, was quoted by the Polish news agency PAP on Thursday as saying Polish patrols in Karbala had been suspended for the soldiers' protection. The Bulgarian foreign minister, Solomon Passi, said 120 American soldiers had been sent to the city as reinforcements.

In Samarra, a predominantly Sunni city 80 miles north of Baghdad that had quieted down after heavy American attacks that followed the capture of Saddam Hussein in December, American troops came under renewed attack on Thursday, according to an Agence FrancePresse report, with heavily armed men roaming the streets in trucks firing rocket-propelled grenades toward a base for American and Iraqi troops.

General Abizaid dismissed suggestions that the widening of the war threatened an unraveling of American control. After outlining options for increased troop strengths, he said, "But I don't want to give the impression that everything is spinning out of control, because it's not."

He added: "It's our judgment that at the present time we need to ensure that there is no misunderstanding on the side of those who oppose us that we will do whatever is necessary to get the situation under control."

"We are not headed for disaster, as long as we are resolute, courageous and patient," he said.

Still, when asked if there was a risk that the insurgency in the Sunni heartland and the uprising led by Mr. al-Sadr would merge into a war of national resistance, with the religious and political rivalries between the Sunni and the Shiites submerging in a surge of Iraqi nationalism, the general gave a measured reply.

"There's always a possibility that a national resistance will arise," he said. "But I firmly believe there are more people in this country trying to hold it together than are trying to take it apart. Our problem is to confront those who would take it apart, and they are in a small minority."

He declined to say how long it might take to achieve stability, saying that would depend on "an awful lot of skill" in managing the political and economic challenges, as well as the military ones. But in the immediate future, he said, American prospects would depend on getting tough with Mr. al-Sadr and others challenging American control.

"This has been a nation of intimidators," he said. "We only have to stop the culture of intimidation, and it will only be done with a fair and firm response by us."

"And it will often be deadly," he said, "but that's what we've got to do."

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Boxer.

I want to thank, again, our distinguished witnesses. You are remarkable public servants and we appreciate the opportunity to visit with you today and to gain your points of view.

At this point, I would like to call upon our next panel. That will consist of the Honorable Richard Perle, senior fellow, American Enterprise Institute, in Washington, DC, Dr. Benjamin Dodge, International Institute for Strategic Studies, consulting senior fellow for the Middle East, in London, England, and Dr. Juan Cole, professor of Modern Middle Eastern History, University of Michigan, in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Gentlemen, we thank you very much for coming to the hearing today and for your prepared testimony. It will be made a part of the record in full.

I will ask you to summarize the testimony, hopefully, in 7 to 10 minutes. I will not be terribly rigorous about that, because we want to hear your points of view. At the same time, I want to recognize, in advance, before we start the hearing, that Mr. Perle will need to leave after 12:45 for important travel. The hearing will have been going on for 3 hours and a quarter by then. Senators, likewise, will have their party caucuses. We will not hurry anyone in the process. We simply want to try to allocate the time as constructively as we can.

I'll ask you to testify in the order that I introduced you, and that will be, first of all, Mr. Perle.

**STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD N. PERLE, SENIOR FELLOW,
AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE**

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

As always, I appreciate the opportunity to share with the committee some ideas and observations—in this case, about the situation in Iraq, and, more specifically, about the transition from Saddam Hussein's brutal dictatorship to a decent, humane, and representative government.

It is a transition of gigantic magnitude and scope, immensely important in itself, and even more important in its ramifications for the Gulf region, the wider Arab world, and the war on terrorism. And as if that were not enough, the outcome of the transition now underway will profoundly affect our ability to operate internationally in a world in which we are uniquely threatened by an ideologically driven movement aimed at our destruction and the destruction of those who share our democratic values.

We are fighting for a better Iraq and a safer America, and we must not fail. So the committee is wise to reflect on whether we are going about this great challenge in the right way. And on this, I want to make three points.

First, the outcome of the struggle to establish a decent representative government in Iraq will depend principally on the Iraqis themselves. We can and must help them achieve a degree of physical security that will enable a decent civil society to emerge from the ashes of Saddam's regime. But while we can help, we cannot substitute for the millions of Iraqis who alone are capable of achieving a successful transition. This point may seem obvious. But, in my view, we were slow to recognize how central the Iraqis

were to the postwar stabilization of the situation on the ground, and how central they now are to the democratic transition.

I believe we would have been wise to go into Iraq with several thousand Iraqis at our side. After all, the Congress, with the support of most, and possibly all, the members of this committee, approved the Iraq Liberation Act, which authorized political, material, and moral support for the Iraqi National Congress and other Iraqi opponents of Saddam's regime. With thousands of Iraqis at our side, we might well have dealt more effectively with the turmoil and looting that followed the collapse of the regime, and we might have jump-started the transition we are now in the process of arranging.

But there was little support within the executive branch for implementing the Iraq Liberation Act, for taking the Iraqi opposition into our confidence. Indeed, the State Department and the CIA actively opposed working with the Iraqi opposition, with the result that very little of the material support voted by Congress was actually spent. By the time those favoring a much closer collaboration between U.S. and Iraqi opposition forces got agreement to begin training the Iraqis, we were on verge of war. Sadly, as we went to war, only a handful of Iraqis, fewer than a hundred, had graduated from a much-delayed training program that had vastly more potential than we were able to realize.

The sooner, Mr. Chairman, the Iraqis take responsibility for their own future, something they are eager to do, the better. That is why it is essential that we not delay the handover of sovereignty set for the end of June, even if there's continuing violence by those who know they have no place in a decent, democratic Iraq. Indeed, increasingly desperate acts of violence against Iraqis, Coalition forces, and international organizations, even as the handover comes closer, shows that what the so-called "insurgents" fear most is momentum toward a free Iraq. To those who were part of Saddam's repressive regime—the jailers, the torturers, the secret police—as well as the jihadists who have joined them in Iraq, Iraqi sovereignty, which will end the Coalition's role as an occupying power, will be a huge, possibly irretrievable defeat. That is the burden of the now-famous letter by Abu al Zarqawi to his al-Qaeda associates.

Following the establishment of Iraqi sovereignty, the role of the United States and its Coalition partners should be to help provide a central physical security as we assist with the training, organization, and development of Iraqi's civil and security institutions, and to help them build the essential infrastructure for a free-market, democratic society. But in doing these things, we should accord great weight to the views and preferences of the Iraqis. They know their situation, their history, culture, and personalities far better than we, and they will surprise us with their intelligence, competence, and dedication. We must not force them to conform to our ideas about how to organize themselves or how to build their institutions.

Second, we should be skeptical of simple formulas that promise an easier time or greater prospects of success "if only" we bring in the United Nations or NATO or enlarge the Coalition. I have serious misgivings about according the United Nations a large or a

long-term role in Iraq. While a small number of individually capable United Nations officials can surely help advise and encourage the Iraqis, especially as they contemplate their constitutional future, a large U.N. contingent in Iraq, even if the U.N. were willing to provide one, would do more harm than good. It would discourage the assumption of responsibility by the Iraqis themselves, it would drain resources urgently needed for the development of the Iraqi economy, and, as we learn more about the record of incompetence and corruption of the U.N.'s Food-for-Oil Program, we should take note—we should note that appalling record, and take it to heart, and hold the U.N. role in Iraq to an absolute minimum.

Some of our allies have sent military and civilian units to Iraq, and we have welcomed the vote of confidence this represents. But many are there under rules of engagement that preclude them from operating effectively when it may matter most. And as we have seen with the announced withdrawal of Spanish forces after the election of a Socialist government in Spain, not all our allies can be counted on to stay the course. Indeed, the Spanish appear to be planning to withdraw with little or no concern for their Coalition partners or those Iraqis who might be endangered by the manner of their departure.

I find incomprehensible the idea that we should somehow contrive to bring into the Coalition countries which have opposed us all along. There is no prospect that this can be done, either by appealing to such countries individually or by trying to get them there under a NATO flag. When the issue is the dispatch of military forces in harm's way, there is little point and great danger in dragging unwilling partners into a mission to which they are not philosophically and politically committed.

And I must say, Mr. Chairman, this drumbeat that the key to solving these very difficult problems in Iraq is to internationalize the problem, I just find completely unconvincing. And I know it's an idea that's been embraced, partly in frustration at the difficulties, but I fail to see how bringing small contingents from additional countries into that difficult situation is going to help significantly.

Third, on the question of whether we are in Iraq with the right numbers of troops possessing the right skills, or whether we need a larger or different military presence, I believe it would be most unwise to send more American troops to Iraq. The problem is not that we have too few troops, but that the Iraqis have too few well-trained, highly motivated troops and security forces. Adding Americans will not produce more Iraqis. Indeed, it may discourage Iraqis from facing up to their responsibilities.

I think I understood Sandy Berger to have suggested that maybe we should have had 500,000 Americans at the outset. First of all, I don't believe we can manage a force of that size. But it's far from clear that the postwar situation would have been significantly different if we had had many more American troops there. We'd have had significantly larger losses. And while mistakes have been made, I don't believe that we have too few troops, and I don't believe that the suggestion that we needed several hundred-thousand has been validated by the problems we're having. The problems do not stem from too few Americans.

Mr. Chairman, those who oppose a successful democratic transition in Iraq have resorted to every vile act of terror they can manage—car bombs, roadside bombs, kidnaping, mutilation, torture, the list is endless—they are indifferent to the suffering they cause, the lives they take, the havoc they wreak. They are intent either on saving themselves from the justice they deserve for their crimes under Saddam's reign of terror or they have come to Iraq to continue the jihad against Western civilization. They will be defeated, because we have opened the door to freedom, and the people of Iraq will pass through that door, and they will do so more surely, more confidently, more steadfastly when we empower them to build their own country with their own chosen leaders. That is why it is vital that we offer the people of Iraq the country they never had under Saddam Hussein, and they will never truly achieve until Iraqis are able to govern themselves.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Perle follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD N. PERLE

Mr. Chairman, as always, I appreciate this opportunity to share with the Committee some ideas and observations about the situation in Iraq and, more specifically, about the transition from Saddam Hussein's brutal dictatorship to a decent, humane and representative government.

It is a transition of gigantic magnitude and scope, immensely important in itself and even more important in its ramifications for the Gulf region, the wider Arab world and the war on terrorism. And as if that were not enough, the outcome of the transition now underway will profoundly affect our ability to operate internationally in a world in which we are uniquely threatened by an ideologically driven movement aimed at our destruction and the destruction of those who share our democratic values.

We are fighting for a better Iraq and a safer America and we must not fail. So the Committee is wise to reflect on whether we are going about this great challenge in the right way. On this, I have three points:

First, the outcome of the struggle to establish a decent representative government in Iraq will depend principally on the Iraqis themselves. We can—and must—help them achieve a degree of physical security that will enable a decent civil society to emerge from the ashes of Saddam's regime. But while we can help, we cannot substitute for the millions of Iraqis who alone are capable of achieving a successful transition.

This point may seem obvious. But, in my view, we were slow to recognize how central the Iraqis were to the post-war stabilization of the situation on the ground and how central they now are to the democratic transition. I believe we would have been wise to go into Iraq with several thousand Iraqis at our side. After all, the Congress, with the support of most and possibly all the members of this committee, approved the Iraq Liberation Act which authorized political, material and moral support for the Iraqi National Congress and other Iraqi opponents of Saddam's regime.

With thousands of Iraqis at our side, we might well have dealt more effectively with the turmoil and looting that followed the collapse of the regime and we might have jump started the transition we are now in the process of arranging. But there was little support within the executive branch for implementing the Iraq Liberation Act, for taking the Iraqi opposition into our confidence. Indeed, the State Department and the CIA actively opposed working with the Iraqi opposition with the result that very little of the material support voted by Congress was actually spent. By the time those favoring a much closer collaboration between U.S. and Iraqi opposition forces got agreement to begin training the Iraqis, we were on the verge of war. Sadly, as we went to war only a handful of Iraqis had graduated from a much delayed training program that had vastly more potential than we were able to realize.

The sooner the Iraqis take responsibility for their own future—something they are eager to do—the better. That is why it is essential that we not delay the hand-over of sovereignty set for the end of June, even if there is continuing violence by those who know they have no place in a decent, democratic Iraq. Indeed, increasingly desperate acts of violence against Iraqis, coalition forces and international organiza-

tions, even as the hand-over comes closer, shows that what the so-called “insurgents” fear most is momentum toward a free Iraq. For those who were part of Saddam’s repressive regime—the jailers, the torturers, the secret police—as well as the Jihadists who have joined them in Iraq, Iraqi sovereignty, which will end the coalition’s role as an occupying power, will be a huge, possibly irretrievable, defeat. That is the burden of the now famous letter by Abu al-Zarqawi to his Al Qaeda associates.

Following the establishment of Iraqi sovereignty, the role of the United States and its coalition partners should be to help provide essential physical security as we assist with the training, organization and development of Iraqi civil and security institutions, and to help them build the essential infrastructure for a free-market, democratic society. But in doing these things, we should accord great weight to the views and preferences of the Iraqis. They know their situation, their history, culture and personalities far better than we and they will surprise us with their intelligence, competence and dedication. We must not force them to conform to our ideas about how to organize themselves or how to build their institutions.

Second, we should be skeptical of simple formulas that promise an easier time or greater prospects for success if only we bring in the United Nations or NATO or enlarge the coalition. I have serious misgivings about according the United Nations a large or long-term role in Iraq. While a small number of individually capable United Nations officials can help advise and encourage the Iraqis, especially as they contemplate their constitutional future, a large U.N. contingent in Iraq—even if the U.N. were willing to provide one—would do more harm than good. It would discourage the assumption of responsibility by the Iraqis themselves. It would drain resources urgently needed for the development of the Iraqi economy. And as we learn more about the record of incompetence and corruption of the U.N.’s food-for-oil program we should take that appalling record to heart and hold the U.N. role in Iraq to an absolute minimum.

Some of our allies have sent military and civilian units to Iraq and we have welcomed the vote of confidence that this represents. But many are there under rules of engagement that preclude them from operating effectively when it may matter most. And as we have seen with the announced withdrawal of Spanish forces after the election of a socialist government in Spain, not all our allies can be counted on to stay the course. Indeed, the Spanish appear to be planning to withdraw with little or no concern for their coalition partners or those Iraqis who might be endangered by the manner of their departure.

I find incomprehensible the idea that we should somehow contrive to bring into the coalition countries which have opposed us all along. There is no prospect that this can be done, either by appealing to such countries individually or by trying to get them there under a NATO flag. When the issue is the dispatch of military forces in harm’s way there is little point—and great danger—in dragging unwilling partners into a mission to which they are not philosophically and politically committed.

Third, on the question of whether we are in Iraq with the right number of troops possessing the right skills, or whether we need a larger or different military presence, I believe it would be most unwise to send more American troops to Iraq. The problem is not that we have too few troops but that the Iraqis have too few well trained, highly motivated troops and security forces. Adding Americans will not produce more Iraqis. Indeed, it may discourage Iraqis from facing up to their responsibilities.

Mr. Chairman, those who oppose a successful democratic transition in Iraq have resorted to every vile act of terror they can manage: car bombs, roadside bombs, rockets and mortars fired at civilian installations, kidnapping, mutilation, torture—the list is endless. They are indifferent to the suffering they cause, the lives they take, the havoc they wreak. They are intent, either on saving themselves from the justice they deserve for their crimes under Saddam’s reign of terror, or they have come to Iraq to continue the jihad against western civilization. They will be defeated because we have opened the door to freedom and the people of Iraq will pass through that door. And they will do so more surely, more confidently, more steadfastly when we empower them to build their own country with their own chosen leaders. That is why it is vital that we offer the people of Iraq the country they never had under Saddam Hussein and that they will never truly achieve until Iraqis are able to govern themselves.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Perle.
Dr. Cole.

**STATEMENT OF DR. JUAN COLE, PROFESSOR OF MODERN
MIDDLE EASTERN HISTORY, UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN**

Dr. COLE. Let me begin by expressing my gratitude to this committee of the U.S. Senate for calling me to testify.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, in my view the biggest U.S. failure in Iraq has lain in an American inability to understand the workings of Iraqi society. Many U.S. administrators and military commanders appear to believe that once the Ba'athist state of Saddam Hussein was overthrown, they would be dealing with an Iraqi society that was docile, grateful, and virtually a blank slate on which U.S. goals could be imprinted.

Ba'athist Iraq was a pressure-cooker. Its highly mobilized, urban, and relatively literate population had organized to oppose the ramshackle Ba'ath state. In al Anbar Province, lying on the road between Amman and Baghdad, local populations came under the influence of Salafi or Sunni fundamentalist movements and ideas that were also growing popular in Jordan.

Shi'ite guerrillas in the south, springing from the clandestine al Da'wa Party, Iraqi Hezbollah, Sadrists, or Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq, conducted bombings, raids, assassinations, and other acts of defiance against the Ba'ath, often sheltering, in the swamps of the south, or retreating, if pursued, to Iranian territory. The followers of Muhammad Sadiq al-Sadr, who was killed by Saddam Hussein's orders in 1999, in particular, were militarily anti-Ba'ath, anti-American, and anti-Israel, and aspire to an Islamic state in Iraq, on the Iranian model. It is that movement which continues today, led now by his son, Muqtada al-Sadr, which launched the Shi'ite insurgency in early April.

What the Americans did in March and April of 2003 was to remove that apparatus of repression and allow the religious parties and militias freely to organize and spread their ideas and structures throughout the country. The U.S., on the other hand, in bringing in politicians from the outside, gave special perquisites to a handful of expatriate politicians with whom it had cut backroom deals. It excluded both the Sadrists and the al Anbar Salafi/Sunni groups from national power in the appointment of the interim governing council last summer. The expatriate politicians had often been involved in scandals, had no grassroots inside the country, and were widely disliked. Many Iraqis feared that the U.S. would shoehorn these expatriates into power as a new sort of soft dictatorship, and that they would betray Iraqi national interests, in preference to personal and American ones, for years to come. And I believe these kinds of mistakes of perception and policy have contributed greatly to the outbreak of the recent insurgency.

What could be done? In order to defuse the violence, the U.S. military needs to adopt a much more narrow and targeted approach to dealing with the guerrillas and to stop, quote, "using a sledgehammer to crack a walnut," in the words of a British officer in Basra recently. U.S. troops have repeatedly used disproportionate force to reply to guerrilla attacks and, in the process, have created new guerrillas by harming innocent civilians.

The tactics used at Fallujah have been seen by most Iraqis, and, indeed, by many Coalition partners and interim governing council members, as an outrage and a direct flaunting of the Geneva Con-

ventions governing military occupations. Even the ordinary search-and-find missions conducted in al Anbar Province and elsewhere have often involved male troops invading the private homes of Iraqis, going into the women's quarters, and visiting humiliation on tribesmen for whom protecting their women is the basis of their honor. Unless these operations are yielding consistently excellent intelligence and results, they should be curtailed.

The Coalition Provisional Authority must cease attempting to "take out" dissident leaders, like Muqtada al-Sadr, before the handover of sovereignty. I believe the recent attempt to arrest 28 of Muqtada al-Sadr's associates was unwise. It was uncalled for. There was no indication of an incipient insurgency. I believe the insurgency was provoked by that action by the Coalition Provisional Authority. And we should remember it was precisely the attempt to cut Mohammed Aidid out of the political process in Somalia that caused the Mogadishu disaster.

The United States will simply have to accept that there are political forces on the ground in Iraq that it views as undesirable. It cannot dictate Iraqi politics to Iraqis without becoming a, frankly, Colonial power. If it does become a mere colonist in Iraq, it will be mired in the country for decades—decades—and forced to spend hundreds of billions of dollars and thousands of servicemen's lives on the endeavor. Rather, it must draw those less-savory political forces in Iraq into parliamentary politics so that they can learn to rework their goals and conflicts and the terms of democratic procedure.

Groups like the Sadrists, the followers of Muqtada al-Sadr, cannot hope to dominate parliament—if we have elections next January, they're not going to be a majority of parliament—and so must learn to trade horses to get part of what they want. The United States must, on no account, invade the holy city of Najaf. Besieging and investing it, as was done at Fallujah, would have major repercussions on Iraqi relations with Shi'ite communities not only in Iraq, but all over the world, from Lebanon to Bahrain, and from Iran to Afghanistan.

It is probably unwise to arrest or kill Muqtada al-Sadr. If he is captured, his followers will mount repeated demonstrations until he is released. And some may resort to taking Western captives to trade for him. If he is killed, many of his followers will go underground and begin waging a long-term guerrilla insurgency against the U.S. similar to what the Sunni Arabs have been doing in al Anbar Province. A way should be found for him to go into exile, in a third country perhaps, and for a United Nations force to be brought immediately into Najaf and Karbala—those cities should be internationalized already—perhaps under a U.S. command, but it should be a U.N. force.

The main problem for the United States in Iraq is a lack of popular legitimacy. And let me just say that the Muqtada al-Sadr movement is not a majority of Iraqi Shi'ites, but it has been consistently underestimated by polling, by U.S. observers. Two million Iraqi Shi'ites live in the slums of east Baghdad. Muqtada has a lot of support there. Maybe not everybody there is willing to come out and fight for him, but he has a lot of moral support there. In the poorer quarters of Basra, Kut, Nazariah, this is not a minor move-

ment. It's not a majority, but it's not a minor movement—an movement, and it is a social movement. You can't crush it by killing Muqtada al-Sadr, or even by dissolving his militia. This thing existed back in the 1990s. Muqtada's father was killed by Saddam. It still didn't stop this movement.

So the main problem for the United States in Iraq is the lack of political legitimacy. The U.S. must now move with all due deliberation to holding free and fair, one-person/one-vote elections in Iraq. The elections should be held even if the security situation remains poor. Indian and other elections in the global south are often attended by public disturbances and even loss of life, but they, nevertheless, produce legitimate governments.

The recently released Brahimi plan should be adopted in full. And I think it's really important that the United Nations play a role in appointing the caretaker government, perhaps in consultation with the Coalition Provisional Authority and the United States, but it is important to Iraqis. And even Ayatollah al-Sistani has said this, that the new government of Iraq be midwived by the United Nations and not unilaterally by the United States.

In the interim, militias should be curbed at the local level and, where possible, integrated into the Iraqi military. Emphasis should not be placed on attacking the top leaders of the militias, but on dealing with the phenomenon. The pace of the formation of the new military and the amount of money spent on it must increase rapidly. This approach would reduce unemployment, reduce the recruitment pool for militias, and provide forces that could help with at least local security.

As it is phased out, the Coalition Provisional Authority must reach out to all sections of the Iraqi public to reassure them that they will not be crushed by a new tyranny of the majority, or looted by a handful of cronies of America. The Sadrists among the Shi'ites and the Sunnis of al Anbar should be encouraged to do what the Shi'ite Amal Party did in Lebanon, trading in its militias for a prominent role in the Lebanese parliament. The Sunni Arabs of al Anbar Province must, likewise, be convinced that they can form alliances in parliament to protect them and achieve their goals.

Let me conclude by saying, I think it was a mistake in the interim constitution to configure the new Iraqi parliament so that it had only one chamber. In Shi'ite-majority Iraq, this way of proceeding ensures that Shi'ites will dominate the legislature, being the majority. A way should be found to create an upper house—and I know I speak to an upper house—and to do so—and to so gerrymander the provinces that it over-represents the Sunni minority. This two-house parliament could then serve as a check on any tyranny of the Shi'ite majority. Such a check is preferable to giving Kurds a veto over the new constitution to be written in 2005, which is the way it's done now, since giving a minority a veto seems unfair; whereas, insisting that the constitution pass the upper house of parliament with a two-thirds majority is unexceptionable.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Cole follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. JUAN COLE

This brief addresses three areas. First, what mistakes have been made in the Coalition administration of Iraq, and why? Second, what is the current situation? Third, what steps can be taken to ensure the emergence of a stable and democratic Iraq?

MISTAKES

The biggest US failure in Iraq to date lay in American inability to understand the workings of Iraqi society. Many US administrators and military commanders appeared to believe that once the Baathist state of Saddam Hussein was overthrown, they would be dealing with an Iraqi society that was docile, grateful and virtually a blank slate on which US goals could be imprinted.

In fact, Baathist Iraq was a pressure-cooker, consisting of a highly mobilized, urban and relatively literate population that had organized clandestinely to oppose the weak and ramshackle Baath state. Although the clan-based political parties and militias of the Kurds in the north were well known because they had emerged as autonomous under the US no-fly zone, similar phenomena in the Sunni Arab center and the Shiite south were obscured by the information black-out of Baath party censorship. In al-Anbar Province, lying on the road between Amman and Baghdad, local populations came under the influence of Salafi or Sunni fundamentalist movements and ideas that were also growing popular in Jordan. In the late Saddam period, the secular Baathist state allowed more manifestations of Sunni religiosity than it had earlier, allowing these groups to establish beachheads in Fallujah, Ramadi and elsewhere.

Many books and articles were published in Arabic in the 1990s, that should have made clear that the Shiite south in particular was a lively arena of contention between the Baath military and the religious parties and their militias, some with bases in Iran to which they could withdraw. Shiite guerrillas in the south, springing from the clandestine al-Da'wa Party, Iraqi Hizbullah, Sadrists, or Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq, conducted bombings, raids, assassinations and other acts of defiance against the Baath, often sheltering in the swamps of the south or retreating, if pursued, to Iranian territory. The followers of Muhammad Sadiq al-Sadr (d. 1999) in particular were militantly anti-Baath, anti-American and anti-Israel, and aspired to an Islamic state in Iraq on the Iranian model. Given the US role in calling for, and then allowing the crushing of, the Shiite uprising of spring, 1991, after the Gulf War, the idea that Shiite Iraqis would be "grateful" to the United States and now willing to forgive altogether that earlier betrayal, was fanciful. Moreover, US officials appeared to be ignorant of the important role of Iran in Iraqi Shiite politics, a role that goes back to 1501, and kept talking about the need of Iran to avoid "interfering" in Iraq (which is rather like telling the Vatican to stop interfering in Ireland). In addition to dissident groups, figures existed within Iraqi society like Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, who have enormous moral authority, about which American administrators were ignorant or skeptical into winter, 2004, to their peril.

These covert political parties and clandestine guerrilla groups were curbed by the Baath secret police and by the Fidayee Saddam. What the Americans did in March and April of 2003 was to remove that apparatus of repression, and allow the religious parties and militias freely to organize, canvass for new members, and spread their ideas and structures freely throughout the country. The Salafi Sunnis and the various Shiite religious parties had a vision of post-Baath Iraq, for which they had been planning for over a decade, that differed starkly from United States goals in Iraq. But because the US was unable to assemble in post-war Iraq anything like the 500,000 troops it had had in the first Gulf War, it and its Coalition allies often were forced actively to depend on the good will and even the security-providing abilities of the religious militias in the post-war period.

Although the US did wisely choose to attempt to incorporate some grass-roots Iraqi political organizations into the Interim Provisional Government, it excluded others. Thus, the London branch of the Shiite al-Dawa Party was given a seat, but the Tehran branch was not (both groups had come back to Iraq after the fall of Saddam, linking back up with local party members who had remained and organized covertly). The Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq, which had a Badr Corps militia of perhaps 15,000 trained men, was given a seat, but the Sadrist organization was not. The Islamic Party of Iraq, a Muslim Brotherhood-derived party from Mosul, was given a seat, but the Salafis of al-Anbar Province were excluded. Of course, some of the excluded groups were hostile to the US occupation, and might have refused to serve, but it is likely that some representative of those tendencies could have been found who would serve.

Worse, the US gave special perquisites and extra power to a handful of expatriate politicians with whom it had cut backroom deals. These expatriate politicians had often been involved in scandals, had no grassroots inside the country, and were widely disliked. Many Iraqis feared that the US would shoehorn these expatriates into power as a sort of new soft dictatorship, and that they would betray Iraqi national interests in preference to personal and American ones for years to come.

On strategy that might have forestalled a lot of opposition would have been to hold early municipal elections. Such free and fair elections were actually scheduled in cities like Najaf by local US military authorities in spring of 2003, but Paul Bremer stepped in to cancel them. A raft of newly elected mayors who subsequently gained experience in domestic politics might have thrown up new leaders in Iraq who could then move to the national stage. This development appears to have been deliberately forestalled by Mr. Bremer, in favor of a kind of cronyism that aimed at putting a pre-selected group of politicians in power. In Najaf, the US appointed a Sunni Baathist officer as mayor over this devotedly Shiite city. He had turned on Saddam only at the last moment. Since Sunni Baathists had massacred the people of Najaf, he was extremely unpopular. He took the children of Najaf notables hostage for ransom and engaged in other corrupt practices. Eventually even the US authorities had to remove him from power and try him. But the first impression the US made on the holy city of Najaf, and therefore on the high Shiite clerics such as Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, was very bad.

The United States made a key strategic error in declining to post enough US troops to Iraq in the post-war period to establish good security. A country the size of Iraq probably required 400,000 to 500,000 troops to keep it orderly in the wake of the collapse of the state. The US compounded that error by dissolving the Iraqi army altogether, which deprived the US of informed potential allies in restoring security, created enormous discontent among the 400,000 men fired, and provided a recruitment pool to religious militias seeking to expand. The US also failed to send in enough experienced, Arabic-speaking civil administrators at the Coalition Provisional Authority. The CPA, with only a thousand employees for much of the post-war period, most of whom could not speak the local language and did not understand local customs, much reduced its own effectiveness by remaining relatively insular and cut off from Iraqi society. The lack of security ensuing from the thinness of the military force on the ground increased the danger to CPA employees and reinforced this insularity. There has been no transparency in US decision-making in Iraq, so that we do not, and the Iraqi people do not know why these steps, so injurious to the common good, were taken.

The security situation in post-Baath Iraq has not been good in much of the country, though the Shiite south was for a long time somewhat quieter than the center-north. The problem area encompassed Baghdad, Samarra, Baqubah (and Diyala province more generally), Mosul, Kirkuk, and al-Anbar Province (Fallujah, Ramadi, Habbaniyah). Nevertheless, guerrillas did mount significant attacks occasionally in the south, as with the huge August 29 truck bombing at Najaf, and in the far north, as with the bombing at Irbil in January. These bombings targeted highly charged political and religious symbols and greatly undermined Iraqi confidence in the ability of the US to provide security. Coalition troops routinely came under fire in the South, though not nearly with as much frequency as in the center-north. The US official and press tendency to speak of the problems as having concerned a relatively small portion of the country, mistakenly termed the "Sunni triangle," obscured the scope and seriousness of a security collapse that encompassed perhaps half of the geographical area of Iraq and affected a good third of its population on an ongoing basis and at least half at some point.

Even in the quieter areas, they were quiet for all the wrong reasons. In the north, the Kurdish peshmerga or paramilitary fighters provided much of what urban security there was, and they had come to dominate the police in multi-ethnic, oil-rich Kirkuk. These paramilitary fighters constituted a law unto themselves and Kurdish leaders vowed that Federal Iraqi troops would never again set foot on Kurdish soil. In the Shiite south, Coalition forces were spread exceedingly thin and were staffed by inexperienced troops from countries like Bulgaria and the Ukraine, who had no local knowledge and who had apparently been assured that they would not be involved in warfare but rather in peacekeeping. Local townspeople tended to turn to Shiite militiamen to police neighborhoods, according to press reports, in places like Samawah, and even in large urban neighborhoods in East Baghdad and Basra.

Although hundreds of millions of dollars have been spent on reconstruction, and there have been some genuine successes, as with the restoration of electricity, the poor security situation has detracted from those successes in the minds of most Iraqis. Moreover, the successes have been partial and often unsatisfactory. Hospitals are open, but often strapped for cash and lacking in equipment, medicine and per-

sonnel. Electricity provision before the war was highly inadequate, so returning to pre-war levels does not solve the problem. The preference for American and British contractors has often cut Iraqi businesses out of the lucrative contracts, except at lower bid levels, which in turn has prevented the US from making a big dent in massive unemployment rates. The massive unemployment in turn has contributed to poor security, in a vicious circle.

THE CURRENT PROBLEMS

The US administration of Iraq has suffered from lack of consistency, from infighting among major bureaucratic organizations such as the Department of Defense and the State Department, and from an apparent desire strongly to shape Iraqi society in certain directions, which has the effect of contravening international law on military occupations, specifically the Hague Regulations of 1907 and the Geneva Conventions of 1949. One example is the determination to impose on the Iraqi economy the kind of shock therapy or very rapid liberalization tried in Russia, with disastrous results. It is one thing for a sovereign Iraqi government to ask for help in liberalizing the economy, it is another for an American civil administrator to take such a decision by fiat. American announcements on economic policy have often been opposed by local Iraqi merchants and entrepreneurs, by the Iraqi-American Chamber of Commerce, and even by the American-appointed Interim Governing Council itself.

The US has gone through four major plans for Iraqi governance and it is unclear as of this writing to whom sovereignty will be handed on June 30. Jay Garner, the first civil administrator, planned to hold a national congress in July, 2003, and then to hand over Iraq to the resulting government by October of that year. He was replaced by Paul Bremer, who initially planned to run Iraq himself by fiat for two or three years. He was unable to do so, and then appointed an Interim Governing Council which, however, suffered problems of legitimacy insofar as it was a committee of a foreign occupying power. On November 15 Mr. Bremer made a 180 degree turn and announced council-based elections for spring of 2004 and a turn-over of sovereignty to the resulting government. Those elections were deemed undemocratic by Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, and were not held, leaving Bremer with a turn-over date but not a government to turn over to. Most Iraqis, who have yet to experience anything like democracy in the post-Baath period, are confused and suspicious at these high-handed and frankly somewhat dictatorial proceedings.

The US has faced serious opposition from Iraqi paramilitaries in al-Anbar province and elsewhere, and has sometimes even clashed with the Kurdish Peshmerga. In late March and early April, it came into severe conflict with Sunni tribesmen in Fallujah and with the Army of the Mahdi, a Shiite militia in East Baghdad and the southern Shiite cities, led by Muqtada al-Sadr. Both conflicts were initially mishandled. The US military responded to the killing of four American civilian security guards, and the desecration of their bodies, by surrounding, besieging, and bombarding the entire town of Fallujah. While it was a hotbed of guerrilla activity, the entire town was not implicated in that activity. Many observers, including the former president of the Interim Governing Council Adnan Pachachi, and United Nations special envoy Lakhdar Brahimi, have accused the US military of engaging in collective punishment of Fallujans and of failing to take due account of the need to avoid civilian casualties.

While Fallujah was poorly handled from a political point of view, the crisis grew out of an attack on US citizens. In contrast, the decision to go after Muqtada al-Sadr was wholly elective. His movement had been militant since the days of Saddam, and it is true that he was organizing a militia. But he had repeatedly instructed his people to avoid clashing with US troops, and seems mainly to have been organizing for the future. Measures could have been taken to forbid his militiamen from training or appearing in uniform in public. But by attempting to arrest his key aides, the Coalition Provisional Authority telegraphed to him its determination to arrest and imprison him. Muqtada had seen his father killed after similar warnings from Saddam, and reacted by launching an insurgency throughout the south, making the point that he would not go quietly.

The CPA grossly underestimated the organizational capacity of his movement. It was able to expel Iraqi police from their stations in many places in the south, and in some instances Iraqi police and military either declined to fight the Army of the Mahdi or even switched sides and joined it. The US military gave up on trying to maintain a presence in East Baghdad. Ukrainian troops were chased off their base at Kut, and Nasiriyah fell to the Sadrists, as did Kufa, Najaf, and parts of Karbala. While the US and its allies were able to contain and then roll back this insurrection, it demonstrated that the Coalition did not really control Iraq, and was only there

on the sufferance of powerful social forces that could effectively challenge it when they so chose.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

In order to defuse the violence, the US military needs to adopt a much more narrow and targeted approach to dealing with guerrillas, and stop “using a sledgehammer to crack a walnut” (in the words of a British officer in Basra). US troops have repeatedly used disproportionate force to reply to guerrilla attacks, and in the process have created new guerrillas by harming innocent civilians. The tactics used at Fallujah have been seen by most Iraqis, and indeed, by many Coalition partners and Interim Governing Council members, as an outrage and a direct flaunting of the Geneva Conventions governing military occupations. Even the ordinary search and find missions conducted in al-Anbar province and elsewhere have often involved male troops invading the private homes of Iraqis, going into the womens’ quarters, and visiting humiliation on tribesmen for whom protecting their women is the basis of their honor. Unless these operations are yielding consistently excellent intelligence and results, they should be curtailed.

The Coalition Provisional Authority must cease attempting to “take out” dissident leaders like Muqtada al-Sadr before the hand-over of sovereignty. It was precisely the attempt to cut Muhammad Aidid out of the political process in Somalia that caused the Mogadishu disaster. The US will simply have to accept that there are political forces on the ground in Iraq that it views as undesirable. It cannot dictate Iraqi politics to Iraqis without becoming a frankly colonial power. If it does become a mere colonist in Iraq, it will be mired in the country for decades and be forced to spend hundreds of billions of dollars and thousands of servicemen’s lives on the endeavor. Rather, it must draw those less savory political forces in Iraq into parliamentary politics so that they can learn to rework their goals and conflicts in the terms of democratic procedure. Groups like the Sadrists cannot hope to dominate parliament, and so must learn to trade horses to get part of what they want.

The main problem for the United States in Iraq is a lack of popular legitimacy. Neither the Coalition Provisional Authority nor the Interim Governing Council has much popular support, with a few exceptions. Neither grew out of any Iraqi democratic process, and neither was formed with significant involvement of the United Nations Security Council, which even Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani has said he respects. In a recent poll, about half of Iraqis felt that the US invasion had been a humiliation, and the other half felt it had been a liberation. Even those who felt liberated, however, are impatient for a government they can call their own.

The US must now move with all due deliberation to holding free and fair, one-person, one-vote elections in Iraq. Only such a process holds any hope of deflecting faction-fighting into more a more peaceful reworking of political conflict into parliamentary processes. The elections should be held even if the security situation remains poor. Indian and other elections in the global south are often attended by public disturbances and even loss of life, but they nevertheless produce legitimate governments.

The recently-released Brahimi plan should be adopted, as President Bush has indicated. It calls for the dissolution of the Interim Governing Council on June 30, for the temporary appointment, under United Nations and Coalition auspices, of a handful of high government officials (a president, two vice presidents and a prime minister) who would form a limited, caretaker government to oversee the transition to elections this winter. It also provides for the election of a broad advisory council that would represent a broader range of Iraqi actors than did the old Interim Governing Council. For the legitimacy of the new government, it is absolutely essential that the United Nations Security Council be deeply involved in its formation and in authorizing it. Indeed, the very presence of US troops and other Coalition troops in Iraq beyond June 30 must be authorized by a new United Nations Security Council resolution if their mission is to remain legal in the bounds of international law.

In the interim, militias should be curbed at the local level and where possible integrated into the Iraqi military. Emphasis should not be placed on attacking the top leaders of the militias, but on dealing with the phenomenon. The pace of the formation of the new military, and the amount of money spent on it, must increase rapidly. This approach would reduce unemployment, reduce the recruitment pool for militias, and provide forces that could help with at least local security.

The giving of reconstruction bids has been structured so that all small bids of \$50,000 or less automatically go to Iraqi firms. This ceiling should be raised, to ensure that more Iraqis are involved in reconstruction and more local jobs created. Shipping the money back to the US by employing mainly American firms will not greatly benefit Iraq or address the deep unemployment problems there.

As it is phased out, the Coalition Provisional Authority must reach out to all sections of the Iraqi public to reassure them that they will not be crushed by a new tyranny of the majority, or looted by a handful of cronies of America. The Sadrists in East Baghdad, Kufa and elsewhere must be convinced that they can best exercise their influence by becoming ward bosses and electing their delegates to parliament. Attempting to exclude the Sadrists will only ensure that they remain violent. They should be encouraged to do what the Shiite Amal Party did in Lebanon, trading in its militias for a prominent role in the Lebanese parliament. The Sunni Arabs of Anbar province must likewise be convinced that they can form alliances in parliament that protect them and achieve their goals.

It was a mistake to configure the new Iraqi parliament so that it had only one chamber. In Shiite-majority Iraq, this way of proceeding ensures that Shiites will dominate the legislature. A way should be found to create an upper house, and to so gerrymander the provinces that it over-represents the Sunni minority. This two-house parliament could then serve as a check on any tyranny of the Shiite majority. Such a check is preferable to giving the Kurds a veto over the new constitution to be written in 2005, since giving a minority a veto seems unfair, whereas insisting that the constitution pass the upper house of parliament with a two-thirds majority is unexceptionable.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Dr. Cole.
Dr. Dodge.

STATEMENT OF DR. BENJAMIN T. DODGE, INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES, CONSULTING SENIOR FELLOW FOR THE MIDDLE EAST, LONDON, ENGLAND

Dr. DODGE. Thank you very much for the invitation to present here today. It's just a great sorrow that it's against such a pessimistic background in Iraq. And I think that the current wave of violence sweeping the country is not merely a one-off spike in attacks on Coalition forces; it is, instead, a symptom of three longer-term dynamics that have dogged the occupation since the liberation of Baghdad on April 9 last year.

The first of these problems, the legacy of Saddam Hussein's rule, could have been anticipated, but could not have been avoided. The other two problems, the nature of the Coalition Provisional Authority's interaction with Iraqi society, and then the character of the violence faced by Coalition forces, are partly the result of decisions taken since the liberation of Baghdad. A different long-term strategy and short-term tactics could have avoided these, and could possibly still avoid these problems.

Overall, these three problems mean that the occupation, either on a de facto or a de jure basis, will have to last a great deal longer than June 30. The continued presence of large numbers of foreign troops is essential for the successful creation of order.

International oversight is also key for the stability of Iraq. Its role would be to manage the Iraqi polity while the Iraqi population negotiates amongst itself the terms of a national pact. Before these things—these things are crucial for the medium-term stability of the country, and need international oversight.

Any attempt to understand the problems faced by the Coalition Provisional Authority today, and any future government of Iraq, has to understand the legacy of Saddam Hussein they're striving to overcome. Before the liberation of Baghdad last year, it was impossible to talk about civil society in Iraq. The regime had reshaped or broken all intermediate institutions that sat between the population and the state.

For the Iraqi population, politics only began on April 9 last year. The Iraqi political organizations that the CPA are trying to liaise with have either been in existence for little over a year or have been imported into the country in the aftermath of regime change. This means that they have had a very short period of time to gain the attention of the population and, more importantly, win their trust and allegiance.

So Iraqi politics today are extremely fluid. Liberation has led to political mobilization, but at the present juncture this process is both tentative, unstable, and highly fractured. No one individual or party has managed to rally any significant amount of support from the population. This was starkly borne out by the largest opinion poll ever conducted in Iraq, in February 2004. Although some of the results were broadly positive for the CPA, others highlighted distinct problems for the medium-term political stability of the country.

When asked which organization they would vote for in a national election, the Shia Party al Da'wa received the highest polling figure. But I think it's crucial to recognize the support that al Da'wa registered was extremely low, at only 10 percent of those questioned. Other parties that also claim a national base registered even lower polling figures. The largest percentage of those polls, 39.2 percent, answered that they did not know whom they were going to vote for, with 34.5 percent refusing to answer the question at all. A similar very-low response resulted to the question, which national leader in Iraq, if any, do you trust the most? Again, al Da'wa's leader, Ibrahim Jaafari, got the highest rating; but, again, it was only 7.7 percent of those questioned. The more indicative result was 21.1 percent of those who were questioned who answered they didn't trust any political figures, and 36.7 percent who answered that they weren't sure.

In Iraq today, the CPA faces a highly mobilized, but largely atomized society that is unrestrained by effective state institutions or by political parties. The Iraqi people, the people that the politicians speak so freely about, have not yet given their allegiance to any individual or party. They clearly feel unrepresented at a national level. They have little or no affinity with the parties who claim to speak for Iraq. With this in mind, handing sovereignty back to Iraqis would be dangerous, and could, if anything, further increase the alienation of the Iraqi population from the CPA or its successor body and the governing structures it's trying to build.

Against the background of increased violence and insecurity, plans for rebuilding the political and administrative structures in Iraq appear to have become largely reactive. As policy is moved to meet a series of challenges, it appears that little attention is being paid to the long-term consequences of each new initiative.

The key problem damaging the occupation and hindering state-building is a difficulty in communication between American civil servants stationed in the Green Zone in downtown Baghdad and the mass majority of ordinary Iraqis. It is this inability to have meaningful interaction with Iraqi society that's the core problem facing the occupation today.

The second problem hampering the occupation is the CPA's continuing lack of expert knowledge about the country they're trying

to control. Within the CPA's headquarters, there are very few experts on any aspect of Iraqi society, politics, or economy. With this limited expertise on Iraq, the Coalition became worryingly dependent upon a small group of Iraqi exiles they had brought back to Baghdad in the aftermath of the liberation. They were meant to provide several functions. First, they would become the main channel of communication between the wider Iraqi population and U.S. forces. Second, they would also, in spite of being absent from the country for many years, become the chief source of information and guidance for the American administrators struggling to understand and rebuild a country. And finally and most importantly, they were set to become the basis of the new political elite.

The heavy reliance on organizations like the Iraqi National Accord and the Iraqi National Congress has further exacerbated the divide between Iraqi society and U.S. forces. Despite setting up numerous offices around Baghdad, publishing lots of party newspapers, and spending large sums of money, the two main exile groups, the INC and the INA, have so far failed to put any substantial roots into Iraqi society. This is borne out by the opinion poll conducted during February 2004. Ahmed Chalabi and Iyad Alawi both respectively registered 0.2 percent of those questioned when asked which national leader, if any, in Iraq do you trust.

The inability of the exiled parties to develop significant constituencies within Iraq had not stopped the CPA from using them as the cornerstone of new governing structures. This is heralded, as we know, by the CPA setting up the Iraqi Governing Council in July 2003. This body was heralded as, "the most"—by the CPA, as, "the most representative body in Iraq's history." The representative nature of the Iraqi Governing Council does clearly not come from the method of its formation, but instead supposedly the balanced nature of its membership. The politicians were chosen to approximate the supposed ethnic makeup of Iraq.

The confessional basis to choosing the Iraqi Governing Council caused much heated debate in Iraqi political circles and across the newly liberated press in Baghdad. Arguments focused on the way members were chosen, for their sectarian affiliation, not their technical skills; and the dangers of introducing divisive confessional dynamics into the highest of level of Iraqi politics.

The lack of communication between American civil servants and military personnel, the handpicked allies on the Iraqi Governing Council, and the wider population of Iraq is one of the key problems that are undermining the occupation and the CPA's attempts to build a state. From this inability to interact with Iraqi society springs the core problems facing the U.S. and those who will inherit the Iraqi state after the 30th of June.

Many Iraqis, aware of the increasing unpopularity of the U.S. presence in their country, and believing it to be temporary, are still sitting on their hands, eschewing involvement in government institutions, political and administrative, until the situation becomes clearer and the risks of political involvement become fewer. Overcoming this problem is clearly the chief concern of Lakhdar Brahimi, the U.N. envoy in Iraq. Early indications suggest that Brahimi may well be trying to reproduce an Afghan model. This would involve a caretaker government made up of a prime min-

ister, president, and two vice presidents. Before elections, scheduled sometime for late 2004 or early 2005, this ruling triumvirate would gain legitimacy from a national conference to be convened a short time after June 30.

It is unclear how this plan would overcome the problems that have undermined the various approaches of the CPA. First, where is Mr. Brahimi going to pick the president and the prime minister from? It seems very likely that he will be forced to choose from the core of the Iraqi Governing Council that has, to date, formed a revolving presidency of the council. If he does succumb to this temptation, then all the problems that have dogged the Iraqi Governing Council—its lack of legitimacy, its inability to forge meaningful links with the population, and the criticisms of it being appointed and not elected—are likely to resurface.

Second, because Mr. Brahimi, like his predecessor, Sergio Vieira de Mello, is working under the auspices of the CPA, he runs the distinct danger of being perceived of as merely an appendage to the occupation.

Finally, with the current poor security situation, the proposed national Congress may find it very difficult attracting a large and representative sample of the Iraqi population. If this were the case, it would be very difficult for it to fulfill its dual roles as a forum for national consultation and a source of legitimacy for the new caretaker government. The failure of a national conference to gather momentum and bring together a broad cross-section of the population would leave the caretaker government proposed by Mr. Brahimi dangerously exposed and open to similar criticisms and suspicions as those that have been leveled at the Iraqi Governing Council since its formation.

The only way to avoid such pitfalls would be to totally internationalize the creation of the governing institutions and democratic structures. This would not mean a partial or token role for the United Nations, organizing national conferences or overseeing elections. Instead, it would involve bringing the whole occupation and state-building under U.N. management. This would reduce the suspicion felt toward the CPA by sections of the Iraqi population. The organization overseeing the move and the creation of a new state would then not be the United States, but the international community. Accusations of double standards or nefarious intent would be much harder to sustain. Arguments about the occupier's willingness to relinquish power, both economic and political, would be negated. It would be the Security Council in New York, not the U.S. Government in Washington, that would have the ultimate responsibility for Iraq's transition. This would result in many more Iraqis viewing the whole exercise with a great deal more legitimacy. The U.N. could then utilize expertise and troops from across the international community. Those involved in the reconstruction, both Iraqis and international civil servants, would not run the danger of being labeled as collaborators.

Now, I think the third problem that I'll briefly touch on is the severe lack of troops on the ground in Iraq at the moment. I think RAND Corporation, in its book on state-building, argue that there should be at least 400,000 or 500,000 troops on the ground. I think it's one security personnel for every—no, is it 20 for every thou-

sand, I think. Now, clearly, the United States isn't and can't be in a position to supply that number of troops. Also, I'm afraid NATO can't. The basic estimates of spare troops for NATO to deliver is about 10,000, as far as I understand it. So it has to be a much broader coalition of the international community that would deliver a great deal more troops to fill what is at the moment what is today a security vacuum.

So that's why I say there hasn't been a spike in violence. What this has been is a cumulative thing toward a tipping point that we saw over the last 2 weeks, where Iraqis are growing cynical and alienated from the occupation. And those who choose to resort to violence—and let's not forget that Iraq is a highly armed society, with nearly most men of military age having done some form of military service, and a lot of them seek military action. So, therefore, these individuals move toward violence because there is a security vacuum. And that security vacuum, as Professor Cole has alluded to, has produced something much more worrying in Iraq today, and that's the growth of militias. It doesn't take much to get a group of armed men together and dominate your neighborhood because the occupation can't do it for you. Those militias are now increasingly organizing along sectarian lines, and are claiming to deploy order on the basis of political—the repaying in political affiliation.

I think that's one of the most dangerous long-term dynamics that we face in Iraq today, and the only way you can circumvent that is by building sustainable democratic links between the Iraqi population and government. That's going to take a lot of time. And before you do that, as the first desperate thing you need to do, establish security across the whole of the country.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Dodge follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. BENJAMIN T. DODGE¹

INTRODUCTION

The current wave of violence that has swept Iraq, killing over 80 US soldiers and hundreds of Iraqis this month, is not merely a one off "spike" in attacks on the coalition's forces. It is also not the main cause of the coalition's problems in the country. It is instead a symptom of three longer-term dynamics that have dogged the occupation since the liberation of Baghdad on April 9 2003. The first of these problems, the legacy of Saddam Hussein's rule, could have been anticipated but could not have been avoided. The other two problems; the nature of the Coalition Provisional Authority's interaction with Iraqi society and the character of the violence faced by coalition forces are partly the result of decisions taken since the liberation of Baghdad. A different long-term strategy and short-term tactics could have avoided these problems. Overall these three problems, the legacy of Saddam Hussein, the basis of the CPA's interaction with Iraqi society and the violence coalition forces are facing means that the occupation, either on a *de facto* or *de jure* basis, will have to last a great deal longer than June 30. The continued presence of large numbers of foreign troops is essential to the successful creation of order. International oversight is also key to the stability of Iraq; its role would be to manage the Iraqi polity while the Iraqi population negotiates the terms of a national pact. Both these are crucial if the medium-term stability of the country is to be secured.

With this in mind, given the scale of the problems faced, the rising resentment directed at US forces and the US domestic electoral cycle, a rapid internationalization of the occupation is called for. This would involve a transfer of *both* political and military oversight to a multilateral body, preferably the United Nations. This would allow for a rapid increase in the numbers of troops the occupation could deploy while also reducing the visibility of American forces. It would have the advantage of giving the occupation access to a much larger pool of technical expertise in

state building. Finally it would go a long way to reducing the alienation and mistrust felt by growing sections of the Iraqi population towards US forces and the Coalition Provisional Authority. It is only by taking this radical step that successful regime change, that is the building of a stable, democratic and sustainable state in Iraq, could be achieved.

THE SCALE OF THE PROBLEMS FACED: THE LEGACY OF SADDAM HUSSEIN

No civil society

Any attempt to understand the problems faced by the Coalition Provisional Authority today and any future government of Iraq has to understand the legacy of Saddam Hussein that they are striving to overcome. The country that the coalition is struggling to pacify and reform is in many ways politically distinct, even amongst the states of the Middle East. Before the liberation of Baghdad last year it was impossible to talk about civil society in Iraq. The regime had reshaped or broken all intermediate institutions between the population and the state.

Iraqi regimes, because of their perceived vulnerability, domestically, regionally and internationally, have sought to maximize their autonomy from society, with varying degrees of success. This autonomy was first supplied in the 1920s and 1930s by British government aid and since 1958 by increasing oil revenue. This means that Iraqi regimes have never had to raise large amounts of tax from or become beholden to domestic interest groups. This in turn has given the government increasing autonomy to control and reshape society.

The Baathist regime built under Hasan al Bakr and then consolidated by Saddam Hussein represented the apex of this process. It set about using oil revenues to build a set of powerful state institutions through the 1970s and 1980s. These managed to reshape society, breaking resistance and atomizing the population. Since seizing power in 1968 the Baath regime efficiently used extreme levels of violence and the powers of patronage to co-opt or break any independent vestiges of civil society. Autonomous collective societal structures beyond the control of the Baathist state did not survive. In their place society came to be dominated by aspects of the "shadow state"², flexible networks of patronage and violence that were used to reshape Iraqi society in the image of Saddam Hussein and his regime.

The atomization of society and the dependence of individuals upon the state increased dramatically after the 1990-91. It was the government rationing system that provided food for the majority of the population in the south and center of the country. Under United Nations resolution 986, agreed to by Iraq in May 1996, Iraq was allowed to import and distribute humanitarian aid under UN supervision. The food was distributed through 53,000 neighborhood grocery stores and regulated through a government controlled ration card.³ Applications to receive a ration card gave the government crucial information about every household under its control. The restrictions placed on ration cards meant individuals could not travel between different areas of the country and had to pick up their food in the same region each month. The rationing system became an additional way in which the regime secured loyalty from and domination over the population. 60 per cent of the populations depended on these handouts for their day-to-day survival.⁴

The weakening of state institutions after 1990

However, the nature of the state's domination of society was transformed under the thirteen years of sanctions that Iraq faced in the aftermath of the 1990 invasion of Kuwait. The visible institutions of the state were greatly weakened and ultimately transformed. The rapid ending of imports and exports after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait drove annual inflation to levels as high as 500%. The middle class was devastated to the extent that it became hard to detect as a category. A UN survey for example, estimated that 63% of professionals were, in the late 1990s, engaged in menial labor. In the early 1990s import levels fell to well below countries such as Zaire and Sudan.⁵

For at least the first seven years of their imposition the sanctions regime imposed on Iraq proved to be extremely efficient in that it denied the government in Baghdad access to large or regular amounts of money. From 1990 government economic policy was largely reactive, dominated by the short-term goal of staying in power. With the economy placed under a comprehensive and debilitating siege, the government sector was largely reduced to a welfare system distributing limited rations to the population. The rapid decline in government income not only forced the drastic reduction of state welfare provision, it also marginalized its role in the economy.

The result was that under the pressure of sanctions, the official institutions of the state, with the exception of the rationing system, retreated from society during the 1990s, especially in the areas of welfare and education. As part of the regime's strat-

egy for survival resources were drained from government ministries. Civil servants, teachers and medical staff had to manage as best they could; extracting resources from the impoverished population that depended on their services. Over the 1990s many professionals left public service either to take their chances in the private sector or flee into exile.

The legacy faced by the CPA

The legacy of Saddam Hussein's rule has made the task of the CPA that much harder. The institutions of the Iraqi state that the US had hoped to inherit in April 2003 were by that time on the verge of collapse. During March they were targeted by the third war in twenty years. This, in addition to thirteen years of sanctions specifically designed to weaken them and three weeks of looting in the aftermath of liberation, resulted in their disintegration. What had been planned as regime change and then the speedy reform of state institutions was now going to be something much more costly and long-term. The legacy of Baathist rule, thirteen years of sanctions and twenty years of war means that today the CPA is engaged in an unforeseen process of building a new Iraqi state from the ground up. By its very nature, this will take much more time, effort and expertise than was anticipated in the run up to invasion.

However, the negative legacy of Saddam Hussein's rule on the Iraqi population, is if anything, even more troublesome. For the Iraqi population, politics only began on April 9 last year. The Iraqi political organizations that the CPA are trying to liaise with have either been in existence for little over a year or have been imported into the country in the aftermath of regime change. This means that they have had a very short period of time to gain the attention of the population and more importantly win their trust or allegiance. With no indigenous civil society organizations surviving Saddam's rule, Iraqi politics are today extremely fluid. The population was largely atomized by thirty-five years of Baathist rule. Liberation has certainly led to political mobilization but at the present juncture this process is tentative, unstable and highly fractured. No one individual or party has managed to rally any significant amount of support from the population. This was starkly born out by the largest opinion poll ever conducted in Iraq. In February 2004 Oxford Research International interviewed 2737 people across Iraq. Although some of the results were broadly positive for the CPA, others highlighted distinct problems for the medium-term political stability of the country. When asked which organization they would vote for in a national election, the Shia party, Al-Da'wa, received the highest polling figure. But the support Al Da'wa registered was extremely low at only 10% of those questioned. Other parties that also claim a national base registered even lower polling figures. The largest percentage of those polled, 39.2%, answered that they did not know whom they would vote for. This was closely followed 34.5% who refused to answer the question. A similar very low response resulted from the question: "Which national leader in Iraq, if any, do you trust the most?" Again Al Da'wa's leader Ibrahim Jaafari got the highest rating but that was only 7.7% of those questioned. The more indicative results were 21.1% of those questioned who answered "none" and the 36.7% of those who did not answer or were not sure.

In Iraq today the CPA faces a highly mobilized but largely atomized society that is unrestrained by effective state institutions or by political parties. Nationwide democratic elections, both at a local, regional and national level could result in the structured political mobilization of the population. This would channel the hopes and aspirations but also the alienation and anger of the Iraqi people into the political process. It would tie the population in a transparent and consensual way to political parties who would be forced to develop a national network but also a national platform. Political parties, in order to prosper, would be forced to both be responsive to Iraqi public opinion but would also, to some extent, be responsible for shaping it. This process would also link the population, through the parties, to state institutions. Without such a process, discussions about handing sovereignty back to the Iraqi people are extremely problematic. As the Oxford Research International opinion poll indicated, "the Iraqi people" have not yet given their allegiance to any individual or party. They feel unrepresented at a national level. They have little or no affinity with the parties who claim to speak for Iraq. With this in mind handing sovereignty back to Iraqis would be dangerous and could, if anything, further increase the alienation of the Iraqi population from the CPA and the governing structures it is trying to build.

The problems

Against a background of increased violence and insecurity plans for rebuilding the political and administrative structures in Iraq appear to have become largely reactive. As policy has moved to meet a series of challenges it appears that little attention has been paid to the long-term consequences of each new initiative. The key problem damaging the occupation and hindering state building is the difficulty in communication between the American civil servants stationed in the green zone in downtown Baghdad and the mass majority of the Iraqi population. It is this inability to have meaningful interaction with Iraqi society that is the core problem facing the US. The CPA's relations with Iraqi society have been undermined by three factors. Firstly from April 2003 onwards the CPA has not had enough Arabic speakers on its staff. The occupation for many Baghdadis is now painfully personified by the daily scenes at the green zone's main gate in the centre of Baghdad. Here hundreds of Iraqis queue up to petition Ambassador Bremer whose office actually lies three miles beyond the initial security cordon. Rolls of barbed wire manned by worried American soldiers confront those who come to seek information from the CPA or try to explain their grievances. With no Arabic and understandably fearful for their own safety, these young men invariably control the Iraqis at the gate by shouting at them in English, cursing and threatening to use force. The result is frequent and bitter clashes between a population and their liberators, with both sides failing to communicate the reasons for their anger and alienation.

The second problem hampering the occupation is the CPA's continuing lack of expert knowledge about the country they are trying to control. Within the CPA's headquarters there are very few experts on Iraqi society, politics or economy. Those experts who have been posted to Baghdad have tended to be a small number of British civil servants, usually on six-month postings. Even this small handful of specialists has had difficulty influencing the making and implementation of policy.

With this limited expertise on Iraq the coalition became worryingly dependent upon the small group of Iraqi exiles it brought back to Baghdad in the aftermath of liberation. They were meant to provide several functions. First, they would become the main channel of communication between the wider Iraqi population and US forces. They would also, in spite of being absent from the country for many years, become the chief source of information and guidance for the American administrators struggling to understand and rebuild the country. Finally, and most importantly, they were set to become the basis of the new political elite. It was the exiles that were to form the core of Iraq's new governing classes. However, this reliance has brought with it distinct problems. The formerly exiled political parties, dominated by the Iraqi National Congress, have brought with them a very distinctive view of Iraqi society. This describes Iraq as irrevocably divided between sectarian and religious groupings mobilised by deep communal hatreds. This "primordialization" of Iraq bears little resemblance to Iraqi society in 2004, but appears to be very influential in the political planning that has gone on since April 9, 2003.⁶

The heavy reliance on organisations like the Iraqi National Accord (INA) and the Iraqi National Congress (INC) has further exacerbated the divide between Iraqi society and US forces. Despite setting up numerous offices around Baghdad, publishing party newspapers and spending large sums of money, the two main exile groups, the INC and INA have so far failed to put substantial roots into society. In a series of interviews with a cross section of Iraqis in Baghdad in May 2003, rich and poor, religious or secular, I found at best indifference and more usually anger towards the returned exiles, especially the avowedly secular INC and INA.⁷ This included one Baghdadi who under Saddam's rule had worked secretly for one of the exile groups. He was arrested and sentenced to death, a fate he only avoided, after nine months on death row in the notorious Abu Ghraib prison, because the regime collapsed. When I asked about the party he nearly lost his life for he replied: "I would have done anything to see the back of Saddam. But since the exiles have returned I have been disappointed, I do not trust them". Off the record many of the more candid formerly exiled politicians will admit that they themselves have been surprised by the difficulties they have faced since returning. Instead of being welcomed they have found a sullen and suspicious population who have largely refused to offer political loyalty to the newly returned parties.

The results

The inability of the exiled parties to develop significant constituencies within Iraq has not stopped the CPA from using them as the cornerstone of the new governing structures. This policy appears to have gone through four distinct phases. Firstly,

once Baghdad had been taken, the ex-general Jay Garner expressed a desire to move quickly to an interim government run by the formerly exiled politicians who came back to the capital with the US military. However the movement towards creating a representative body was hasty and rather ramshackle in nature. The first two meetings, at Ur near Nassariyah, on March 15 and then in Baghdad, on April 28, 2003, were designed to draw together Iraqis in some form of assembly. The meeting at Ur was notable for those who chose not to attend and the large demonstration against the meeting outside. This highlighted the small number of delegates (80) and the veracity of their claims to be representative of little more than themselves. Although the turnout in Baghdad was larger at 300, it did not reach the 2000-3000 predicted in advance. The organisers refused to indicate how many had been invited but did concede that the meeting was “not sufficiently representative to establish an interim authority”.⁸

The second phase of US approaches to rebuilding Iraq was marked by one of Ambassador Paul Bremer’s first decisions upon arriving in Baghdad. He decided to put Jay Garner’s plans on hold and delay delegating power to a leadership council mainly composed of the formerly exiled parties. Given the fluidity of the situation and the difficulties of engaging the Iraqi population in a political process in the aftermath of conflict, this appeared to have been a very astute decision. However, this cautious and incremental approach was set aside with the advent of the third plan for building governmental structures. This was heralded by the CPA, in conjunction with the United Nations, setting up the Iraqi Governing Council (IGC) in July 2003. This body, picked by Paul Bremer after extended negotiations between the CPA, the UN and seven dominant parties, was trumpeted by the CPA as “the most representative body in Iraq’s history”. The representative nature of the IGC does not come from the method of its formation but instead from the supposedly “balanced” nature of its membership. The politicians were chosen to approximate the ethnic make up of Iraq, with 13 members being technically Shia, five Sunnis, with a Turkoman and a Christian thrown in for good measure. The nature of this arrangement becomes apparent when it is realised that Hamid Majid Mousa, the Iraqi Communist Party’s representative and indeed the avowedly secular Ahmed Chalabi himself are included within the “Shia block” of thirteen. Is the Marxist Mr. Mousa meant to represent that section of the Shia community with leftist or secular leanings or is the CPA’s designation of him as a Shia more indicative of the rather strange nature of the ethnic mathematics used to form the IGC? This sectarian mathematics was also why the number of cabinet portfolios was increased to 25, so that the spoils of office could be divided up in a similar fashion.

The confessional basis to choosing the IGC caused much heated debate in Iraqi political circles and across the newly liberated press in Baghdad. Arguments focused on the way members were chosen, for their sectarian affiliation not their technical skills, and the dangers of introducing divisive confessional dynamics into the highest level of Iraqi politics. To quote Rend Rahim Francke, the Iraqi Ambassador-in-waiting to Washington DC:

. . . a quota system based on sect and ethnicity undermines the hope of forging a common Iraqi citizenship by stressing communitarian identity and allegiance at the expense of Iraqi identity . . . anyone who wishes to be involved in the political process must first advertise an ethnic, sectarian or at least tribal identity, and play the ethnic and sectarian card. Proclaiming one’s “Iraqiness” is no longer sufficient: one has to “declare” for a communal identity. This puts Iraq well on the road to Lebanonization . . .⁹

By mid-November 2003 the shortcomings of the IGC had become apparent to decision makers in both London and Washington. A fourth change in policy was trailed by a series of well sourced leaks in the media originating from both Baghdad and Washington highlighting the inefficiencies of the IGC. The fact that on average 17 of its 25 members had been out of Iraq since its formation was used to paint the governing council as ineffective. This press campaign reached its peak with the recall of Ambassador Bremer for consultations in Washington. This resulted in a new plan, a new timetable and the proposal for a new institution through which Iraqis were to govern themselves.

Pressured by the oncoming electoral cycle in America and increasing casualties in Iraq, the US government has sought to radically reduce the length and nature of its political commitment to Iraq. The new plan endorsed by the IGC on November 15, 2003, called for the drafting of a “fundamental law” to be followed by the creation of a transitional assembly of anything between 200 to 500 delegates. It is this assembly that was to select a cabinet and leader for Iraq and guide the country to democratic elections. Problematically, although the proposed transitional assembly was to play such a pivotal role in Iraq’s future it was not to be directly elected. In-

stead a system of indirect elections and caucuses were to be held, with town and city leaders “electing” delegates to the assembly in a series of countrywide town hall meetings.

This rather rough and ready approach to representation was not been greeted with universal approval in Iraq. Most importantly, the senior Shia cleric Marja Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani publically set himself against the “caucusing” approach, re-stating his long held and very public position that a constitutional assembly must be elected by universal suffrage. The Ayatollah’s position had been clearly articulated weeks before Paul Bremer’s departure for Washington in November. The fact that his opposition and its ramifications were underestimated, points to the continuing difficulties that the CPA is having in comprehending the dynamics of Iraqi politics.

The lack of communication between the American civil servants and military personnel, their handpicked allies on IGC and the wider population of Iraq is one of the key problems that has undermined the occupation and the CPA’s attempts at state building. From this inability to interact with Iraqi society springs the core problems facing the US and those who will inherit Iraq after June 30. Intelligence gathering is proving to be difficult because many Iraqis feel alienated from the CPA. The small number of Arabic speakers on its staff has undermined the CPA’s interaction with Iraqi society. This has contributed to the CPA’s lack of knowledge about the country they are trying to control. With almost no experts on Iraq on its staff the coalition became worryingly dependent upon the small group of Iraqi exiles it brought back to Baghdad with them. It is from amongst this group that the majority of the 25 members IGC were selected. However, this reliance has brought with it distinct problems. Firstly the formerly exiled politicians have proved to be unpopular. This means that the ICG, the most likely core of a new government, post June 30, is detached from the very people it is meant to represent. This gap between the political structures left by the departing CPA and the population does not bode well either for the growth of democracy or for the vanquishing of the insurgency.

Possible solutions

The whole process of building institutional and governmental links between the CPA and Iraqi society has been plagued by the fact that many Iraqis, aware of the increasing unpopularity of the US presence in their country, and believing it to be temporary, are still sitting on their hands, eschewing involvement in government institutions, political and administrative, until the situation becomes clearer and the risks of political involvement fewer. Overcoming this problem is the chief concern of Lakhdar Brahimi, the UN envoy to Iraq, who began his new mission on April 5. Early indications suggest that Brahimi may well be trying to reproduce an Afghan model. This would involve a caretaker government made up of a prime minister, president and two vice presidents. Before elections, scheduled for late 2004 or early 2005, this ruling triumvirate would gain legitimacy from a national conference, to be convened a short time after June 30.

It is unclear how this plan would overcome the problems that have undermined the various approaches of the CPA. Firstly where is Mr. Brahimi going to pick the president and prime minister? It seems very likely that he will be forced to choose from the core of the ICG, that has to date formed the revolving presidency of the council. If he does succumb to this temptation then all the problems that dogged the IGC, its lack of legitimacy, its inability to forge meaningful links with the population and criticisms of it being appointed and not elected will resurface.

Secondly because Mr. Brahimi, like his predecessor, Sergio Vieira de Mello, is working under the auspices of the CPA he runs the distinct danger of being perceived of as merely an appendage to the occupation. With the current poor security situation the proposed national conference may find it very difficult attracting a large and representative sample of the Iraqi population. If this were the case it would be very difficult for it to fulfill its dual roles as a forum for national consultation and a source of legitimacy for the new caretaker government. The failure of a national conference to gather momentum and bring together a broad cross section of the population would leave the caretaker government proposed by Mr. Brahimi dangerously exposed and open to similar criticisms and suspicions as those which have been leveled at the ICG since its formation.

The only way to avoid such pitfalls would be to internationalise the creation of governing institutions and democratic structures. This would not mean a partial or token role for the United Nations, organising national conferences or overseeing election. Instead it would involve bringing the whole occupation and state building under United Nations management. This would reduce the suspicion felt towards the CPA by sections of the Iraqi population. The organisation overseeing the move towards the creation of a new state would then not be the United States but the international community. Accusations of double standards or nefarious intent would

be much harder to sustain. Arguments about the occupier's willingness to relinquish power would also be negated. It would be the Security Council in New York not the US government in Washington that would have ultimate responsibility for Iraq's transition. This would result in many more Iraqis viewing the whole exercise with a great deal more legitimacy. The UN could then utilise expertise and troops from across the international community. Those involved in reconstruction, both Iraqis and international civil servants, would then not run the danger of being labelled collaborators.

ORDER AND VIOLENCE

The rising unpopularity of a sustained US presence in Iraq is closely linked to the nature of the order they have been able to impose on the country since the taking of Baghdad. For military occupation to be successful the population has to be overawed by both the scale but also the commitment of the occupiers. The speed with which US forces removed Saddam Hussein's regime certainly impressed the Iraqi population. In the immediate aftermath of April 9 there was little doubt that US military superiority appeared absolute. But the inability of American forces to control the looting that swept Baghdad and the continued lawlessness that haunts the lives of ordinary Iraqis has done a great deal to undermine that initial impression of American omnipotence.

Troop numbers and tactics have hampered the nature and quality of the law and order that American troops have been able to enforce in the aftermath of the ceasefire. In the run up to war Army Chief of Staff Eric Shinseki in a Senate hearing called for "hundreds of thousands" of troops to guarantee order. Michael O'Hanlon, of the Brookings Institute, based on his experience in the Balkans, took the figure of 150,000 as a minimum with at least 100,000 staying in the country for several years.¹⁰ At the moment there are only 137,000 US troops attempting to impose order on the country, this is clearly not enough to achieve the type of sustainable order state building requires.

The understandable tactics adopted by US troops, a combination of heavily armed motorised patrols and large fortified bases, means that the military presence became detached and largely remote from the Iraqi population. As the daily toll of US casualties mounts American forces are increasingly perceived of as weak and their presence in and commitment to the country as temporary. This general impression helps to explain why Baath loyalists began to reorganise in the spring of 2003 and why the remnants of Saddam's security services, sensing an opportunity to take advantage of US force vulnerability, began launching hit and run attacks with increasing frequency and skill.

Understanding the insurgency

A homogeneity of viewpoint in explaining the causes of both the insurgency and the large-scale terrorist attacks in Iraq appears to have developed amongst senior staffers in the US administration. General Richard Myers, the chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, has been keen to stress that resistance is neither monolithic nor nationwide. He argues that 90 percent of the incidents are in the so-called "Sunni triangle" of northwest Iraq, running from Baghdad north to Mosul and west to the Jordanian border.¹¹ Washington has been keen to portray the violence as the work of regime "hold-outs", die-hard Saddam loyalists who may have formed utilitarian alliances with radical Islamists from across the Middle East.¹² The logic of this argument is that the violence is highly unrepresentative of Iraqi popular opinion, geographically located in a comparatively small area of the country and politically limited to those fanatical enough or unintelligent enough not to realise that the old regime is dead and buried and that opposition to the new, US sponsored, world is futile.

However, the violence dogging the occupation springs from three separate sources with a host of causes beyond the "fanatical hold-outs" of the old regime. The first group undermining law and order are "industrial scale" criminal gangs operating in the urban centres of Basra, Baghdad and Mosul. It is organised crime that makes the everyday lives of Iraqi city dwellers so precarious. These groups, born in the mid-1990s when Saddam's grip on society was at its weakest, have been revitalised by the lawlessness of present day Iraq. Capitalising on readily available weapons, the weaknesses of a new and hastily trained police force and the CPA's shortage of intelligence about Iraqi society, they prey on middle class Iraqis, car jacking, housebreaking, murdering and kidnapping. It is groups like these that make the roads surrounding Baghdad so dangerous, regularly attacking foreign workers.

The second group involved in violence is, as the CPA argues, the remnants of the Baath regime's security services. Sensing the vulnerability of occupation forces they began launching hit and run attacks on US troops in May and have increased the

frequency, skill and geographic scope with which they are carried out. Two things must be understood about the genesis of the insurgency. First, the likelihood of a “hidden hand” coordinating and funding it from its outset is very doubtful. Research I carried out in Iraq at the outset of the insurgency paints a much more fractured if not organic picture of the forces arrayed against the US. The networks and personnel now pursuing the insurgency appear to have been reconstituted through personal, family and geographic ties in the months after April 9 not in response to a master plan developed in the run up to the invasion. Paul Bremer’s decision, upon his arrival in Baghdad, to dissolve the army on May 23 and embark on root and branch de-Baathification on May 16, 2003, contributed to the personal organisation of the insurgency. Baathists in late May felt under attack and vulnerable. The CPA edicts in conjunction with a spate of assassinations by radical Shia groups gave them the motivation to re-organise. It was only by the spring of 2004 that evidence began to emerge that a national organisation was beginning to coordinate the actions of the disparate groups involved in the insurgency.

The second factor supporting the insurgency is the coherence of the security networks that guaranteed Saddam’s survival in power for so long. The “Sunni triangle” is often talked about as a homogenous block of insurgency supporters, offering material and ideological comfort to the fighters. What is not understood is that the “shadow state”, the flexible networks of patronage and violence that were used to reshape Iraqi society in the image of Saddam Hussein and his regime, is still functioning coherently in the north west of Iraq.¹³ The same individuals who intimidated and demobilised Iraqi society in the north west under the Baath regime are still there today and can be expected to be carrying out their allotted function.

The result of these two factors is the insurgency today. The weaknesses of intelligence on the US side means American forces have a partial understanding of who is killing them, who is organising the insurgency and what its relations with the wider community are. The repeated large-scale swoops through north west Iraq by US troops, Operation Peninsula Strike, Operation Sidewinder and Operation Soda Mountain, may have resulted in the capture of large amounts of munitions, but they have also been accompanied by the deployment of large numbers of troops, mass arrests and widespread house searches. This has done little to stem the tide of violence. Without accurate, time sensitive intelligence and local knowledge such raids do, slowly, locate the remaining key players of Saddam’s ruling elite. But in the process they also alienate large sections of the population in the targeted areas. Large numbers of arrests and detentions are bound to fuel resentment and swell the ranks of the violently disaffected.

The final source of violence is certainly the most worrying for the CPA and the hardest to deal with. This can be usefully characterised as Iraqi Islamism, with both Sunni and Shia variations. Fueled by both nationalism and religion it is certainly not going to go away and provides an insight into the mobilising dynamics of future Iraqi politics. An early indication of the cause and effect of this phenomenon can be seen in the town of Falluja, thirty-five miles west of Baghdad. In spite of assertions to the contrary, Iraqis did not regard Falluja, prior to the war, as a “hotbed of Baathist activity”.¹⁴ On the contrary, Falluja had a reputation in Iraq as a deeply conservative town, famed for the number of its mosques and its adherence to Sunni Islam.¹⁵ In the immediate aftermath of regime change Iraqi troops and Baath Party leaders left the town. Imams from the local mosques stepped into the socio-political vacuum, bringing an end to the looting, even managing to return some of the stolen property.¹⁶

The fact that this town became a centre of violent opposition to US occupation so soon after liberation is explained by Iraqis I interviewed as a result of heavy-handed searches carried out by US troops in the hunt for leading members of the old regime. Resentment escalated when two local Imam’s were arrested.¹⁷ Events reached a climax when US troops broke up a demonstration with gunfire resulting in reports of seventeen Iraq fatalities and seventy wounded.

The repeated violation of the private sphere of Iraqi domestic life by US troops searching for weapons and fugitives has caused recurring resentment across Iraq, especially when combined with the seizure of weapons and money. It has to be remembered that as brutal as Saddam’s regime was, it never sought to disarm the Iraqi population. The deaths of six British soldiers in June 2003 in the southern town of Majar al Kabir, although almost certainly carried out by Shias, can also be explained in a similar fashion. It was preceded by a British army operation designed to recover weapons by searching houses. The resentment this caused erupted when a heavy deployment of British troops was replaced by a small number of lightly armed military police.

The insurgency changes tactics

The explosions in Baghdad and Karbala that greeted the signing of Transitional Administrative law in the first week of March 2004 marked a new phase in the insurgency. This was a response to the CPA's plans to hand over the provision of security to the nascent Iraqi army and police force. This new and destabilising phase of violence is designed to make Iraq ungovernable either by the US or a new Iraqi government. Terrorism is now being deployed with the twin aims of exacerbating sectarian tensions whilst at the same time seeking to stop the growth in indigenous governing structures designed to replace the occupation.

As US troops took a less public role and began to be redeployed to more secure bases, the insurgents have sought out more accessible target. The embryonic institutions and personnel of the new Iraqi state provided these. This change in tactics was heralded by the attack on three police stations in Baghdad on the same day in October last year. Since then this method has been extended in its geographical scope and ferocity, using car bombs to target police stations in Khalidiyah in western Iraq, Mosul in the north and Iskandariya and Hillah south of Baghdad. These attacks, along with a devastating car bomb assault on an army-recruiting centre in Baghdad that killed 53 people in February, are designed not only to discourage Iraqis from working for the new state but also to stop the growth of its institutions. They undermine attempts to deliver to the Iraqi population what they have been demanding since the fall of the Baath regime: law and order.

However the second tactic adopted by insurgents has the potential to be even more damaging to Iraq's long-term stability. By targeting the large crowds that gathered to commemorate the Shia festival of Ashura in Baghdad and Karbala, the perpetrators of the attacks on March 2 were attempting to trigger a civil war between Iraq's different communities. This approach first became apparent on August 29, 2003, with the car bomb at the Imam Ali mosque in Najaf. In February 2004 this tactic was extended to the Kurdish areas of Iraq when two suicide bombers killed 101 people in Irbil at the offices of the Kurdish Democratic Party and Patriotic Union of Kurdistan.

Prominent Iraqi politicians were keen to blame the rise in car bombing, civilian casualties and the resulting sectarian tension on outside forces. But there is a danger that they have tended to overstate their case. The efficiency of these attacks, their regularity and the speed with which they were organised in the aftermath of Saddam's fall all point to a large amount of Iraqi involvement. The shadowy organisation behind these sectarian attacks is much more likely to be a hybrid, with elements of the old regime acting in alliance with indigenous Islamic radicals and a small number of foreign fighters. This potent mix has allowed mid-ranking members of the old regime to deploy their training and weapons stockpiles. They have sought to ally themselves with a new brand of Islamic nationalism, seeking to mobilise Sunni fears of Shia and Kurdish domination and a growing resentment at foreign occupation. Although the use of indiscriminate violence has alienated the vast majority of Iraqi public opinion across all sections of society the carnage it has produced has been a major set back for state building and stability.

The results of insecurity

The inability of the CPA to impose law and order on Iraq has created a security vacuum across the whole of the country. This has given rise to another destabilising and very worrying dynamic that may come to dominate post-occupation Iraqi politics. Militias have stepped into the security vacuum further adding to instability and insecurity. In a country where automatic weapons are widely available and most men have had military training and many have seen active service, the organisation of militias is comparatively straight forward. The months since liberation has seen a plethora of armed groups taking to the streets, increasingly organised along sectarian lines. The inconsistent application of CPA disarmament edicts, allowing Kurdish militias to retain their arms while demanding that certain Shia ones cannot, has led to the militias filling the social space formally occupied by central government. Although these militias enjoy little popular support their very existence is testament to the inability of the CPA to guarantee the personal safety of the Iraqi population.

Clearly the establishment of countrywide order is essential for the successful creation of a stable state. It is also evident that more troops and policemen are needed for this to happen. What the events of the last two weeks have highlighted is that the nascent forces of the newly formed Iraqi army and police force are unable or unwilling to impose order. With the speed with which these forces were created it was perhaps overly optimistic to put such a large burden upon them with such haste. However, it is clear that US forces have also become a target of resentment and nationalist mobilisation. More troops are needed but of a different type. If the

occupation were internationalised, a UN force, would not be such a potent target of anger and suspicion. They could provide the numbers of troops on the ground needed for the provision of order.

CONCLUSIONS

It is hard to over-estimate what is at stake in Iraq today. The removal of Saddam Hussein has proved to be the beginning not the culmination of a long and very uncertain process of occupation and state building. The lawlessness and looting that greeted the liberation of Baghdad on April 9, 2003, has evolved into a self-sustaining dynamic that combines violence, instability and profound uncertainty. US troops now face an insurgency that has managed to extend its geographic impact, while increasing the level of violence and the capacity for destruction and instability.

Against this background the failure of American attempts to replace Saddam Hussein's regime with a stable, sustainable and hopefully liberal government would have major consequences far beyond Iraq, the region or indeed the United States itself. The failure of regime consolidation in Iraq for the Middle East would be very problematic. The importance of Iraq to the geo-political stability of the Gulf and the wider Middle East area can hardly be overestimated. Geographically it sits on the eastern flank of the Arab Middle East with Turkey and Iran as neighbours. Although its population is considerably smaller than both of its non-Arab neighbours, it is larger than any of the bordering Arab states. With oil reserves second only to Saudi Arabia its economic importance is clearly global. If the present domestic situation does not stabilise then violence and political unrest would be expected to spread across Iraq's long and porous borders. A violently unstable Iraq, bridging the mashreq and the Gulf would further weaken the already fragile domestic and regional stability of the surrounding states and the wider region beyond. Iraq's role as a magnet for radical Islamists from across the Muslim world, eager to fight US troops on Middle Eastern soil, would increase. In addition there is a distinct danger that neighbouring states would be sucked into the country, competing for influence, using Iraqi proxies to violently further their own regime's interests.

With this in mind and given the social and political legacy of Saddam Hussein's rule it is unfair but also unrealistic to ask one country to bear the major burden of rebuilding the state. No one country, even the world's sole remaining super power, has the resources and expertise to finish the job at hand alone. The rebuilding of Iraq is an international problem and should be given to the international community to handle.

FOOTNOTES

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²See Charles Tripp, "After Saddam", *Survival*, Vol. 44, No. 4, Winter 2002-2003, p. 26.

³Amatzia Baram, *Building Towards Crisis: Saddam Husayn's Strategy for Survival*, Policy Paper No. 47, (Washington: The Washington Institute for Near East policy, 1998), p. 73.

⁴Frederick D. Barton and Bathsheba Croker, "Winning the Peace in Iraq," *The Washington Quarterly*, Spring 2003, Vol. 26, No. 2, p. 10.

⁵See Peter Boone, Haris Gazdar and Athar Hussain, "Sanctions against Iraq: Costs of Failure", a paper given at "Frustrated Development: the Iraqi Economy in War and in Peace," conference, University of Exeter, Centre for Gulf Studies in collaboration with the Iraqi Economic Forum, July 1997, p. 10.

⁶See Isam al Khafaji, "A Few Days After: State and Society in a Post-Saddam Iraq", in *Iraq at the Crossroads: State and Society in the Shadow of Regime Change*, (edited by Toby Dodge and Steven Simon) (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies and Oxford University Press, 2003).

⁷This finding is supported by the opinion poll conducted during February 2004 by Oxford Research International. Ahmed Chalabi and Ayad Alawi both respectively

registered 0.2% of those questioned when asked “Which national leader in Iraq, if any, do you trust the most?” Another opinion poll carried out on June 2003 by the Iraq Centre for Research and Strategic Studies found “that only 15.1% of Iraqis polled in Baghdad said that the political parties in Iraq represented their interests. Approximately 63% of those surveyed preferred a technocratic government, rather than one based upon political parties.” See Puneet Talwar and Andrew Parasiliti, 108th Congress, 1st Session, Committee print, “Iraq: meeting the challenge, sharing the burden, staying the course.” A trip report to members of the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, p. 9.

⁸Jonathan Steele, “Delegates agree new talks on government”, *The Guardian*, April 29, 2003.

⁹Rend Rahim Francke, “Iraq Democracy Watch: on the Situation in Iraq”, September 2003. (<http://www.iraqfoundation.org/news/2003/isept/26—democracy—watch.html>).

¹⁰See the unedited transcript, “The day after: planning for a post-Saddam Iraq”, The American Enterprise Institute, Washington, DC, October 3, 2002.

¹¹See transcription of Fox News, July 6, 2003, <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,91170,00.html>.

¹²George W. Bush, “President Addresses the Nation”, Address of the President to the Nation, The Cabinet Room, September 7, 2003, and Testimony as Delivered by Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, and Director, Office of Management and Budget, Joshua Bolten, and Acting Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, General John Keane, Tuesday, July 29, 2003.

¹³For more information on this see Toby Dodge, “US intervention and possible Iraqi futures”, *Survival*, Vol. 45, No. 3, August 2003.

¹⁴See Paul Wolfowitz, Deputy Secretary of Defence, General Peter Pace, USMC, Vice Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff, Alan Larson, Assistant Secretary of State for Economics, Business and Agricultural Affairs, testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, 2:35, p.m., Thursday, May 22, 2003.

¹⁵This is based on interviews carried out by the author in Baghdad in late May last year.

¹⁶See Jonathan Steele, *The Guardian*, May 6, 2003.

¹⁷See Jonathan Steele reporting from Falluja, *The Guardian*, April 30, 2003.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Dr. Dodge.

Once again, we’ll have a 7-minute limit in our questions. We will try to adhere to that as best we can.

Now, let me start by saying that Mr. Perle has mentioned that the Iraqis will, finally, have to settle the issue themselves. His suggestion was that we should have brought in thousands of Iraqis at the outset, both for security purposes, as well as for governance purposes.

Dr. Cole, you’ve mentioned that, in fact, the overthrow of Saddam liberated Iraqis, liberated the religious groups, including Shi’ites who may have been affiliated with Iran, The Shi’ites may be interested in democracy, or maybe not; perhaps they are really interested a theocracy.

Dr. Dodge, you’ve added the disquieting thought that whether the leaders we are looking to in Iraq are exiles who have returned or whether they are indigenous and have been there through it all, very few have captured the attention or support of the Iraqi people. The poll you cited shows very small levels of support when it comes to a particular person, party or movement.

That will all come to a head on June 30 or before then, when Ambassador Brahimi and his team, are going to select leaders to fill these top posts—the president, two vice presidents and a prime minister. You suggested, Dr. Dodge, that he will make these selections from members of the Governing Council. This is a group, at least as you described it, that was imposed by the Coalition and that does not have the support of Iraqis. From the beginning, this group has had some problems in terms of executive leadership.

Now, granted, Ambassador Brahimi's advisory group approach may ameliorate this lack of support, but many of those advising him may not have high recognition either, or great popularity. They may not be able to add to the popular support this effort needs.

As Mr. Perle has said, perhaps our policy with the liberation of Iraq never had the follow-through from administrations or Congress in the past. Maybe pragmatically it was impossible for this group to overthrow Saddam militarily. Maybe that is something that was a non-starter.

In any event, we're faced, pragmatically, with somebody—Mr. Brahimi appears to be the one—naming people to lead Iraq. Maybe Iraqis will accept the choices, since they come from a United Nations commission and that it is an interim group whose main tasks will be to administer the basic functions of government and set the conditions for elections, which Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, in particular, has called for.

In my initial questions, I raised an issue that I would like to pose to you again, because it's not been touched upon further. What will happen if, for example, the governing group decides that the security that we are providing, which all of us believe today is really essential, is no longer needed? We would like other nations to be helping us, but, thus far no one has suggested that the 130,000 American troops ought to leave. Let's say this government really takes things seriously, and the new president, or the vice president, or so forth, indicates that they have some serious qualms about our tactics, whether it be in Fallujah, or with regard to Najaf, or other places. In other words, they might say to the American commander, you may be commander of 130,000 Americans, but we don't want you to go to Fallujah, or, further, we want to prescribe how the security will be done these days in our country.

Are you comfortable with the amount of clarity and legitimacy that U.N. Resolution 1511, the TAL, current CPA regulations, and—we hope—a new resolution will give to all of this structure? Will the American commander of the multi-national force remain in full charge of all the security or will he have to clear his decisions with the new sovereign government?

I'm raising this question in the same spirit as you've raised the question. How do you select the people? How are they given at least some strength, the low poll numbers that you've cited? How do we establish the relationship on security between the U.S. and this government that some people blandly say just has civil sovereignty? Iraqis may decide to take seriously the whole problem of governance.

At the end of the day there still are the technical questions of these elections. In Afghanistan, this has been formidable, for a variety of reasons. Barely 20 to 25 percent of the population has been registered, even though there is an agreement that the election should be held at a certain point. It has already been pushed back. It may be pushed back some more. Who will do the nitty-gritty political work in Iraq—registering valid voters, setting up security for some legitimacy—so that after these elections will be held, there will not be cries of, "Foul ball"? Who will be responsible for taking the steps to ensure that the upcoming vote in Iraq will not be

deemed to be a flawed situation in which the voters didn't get what they wanted?

Will each of you give a comment? That will exhaust my time. I will then turn to Senator Biden.

Mr. Perle, do you have any overall thoughts about this situation?

Mr. PERLE. I do think, Mr. Chairman, you've correctly identified some of the very difficult problems that arise in what is not a normal civil society in which the institutions we would normally turn to are there and available, and it's going to take very considerable ingenuity. It's going to take our military commanders working with the caretaker government for that period of time. Hopefully, it will be a very brief period. It's only meant to be a few months. Unless people are chosen who cannot manage a pragmatic relationship of that sort, I think they'll find a way to muddle through. But this is not going to be orderly, it's not going to be highly predictable, and there's a premium placed on our adaptability. And I think, so far—there have been plenty of mistakes, but, so far, we've proven pretty adaptable in understanding where things have gone wrong, and trying to correct them. So it isn't going to be neat, but I think we'll muddle through.

The CHAIRMAN. Dr. Cole.

Dr. COLE. Well, I agree that there are sets of very difficult issues here that have yet to be negotiated. And, indeed, we don't know with whom we will be negotiating them.

With regard to the military situation, I'm a little bit more optimistic about the relationship of any Iraqi government with CENTCOM, insofar as, the Iraqi army is gone. Iraq is a small country of 25 million, surrounded by very large countries, like Iran and Turkey, each of which have nearly three times as many, and which have very powerful militaries. Iran fought an 8-year war with Iraq not so long ago. Turkey has made noises occasionally about invading the north of Iraq. So I think that whether they like it or not, most responsible Iraqis are going to want a U.S. security umbrella. They may have severe differences of opinion. And, indeed, the Interim Governing Council that we appointed didn't like the strategy used at Fallujah, and said so on a lot of the satellite television. But they may have differences of opinion about particular tactics and so forth. I'm fairly optimistic that they're not going to want to be left in the lurch, regardless of their feelings about being occupied. So I think those things can be negotiated.

I would say, with regard to the issue of holding elections, it should be remembered that Iran was a constitutional monarchy from the 1920s through the 1950s. There were occasionally military coups in that period; but, on the whole and by and large, they had elections, and parties came to power, and prime ministers were elected, so this is not an unprecedented thing to happen in Iraq. And it ended, in part, because that was a game of large landlords in that period, and didn't have popular support.

I think there are already now city councils and provincial governing councils in place. They haven't been exactly democratically put in place, but they are there. There are people who would be in charge of voter registrations. The voter registration can be kept honest in some ways because it can be compared to the food-ration rolls that the U.N. had prepared.

So I think that, in principle, there's not a reason for which Iraq can't go to the polls in January. I think Grand Ayatollah al-Sistani desperately wants this. He doesn't want the country to fall into chaos. He will exercise his considerable moral authority in this regard.

I think there will be people who will attempt to disrupt this process. There will be guerrilla forces that attempt to disrupt it. And that's why I say that the elections should be held anyway. Even if some polling booths are bombed, the elections should go forward. Twenty-five million people should be allowed to vote in their government. It won't be perfect. The first government that is elected may be contested, but it will have a great deal more legitimacy than anything that can be appointed, and it's the only way forward.

The CHAIRMAN. Dr. Dodge.

Dr. DODGE. Thank you. I think we have two problems. We have the date of the 30th of June, which is shooting toward us with increasing speed, and you or I or the vast majority of Iraqis don't know what that will deliver, because so much of it is un-worked-out. So we have that very narrow and political timetable.

Then, on the other hand, we have a society ravaged by 35 years of dictatorship, which has no institutions, which is highly mobilized, but isn't coalescing around political forces, and that's the great tension.

So I guess your question is, how do we overcome that question? How do we—what's the best compromise we can find? Well, I think it's a hybrid. First, clearly, we—in the runup to elections, whenever they come—and they may well, almost certainly, I suspect, be postponed—we need to build local democratic structures, need to build on the limited work that's being done on local town councils and regional councils, and pump money and oversight into that, because that will clearly be the architecture which democracy will finally be built through. I think there's been too much emphasis on grand conferences in Baghdad, and not enough on the nitty-gritty un-glamorous work of building local democracy.

And, second, I agree with Professor Cole, you desperately need a national election, because what that will do is force these parties to develop a national base. And those that can't develop a national base won't get national votes. It will also force, to a certain extent, these parties to shape the policy, the very diverse and fractured policy, and explain to the Iraqi population, or negotiate with the Iraqi population, what is a valid manifesto. So you'll have a dialog between the parties and the population, which will be mutually transforming and then will channel political mobilization, anger as well as hope, through democratic institutions. So an election is desperately needed, but my great worry is that, like nearly everything else with this occupation, it will be postponed and then postponed.

Now, that's a pessimistic prediction. But while that may well be happening, it's desperate that much more emphasis is put on the local level, building up local democracy.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I thank all three of you. I will just make an observation that much seems to depend on the Ayatollah al-Sistani and his desire for an election to occur, for democracy to happen, for at least the Shi'ite majority to become a government. So that pragmatically, as Mr. Perle has said, things may muddle

through, because if they get off track, the elections the democracy, whatever may be manifested there'll get off track, likewise.

Senator Biden.

Senator BIDEN. Well, there seems to be an agreement among the three of you that elections should take place as rapidly as feasible. Is that right? Do you all agree with that?

[Witnesses all nodded heads in the affirmative.]

Senator BIDEN. And that's essentially what Chirac has been arguing for, for the last year, that there should have been elections almost immediately. He wanted to have them this spring. Was it feasible to have them this spring?

Dr. COLE. Yes, it was feasible. The British command in Basra actually has been a little bit insubordinate in being very open that they thought that such elections were entirely feasible. The CPA would say, "well, the election rolls are incomplete." They would say, "no, they've been updated." They would say, "well, they didn't include the Kurds." The British commander said, "well, yes, they do." And so Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani wanted to have the elections this spring. There was substantial international support for such an idea, and at least the British military command in Basra thought that it was feasible.

As a historian, I try to have a balanced view of these things, and I also do understand the reasons for which, perhaps, Mr. Bremer was not eager to go forward with such elections at this time. It's a risk. You don't know who exactly is going to be elected. And they did this in Bosnia, they had early elections after the violence ended there, and people got into power, quite frankly, who later were thugs, and who later on posed obstacles to then, down the road, further good things happening.

So I think one must remember that a lot of the American military and State Department and other personnel involved in Iraq, their recent history has been in the Balkans. And coming from that Balkans background, you can understand how they felt, well, we went too early to elections in the Balkans, and it had this—

Senator BIDEN. I was one who shared that view, by the way.

Dr. COLE. Yes, well—so I'm sympathetic—

Senator BIDEN. I know no one else acknowledges having made any mistake anywhere, but—

Dr. COLE. So I'm sympathetic to the reservations that they had; however, I think Iraq is not the Balkans, the Iraqi situation is different. I think there would have been a value in going to early elections in Iraq. I think it might have forestalled the recent blowup had they done that.

I also think it was a mistake not to have early municipal elections. People were planning municipal open elections in Najaf last June, and everything was set to go, and Mr. Bremer decided not to do it. What was reported in the press—and I don't know if it's true—is that he was afraid that pro-Iranian parties would win in Najaf. I hesitate to say this, but there are no parties that would win an election for the mayoralty of Najaf which wouldn't be favorable toward Iran, so if that's a consideration, you could never have elections there.

I think it was a mistake to cancel those elections. I think it made a bad impression on al-Sistani and other Shi'ite leaders that the United States was maybe not serious about democracy.

So I agree completely with Dr. Dodge that as soon as you can have free and open municipal elections, that would be a good base for the national scene. And John Burn, for instance, who is a Coalition Provision Authority figure in the Nazariah area, has been going around having open elections in the towns and villages around Nazariah with great success. So in some parts of Iraq, it's been done; in other parts, it's been the local lieutenant colonel who, sort of, appointed a council. It's diverse. But the more local choice can be there, the better.

Senator BIDEN. Dr. Dodge, what do you think?

Dr. DODGE. Just a brief point. The feedback from the local elections organized around Nazariah were quite intriguing and surprising. They threw up a much larger secular vote than would have been anticipated. The secular parties and independents got a larger share of the vote than anyone would have predicted?

Senator BIDEN. Richard.

Mr. PERLE. I don't think there is as much reason as some people suggest to fear that the Shia vote is going to be for the establishment of the theocracy. I don't think you would get a theocracy voted in Iran today. So this may be significantly overblown.

But I just wanted to raise a question about the idea that the current flare-up would not have taken place, or would have been mitigated had there been elections prior to this. The current flare-up is the product of the activity of people who would not be impressed or mollified or discouraged by elections. On the contrary, I believe it's the imminent transfer of authority leading to elections that has caused the al-Sadrs, who will not win an election, and the diehard Ba'athists, and, needless to say, the jihadists, to intensify their activity. They're fearful of precisely the kind of political development that we are all urging, so they would not refrain from their attacks if there had been an election.

Senator BIDEN. Well, then you'd have to have some additional security to deal with that, correct? With these flare-ups? They would have occurred whether or not we have elections.

Mr. PERLE. Well, I think the Ba'athists who were facing the gallows would not be deterred by elections—

Senator BIDEN. No, I'm not trying to be argumentative; I'm trying to understand. I don't disagree with you—that the very people who are the ones that conclude that they are not likely to succeed in a democratic process of some sort are the people that are most concerned about the transition taking place and ultimately having elections. Not generically the Sunnis, but specifically some elements of the Sunni population, the former Ba'athists in particular. I've read your statement and other things you've written, Dr. Cole, with great interest; it's why you're here. There is this sense that it is—the resistance among the Sunnis is pretty basic, even those who don't take up arms themselves. They know that 80 years of—on the “gravy train,” for lack of a better and unfair way of phrasing it, is over, that it's not going to happen, and they just figure, how are we going to get a piece of their pie?

I thought your version of a Connecticut compromise for Iraq is a good idea, that is two bodies. Everybody talks about democracy; we don't have a democracy here, we have a republic here. There would be no nation unless you decided that Delaware's going to get two senators, just like New York. Not kidding about it. It literally is true, it wouldn't have happened. And so I understand all that.

I'm trying to, practically, figure what we do immediately. And immediately, you're in a situation where you're saying elections make sense whether they would or would not have stopped what happened, that there is an insurgency that is indigenous, that's there. It's not going to go away, whether or not there are free and fair elections. And so what's the answer to deal with that? The answer to deal with that is greater security. The answer you've suggested, Mr. Perle, is that that rests with the Iraqis, training up the Iraqis. Yet every expert, people you used to work with in the Defense Department, who I visited with in Iraq, out of Iraqi, in the United States, in the Balkans, in Afghanistan have told us repeatedly, from the beginning, it's going to take a minimum of 3 years just to get to 40,000 trained Iraqis for the military, and going to take 5 years to get to 75,000 Iraqi police, which is the estimated need nationwide.

So what happens in the meantime? One of the things that I get from Iraqis—when I was there, as well as I get now—is that there's a resentment—and, in a sense, it's unfair to our troops—they believe our troops are there for force protection; they're not there to keep their daughter from being raped, they're not there to keep their daughter from being kidnaped, they're not there to keep their streets safe, they're not there to keep their homes from being looted, they're not there to keep them from being victimized. And there is nothing in between.

Again, last summer we went out to the police headquarters in Baghdad. We spoke with our trainers, our guys, our people, bright people—a year ago, almost—and they sat there and told us, when we asked them, "If you had all the money in the world, if we gave you every single thing you needed now, how long is it going to take you just to train up an Iraqi police force you could have some confidence in and be able to provide that kind of security for the people in Baghdad?" Not nationwide; in Baghdad. They said that would take at least 18 months. At least 18 months.

And so what do we do? Is that wrong? Or can we train these folks up—

Mr. PERLE. I think it's wrong. Yes, I think it's wrong.

Senator BIDEN. What evidence do you have?

Mr. PERLE. The question is, what standard are you going to train people to?

Senator BIDEN. Well, let me define the standard. To train them to the point that someone sending their daughter to a local school—great things we've done, open schools—does not have to sit outside that facility—as I watched—in automobiles with their motor running the entire period their daughter is in there so that they don't have to walk from the front door of the school to the car without the mother or father being there to physically make sure the daughter makes that path, which is no longer from this wall to that door. So to provide that kind of security. So they're com-

fortable to the extent that one is comfortable in major cities in the world, that they are likely that their daughter can make it from the school door to the automobile or the bus, or they're likely to be able to walk or get in an automobile and drive from point A to point B in Iraq without them being victimized—not blown up; their car being stolen, just that. Just basic elements of what we would consider to be basic order, so that people could go to the grocery store, go to a local bank, make sure they send their kid off to school, and have some prospect that it is likely that they can get back to their home safely. That's all I'm talking about.

Mr. PERLE. But in much of the country, Senator, that's the situation today.

Senator BIDEN. Oh, in much of the country, it is. But in much of the country, it isn't. In a vast portion of where the populations are, it isn't; at least they don't think it is. In my visits, they don't think it is. I don't have anybody telling me—do you guys get that? I mean, do they think it is?

Dr. COLE. Well, actually, in the parts of the country that there's fairly good security, it is because the CPA or the local authorities are cooperating with these militias. The small city of Samawah, where the Japanese are, is being patrolled by al Da'wa paramilitary and by the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq's Badr brigade. In Basra, at least Arabic press reports suggest that the British officials have openly made a kind of agreement with Badr corps and other Shi'ite militias to patrol the streets in Basra. And so you have fair security in Basra, but it is as the price of these paramilitary groups having a certain amount of influence.

And I'd like to suggest that it's not useful to demonize them. That is to say, a lot of these are poor Shi'ite guys, who are unemployed otherwise. They maybe get a small stipend if they join a militia. They're fluid. Their loyalties are in flux, you know—

Senator BIDEN. Well, I'm not demonizing. I'm not sure—

Dr. COLE. No, oh, I'm not suggesting that you did. I'm suggesting that somebody else did.

Senator BIDEN. No, all I'm trying to do is get to the point where—where are we able to be, other than—for example, Chuck Hagel and I spent a little time in Northern Iraq, up in Arbil. We met with Barzani and Talabani. There's security up there. You drive through these big stone entrances, and you see guys standing up on top of the stone entrance with their AK-47s. They're the Barzani clan. There's security in there. They're not a problem. They've got security, man.

Matter of fact, the only thing I worried about in Arbil is, one of these guys were going to trip on the marble floor and their gun was going to go off, and there are about 80 of them, literally, in this hallway, all carrying AK-47s. I was hoping they had their safeties on. They were there to protect me. I was worried one of them was going to trip down the steps and accidentally shoot me.

So there's that kind of security. But what I'm talking about is this notion of some idea of a kind of police force that quasi-democracies have. And the experts I've spoken to, Richard, tell me it's going to take 3 to 5 years to get there. You're telling me you can do that quickly.

Mr. PERLE. I think if you believe that you've got to build a police academy first, and go out and acquire real estate to do that, and produce a freshly minted police department in classes the way we would go about it, I suppose it could take 5 years. If you say to Barzani or Talabani, we need some police. Can you help us out with some people that we can put through, sort of, basic police training? Can you draw them from the pesh merga? I think you'll get police—

Senator BIDEN. I agree.

Mr. PERLE [continuing]. In a hurry. And we need to—

Senator BIDEN. But what about the Sunni triangle?

Mr. PERLE [continuing]. Adapt to the local situation.

Senator BIDEN. Who do we go to in the Sunni triangle to say that?

Dr. DODGE. I think we have a tension between long-term strategy and short-term tactics. The short-term tactics of the British doing deals on street corners in Basra and across the south did result in a very uneasy law and order that we saw broke down over the last 2 or 3 weeks because it was uneasy, and it was a compromise between a weak occupying force and a weak set of militias. And when the sections of militias decided they didn't like the occupying force anymore, they revolted against them. The security that you saw in the north is another militia. It's not providing law and order; it's backing Barzani, Talabani.

Senator BIDEN. I agree, yes.

Mr. PERLE. And that's the great worry. So the number of short-term deals you get to get some rough-and-ready security stood up, the longer long-term weakness of law and order.

I think there's two points. And I totally agree with what Mr. Berger said in the last testimony, as far as I saw—5 years. And what do you do while that's unfolding? You try and drain the popularity away from the militias, away from the insurgents, and you do that by democracy. So it's a dual tactic. You clearly state what the Iraqi people were promised in the runup to the invasion—was democracy, stability, and rule of law—and that takes time. And there are shortcuts you take that undermines that. And while you do that, you give them democracy so they can channel their energies into a process they believe they own. So it's a dual-track thing. The more corners you cut, the more you're undermining the promises given to the Iraqis just before the invasion.

Senator BIDEN. Well, there's many more questions, but so little time, and the Chairman is accurately pointing out we have a colleague here. I apologize, Senator. I didn't see you there. I'm sorry for going on.

The CHAIRMAN. And Senator Corzine.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Biden.

Senator Brownback.

Senator BROWNBACK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, very much. And thank you for being here, gentlemen.

I wanted to catch, Mr. Perle, just a question here. We've had a number of people—and, I'm sorry, I missed some of the testimony earlier, so if this has already been discussed, forgive me for not having heard it—we've got a number of people that are pushing that we need to further internationalize the effort in Iraq, and

clearly we want international support for it. There's no question about it. But if that means that we bring in a lot more international troops and police, what are we currently getting out of internationalizing it, beyond us and the Brits? And what would we get if we further internationalized it on the security-force area?

Mr. PERLE. I think, Senator, that the political support that comes from other countries contributing to the effort is very valuable. The practical effect of small numbers of forces, who may operate under rules of engagement that severely restrict their ability to take on the tough tasks—to deal with a Fallujah-type situation, for example—I think the contribution that comes through that means is pretty minimal. And there's sometimes the sense that we are carrying this great burden—and we are—and if we could only get others to share it, it would significantly diminish the burden we have to carry. I think, as a practical matter, that's highly unlikely.

Senator BROWNBACK. How do we get more of the international political support that we do seek, to where we wouldn't have the French, others, constantly belittling or berating what we are doing, which, to me—and I want to preface this by saying, I met, last week, with soldiers at Fort Riley that had been over in the region for a year. I had kind of a closed town-hall meeting with about 300 of them. And they're probably going back in less than a year. To a person, they were strongly supportive and believed in what they had done and were doing, and thought this a great and noble cause, and were deeply concerned that the weakest part—or what they're concerned about is moving U.S. public opinion, that it would somehow pull out—pull us out of the region, and then the sacrifices—the huge sacrifices we've already made would be seen as for naught. And they feel very honored to have done what they have done.

How can we get to some of that international political support in ways that are not currently being done?

Mr. PERLE. I think that is, of course, a task for our diplomats, and they work at it. It's difficult. Take Spain, for example. We had the strong support of President Aznar. He's now been replaced by someone who doesn't support us, who's pulling his forces out precipitately. The French, for their own reasons, never liked our policy in Iraq. They don't like it today. Germans are similarly disposed, although not as vehement. The Italians are there with us. The Poles are there with us. In fact, many more countries are with us than have actively opposed us.

What I think really matters is less what someone in the Elysee Palace or the Quai d'Orsay thinks about the situation than what Iraqis themselves think, which is why I believe it's urgent to empower the Iraqis. Up to this moment, we have not given the Iraqis any significant scope for taking their own destiny in their own hands. The Governing Council has had such a restricted mandate that it's not surprising that there's no confidence reposed in the people who have been appointed to the Governing Council.

I think we will see a dramatic and significant change in the engagement of Iraqis when the Iraqis are represented by people they respect and admire and choose.

Senator BROWNBACK. And when they have real political authority.

Mr. PERLE. When they can make decisions. Nobody's going to pay a lot of attention to somebody who's appointed to an organization, but has no authority and no ability to make decisions to affect their lives. Where, at the local level, some of these councils have been, you see people getting drawn into a political process. And it's working in some places remarkably well.

So I think we've done ourselves a disservice by regarding the Iraqis themselves as incapable of managing their own affairs in any significant way.

Senator BROWNBAC. So really the key to the future of Iraq is Iraqis; it's not internationalizing the event.

Mr. PERLE. I think internationalizing it could actually be inconsistent with rapid devolution to the Iraqis themselves. The United Nations, for example, is—let's face it, it is a large international bureaucracy. It has all the problems of a national bureaucracy, compounded by the fact that nations get to nominate personnel. And they do that for all kinds of reasons, including, sometimes, professional competence. So you have a big bureaucracy, which tends to stay for very long periods of time. They develop their own interest in remaining where they are. And that can encourage a culture of dependency and a lack of self reliance, and make it very difficult for people to assume responsibility for themselves.

So I certainly hope we don't see a large-scale internationalization of this. I think that will retard the essential, which is rapid movement, toward the empowerment of Iraqis.

Senator BROWNBAC. Is that the difference in the model between Afghanistan and Iraq that we've seen as—where in Afghanistan, we brought in Afghanis to run things—were brought in to have real political authority much quicker than what we've seen taking place in Iraq?

Mr. PERLE. There's certainly lots of problems in Afghanistan. But I think the fact that Karzai came in rather quickly, and there is now a political process, there's now a legislative body—I think all of that has contributed to the significant progress that's been made in Afghanistan. The principal problem in Afghanistan is resources. They simply don't have the money to develop the country as rapidly as it needs to be developed.

Senator BROWNBAC. Well, you just don't hear, kind of, the international harping on Afghanistan, like you do on Iraq. Now, maybe there's—the Iraqi legacy is there anyway. But it strikes me a good part of it is, is that you—Afghanistan, you had an Afghan face and leadership rather quickly there and—we're a year later in Iraq, and we still don't have an Iraqi leadership in Iraq.

Mr. PERLE. I believe that Iraq has become the poster child for a lot of resentment at the emergence of the United States as the super power. It's not insignificant that President Chirac decries the existence of a unipolar world. And there is bound to be a certain amount of resentment at the position we occupy. And distancing themselves from our activity in Iraq, I think, is part of that. It's caught up in the global politics of that. So I think that exaggerates the problem. It's one of the reasons why I think it's unrealistic to expect significant contributions from other countries beyond those who are already in Iraq. And it's a reason why I don't think we

should be deeply troubled by that. We need to get on with the business in Iraq.

The right answer in Iraq is success in Iraq, and the quickest route to success is by empowering the Iraqis. We don't want to be an occupying power, we don't want to deprive the Iraqis of a real political process. Legitimacy for their leaders is very much in our interest and in the world's interest, and we've just got to get on with it.

Senator BROWNBACK. If I could just, Mr. Chairman—it strikes me, from what you're saying, actually we could delay the process of bringing Iraqis in control, I think, as you said earlier, if we'd further try to really spend our energies on internationalizing this effort.

Mr. PERLE. Indeed. I'm a little concerned about the idea that the CPA—which I think has 3,000 people now in Baghdad, who are not communicating—I think the point that was made is quite right, the isolation of the CPA is a serious problem. And there are reasons for that. Physical security is one; language, another; skills is another. But I hope that after the Iraqis begin to assume responsibility for themselves, we wind up with an embassy in Baghdad that is a normal embassy, and not—that we don't simply change the nameplate by the door from “Coalition Provisional Authority” to “United States Embassy.”

The CHAIRMAN. Let me recognize Dr. Cole, and then we probably should move on to—

Senator BROWNBACK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Dr. Cole.

Dr. COLE. I think that the question of internationalization depends upon what it means. That is to say—and I think we have to really question this idea of “the Iraqis.” I mean, we were told, last year this time, that “the Iraqis” were going to jump up and down for joy that the United States came in, and they'd be putting garlands of roses on everybody's necks, and “the Iraqis”—well, of course some Iraqis felt that way. Certainly. A lot of the Shi'ite and Kurdish Iraqis were very glad to see the Americans show up and get rid of Saddam.

Mr. PERLE. It's about 85 percent of the population.

Dr. COLE. But “the Iraqis” don't exist. And, of course, what that argument left out was that there was going to be a substantial number of Iraqis who weren't going to be happy to see these things. So when we say that “the Iraqis” should take over, of course the Iraqis should take over, but there's going to be a caretaker government as of June 30, and the question is, who exactly is going to be in the caretaker government, which Iraqis, and how is it going to be chosen, and is it going to be trusted by large sections of the various constituencies inside Iraq to preside over the transition to an elected government? Because it should be remembered that that caretaker government could work out lots of different ways. It could have advantages of incumbency, which would allow the appointees to take undue advantage of their position to try to propel themselves into power. We've seen a lot of nepotism and cronyism among members of the Interim Governing Council. When they were asked to appoint cabinet members, they appointed their cousins and their sons, and contracts have been thrown to cronies, and so

forth. So people in Iraq are very nervous about this process of how you get people in power, who exactly they represent, and whether they're going to misuse their position.

So the precise form that President Bush appears to me now to have endorsed seems to be very wise, which is, you involve Mr. Brahimi, you involve the United Nations in making that determination of who exactly is going to be the caretaker government—the president, the vice president, the prime minister—on June 30. And that United Nations involvement will give that caretaker government a kind of legitimacy that appointment by the U.S. Government simply is never going to have. And I think we should understand that the last 3 weeks have demonstrated there are very substantial problems with the legitimacy of the American enterprise in Iraq. There are substantial—it's not just a couple of flare-ups—there are substantial proportions of that population that are very unhappy with the way things are going.

So I think this is the right time to involve the U.N. in that particular regard. I'm not saying, necessarily, bring in a lot of U.N. troops or whatever. And I think Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, who is one of the most respected people in Iraq, has also endorsed this kind of process.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Corzine.

Senator CORZINE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I truly appreciate your holding this set of hearings. I apologize for not being here earlier this morning, with work on the floor. And some of the questions may be repetitive.

But one of the things—the assumptions that I am hearing here, which I'm actually quite troubled by, is that we have consistently set out game plans—I'm not even sure how effective those plans have been laid down—then had to change because circumstances on the ground, pragmatically, led to different responses to the current situation. We were supposed to have a status-of-force agreement put in place, I don't know, 3 or 4 months ago. Given the fact that there has been this enormous shift—different people can categorize it however they want—the fact is, is that American men and women are losing their lives in this process, in untold numbers in the last 3 weeks, and it certainly catches the public's attention, it catches this Senator's attention, and, you know, it has a great human element to it.

Why are we so committed to a timetable that apparently was pulled out of the air more than—I've been involved in business plans, and sometimes you work your way through, and then you get to a point, and you say, well, we're not prepared to go. We don't know what the status-of-forces are, we don't know who we're going to transfer this to, we don't know what the civil sovereignty means, versus military sovereignty is about. We have a rough justice view of the direction of this. We're arguing about whether it should be internationalized or shouldn't be internationalized. I think we are not in a prepared state—it doesn't seem to me—now, I don't have all the information that I'd like to be asking the administration why they think we're in a period of preparation. We're still arguing about whether we should have more forces on the ground or we shouldn't have more forces on the ground. How do we create security? No one would disagree with Mr. Perle's argument in the long

run that we'd like to have an Iraqi face on this. That's just not possible right now. Or if it was, then we have really not prepared ourselves for this moment in time.

So the simple question is, why June 30? When, in fact, the most important thing—which I think was generally agreed by the panel—was getting to an election that actually has Iraqi legitimacy to it, as opposed to this mad rush toward June 30 with all kinds of unanswered questions. In the Afghani model, which, by the way, at least to my mind, looked like an international—I thought they had an international conference in Bonn—people were on the ground, we had the United Nations, sort of, supervising how the thing worked. I see international troops fighting alongside the American side. Maybe that's not internationalization; maybe it's just Afghani. I don't really believe that. But the fact is, we need to make decisions that will allow for the reality of creating security and political arrangements that will set up this election that I think all of us agree ultimately are the appropriate things.

What's so magic about June 30?

Mr. PERLE. Well, it's a date that was established—it's too late, in my view. It took rather longer than it should have for us to come to the conclusion that the position of an occupying power was one in which the situation would become increasingly difficult. And so we should have—in my view, we should have prepared to turn over sovereignty much before now.

But having settled on this date, Senator, to back away from it at this point would raise the question of—

Senator CORZINE. Even if we're unprepared? Even if there are so many unanswered questions that your result of that turnover—

Mr. PERLE. I think they're going to be unanswered—no matter what the date is, there are going to be unanswered questions. If one could show that if you slip this by a month, something of critical importance that will improve the prospects for success will take place in that intervening period, I suppose like a business plan, you'd have a good argument for examining that. One should be open-minded about it. But we will get readier when we face a deadline. Campaigns come together in the last few weeks before people go to the polls. Things get sorted out in mergers and acquisitions when you're facing the deadline. I think the deadline's important. It's action-forcing. And we've learned by experience that there are real limits to how much we can expect to plan and organize. Things have a life of their own. So I think it would be a great mistake to slip this date, and it would raise a question about what the alternative date is going to look like as we approach that.

If you believe, as I do, that the beginning of the process of empowering Iraqis is politically critical to evolution in the right direction in Iraq, then I think the argument for getting on with it is very powerful.

Senator CORZINE. I think you could accept your assumption that empowering them is right, but making sure you do it right, and answer the questions of status-of-force and making sure that there's enough security on the ground—not only for the Iraqi situation, which I think ultimately is what our mission is, but also for our own men and women that are carrying out that mission—is at least a question that I have.

Mr. PERLE. It's a fair question, but I don't believe the security situation would change dramatically if we added another 6 months. We have to deal with the problem in Fallujah, that's clear. We have to deal with some other isolated—I don't accept the idea that there's some mass uprising here. I don't see any evidence of a mass uprising. I think we've pretty much identified where the trouble is coming from, in Fallujah and among al-Sadr's militia. And, in fact, I think we're making significant—now, I haven't seen reports today—but significant progress in resolving at least the al-Sadr issue, and possibly in Fallujah, as well, with some people giving up their weapons through a negotiated arrangement. So the security situation, which looked dreadful last week, may look a lot better a week from now.

But there's very little we can do quickly that is fundamentally going to give you confidence that the situation is secure, and I doubt that anyone would want to delay the movement toward Iraqi sovereignty for any extended period of time.

Dr. COLE. Could I just say that the reasons for which this date was set have to do with the crisis of last October, when it became increasingly clear that Mr. Bremer could not, as initially envisaged, continue to rule Iraq virtually by fiat for an extended period of time. He flew back to Washington, he negotiated with the Interim Governing Council. And initially his plan was to have council-based elections and to have a more legitimate government come into power on June 30 that at least had some electoral input from some proportion of the Iraqi public. Those council-based elections were viewed by Grand Ayatollah al-Sistani and many other Iraqi actors as stage-managed and not genuine representatives—representations of the Iraqi public will. And so that element of it had to drop out, but the transition remained. So there is a kind of natural history of how this thing has happened.

But I have to say that—I read the Iraqi press in Arabic every day—my firm impression is that this is enormously popular among the Iraqis. That is to say they want a transition on June 30. There's no faction in Iraq, on any part of the political spectrum, that would be at all happy with any kind of delay in this date.

And I think we have to recognize that, the way things have turned out, it is largely going to be a symbolic moment. I mean, the United States is still going to make a lot of important decisions in Iraq. There's going to be a weak caretaker government, which may have some U.N. influence in its appointment.

But the big date now is next winter's elections. And if the security situation can be stabilized to the point, and if preparations can be made, for those elections actually to occur, that, for me, would be the light at the end of the tunnel. That's the one glimmer of hope I see in this situation.

I don't understand how someone can look at what happened the last 2 weeks and say it's not a popular uprising. The United States lost control of much of Baghdad. Its supply lines and communications lines to the south were lost. A rag-tag bunch of militiamen in Kut chased the Ukrainian troops off of their base and took control of it. This was an uprising. And how much popular support it had is hard to know. It's true that, when pushed, these people took

off their uniforms and went home. But there are real problems here.

Senator CORZINE. I would only say, though, that if you create a structure that is a problem for getting to the elections, then you may have satisfied public opinion—so-called public opinion in the short run, and ended up creating one helluva mess when you get to what I think, all the voices I hear, both those that were in favor of this, weren't in favor of it. And none of us want to "cut and run," but we want to get to a positive conclusion. That is those elections. And it seems to me—just one person's observation—we're on a mad rush with regard to a lot of unanswered questions, and that we feel pressure about it.

Dr. DODGE. I think that that's the great danger that you've both hit upon, that there is a sense that something's going to change on June 30, in Iraqi popular opinion; and when we look at what that's based on, there aren't state institutions in Iraq that run from Baghdad to the periphery of the geographical area of Iraq. The polity, as we've seen, is not ready for elections when—so there'll be an interregnum before elections come, and security is absolutely dreadful. And, when pushed, the new indigenous security structures, the police and the army, ran away or refused to fight when they were asked to impose security. So then there is a buildup of aspiration around June 30 that I suspect, in a pessimistic prediction, will then—when that popular opinion realizes that nothing changes after June 30, then things may well get a lot worse in the runup—in the aftermath of that date, that—exactly as you say, Senator, that that goodwill or hope will be then frittered away, and the next dates will be even more difficult to move toward. That's the great danger, that nothing about this handover has been nailed down, nothing—we can't say—the ink has not dried yet, the document hasn't been written yet. There is so much uncertainty in a very uncertain and disturbed country, that June 30 may well add to our problems, not detract from them.

Senator CORZINE. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Corzine.

I thank each of you for your patience and your longevity in this hearing and your wisdom.

The hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1:11 p.m., the committee adjourned, to reconvene at 9:30 a.m., on April 21, 2004.]

