U.S. POLICY OPTIONS IN THE IRAQ CRISIS

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

JULY 17, 2007

Serial No. 110–99

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

Available via the World Wide Web: http://www.foreignaffairs.house.gov/

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

36–822PDF WASHINGTON : 2007

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

TOM LANTOS, California, *Chairman*

HOWARD L. BERMAN, California
GARY L. ACKERMAN, New York
ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA, American Samoa
DONALD M. PAYNE, New Jersey
BRAD SHERMAN, California
ROBERT WEXLER, Florida
ELIOT L. ENGEL, New York
BILL DELAHUNT, Massachusetts
GREGORY W. MEEKS, New York
DIANE E. WATSON, California
ADAM SMITH, Washington
RUSS CARNAHAN, Missouri
JOHN S. TANNER, Tennessee
GENE GREEN, Texas
LYNN C. WOOLSEY, California
SHEILA JACKSON LEE, Texas
RUBÉN HINOJOSA, Texas
JOSEPH CROWLEY, New York
DAVID WU, Oregon
BRAD MILLER, North Carolina
LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ, California
DAVID SCOTT, Georgia
JIM COSTA, California
ALBIO SIRES, New Jersey
GABRIELLE GIFFORDS, Arizona
RON KLEIN, Florida

ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, Florida
CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, New Jersey
DAN BURTON, Indiana
ELTON GALLEGLY, California
DANA ROHRABACHER, California
DONALD A. MANZULLO, Illinois
EDWARD R. ROYCE, California
STEVE CHABOT, Ohio
THOMAS G. TANCREDO, Colorado
RON PAUL, Texas
JEFF FLAKE, Arizona
JO ANN DAVIS, Virginia
MIKE PENCE, Indiana
JOE WILSON, South Carolina
JOHN BOOZMAN, Arkansas
J. GRESHAM BARRETT, South Carolina
CONNIE MACK, Florida
JEFF FORTENBERRY, Nebraska
MICHAEL T. MCCAUL, Texas
TED POE, Texas
BOB INGLIS, South Carolina
LUIS G. FORTUÑO, Puerto Rico
GUS BILIRAKIS, Florida

ROBERT R. KING, *Staff Director*
YLEEM POBLETE, *Republican Staff Director*
ALAN MAKOVSKY, *Senior Professional Staff Member*
GENELL BROWN, *Full Committee Hearing Coordinator*

CONTENTS

U.S. POLICY OPTIONS IN THE IRAQ CRISIS

TUESDAY, JULY 17, 2007

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:36 a.m. in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Thomas Lantos (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Chairman LANTOS. Committee will come to order.

If there was any question about the direction of Congress on Iraq, it has become crystal clear in the past 2 weeks. With respected Republican leaders like Richard Lugar and John Warner breaking ranks and firmly stating the need for a change in course, the pressure on the administration is becoming greater by the day. Soon the chorus of voices calling for a responsible redeployment will be impossible for the White House to quell with a veto threat.

For now, the administration remains willfully deaf to these calls. But even if the President does veto the redeployment bill that I cosponsored and that passed the House last week, Congress will send yet another telegram to the White House—and next time more Republicans will show up to help deliver it. And the time after that, even more will stand up and be counted.

I hope it doesn't come to that, but I fear that it might. The administration astonishingly signaled yesterday that it is considering a further increase in troop levels in Iraq. The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Peter Pace, said one of the options on the table would be to boost the number after General Petraeus' crucial report in September. This would represent an irresponsible disregard for the strong will of Congress and of the American people.

The administration is fighting against the tide with a misinformation campaign. After each damming military report and devastating development, the White House spins a story about partial progress and the slimmest of successes.

The fact is that Iraq has spiraled into a civil war that cannot be contained. Four years and four months into the war, the level of violence is once again flaring, as demonstrated by the ghastly bombings yesterday in the city of Kirkuk.

In its interim benchmark report, the administration again tried to sugarcoat the rapidly deteriorating situation on the ground. Using the most liberal grading standard possible, the administration could get no more than a 50-percent grade to the Iraqis. Among the list of the unmet benchmarks were some of the most critical of all, including the disarming of militias and the ability of the Iraqi security forces to operate independently.

Let us face it, the troop escalation is a categorical failure and the American people know it. Like most Americans, I am convinced that the war has dragged on too long and cannot be won anytime soon by any definition of winning that includes peace and good government. The issue is no longer whether we get out. It is how we get out, how soon, and how we manage the aftermath.

So even if the Senate passes the redeployment bill this week to match ours, and the administration vetoes it, we will continue to insist on a reasonable and responsible withdrawal plan that presents the least bad option for Iraq, the region, and our national security interests.

Many doomsayers predict the direst of consequences in the aftermath of a withdrawal from Iraq. There is concern about the prospect of regional war and possibly genocide. There is concern about the possibility of a war between Turkey and the Iraqi Kurds. And there is considerable concern about the prospects that Iraq will fall fully under the sway of Iran once the United States withdraws. We must grapple with and address these concerns as we craft a withdrawal plan.

I look forward to working with Republican leaders on ensuring that our withdrawal is safe and responsible, both for our troops and for Iraq. A few courageous Republican senators have seen the writing on the wall and are boldly stating that we must change our strategy urgently.

The bill introduced by my friends, Senators Warner and Lugar, calls for the administration to adopt a shift in our approach to Iraq by October. While I do not think that their bill goes far enough to really change course, it does employ a tactic that might accomplish a great deal: Reconsidering the 2002 war authorization legislation and reshaping it for today's more realistic mission. I applaud Republican leaders for breaking ranks, and I urge Republicans in the Senate to turn up the heat on the White House by voting for a responsible redeployment plan this week as the House has already done. Congress must bring the administration back down to Earth on Iraq.

The administration must come to grips with what the Congress and the American people have known for months: We have to finally get our troops out of harm's way. Over the past week it has become apparent that Congress and the administration do not just disagree about the war, but are in fact working in two different orbits.

The administration has no concrete plan to bring an end to the war before the conclusion of its term. Meanwhile, Congress is becoming increasingly committed to crafting strong, substantive initiatives toward a wise redeployment. I urge the administration to finally heed the calls of the leaders of its own party and the will of the American people.

I now turn to my good friend and distinguished colleague, the ranking member of the committee, Ms. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, to make any remarks she might choose to make.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you as always, Mr. Chairman, for your leadership and for calling this hearing. But Mr. Chairman, how can we expect that a complex military operation that has been

in place roughly 1 month with the full troop strength would have reached all of its ambitious targets by how?

Yet, on April 25, 2007, prior to the surge reaching its full strength, the Speaker argued for a rapid withdrawal of our forces from Iraq, stating that "We have put our citizens at greater risk, we have put their lives at greater risk, their property, our economy, our way of life, and that is just unacceptable."

However, on December 13, 1995, when arguing for sustained United States deployment to Bosnia, the Speaker had said, "Is the Bosnia mission without danger and risk? No. With strong leadership, there are always risks. These risks have been minimized and they are risks for peace, risks for ending years of bloodshed, risks for freedom. We risk far more by failing to act. We risk far more if we allow the tenuous peace to collapse and watch the flames of war ignite again."

Additionally, on September 19, 1994, when advocating again for a sustained United States presence in Haiti, the Speaker said, "Setting a date certain for troop withdrawal will unnecessarily endanger both our troops on the ground and our efforts at promoting democracy in Haiti."

Mr. Chairman, we have no less at stake in Iraq. Is it not in our strategic and security interests to help ensure stability in Iraq? Are the consequences for our allies in the Middle East not as grave as those for our European allies when we engaged in Bosnia?

By taking aggressive and sustained action against al-Qaeda forces, militias, and other criminal elements on a broad front, the new Iraqi strategy has resulted in the near collapse of al-Qaeda in the Anbar province, a similar terrorist setback in Salah-ad-Din and Diyala provinces, and a sharp decrease in sectarian and criminal violence in Baghdad.

Given that this strategy has been in effect only since June 15, why are some so eager to pronounce it a failure and seek to force a premature withdrawal?

As Major General Rick Lynch, the commander for operations on Baghdad's southern approaches, recently said, "An early American withdrawal would clear the way for the enemy to come back to areas that are now being cleared of insurgents."

Observers state that a prerequisite for successful conclusion to the United States mission in Iraq is for the Iraqi Government to assume an ever-greater responsibility for controlling Iraqi territory, especially by hunting down and destroying the terrorists operating there. U.S. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon warned on Monday against an abrupt withdrawal by United States forces from Iraq—his quote—and said, "The international community must not abandon the Iraqi people. We must continue to work closely with the Government of Iraq to increase its capacity to assert the authority of the Government of Iraq in all parts of its territory, to root out terrorists, militias, and criminals seeking to undermine stability in Iraq, continue to promote the rule of law, and provide essential services to the people of Iraq."

I would appreciate the witness' recommendations regarding the measures they believe the United States should take to improve the ability of the Iraqi Government and its security forces to safeguard Iraqi territory for encroachment by state sponsors of terror,

such as Iran and Syria, as well as from terrorist organizations, and other non-state actors.

Dr. Simon, I would appreciate your comments on the June 17 *Washington Post* article in which you wrote that, "a well-managed defeat would be more likely to boost U.S. credibility." Can you please elaborate on how this outcome would be possible given the negative ramifications of the United States defeat in Iraq? How can a U.S. defeat, however one managed, not embolden our enemies, harm troop morale, and not lower our standing in the world?

Ambassador Dobbins, I would appreciate your elaborating on your comment in a Foreign Affairs roundtable in July 2006, in which you stated that, "the central objective of U.S. diplomacy should shift from the transformation of Iraq to its stabilizations, with an emphasis on power sharing, on sovereignty, and regional cooperation."

And Dr. Rubin, who will be joining us at the teleconference, I would like to thank you for your service to our country. I would appreciate your conveying to our Marines in Camp Pendleton our profound thanks for many sacrifices and letting them know that they are in our thoughts and in our prayers. My stepson and daughter-in-law are Marine officers serving overseas.

So Dr. Rubin, given your experience in dealing with the Iranian regime, would you agree that its current policy is to destabilize Iraq and that a premature withdrawal by us would only assist in its aim?

Further, do you believe that negotiating with Iran gives the regime a legitimacy that we should not bestow on state-sponsored of terrors and advocates of genocide?

Mr. Chairman, it is my hope that this hearing will help us to better understand our options in Iraq, and to contribute to the success of the new strategy that we are aggressively pursuing over there.

Thank you, all of the witnesses, for appearing before the committee today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, as always.

Chairman LANTOS. Thank you very much.

I am delighted to recognize for 3 minutes Mr. Ackerman.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Chairman, I have a lot to say about Iraq, but little of it is new. All we are arguing about now is how much time it would take for the President's defenders in Congress to disassociate themselves from the President's policy. In case any of them are wondering what they are still defending, let me remind them.

The Bush administration's effort to implant a Western style democracy in Iraq has failed. The Bush administration's effort to reorder the Middle East by making an example out of Saddam Hussein has failed. The Bush administration's effort to intimidate Iran and Syria into better behavior has failed. The Bush administration's effort to defeat al-Qaeda by drawing them into Iraq, a strategy that reduced our soldiers to the role of bait, has failed. The Bush administration's effort to reorder not just Iraq's institutions but the very nature of its politics and economy has failed.

The Bush administration's effort to create a functioning democracy by rewriting Iraq's constitution and holding elections has failed. The Bush administration's attempt to create a viable broad-based government on a foundation of unresolved ethnic and reli-

gious tension has failed. The Bush administration's reconstruction program and contracts have been a boon to its corporate allies, but the effort to provide Iraqi's people with reliable electricity, water, and sewage services has failed. The Bush administration's effort to restore Iraq's oil sector has failed.

The Bush administration's effort to assist the 4 million Iraqi refugees into safe places is virtually nonexistent and not surprisingly, also have failed. The Bush administration's effort to establish law and order through the training of Iraqi soldiers, paramilitary forces and police remain loyal principally to their tribal sect and often to a hostile militia has failed.

The Bush administration's effort to control vast stockpiles of Iraqi conventional arms with helicopter patrols has failed. The Bush administration's efforts to control thousands of miles of borders with overhead imagery systems has failed. The Bush administration's effort to protect the human rights of Iraqis in the custody of our military has failed. The Bush administration's effort to establish security in Iraq with too few troops have failed, and now the Bush administration's effort to repair the mistake with a surge of a few thousand more troops is failing.

The Bush administration's attempt to hold together an international coalition of the willing has failed. The Bush administration's effort to persuade the American public that this futile, costly, and bloody effort is worth continuing has failed. The Bush administration's attempt to link 9/11 attacks to the current debacle in Iraq has failed, and the Bush administration's ongoing efforts to smear and scare more life into this debilitating and catastrophic policy has failed.

Last week the Democratic majority again acted to end this war, to responsibly redeploy our troops and to focus our Nation's energy and restoring our military strength and protecting our allies in the region. Not surprisingly, almost all of the no votes came from the Republican minority, still apparently the thrall of the President. I don't know when, but certainly before November 2008, the Bush administration's political holding action will also fail. Our friends across the aisle just need to decide how much failure they can stomach. The rest of us have had more than enough.

Chairman LANTOS. I am pleased to call on my friend from Indiana, Mr. Pence, for 3 minutes.

Mr. PENCE. Thank you, Chairman. Thank you for calling this important hearing.

I believe we are at a critical juncture in the life of two nations, and with great respect to the chairman of the subcommittee on which I serve as the ranking member, his long litany of how the Bush administration has failed, while memorable and imminently quotable as always, illustrates a point that I have wanted to make before the committee today, Mr. Chairman, and that is that if America fails in Iraq, it will not be the Bush administration that failed, it will be America that failed, and the world will not make such partisan divisions as we make in this town.

Therefore, I want to associate myself with the notion that I believe that has been well articulated by the senior senator from Indiana, who has been quoted appropriately and growingly by the chairman of this committee. While Senator Lugar has advocated—

I want to be the first to say—some tactical recommendations of redeployment and withdrawal that I do not support, and that the chairman correctly described and characterized, I do want to suggest that Senator Lugar, as well as the former chairman of this committee, Lee Hamilton, are not two leaders that are interested in accepting an American failure in Iraq, and permit me to quote if I may.

Senator Lugar, in remarks that he made last week said, "Iraq and its impact on the Middle East are vitally important. Consequently," Senator Lugar said, "we must not withdraw wholesale from Iraq as some opponents of the President have suggested."

Senator Lugar went on to say, "A precipitous withdrawal would compound the risks of a wider regional conflict stimulated by Sunni-Shia tensions. It would be a severe blow to U.S. standing in the region that could reduce willingness of Middle East nations to cooperate with us on shared interests. It would expose Iraqis who have worked with us to retribution, increasing the chances of destabilizing refugee flows, undercut economic and development projects underway in Iraq, and signal that the United States was abandoning efforts to prevent Iraq territory from being used as a terrorist base."

Just last week the former chairman of this committee, Lee Hamilton, in response to calls for an immediate pull out that the majority voted for on the floor last week, Chairman Hamilton stated some people have given up and say it can't be done, therefore the United States should simply pull out. "I am not of that school of thought myself. I think it's still possible to get these factions together," so said the former chairman of this committee, Lee Hamilton.

I must say, and I am prepared after our General's report this September to accept thoughtful recommendations from our Commander in Chief and our troops on the ground about if tactics must change, let them change. If strategies must change, let them change. But our objective must not change, and our objective must remain that Iraq must succeed and America must succeed in Iraq.

To read carefully Senator Lugar's now famous speech on the Senate floor, Mr. Chairman, is to read a rendition of a man calling for a change in course to achieve an American success, and I fear, as I close, I fear that there are many, not those in present company, and certainly not the chairman of this committee, who will be willing at the expense of American interests in the region, at the expense of America's prestige in the world to accept an American failure in Iraq and a failed Iraqi state, which is not in the long-term interests of this country or our allies in the region.

So I thank you for calling this hearing, and I yield back.

Chairman LANTOS. Before calling on other colleagues, may I just suggest to my good friend from Indiana that no one is favoring an American failure in Iraq? What some are suggesting is that you cannot unscramble the omelet, and with the horrendous series of mistakes committed by this administration for almost 4 years, talking about success is unrealistic, and the only realistic conversation relates to minimizing the damage which an appallingly clumsy, mistaken one policy has created.

The line is not between those who favor success and those who favor failure. I know of no one who favors failure, but I do think that a number of us are prepared to look at reality in the face, and, given the reality, opt for the least undesirable course of action.

Any colleagues who would like to be recognized briefly? Mr. Sherman, yes.

Mr. SHERMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We are told that this is the central front in the war on terrorism because the terrorists on the Web pages tell us so. Since when do we decide to believe the terrorists, to accommodate them, and to fight in the theater of their choosing?

In 2003, we were told mission accomplished. In 2004, we saw the first surge. In 2005, late 2005, we saw the second surge. In late 2006, we began planning the third surge and announced that this was somehow a new policy we had never tried before. The benchmarks; maybe 50 percent have been hit, but a 50 percent grade fails out of any school, and these are the lowest possible benchmarks, and we have the most generous possible grader.

Mesopotamia is a mess now. It will be a mess as long as we stay. It will be a mess when we leave, and perhaps what we do by staying is simply delay the inevitable. Our President replaces the generals that don't agree with him, and then turns to the American people and says, "Shut up, listen to the generals on the ground."

Our esteemed ranking member is right. A stable Iraq is as vital to America as a stable Haiti or a stable Bosnia. Would that the casualties had been equal of the various different deployments, the costs, and the level of distraction. Would that the prospects of a stable Iraq be equal to the prospects of a stable Haiti or a stable Bosnia. Cost matters, casualty levels matter, and the prospect of success matters.

We are told that if we don't stay in Iraq terrorists will have a place to meet. Well they meet now in northern Waziristan and Somalia and parts of Afghanistan, and they plotted 9/11 in an apartment building in Hamburg. As long as we patrol the streets of Baghdad, we serve as a crutch for our friends and a recruiting tool for our enemies, and we distract all of America from the highest levels to ordinary Americans concerned with foreign policy from the real threats, and that especially is the Iranian nuclear program, where we have been unable as a nation to impose costs on multinational corporation by having real economic sanctions.

I wished that we were focused on the real threats of American and not distracted by a front that may turn out to be only somewhat more significant than Afghanistan, Somalia or other places in the world, and I yield back.

Chairman LANTOS. The gentleman from Texas, Mr. Poe.

Mr. POE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Wars are not won by evacuation. That was a statement made by Winston Churchill a long time ago. And peace, some cry peace at any price, but there can be no peace just because war is hard, and by evacuating Iraq there will be no peace. So pack our bags and leave now, my questions are: What are the consequences in the real world? What will it do, one, to the stability of Iraq? Second, what will Iran do when we pack our bags and leave? Three, what will the militias do? Four, what will the effect be on the worldwide net-

work of terrorists? And five, what will it do to United States' credibility, if anything?

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LANTOS. Thank you very much.

Anybody else on this side? Ms. Woolsey.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Our failure, failure is attacking the wrong enemy in the first place. Failure is not knowing the difference between Iraq and Afghanistan. Failure is 4 million refugees, 100,000 of them this year alone not having a place in their own country and having to leave. Failure is over 3,600 American troops dead, thousands of civilian Iraqis dead, wounded, tens of thousands of our American troops wounded so badly their lives will never be the same. Failure is $4,000 a second from our treasury and also the loss of our reputation internationally.

And is not the announcement that there are terrorists in the United States also a failure? That is what we should have been concentrating on, and the very idea that we are less safe, not safer, is definitely a failure. It also could be, and we all have to know this, a change of conversation to try to get people scared again so they don't pay attention to what is going on in Iraq.

I want to say one thing. General William Odom, one of the leaders in the Vietnam war time, and retired, said it loud and clear, "If you want to protect your troops, bring them home."

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LANTOS. Anybody on the Republican side? Mr. Rohrabacher.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Look, people can look back in hindsight point to mistakes in any endeavor that the United States has tried over its 200-year history. Certainly the mistakes, there were many, many mistakes in World War II. One mistake, the decision for training mistake in the weeks prior to D-Day cost the lives of more men in that mistaken decision by a general to train his people and didn't have the proper naval protection cost the lives of almost as many of our military people at that time as have been killed in the entire 3 years that we have been in Iraq in terms of our military personnel have lost their lives. That did not make the liberation of France and Europe any less an admirable thing to do.

I think this administration has made a great number of mistakes, and I can point to them myself, and that is not an excuse, but that is just recognizing that those mistakes happen when endeavors, even if they are really noble efforts. I believe liberating Iraq from its tyrant, from its murderous tyrant who butchered hundreds of thousands of his own people, so I am saying that was a noble thing to do, to help liberate that country from that tyrant.

Trying to help Iraq in the aftermath, help the people there put in place a democracy so that radical Islamic forces within that society would not prevail, and that, I think, was certainly something we can be proud of. Our people have tried to do their best in what I consider to be a very justified and noble endeavor. It is up to the Iraqi people now to fight their fight. We are giving them this opportunity to have a democracy, but we cannot continue to carry the load. That is very clear. We don't want to set specific time lines

and dates to get out, but we do know that this cannot go on indefinitely.

Today, I am anxious to hear about what our chances are of withdrawing with honor from this conflict in a way that would leave democratic forces in place rather than radical Islamic forces or others in charge of Iraq.

So thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I am looking forward to hearing the testimony.

Chairman LANTOS. Thank you very much.

Ms. Watson.

Ms. WATSON. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman, for giving us this opportunity to discuss our options moving forward in Iraq in this time, not past time, but today.

We are now 6 months into President Bush's escalation of the war in Iraq, and we are not seeing the progress that we were told we would see. Recently the *Washington Post* reported that U.S. military commanders are increasingly relying on Sunni militias to fight insurgent groups. We are giving these militias weapons and intelligence and setting them loose.

Just a few months ago the President told us he needed to escalate the commitment of United States soldiers to Iraq to disarm these ethnic militias. Now we are arming them? Just a few months ago the President told us that ethnic militias were undermining the security and stability of Iraq. Now they are the guarantors of the stability and security of Iraq?

When the President's strategy for victory involves arming the people who just a few months ago were our sworn enemies, it becomes difficult for any of us to explain to our constituents what our troops are still doing there in Iraq. The troops have done their job in an honorable way. They have given their life and their limbs, but they will not be successful if the President cannot decide what the mission is. Three years ago he stood on a battleship and he said, "Mission accomplished."

The surge is not a strategy, Mr. Chairman. It is a tactic, and I have searched for a strategy. We need to immediately redeploy our troops and shift to a political strategy intended to put the Iraqis in charge of their own country, their own security, and their own destiny. We have no business, now with a democratic structure in place, trying to build a nation in our image—we can't get it really right here—and when we are occupying, and it is clear to me that we can move in that direction. That is a new direction. It is time for the President to catch up to where the rest of the country is on this issue, and acknowledge that it is time to bring our troops home.

Our image is already damaged. As we travel worldwide, all you need to do is get off our military planes and get an earful. We have already lost the respect in the world for our occupation of Iraq.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LANTOS. Any other colleagues? Mr. Wu.

Mr. WU. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Santayana said famously, "The essence of fanaticism is to redouble your efforts while losing sight of your aims." What are or were our aims? Saddam is dead, any WMD that we are going to find we

have found, and Iraq has a freely elected government, but this war continues.

Why? This war was begun here in this city, in Washington, and it will continue until those who made the decisions or supported the decisions to begin this war admit that this is a war begun in error, and perpetuated by pride. The aftermath of this war will be difficult and our recovery will be long, but let this be a lesson to future generations that anyone entrusted with a leadership position can start a war. It takes a real statesman to end one.

It is already guaranteed that generations of American statesmen will be cleaning up the fiasco in Iraq. The only remaining question is how many of our soldiers who have done everything that we have asked them to do, how many of our soldiers won't be coming home?

William Tecusseh Sherman said, "It was begun in error and perpetuated in pride." Those words are apt today as it was in 1864.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Chairman LANTOS. Thank you.

Any of my Republican colleagues wish to be recognized? No? Mr. Delahunt.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I find it ironic that one of my colleagues asked the question, rhetorical question though, he said what message are we sending to terrorist groups, and yet reports last week indicate that after 4 years al-Qaeda, according to a national intelligence estimate, is stronger than ever—is stronger than ever after 4 years. I wonder what kind of message we have sent over the last 4 years so as to create the conditions for al-Qaeda to be stronger than ever.

And my friend from California, the ranking member on the subcommittee that I chair, talked about looking back at hindsight, but I also find it ironic that there seems to be a certitude about the consequences of a withdrawal. There is an echo that reverberates for me about the language and the rhetoric that we heard during the course of our exit from Vietnam, and yet I am reminded of that picture of President Bush in Vietnam signing a bilateral trade agreement with the looming bust of Ho Chi Minh peering over his shoulder. What irony.

I wonder if those that would suggest that a withdrawal will lead to a bloodbath and dire consequences at every level, if they review their positions on this policy over the course of the last 4 or 5 years, can point to one time where they have been right—one single time. I dare say I can't think of any specifically.

It is long overdue that the United States withdraw from this debacle, and with that I yield back.

Chairman LANTOS. Thank you.

Anyone else who wishes to be recognized? Mr. Scott of Georgia.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I certainly appreciate this hearing. It is most timely. But I think as we move forward we must not forget that this war in Iraq was not a war of necessity. It was a war of choice. The American people did not make that choice. President Bush made that choice, and the history books will reflect that this was a choice made by the President of the United States based upon, not necessity, and based upon lies, based upon misinformation, based upon cooked in-

telligence books. Everything about going into Iraq was, is, and remains a mistake. This is why 70 percent of the American people say it was a mistake.

Now, what we need to do here in Congress is to understand that, to answer the question now of what comes next. The American people are looking for Congress to provide that leadership, and this House of Representatives took the initial steps last week when 223 of us put forward a very responsible approach to a redeployment so that we could refocus your troops, scare resources as they are, strained military as it is, $10 billion a month as it is, to better capture al-Qaeda and fight the war on terror.

Finally, this misguided effort of wanting to place a democracy in the middle of the Middle East while, yes, noble, highly unrealistic. A democracy must come from people within the soul of that people. They must want it, not at the barrel of a gun of a country, the United States, who says this is best for them. This is Iraq's country, not the United States' colony. This administration based this whole approach in Iraq on misguided colonialism and imperialism, which is both outdated, unnecessary, wrong, and a mistake, and the American people are pleased to see this Congress finally step forward and be the Congress that they want us to be.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LANTOS. Any other colleague who wishes to be recognized? Ms. Sheila Jackson Lee. This will be our last opening remark.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, we cannot thank you enough and the ranking member for realizing that the duty of the Congress is to act courageously and to make the right decisions for the people of the United States.

Let me remind my colleagues that no member of the United States military hesitates when asked to go into battle, but we have asked them to shed their blood for an ending and ongoing failure. This war has not been directed by strategy and policy. It has been directed by thieves, weapons of mass destruction, liberation, stay the course, cutting and running.

Clearly, as the chairman has said, no one favors failure, but when we find out that terrorism is now being franchised the whole premise of the Bush administration's argument—fight them there so we don't have to fight them here—certainly is negated by the gut reaction that Secretary Chertoff has been speaking to for the last 3 weeks.

So it is crucial that Congress, members on both sides of the aisle, recognize that one upmanship of my good friends on the other side of the aisle attempted to do on their vote last week is not what the American people are looking for. It is courageous to make decisions that your party does not support.

We are Americans in this room. It is clear that this war, the success of the military is complete, and it is clear that the reconciliation has to be done by the Iraqis, and it is clear that Prime Minister Malaki needs to stand on his own two feet and ensure that he works as a statesperson and not a partisan.

So Mr. Chairman, I would hope as we listen to these witnesses each of us in our own way can develop the spirit of courage to do what is right on behalf of the American people, and that is the ulti-

matum to say that now our troops will come home from battle in success, and we will remove our troops from Iraq, short of those who need to remain, and bring home troops to end this dastardly misdirected war that is not doing anything but continuing to kill civilians. The treasure of our country deserves courageous acts by members of the United States Congress to end this war now.

Chairman LANTOS. Before turning to our witnesses, I want to give my friend from New Jersey, Mr. Smith, a chance to speak.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Just let me say that I do appreciate you holding this hearing. I think it is important that we vet every aspect of this war and to look at every potential policy that can lead to an ending of the hostilities, and hopefully a break out of democracy in Iraq.

But I do think it is profoundly unfair and breathtakingly inaccurate to suggest, as some of my colleagues have just prior to me speaking, that this was somehow a war of imperialism and colonialism. Nothing could be further from the truth. I don't believe the President, I don't believe those of us who supported the use of force as a means of trying to bring some stability, some democracy, some respect for human rights to Iraq in any way ever even contemplated that this was somehow imperialism or colonialism the way my friend and colleague said a moment ago.

The idea was to intervene to try to protect the innocent from what had been a barbaric regime in Saddam Hussein. We not so long ago, and I just returned, as you know, Mr. Chairman, from Srebrenitza where 8,000 men under the auspices of UNPROFOR, the U.N. protection force, was separated from the women and summarily executed 12 years ago beginning on July 11. I was there for a solemn remembrance of that terrible genocide that occurred there.

We intervened in Bosnia, especially as it related to Kosova, because we believed that innocent people deserve respect for human rights, and at least an attempt at democracy.

I think it is insulting to posit that a people anywhere on this planet somehow can't handle democracy. Maybe it would take time, but I think it is insulting to people of Iraq, notwithstanding their sectarian differences, to say they can't handle it.

Finally, there are many of us who when we look at Darfur feel that there ought to be a more robust U.N. presence there as well. To prevent what? The killing and maiming and the slaughter of innocent people.

So while we are all profoundly upset with this war, I think it is wrong, as my friend and colleague said a moment ago, to somehow suggest this was about imperialism and colonialism. We have no colonial design on Iraq. We want to get out as soon as humanly possible, and again, if you want to see an example of that look at World War II.

Unlike many other parties who conquered, in this case a world war, what did we do in Japan? We got out of there as soon as we possibly could, left them with what is now a robust democracy, and the same happened in Europe, especially as it relates to Germany.

So again, I think that is a wrong headed approach to take. We have our differences. I want to get out of there as soon as possible

as well, but this is not about imperialism. It is not about colonialism.

Chairman LANTOS. I want to thank all of my colleagues, and now I want to turn to our distinguished witnesses, who have studied Iraq and written about it extensively.

Dr. Steven Simon is the Senior Fellow for Middle Eastern Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations, which he joined after working at the widely respected RAND Corporation. Dr. Simon served in the Clinton White House for more than 5 years as Director for Global Issues and Senior Director for Transnational Threats. He has published numerous pieces on the Iraq war and wrote an important work this year titled "After the Surge: The Case for Military Disengagement from Iraq."

Ambassador James Dobbins is one of this Nation's most accomplished statesmen. He has held several State Department and White House posts, handling some of the most sensitive American foreign policy issues in Europe, Africa, and the Western Hemisphere. These included our strategy for crises in the Balkans, Somalia and Haiti. More recently, Ambassador Dobbins was a crucial figure in establishing the new government in Afghanistan after the war there. He currently directs RAND's International Security and Defense Policy Center.

Dr. Michael Rubin, who is joining us by electronic means, is a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute and is editor of the Middle East Quarterly. Between 2002 and 2004, he worked as a staff advisor for Iran and Iraq in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. He has published widely on both Iran and Iraq. He has taught at three different universities in northern Iraq and lectures American military leaders leaving for Iraq.

Dr. Simon, we will begin with you.

STATEMENT OF STEVEN SIMON, PH.D., HASIB J. SABBAGH SENIOR FELLOW FOR MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES, COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. SIMON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee for this opportunity to speak to you on this extremely important topic.

Chairman LANTOS. Could you pull the microphone a little closer?

Mr. SIMON. Yes. Can you hear me now, Mr. Chairman? Thank you.

The interim surge report underscores the chasm that separates United States and Iraqi conceptions of reconciliation. For Americans, reconciliation is the product of a bargaining process through which Sunnis participate in the governance of the state and get their fair share of Iraq's resources.

Iraqis see things differently. Shias tend to emphasize the need for justice. The centrality of justice is rooted in the history of Shia thought and in their painful experience as Iraqis. For them, justice demands that their suffering under previous regimes—not only Saddam's—be compensated. This in turn necessitates the subordination of Iraq's Sunni population to the needs of the Shia community. For the Shia-run government, justice must precede reconciliation.

For many Sunnis, reconciliation means restoration. This goes beyond mere inclusion in power sharing arrangements. It means regaining control of the state. For Kurds, reconciliation means recognition of Kurdish autonomy and openness to the Kurds' prospective territorial gains.

These differences will not be reconciled soon. Dethroned elites do not easily surrender their dreams of a reversal of fortune. The process resembles the way people are said to grapple with imminent death through stages of denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. Well, Sunnis are not yet near the bargaining stage of dealing with Saddam's overthrow.

It is also worth noting that studies of civil war since 1945 show that most last 7 to 10 years and they generally end with military victory of one side or the other, rather than a negotiated settlement. Where power-sharing arrangements have been reached, they have been short-lived, depressingly, and often led to renewed hostilities. Moreover, civil wars tend to be harder to resolve when the rebel side is fractured, a point relevant to the current U.S. strategy of driving wedges in the Sunni insurgency. With or without the presence of United States ground forces, the Iraqi civil war is likely to grind on for some time.

Well, what purpose do U.S. forces serve under these circumstances?

The large presence of United States ground forces has had little effect on Iraqi politics or on the insurgency. The surge has redistributed insurgent activity but not suppressed it. Ironically, violence now touches more of the country than before, with a corresponding erosion of societal stability and government credibility.

At the same time, the presence of U.S. forces is a godsend to jihadists. Talk of a Korea-like commitment and an elaborate base structure, alongside an unwillingness to discuss a timetable for withdrawal, has fueled suspicion and further energized the jihad.

Meanwhile, given our large presence in Iraq, we are bound to be held responsible for the awful things happening there, even though we are unable to prevent them. The U.S. is culpable, but not capable. Against the background of regrettable but unavoidable battlefield excesses, the U.S. seems not only ineffectual but cruel. This image of America is continuously broadcast to the world in the form of the 900 insurgent communiqués and videos generated from within Iraq every month.

And why is a near term decision to withdraw essential?

Domestic public support for the war has dwindled. Casualty tolerance is weakening and could crack at any time. A U.S. pull-out precipitated by a sudden collapse of domestic opinion will appear confused and ill-prepared; the hasty reaction to a sudden reversal. It is vital that a withdrawal appear, to the extent possible, to be a matter of volition, not compulsion. We must therefore begin planning now for a deliberate and orderly redeployment of United States forces from Iraq.

Now, the administration contends that the hypothetical costs of withdrawal are necessarily bigger than the demonstrated costs of staying. Predictions of catastrophe, like President Bush's assertion that the results of a so-called "precipitous" withdrawal will be "horrific," have miscast uncertain speculation as unquestionable fact.

The consequence, the unknowable has become the unthinkable. But question we must.

First, what about civil war? Will the withdrawal of U.S. forces open the door to regional chaos, as the administration says?

Well, armed clashes between or among the armies of Iraq's neighbors do not seem likely. Mid-to-late twentieth century civil wars in the region—in Algeria, Yemen, Afghanistan, Pakistan, even Lebanon—did not spark wider wars. In most cases, surrounding countries tried to protect their interests through proxies, while avoiding the risks and costs of military intervention.

Indeed, this low profile competition is already underway in Iraq, albeit confined to its borders. Without a diplomatic process designed to stave off, or at least regulate moves by neighboring countries to protect their interests using proxies, this meddling will persist.

The real threat of instability, it seems to me, is directed at Jordan, which is host to an Iraqi refugee cohort equal to one-tenth its population. This calls for international assistance and heightened vigilance by Jordanian security forces. But there is little that a large United States military presence in Iraq can do to mitigate the threat.

What about genocide?

In thinking about genocide, it is worth remembering that Sunni insurgents already act with impunity and that only in neighborhoods where the U.S. presence is temporarily bulked-up have militias desisted from cleansing operations. The question is how much worse it can get.

A prudent forecast is that the lack of organizational capacity, broad communal consent and heaving weapons on either side will impede a drastic increase in the already appalling casualty rate. The largely Sunni areas are uninteresting to the Shia as objects of conquest. Without artillery, armor, and attack aircraft, Shia forces will be hard pressed to reduce Sunni majority cities to rubble in the way say that Serbs dealt with Croatian or Muslim urban areas in the former Yugoslavia.

Ethnic cleaning in mixed areas will continue, refugees and the internally displaced will grow, bombing and death squads will claim many lives, but the necessary conditions for nationwide genocidal violence are as yet absent.

Now, how about credibility?

The administration believes that the withdrawal of American forces would damage American credibility. This disregards the damage that floundering in Iraq has already inflicted on America's reputation for competence, integrity, and military prowess.

It is also unclear how staying the very course that exposed America to worldwide derision and disenchantment will somehow cause America to be admired and trusted.

Al-Qaeda will no doubt revel in the sight of American troops withdrawing from Iraq. But al-Qaeda already sees Iraq as a victory. If we stay, al-Qaeda will have it both ways: Vindicated by America's failure to control events and by Washington's determination, despite fierce resistance, to occupy the heartland of the Arab world.

At a strategic level, an orderly, systematic withdrawal is unlikely to affect the calculation of a future state adversary deciding whether to push its luck in a confrontation with the United States. In such a crisis, the adversary will be focused on assessing the stakes for the U.S. and Washington's ability to defend them at that moment. The adversary is unlikely to look back to what the United States did or didn't do years before in Iraq.

What about al-Qaeda?

Well, there is no easy fix for this problem we created. The bleed-out specter—that is to say violence radiating from Iraq to other countries near and far—is real, as the U.K., Lebanon, and Jordan have experienced. Al-Qaeda in Iraq has also deepened the sectarian divide in Iraq. While its numbers are small, the recruitment pool is deep and mostly indigenous to Iraq.

The cracks in the Islamic Army of Iraq and the 1920 Revolution Brigade have been greeted in Washington as a welcome development. This, however, is a misreading of events. These splits reflect a tendency for insurgents to opt for more radical solutions when the so-called moderates do not appear to be capable of delivering results. Fissures in the insurgency reflect defections to al-Qaeda, rather than a growing taste for moderation. It is therefore premature to celebrate episodic, local rifts between al-Qaeda affiliates and other insurgents or see them simply as a rejection of al-Qaeda.

Now, in helping the good "bad guys" fight the bad "bad guys," we need to remember several things: First, this is not a mission for which the United States needs 165,000 troops in Iraq. The U.S. troop presence, it must be remembered, helps drive the very insurgency that ad hoc deals between U.S. and insurgent commanders are supposed to undermine. For al-Qaeda in Iraq, becoming the target of the good "bad guys" will likely help it recruit new fighters by conferring on al-Qaeda the glow of integrity and even nobility. And lastly, the moving parts of the insurgency can reengage quickly to threaten not only United States forces but the Iraqi Government.

Well, if all this is true, why not withdraw immediately?

Well, a rapid withdrawal is logistically feasible but only if we were to leave behind the equipment that couldn't be flown out. Road distances and port and shipping capacities will limit necessarily the speed with which our material can be redeployed.

If we wish to give the Iraqi army our equipment, that is one thing. If not, perhaps because the Iraqi army might use it for genocidal purposes, then leaving material behind will cause our departure to be seen as a rout. This perception must be avoided. Time, then, must be taken.

We will also need time to put in place a multilateral structure to support economic recovery; to care for refugees and the displaced; improve border controls; and plan for an international humanitarian effort should Iraq disintegrate.

Time will also be needed to negotiate a withdrawal with the Iraqi Government that might afford us a window through which to assess Iraqi forces, give Washington the clout to enforce a red line against genocidal actions by the government, and to offset some of Tehran's significant influence, thereby giving Iraqi nationalists an alternative to Iranian patronage.

Let me sum up.

Predictions of across-the-board post-withdrawal disasters, or fantasies about Iraqi national reconciliation must not deter us from considering all available options.

Regional chaos is unlikely, as is genocide within Iraq. While the al-Qaedization of the insurgency is underway and internecine violence will remain severe, a long term U.S. troop commitment won't stop these trends.

U.S. credibility is already tattered. The way to restore it is by cutting our losses in Iraq, shifting the basis of our support for the country to a diplomacy and economic development, and showing that Washington can still act creatively and effectively in the region.

Withdrawal, in sum, is the strategically appropriate course of action, provided that it is systematic, orderly, and geared to a coherent diplomatic game plan. The sooner we grasp this nettle, the better.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Simon follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF STEVEN SIMON, PH.D., HASIB J. SABBAGH SENIOR FELLOW FOR MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES, COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

THE INTERIM REPORT

The interim surge report underscores the chasm that separates US and Iraqi conceptions of reconciliation. For Americans, reconciliation is the product of a bargaining process through which Sunnis participate in the governance of the state and get their fair share of Iraq's resources.

Iraqis see things differently. Shi'as tend to emphasize the need for justice. The centrality of justice is rooted in the history of Shi'a thought and in their painful experience as Iraqis. For them, justice demands that their suffering under previous regimes—not only Saddam's—be compensated. This in turn necessitates the subordination of Iraq's Sunni population to the needs of the Shi'a community. For the Shi'a-run government, justice must precede reconciliation.

For many Sunnis, reconciliation means restoration. This goes beyond mere inclusion in power sharing arrangements. It means regaining control of the state. For Kurds, reconciliation means recognition of Kurdish autonomy and openness to the Kurds' prospective territorial gains.

These differences will not be reconciled soon. Dethroned elites do not easily surrender their dreams of a reversal of fortune. The process resembles the way people are said to grapple with imminent death through stages of denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. Sunnis are not yet near the bargaining stage of dealing with Saddam's overthrow.

DURATION OF CIVIL WARS

Studies of civil wars since 1945 show that most last seven to ten years and generally end with the military victory of one side or the other, rather than a negotiated settlement. Where power-sharing arrangements have been reached, they have been short-lived and often led to renewed hostilities. Moreover, civil wars tend to be harder to resolve when the rebel side is fractured, a point relevant to the current US strategy of driving wedges in the Sunni insurgency. With or without the presence of US forces, the Iraqi civil war is likely to grind on for some time.

WHAT PURPOSE DO US FORCES SERVE?

The large presence of US ground forces has had little effect on Iraqi politics, or on the insurgency. The surge has redistributed insurgent activity but not suppressed it. Ironically, violence now touches more of the country than before, with a corresponding erosion of societal stability and government credibility.

At the same time, the presence of US forces is a godsend to jihadists. Talk of a Korea-like commitment and an elaborate base structure, alongside an unwillingness to discuss a timetable for withdrawal, has fueled suspicion and further energized the jihad.

Meanwhile, given our large presence in Iraq, we are bound to be held responsible for the awful things happening there, even though we are unable to prevent them. The US is culpable, but not capable. Against the background of regrettable but unavoidable battlefield excesses, the US seems not only ineffectual but cruel. This image of America is continuously broadcast to the world in the form of the 900 insurgent communiqués and videos generated from within Iraq every month.

WHY A NEAR TERM DECISION TO WITHDRAW IS ESSENTIAL

Domestic public support for the war has dwindled. Casualty tolerance is weakening and could crack at any time. A US pull-out precipitated by a sudden collapse of domestic opinion will appear confused and ill-prepared; the hasty reaction to a sudden reversal. It is vital that a withdrawal appear, to the extent possible, to be a matter of volition, not compulsion. We must therefore begin planning now for a deliberate and orderly redeployment of US forces from Iraq.

WHICH IS WORSE: THE COST OF STAYING OR THE COST OF LEAVING?

The Administration contends that the hypothetical costs of withdrawal are necessarily bigger than the demonstrated costs of staying. Predictions of catastrophe, like President Bush's assertion that the results of a so-called "precipitous" withdrawal will be "horrific," have miscast uncertain speculation as unquestionable fact. In consequence, the unknowable has become the unthinkable. But question we must.

SPREAD OF CIVIL WAR

Will the withdrawal of U.S. forces open the door to "regional chaos," as the Administration says? Armed clashes between or among the armies of Iraq's neighbors do not seem likely. Mid-to-late twentieth century civil wars in the region-in Algeria, Yemen, Afghanistan, Pakistan, even Lebanon-did not spark wider wars. In most cases, surrounding countries tried to protect their interests through proxies, while avoiding the risks and costs of military intervention. Indeed, this low profile competition is already underway in Iraq, albeit confined to its borders. Without a diplomatic process designed to stave off, or at least regulate moves by neighboring countries to protect their interests using proxies, meddling will persist.

The real threat of instability is directed at Jordan, which is host to an Iraqi refugee cohort equal to one-tenth its population. This calls for international assistance and heightened vigilance by Jordanian security forces. But there is little that a large US military presence in Iraq can do to mitigate the threat.

GENOCIDE

In thinking about genocide, it is worth remembering that Sunni insurgents already act with impunity and that only in neighborhoods where the US presence is temporarily bulked-up have militias desisted from cleansing operations. The question is how much worse it can get.

A prudent forecast is that the lack of organizational capacity, broad communal consent and heavy weapons on either side will impede a drastic increase in the already appalling casualty rate. The largely Sunni areas are uninteresting to the Shi'a as objects of conquest. Without artillery, armor, and attack aircraft, Shi'a forces will be hard pressed to reduce Sunni majority cities to rubble in the way that Serbs dealt with Croatian or Muslim urban areas in the former Yugoslavia. Ethnic cleansing in mixed areas will continue, refugees and the internally displaced will grow, bombings and death squads will claim many lives, but the necessary conditions for nationwide genocidal violence are as yet absent.

THE CREDIBILITY COST OF LEAVING

The Administration believes that the withdrawal of American forces would damage American credibility. This disregards the damage that floundering in Iraq has already inflicted on America's reputation for competence, integrity and military prowess.

It is also unclear how staying the very course that exposed America to worldwide ridicule and disenchantment will somehow cause America to be admired and trusted.

Al Qaeda will no doubt revel in the sight of American troops withdrawing from Iraq. But AQ already sees Iraq as a victory. If we stay, AQ will have it both ways: vindicated by America's failure to control events and by Washington's determination, despite fierce resistance, to occupy the heartland of the Arab world.

At a strategic level, an orderly, systematic withdrawal is unlikely to affect the calculation of a future state adversary deciding whether to push its luck in a confrontation with the United States. In such a crisis, the adversary will be focused on assessing the stakes for the US and Washington's ability to defend them at that moment. The adversary is unlikely to look back to what the US did or didn't do years before in Iraq.

HOW SHOULD THE US DEAL WITH AN AL QAEDA MINI-STATE IN IRAQ?

There is no easy fix for this problem we created. The bleed-out specter—violence radiated from Iraq to other countries near and far—is real, as the UK, Lebanon and Jordan have experienced. AQI has also deepened the sectarian divide in Iraq. While its numbers are small, the recruitment pool is deep and mostly indigenous to Iraq.

The cracks in the Islamic Army of Iraq and the 1920 Revolution Brigade have been greeted in Washington as a welcome development. This, however, is a misreading of events. These splits reflect a tendency for insurgents to opt for more radical solutions when the so-called moderates do not appear to be capable of delivering results. Fissures in the insurgency reflect defections to al Qaeda, rather than a growing taste for moderation. It is therefore premature to celebrate episodic, local rifts between AQ affiliates and other insurgents or see them simply as a rejection of AQ.

In helping the good "bad guys" fight the bad "bad guys," we need to remember several things:

- this is not a mission for which the US needs 165,000 troops in Iraq;
- the US troop presence helps drive the very insurgency that ad hoc deals between US and insurgent commanders are supposed to undermine;
- for AQI, becoming the target of good "bad guys" will likely help it to recruit new fighters by conferring on AQ the glow of integrity and even nobility;
- and lastly, the moving parts of the insurgency can reengage quickly to threaten not only US forces but the Iraqi government.

WHY SHOULD THE US NOT WITHDRAW ITS FORCES IMMEDIATELY?

A rapid withdrawal is logistically feasible only if we were to leave behind the equipment that couldn't be flown out. Road distances and port and shipping capacities will limit necessarily the speed with which our materiel can be redeployed.

If we wish to give the Iraqi army our equipment, that is one thing. If not, perhaps because the Iraqi army might use it for genocidal purposes, then leaving materiel behind will cause our departure to be seen as a rout. *This perception must be avoided.* Time, then, must be taken.

We will also need time to put in place a multilateral structure to support economic recovery; care for refugees and the displaced; improve border controls; and plan for an international humanitarian effort should Iraq disintegrate.

Time will also be needed to negotiate a withdrawal with the Iraqi government that might afford a window through which to assess Iraqi forces, give Washington the clout to enforce a red line against genocidal actions by the government, and to offset some of Tehran's significant influence, thereby giving Iraqi nationalists an alternative to Iranian patronage.

CONCLUSION

Predictions of across-the-board post-withdrawal disasters, or fantasies about Iraqi national reconciliation must not deter us from considering all available options.

Regional chaos is unlikely, as is genocide within Iraq. While the al-Qaedization of the insurgency is underway and internecine violence will remain severe, a long term US troop commitment won't stop these trends.

US credibility is already tattered. The way to restore it is by cutting our losses in Iraq, shifting the basis of our support for the country toward diplomacy and economic development, and showing that Washington can still act creatively and effectively in the region.

Withdrawal is the strategically appropriate course of action, provided that it is systematic, orderly, and geared to a coherent diplomatic gameplan. The sooner we grasp this nettle, the better.

Chairman LANTOS. Thank you very much.
Ambassador Dobbins.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JAMES DOBBINS, DIRECTOR, INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENSE POLICY CENTER, THE RAND CORPORATION

Ambassador DOBBINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for the invitation to testify.

I agree with Steve Simon that the situation is desperate and requires a change in American strategy. I am not sure, however, that we can afford to simply withdraw. I think our interests are too heavily engaged. I think our responsibilities are too heavily engaged to move to that alternative.

Most of the discussion, of course, in the American public and the Congress and the media has focused on the level of American troops and what those troops should be doing. I would like to get to that issue but I would like to get to it via the route of considering what our broader policies should be, what our diplomatic efforts should be aimed at, and how our military presence and activities might support that.

If we have learned anything about the process of nation building over the last 15 years or so, in which we tried with mixed success in places like Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Kosova, Afghanistan and Iraq, it is that you can't put together broken societies and failing states if the neighbors don't want you to. They simply have too much access and too much influence to be ignored by virtue of their proximity, by virtue of their cultural and linguistic similarities, by virtue of their access.

I think if this administration can be faulted for anything, it is for believing that it could democratize and stabilize Iraq, not only without the cooperation of its neighbors but actually against their interests, and I think that events there have demonstrated that this is not possible.

If you recall back in the mid-90s when we brought the end of the civil war in Bosnia, how did we do that?

We did that by bringing the two countries, the two governments and the two individuals who were personally responsible for the genocide we were trying to stop to the negotiating table, that is to say Milosevic and Tudjman. It was only with their cooperation that we could bring that civil war to an end.

Yes, they both won elections after that, in part because of the enhanced prestige they gained as a result of their contacts with us and the privileged position that we had given them. But if we had not been prepared to bring them to the table, the civil war in Bosnia would have continued.

In 2001, in Afghanistan, how did we so quickly overthrow the Taliban and replace it with a moderate cooperative regime?

We did so by engaging all of the states that had been fighting a proxy war in Afghanistan for 20 years. So we brought to the Bonn Conference Iran, Pakistan, India, and Russia, and we made them part of the solution. We asked them to use their influence with the different factions that they had been backing to put together a broadly represented government, and one of the reasons we were comparatively more successful in Afghanistan than in Iraq was the fact that we had managed to get the uniform and enthusiastic support of all of Afghanistan's neighbors for our efforts back in 2001.

Now, of course, we didn't go into Afghanistan with the stated objective of making that country a model democracy, a model for Central Asia, the intention of which was to undermine the legitimacy of all of its neighboring governments, and ultimately lead to a change in their form of government. Had that been our stated objective, we wouldn't have gotten bases in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. We wouldn't have persuaded Pakistan to abandon the Taliban. We wouldn't have gotten diplomatic support, essential diplomatic support from both Iran and Russia.

Now, we went in with a more modest set of objectives, which were to ensure that Afghanistan was not going to become a base for global terrorism, and that it would have a broadly based government friendly to all of its neighbors, and that was the proposition we could get everybody to agree to.

In Iraq, we did go in with the stated declared objective of making that state a model democracy, the intent of which, the stated intent of which was to undermine the illegitimacy and form of government of everyone of its neighbors and ultimately bring about a change in those governments. This was not a project that any of those neighbors were likely to embrace, and they haven't, and by the nature of its declared intent in Iraq, the United States has made it impossible to achieve a broadly based regional consensus on what Iraq should look like, and this has led to the current situation.

Anytime you have a failing state, all of the competitors for power in that state look for external sources of support, and all of the neighbors back rival claimants for power in that failing state. It is fine to tell them to bug-off, stay out, you will take care of it. They are not going to do it. They are the ones who are going to get the refugees, not us. They are the ones who are going to get the endemic disease, not us. They are the ones who are going to get the terrorism, the criminality, and the commercial disruption that will come from having a failed state on their doorstep, not us. They are going to interfere and there is nothing we can do to stop it.

Unfortunately, this interference is going to manifest itself in a way that accelerates the disintegration of the state in question, even though most of the neighbors don't actually want that to happen, and that is because they are all backing rival claimants to power and those claimants are engaged in a violent competition.

The only way you can stop this is not by preventing them from interfering, which is not going to happen, it is by ensuring that that interference acts in a convergent direction. It is by ensuring that the external pressures that this failing society is under are pushing people together rather than pulling them apart. That is what we achieved in Bosnia, that is what we achieved in Afghanistan, and it is the only hope for stabilizing Iraq.

Now, at this late date what are the chances that the administration could pull something like this off?

I think it is going to be very difficult, but not perhaps impossible. All of the neighbors do have an interest in a unified Iraq, in a stable Iraq, and an Iraq that is not disintegrating and is not breaking into several constituent elements. But the United States is going to have to decide that this is the most important thing we can do in the Middle East this year.

In Bosnia, in 1995, we succeeded because that was the most important objective of American foreign policy, and every other interest was subordinated to it, so we sat down with Milosevic and Tudjman, even though they were guilty of genocide. We worked with the Russians even though they had been supporting the wrong side. We decided not to do anything about Kosova in 1995, that we would just have to wait. We were focused on Bosnia. We decided not to do anything about democracy in Serbia in 1995. We let Milosevic win another election by virtue of his relationship with us, because ending the civil war was our number one priority.

Similarly, in 2001, after September 11 the most important objective of American policy was to topple the Taliban and replace it with something quick enough so we didn't have to occupy the country and govern it, and everything else was subordinated to that. We talked to the Iranians. We forged an alliance with Pakistan that had been selling nuclear technology to our enemies and promoting terrorism all over the world. We made a number of concessions in order to achieve that objective very quickly. We are going to have to make the same kind of triage in the Middle East if we are going to stabilize Iraq.

Now, it doesn't mean that other interests in the Middle East are indefinitely subordinated, but it does mean that there has to be some choosing. State craft is about prioritizing, sequencing, and choosing, and doing what you can do now and postponing what you can't do now. It has never been likely that the United States could stabilize Iraq and destabilize Iran and Syria at the same time. It is simply too much to expect.

Now, in 1995, we ignored Kosova. Then in 1999, we liberated Kosova, but we left Milosevic in power, and then in 2000, we overthrew Milosevic. So you can achieve everything you want but you can't achieve it all at the same time.

We have got a lot of interests in the Middle East, in creating a Palestinian state at peace with Israel, in democratizing Lebanon, in de-nuclearizing Iran, in stopping Syrian support for terrorism and interference in Lebanon. If we try to achieve all of these simultaneously, we are going to do exactly what we have done for the last 4 or 5 years, which is achieved none of them.

So we are going to have to decide what is more important. In my judgment, given the level of responsibilities the United States has assumed in Iraq, stabilizing Iraq should be our number one priority.

Now, what does that mean for the U.S. military presence?

I think that if we went to the Iraq's neighbors and to the Iraqi factions and said, we are re-thinking our policy. This isn't working. We are going to come to a different policy, a different mission for our troops, a different number of troops, but we want to hear what you have to say before we make our decisions, and we are going to make our decisions based on what you say and the degree you are prepared to help. I think the end result of consultations like that would be that the Iraqi leadership and most of the neighboring countries want us to leave but not right away; want us to reduce, but not to zero; want a residual American presence for long enough to stabilize Iraq.

Being able to come to a decision regarding our troop presence on the basis of a strong consensus which involved Iraqi parties and all of Iraq's neighbors would immensely strengthen our capacity to carry through our mission in that regard. So I do believe that we ought to put policy first and military strategy second. Make one the instrument of the other, and I believe that the only possible hope for stabilizing Iraq at this time is to forge a consensus among its neighbors in that regard.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Dobbins follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JAMES DOBBINS,[1] DIRECTOR, INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENSE POLICY CENTER, THE RAND CORPORATION[2]

Whether or not one believes the invasion of Iraq to have been necessary, there is little dispute that its occupation, stabilization and reconstruction have been poorly handled. Many actions have been cited as turning points in this regard, from disbanding the Iraqi army to firing much of its civil service. Personally, I am more inclined to attribute the difficulties American efforts have encountered to two more fundamental and underlying policy choices.

The first of these choices was the low priority assigned to public security. The second was the even lower priority attached to collaboration with neighboring countries.

The first responsibility of any occupying power is the security of the civilian population in its charge. In the spring of 2003, as looters stripped every public edifice in the country to the bare wall, American troops stood passively by, responding to inquiring journalists that preserving public order was not their job. Whose job, one may ask, did they think it was? They had just conquered a foreign country. Had no one reviewed the laws of armed conflict as regard occupation before launching the invasion?

Moral and legal responsibilities aside, experience has shown that the ability of any occupying force to secure the cooperation of a civilian population depends most heavily upon its ability to afford that population protection in return. If an occupied people feel safer by reason of the occupier's presence, they will be inclined to collaborate. If not, then not. The United States failed in this single measure of success from the day Saddam's statue fell. Long before any organized resistance movement emerged the Iraqi population was exposed to the depredations of thieves, rapists, and murderers. For several years thereafter, the primary focus of American military efforts was seeking out and destroying resistance elements, rather than securing the civilian population. During these years American military authorities made no effort to tabulate or keep track of civilian casualties, which should have been the primary benchmark of their success or failure.

Neighboring states bear considerable responsibility for the current state of Iraq, but the United States bears even greater responsibility for thinking that the influence of these societies could be safely ignored. If two decades of nation building experience had taught us anything, it should have been the impossibility of holding together failing nations without the cooperation of adjoining states. Nearby societies simply have too much access and too much influence, by reason of proximity, personal relationships and cultural affinity, to be ignored. Neither can these societies be persuaded to eschew interference. After all, it is they, not more distant countries like the United States that will get the refugees, the crime, the terrorism, the endemic disease, and the economic disruption caused by having a failed state on their doorstep. These neighboring societies cannot afford to remain uninvolved, and they will not.

Unfortunately, left to their own devices, neighboring states will tend to exacerbate the disintegration they would generally prefer to avoid. In any failing state, all

[1] The opinions and conclusions expressed in this testimony are the author's alone and should not be interpreted as representing those of RAND or any of the sponsors of its research. This product is part of the RAND Corporation testimony series. RAND testimonies record testimony presented by RAND associates to federal, state, or local legislative committees; government-appointed commissions and panels; and private review and oversight bodies. The RAND Corporation is a nonprofit research organization providing objective analysis and effective solutions that address the challenges facing the public and private sectors around the world. RAND's publications do not necessarily reflect the opinions of its research clients and sponsors.

[2] This testimony is available for free download at http://www.rand.org/pubs/testimonies/CT288.

claimants for power seek foreign sponsors, and all neighboring states back favorites in this contest. As a result, by backing rival claimants for power, they accelerate the breakup they are usually trying to stop. This effect can be avoided only if neighboring governments can be persuaded to exert their influence along convergent, rather then divergent lines, pressing the local political leaders to coalesce rather than to fight.

American success in ending the Bosnian civil war in 1995 depended upon bringing two neighboring states that were fighting a proxy war there, Serbia and Croatia, into the negotiating process. Those states, and their leaders, were personally guilty of the genocide America was trying to stop. Yet Washington engaged these leaders, gave them a privileged status in the negotiations, and then worked with them to implement the peace agreement. President Milosevic and Tudjman both won subsequent elections, based in part on the prestige they had garnered through this connection. Had the Clinton Administration not been willing to pay that price, however, the war in Bosnia would have continued.

In the aftermath of 9/11, the United States worked with all the very states that had been fomenting civil war in Afghanistan for twenty years. With their help the United States was able to overthrow the Taliban in short order, and then even more quickly replace it with a broadly based government under Hamid Karzai. These achievements were only possible because the United States sought and gained the support of all of Afghanistan's neighbors, to include basing rights in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, over flight rights in Pakistan and diplomatic support from Iran. In fact, Iran played a decisively positive role in the negotiations that led to the formation, installation and subsequent consolidation of the Karzai government.

Unlike its approach in Afghanistan, the United States entered Iraq on the basis of a proposition that precluded this sort of support. The United States did not invade Afghanistan with the declared objective of making that country a model of democracy, which by its very existence was intended to undermine the legitimacy of all its neighboring regimes, and ultimately lead to their replacement. Had this been its stated intention, Washington would have never achieved the regional support which brought quick success in Afghanistan.

By contrast, the United States did enter Iraq loudly proclaiming the intention to turn that country into a model democracy, the example of which would undermine neighboring regimes and ultimately lead to their replacement. Needless to say, this was not a project that other regional governments were likely to buy into. Nor have they.

In so describing its mission in Iraq, the United States effectively excluded the possibility of securing regional support for its efforts there.

The question before this Committee today is whether there is still a chance for the United States, at this late date, to rectify these two errors, to win the confidence of the Iraqi people and to secure the cooperation of Iraq's neighbors. My answer to the first question is probably not; to the second, possibly, but only if Washington makes such an effort the centerpiece of its Middle Eastern diplomacy for the rest of this Administration's term.

The Administration's latest report to Congress indicates that only very limited progress has been made by the Iraqi political leadership in reconciling their differences over the future shape and direction of their country. The American military does seem to have made some progress in bringing down levels of sectarian violence and securing cooperation of Sunni tribal forces to combat Al Qaeda. Both developments reflect local accommodations which seem quite fragile. The reduced sectarian killings seem to reflect a decision by the Mahdi Army and other Shia militia to stand down temporarily while the American "surge" runs its course. The Sunni militia who are fighting Al Qaeda today could well return to attacking American forces tomorrow.

Opinion polling indicates that the overwhelming majority of the Iraqi people want American troops to leave, if not immediately, then soon. A smaller number, but still a majority of Iraqis, actually believe that attacks upon American forces are justified. Under General Petraeus's leadership American forces are finally putting the security of the civilian population at the center of their strategy. Had we done this four years ago, Iraqi attitudes toward the American presence might have been very different today. At this late stage, however, it seems unlikely that American forces can gain the confidence and thus secure the cooperation of the Iraqi people.

Neither will it be easy to gain the confidence and secure the cooperation of Iraq's neighbors. Nevertheless, all of these governments have strong incentives to avoid a total collapse of the Iraqi state, which would be the most likely consequence of an early and complete American withdrawal. The threat of military disengagement thus could give the United States some potential leverage with these states. To em-

ploy that leverage, however, Washington will need to engage them much more intensively than we have to date.

Last December the Iraq Study Group recommended a "diplomatic surge." Two weeks ago, in the Washington Post, former Secretary of State Kissinger did the same. Last week Senators Warner and Lugar introduced legislation to the same effect. No one believes that diplomacy alone will reverse the tide in Iraq, nor can one be certain of obtaining the cooperation of states like Iran, Syria and Saudi Arabia, all of whom have been quite hostile to our efforts in Iraq for the reasons I have cited. Those who advocate a diplomatic surge simply believe that trying to engage these and other regional governments is the last, best hope of retrieving something from the impending debacle.

Such a process cannot succeed unless the United States makes stabilizing Iraq its top objective in the region. In 1995 American diplomacy succeeded in ending the civil war in Bosnia because until peace was achieved, nothing else was more important. Other issues in American relations with Russia, our European allies and the Balkan states took second place to ending that war. Competing concerns, including ethic cleansing in Kosovo and democratization in Serbia were subordinated to that priority.

Similarly, in 2001, the United States succeeded in overthrowing and replacing the Taliban in a matter of weeks because all other objectives were subordinated to that goal. The Bush Administration embraced Pakistan, despite its record of nuclear proliferation and support for terrorism, it stopped hectoring Putin about human rights in Chechnya, and it even collaborated with Iran.

The United States has a number of important and legitimate objectives throughout the Middle East, to include denuclearizing Iran, curbing Syrian support for terrorism, preventing civil war in Lebanon, promoting the emergence of a Palestinian state willing to live at peace with Israel, and supporting democratic forces throughout the region. None of these interests should be abandoned, but some may need to be postponed. There is no way we can achieve, or even advance all these objectives simultaneously. It has never been likely, for instance, that the United States could stabilize Iraq and destabilize Iran and Syria at the same time, as it has been trying to do.

Statecraft, after all, is all about choosing, prioritizing and sequencing the objectives of a nation's diplomacy. In 1995, the United States and its allies brought peace to Bosnia at the expense of ignoring ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. In 1999 the United States and its allies liberated Kosovo while leaving Milosevic in power. Then in 2000, the United States and its allies supported his overthrow. Sequencing and prioritization allowed Washington to achieve all its objectives in the Balkans, but not all at the same time. Until the Administration makes hard choices of this sort in the Middle East, it will continue to fail across the board, as it has to date.

The debate in Congress has largely been about American troop levels. The obvious question, therefore, is what sort of American troop levels might emerge from such a process of regional diplomacy, and might be required thereafter to sustain it. The answer, I think is some smaller, but not insignificant number of troops, for some extended, but not indefinite period. In other words, in my judgment, consultations with Iraq and its neighbors would likely lead to a result not dissimilar to that recommended by the Iraq Study Group a year ago.

I would prefer that decisions regarding American troop levels flow from such a diplomatic process, rather than precede it. Faced with a real prospect of American withdrawal, I believe most Iraqi leaders, and all regional governments will urge us to stay, not indefinitely and not necessarily in our current numbers, but in some strength, and for some further period. Open ended consultations about America's future role can thus help us forge a regional consensus about that role, and about the shape of a future Iraq that we currently lack. Knowledge that the United States will not remain indefinitely in Iraq in current numbers, or permanently in at any level can provide American diplomats some leverage in moving governments of the region to recognize their own interests in, and responsibilities for, stabilizing Iraq. I would therefore urge Congressional action that presses the President to move in this direction, without so circumscribing his discretion as to render such diplomacy ineffective.

Admittedly, this is much easier to say than to do. So far the Administration's regional diplomacy has consisted of a series of largely substance free photo-ops without hard bargaining or meaningful follow through. In his last meeting with his Iranian opposite number, our Ambassador to Baghdad did not even have instruction that would let him agree to a second meeting. What can the Administration possibly have believed could be achieved in a single brief encounter with Iran, lasting but a few hours, after years of non-communication?

Neither has there been any visible follow through to Secretary Rice's last meeting with the Syrian Foreign Minister. It appears the Administration is actually discouraging the Israeli government from exploring accommodation with Syria over the Golan Heights. "They know what they have to do," has been the Administration's response to criticism of this policy of non-communication.

In my view President Bush should inform the Iraqi leaders and those if its neighbors that he is rethinking US policy, but wants to hear from all the factions in Iraq, and all the neighboring governments before coming to any conclusions regarding the future American military role. In doing so, he should make clear that his decision about the future size and mission of the American military in Iraq will be heavily influenced by what he hears, and what others are willing to do to help stabilized that country. Further, in order to facilitate and perpetuate these consultations, he should propose establishment of a standing forum, including representatives of Iraq, each of its neighbors and the U.S., perhaps under United Nations auspices. These representatives should agree to meet daily, in some neutral location, for an indefinite period probably extending several months into the future to work together on common approaches toward the crisis in Iraq. Their objective would not be to produce a communiqué, or even a treaty, but rather to develop an effective, continual working relationship among all those with a stake in Iraq's future.

The gathering I suggest should not be the exclusive forum for helping bring peace to Iraq. There should also be scope, at some point, for an internationally sponsored gathering of all the warring factions in Iraq. There should also be a wider forum bringing together the many states and organizations that could contribute to the reconstruction of Iraq once some minimal level of security was restored. Neither of these gatherings is likely to be productive, however, as long as Iraq's neighbors are operating at cross purposes there. I would therefore advise the Administration to begin with the core group consisting of Iraq, its neighbors and the United States, moving to constitute the other gatherings as the situation permits.

The American habit is to decide and then consult. In this case, I would recommend the opposite. Uncertainty about our ultimate intentions can, in this instance, provide us leverage with the Iraqis and their neighbors. Obviously, in the end, we will make our own decisions. Those decisions will be wiser and more sustainable, however, if they are informed by genuine consultation and buttressed by local and regional support.

Chairman LANTOS. Thank you, Ambassador Dobbins.

We will now turn to Dr. Michael Rubin. Dr. Rubin, the floor is yours.

STATEMENT OF MICHAEL RUBIN, PH.D., RESIDENT SCHOLAR, AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH

Mr. RUBIN. Chairman Lantos, Ranking Member Ros-Lehtinen, thank you for this opportunity to testify from Camp Pendleton where the 11th Marine Regiment is preparing for deployment to Iraq. Their willingness to undertake this courageous mission adds gravity to our discussion today.

Today, policymakers debate cutting short the surge. While few favor immediate withdrawal, there is open debate about other options: Reducing presence and limiting troops to training missions only; redeployment to neighboring countries; redeployment to Iraqi Kurdistan; so-called soft partition; and increasing diplomatic engagement with neighboring states. None of these strategies will solve the problems that Congress has identified. They will not make the United States safer. Each involves seeding ground to terrorists or Iranian influence. Each also sends the message that when faced with terrorism American runs.

Precipitous withdrawal is ill-advised. In Lebanon and in Somalia, our quick withdrawal encouraged terrorism. Osama Bin Laden has cited both examples when rallying his followers. There is no way to spin defeat. Nor is it wise to believe that we can contain violence

within Iraq should we withdraw. Such a strategy did not work when the Taliban ruled Afghanistan. It is risky to believe that it will work in Iraq.

Rather than bring stability or victory, partial withdrawal will ensure chaos and defeat. It is ironic that many who once criticized Donald Rumsfeld because he deployed too few troops to stabilize Iraq would now counsel replicating his strategy. The major benefit of the surge is that it creates room to further train and develop the Iraqi security forces. With fewer United States troops in Iraq, it will not be possible to continue training at the same level and with the same rigor. The ability to train sufficient Iraqis to stabilize Iraq will be the chief determinant of United States success.

Over-the-horizon deployment will place the U.S. military's ability to conduct missions hostage to the countries in which they are stationed. When our troops or our allies are engaged in a fight and need instant response, we should not need to depend on an application to the Saudi, Kuwaiti, or Jordanian foreign ministries to cross borders or clear airspace. Cross-border operations are seldom rapid.

Nor is redeployment into Iraq Kurdistan wise. The Iraqi Kurdish leadership's declarations that they are America's best regional allies are more rhetorical than real. While Iraqi Kurdish leaders host visiting American delegations for lavish dinners, they are enable az-Zawraa, the most virulent anti-American and pro-insurgent television, to broadcast from their territory.

Masud Barzani, the regional president, has both enabled the Iranian Revolutionary Guards to increase their presence in the region and interfered with United States attempts to intercept those planning attacks on Americans. Barzani has provided safe haven and arms to PKK terrorists responsible for the deaths in Turkey of more than 100 people since January alone.

It is tragic that Turkish-American relations have been so rocky since 2003. This is the result of the politics of a prime minister whose tenure may end with elections this Sunday. Regardless of our differences with Ankara, Washington should not turn a blind eye toward terrorism against such an important NATO ally nor should it lend protection to those who support such terrorism.

Redeploying troops in Iraqi Kurdistan short of an end to the PKK's presence in northern Iraq would spark greater conflicts and could lead to Turkey's withdraw from NATO. Washington should demand Barzani expel PKK terrorists, renounce any interest beyond the borders of Iraq and stop weapons smugglings from Iraqi Kurdistan into Turkey.

Partition, hard or soft, is unwise. Any partition would require significant population transfer. But rather than resolve conflict, displaced people catalyze it. The Bosnia model does not apply well. Bosnia experienced 3 years of ethnic cleansing and conflict proportionately far more intense than anything in Iraq. The Bosnia civil war killed 200,000 people and resulted in the displacement of half that country's population. This would be the proportional equivalent to more than 1.5 million Iraqis killed and 12 million Iraqi refugees.

To advocate for the partition of Iraq would, in effect, involve accelerating civil war and making millions of refugees. But division along ethnic or sectarian lines will not bring stability. Divisions

within the United Iraqi Alliance, the Shia group, demonstrate the fractured nature of Shia leadership. A leadership vacuum still plagues Sunni Arab communities. Kurdish unity is more theoretical than actual. Internal tension of the sort that sparked the 1994 to 1997 intra-Kurdish civil war still plagues the Kurdistan regional government, and indeed is inclusive.

Partition will divide Iraq into morsels which Iraq's neighbors will find easier to digest. This is not to condemn federalism. The age of a strongman is over. Some Iraqis do advocate for a strong leader, but only so long as he happens to be their cousin. Federalism can ensure Iraqi stability so long as it is administrative, based on the division of resources according to the population of each governorate. The bloodshed sparked by ethno-sectarian federalism, so-called soft partition, will not be contained to Iraq.

Regional diplomacy—especially outreach to Iran and Syria—rests on the false assumption that Iraq's neighbors seek a peaceful, stable Iraq. The Iranian leadership fears that rival Shiite leadership could emerge in Iraq, which could challenge Iran's religious and political claims. Short of political domination, Iranian's strategists believe limited instability and free rein of pro-Iranian militias to be in their best interest.

While diplomats may engage, Iranian diplomats have no power over Iranians conducting operations in Iraq. Inside the former U.S. Embassy in Tehran, a Revolutionary Guards unit today publishes *Amaliyat-i Ravanshenasi*, loosely translated as *Psychological Operations,* a journal dedicated to discussing strategies to stymie the United States in Iraq.

This past Friday, the former President, Hashemi Rafsanjani, whom many in Washington describe as a pragmatist, gave a speech in which he declared, "What a superpower is the United States when it can easily be trapped in a small country like Iraq?" He continued to predict that the United States would suffer the same lessons in Afghanistan as it is now in Iraq. Indeed, the Iranian interests will try to replicate that same strategy.

Many use Iraq to call for a return to realism. It is ironic that their realism bases itself on a Utopian notion of an adversary's good will. Four days after Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice offered an olive branch to the Islamic Republic, its Supreme Leader, ridiculed the offer. "Why don't you admit that you are weak and your razor is blunt?" he asked. Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps proceeded to accelerate weapons shipments into Iraq.

When assessing United States policy toward Iraq today, it is easy to criticize Plan A. It is a leap of logic, however, to assume that Plans B, C, or D are better alternatives. While the Iraqi Government has yet to make satisfactory progress toward all benchmarks, public threats to reduce or abandon the United States commitment to Iraq are counterproductive. To convince Iraqi politicians to make tough compromises that will anger powerful constituencies requires that the Iraqi leadership knows Washington's commitment is firm. If Washington threatens to leave or reduce its support for the Iraqi leadership, we will force even the most pro-American politicians there to make accommodation with our adversaries. A constant theme of Iranian influence operations is that the United States

lacks staying power. Willing to abandon allies only plays into Iranians' hands and will reverberate far beyond Iraq's borders.

The United States mission should be to enable Iraqis to secure their own country. This requires that the surge continues. If the Iraqis do not have the opportunity to develop their security forces, then their country and the wider region will descend into chaos and war. It is risky to assume or to take the chance it will not. It will take hard work. We should not pull the carpet out from beneath our allies.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Rubin follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHAEL RUBIN, PH.D., RESIDENT SCHOLAR, AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH

Mr. Chairman, Honorable Members. Thank you for this opportunity to testify from Camp Pendleton, California, where the 11th Marine Regiment is preparing for deployment to Iraq. The danger they face and their willingness to undertake this courageous mission adds gravity to our discussion here today.

The Initial Benchmark Assessment Report, released on July 12, 2007, painted a mixed picture: While the surge has created space to further training of the Iraqi security forces and reduced death squad activity and ethnic and sectarian cleansing, it has not, however, stopped terrorism. Nor have Iraq's political leaders met our political benchmarks. Still, there is reason for guarded optimism. It took five months after President Bush's announcement of the surge approach to deploy the five additional Army brigades and Marine elements into theater. Only on June 15, 2007, with the commencement of Operation Phantom Thunder, did Generals Petraeus and Odierno inaugurate the surge strategy in earnest. Its success after only one month is impressive.

Nevertheless, today policymakers in this room and outside debate cutting short the surge and switching course. While few favor immediate withdrawal, there is open debate about other options:

- Reducing presence and limiting troops to training missions only
- Redeployment to neighboring countries
- Redeployment to Iraqi Kurdistan.
- So-called soft partition; and
- Increasing diplomatic engagement with neighboring states

None of these strategies will solve the problems that Congress has identified. They will not better the situation in Iraq nor make the United States safer. Indeed, they may make them far worse. Each involves ceding ground to terrorists or to Iranian influence. Each also sends the message that, when faced with terrorism, America runs.

Precipitous withdrawal is ill-advised. In Lebanon and in Somalia, our quick withdrawal encouraged terrorism. Usama Bin Laden has cited both examples when rallying his followers to further terrorism. There is no way to spin defeat. Nor is wise to believe that we can contain violence within Iraq should we withdraw. Such a strategy did not work when the Taliban ruled Afghanistan. It is risky to believe that, in a global age, it will work in Iraq.

Rather than bring stability or victory; partial withdrawal will ensure chaos and defeat. It is ironic that many who once criticized Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld because he deployed too few troops to stabilize Iraq would now counsel replicating his strategy. The major benefit of the surge is that it creates room to further train and to develop the Iraqi Security Forces. With fewer U.S. troops in Iraq, it will not be possible to continue training at the same level and with the same rigor. The ability to train sufficient Iraqis to guarantee to stabilize Iraq will be the chief determinant of U.S. success.

Over-the-horizon deployment will place the U.S. military's ability to conduct missions hostage to the countries in which they are stationed. The diplomatic cost will be heavy, and effectiveness minimal. When our troops or our allies are engaged in a fight and need an instant response, we should not need to depend on an application to the Saudi, Kuwaiti, or Jordanian foreign ministries to cross borders or clear airspace. Cross-border operations are seldom rapid.

Nor is redeployment into Iraqi Kurdistan wise. The Iraqi Kurdish leadership's rhetorical declarations that they are America's best regional ally are more rhetorical than real. While Iraqi Kurdish leaders host visiting American delegations for lavish dinners, they also enable az-Zawraa, the most virulent anti-American and pro-insurgent television, to broadcast from their territory. Masud Barzani, the President of Iraqi Kurdistan, has both enabled the Iranian Revolutionary Guards to increase their presence in the region and interfered with U.S. attempts to intercept those planning attacks on Americans. Barzani has provided safe-haven and arms to PKK terrorists responsible for the deaths in Turkey of more than 100 people since January alone.

It is tragic that Turkish-American relations have been so rocky since 2003. This is the result both of bungled U.S. diplomacy and the rhetoric and politics of a prime minister whose tenure may end with elections this Sunday. Regardless of our differences with Ankara, Washington should not turn a blind eye toward terrorism against such an important NATO ally nor should it lend protection to those who support such terrorism. Redeploying troops in Iraqi Kurdistan short of an end to the PKK's presence in northern Iraq would likely spark greater conflict and could conceivably lead to Turkey's withdrawal from NATO. In the short-term, Congress and the State Department should demand Barzani expel PKK terrorists, renounce any interest beyond the borders of Iraq, and stop weapons smuggling from Iraqi Kurdistan into Turkey.

Partition, hard or soft, is unwise. Any partition would require significant population transfer. But rather than resolve conflict, displaced people catalyze it. The Bosnia model does not apply well. Three years of ethnic cleansing and conflict proportionately far more intense than that currently occurring in Iraq. The Bosnia civil war killed 200,000 people and resulted in the displacement of half that countries population. This would be the proportional equivalent to more than 1.5 million Iraqis killed and twelve million refugees. To advocate for the partition of Iraq would, in effect, involve accelerating civil war and making millions of refugees. But division along ethnic or sectarian lines will not bring stability. Divisions within the United Iraqi Alliance demonstrate the fractured nature of Shi'a leadership. A leadership vacuum still plagues Sunni Arab communities. Kurdish unity is more theoretical than actual. Internal tension plagues the Kurdistan Regional Government. Corruption, resource division, and revenue sharing disputes similar to those which sparked the 1994–1997 intra-Kurdish civil war are on the rise.

Partition will divide Iraq into morsels which Iraq's neighbors will find easier to digest. This is not to condemn federalism. The age of a strongman is over; some Iraqi will advocate for a strong leader, but only so long as he happens to be their brother or cousin. Federalism can ensure Iraqi stability so long as it is administrative, based on the division of resources according to the population of each governorate. The bloodshed sparked by ethno-sectarian federalism will not be contained to Iraq.

Regional diplomacy—especially outreach to Iran and Syria—may appear attractive, but the assumption that Iraq's neighbors seek a peaceful, stable Iraq is false. The Iranian leadership fears that rival Shi'ite religious leadership could emerge in Iraq which could challenge the Iranian leadership's religious and political claims. Short of political domination, Iranian strategists believe limited instability and free rein of pro-Iranian militias to be in their best interest. While diplomats may engage, Iranian diplomats have no power over the Iranians conducting operations in Iraq. Inside the former U.S. embassy in Tehran, a Revolutionary Guards' unit publishes *Amaliyat-i Ravanshenasi* (*Psychological Operations*) a journal dedicated to discussing strategies to stymie the United States in Iraq. This past Friday, July 13, Hashemi Rafsanjani, the former Iranian president whom many in Washington describe as a pragmatist, gave a speech in which he declared, "What a superpower is the United States is when it can be easily trapped in a small country like Iraq?" He continued to predict that the United States would suffer the same lesson in Afghanistan.

Many use Iraq to call for a return to realism. It is ironic that their realism bases itself on a Utopian notion of an adversary's good will. Four days after Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice offered an olive branch to the Islamic Republic, its Supreme Leader, 'Ali Khamene'i ridiculed the offer. "Why don't you admit that you are weak and your razor is blunt?" he asked. Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps proceeded to accelerate weapons shipments into Iraq.

When assessing U.S. policy toward Iraq today, it easy to criticize Plan A. It is a leap of logic, however, to assume that Plans B, C, or D are better alternatives. While the Iraqi government has yet to make satisfactory progress toward all benchmarks, public threats to reduce or abandon the U.S. commitment to Iraq are counterproductive. To convince Iraqi politicians to make tough compromises that will

anger powerful constituencies requires that the Iraqi leadership knows Washington's commitment is firm. If Washington threatens to leave or reduce its support for the Iraqi leadership, we will force even the most pro-American politicians there to make accommodation with our adversaries. A constant theme of Iranian influence operations is that the United States lacks Iran's staying power. Willing to abandon allies only plays into Tehran's hands and will reverberate far beyond Iraq's borders.

Success in Iraq is possible. It is imperative that the Iraqis take the lead in their future. The U.S. mission should be to enable them to secure their own country. This requires that the surge continues. If the Iraqis do not have the opportunity to develop their own multi-ethnic and multi-sectarian security forces then their country and the wider region will descend into chaos and war. It will take hard work. We should not pull the carpet out from beneath them.

Chairman LANTOS. I want to thank all three of our very articulate witnesses. We will begin the questioning with Ms. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you as always, Mr. Chairman, for your leadership, for having these oversight hearings, and for giving us the opportunity to hear from the good panelists and ask questions, so thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I find it interesting that many members who advocated for a strong United States military roles in Bosnia and in Haiti, and vigorously argued against setting arbitrary withdrawal deadlines from those countries now favor no United States military role in Iraq and favor arbitrary withdrawal deadlines for that country.

So I would like to ask Ambassador Dobbins specifically what vital United States national security interests led us to intervene militarily in Bosnia or in Haiti, and how did these interests differ from those in Iraq today, and continuing with that, the comparison of previous military participation abroad?

In an interview with Bill Moyer in 2005, Mr. Ambassador, you stated that it was a fundamental mistake to leave Haiti after only 2 years. You said, "Well, we have never seen one of these operations succeed in less than 7 or 8 years, at least none of the ones that the U.S. has been involved in."

So if the United States were to withdraw in the next year, would we look back with similar regret in our participation in Iraq? Does the 7 or 8 year principle not apply on Iraq?

And during your term as the Clinton administration's special coordinator for Haiti, the United States was involved correctly, I believe, militarily to help overthrow a repressive and dangerous regime, to bring stability and reconstruction to the island. However, the United States withdrew from Haiti before it was fully stabilized. Haiti soon plunged back into turmoil, requiring further United States action, and I wanted to ask, doesn't the failure of the American efforts in Haiti during the Clinton administration serve as a warning against premature withdrawal of troops in Iraq? Are there parallels between Iraq and Haiti?

Isn't it true that while American troops initially brought stability to Haiti, soon, 18 months after street violence and turmoil was created in the streets of Haiti, and doesn't the Haiti case demonstrate that reconstruction and occupation cannot be done hastily and on the cheek?

And as you stated in testimony a few years ago when talking about the Western Hemisphere, you said, "Exit strategies and departure deadlines are incompatible with enduring reform of failed state," and I think that that makes a strong argument against a

date certain for withdrawal in Iraq. I realize I am throwing a lot at you, Mr. Ambassador.

And if I could ask an additional question to Dr. Rubin. Thank you for your service, and I wanted to ask, do you believe that Iranian-supported militias, such as the Mahdi Army, pose a strategic threat to American interests and how can we best deal with that threat?

Thank you again. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LANTOS. Ambassador Dobbins.

Ambassador DOBBINS. Well, thank you. I am flattered with the broad familiarity with my writings that you have demonstrated, Congresswoman.

Chairman LANTOS. We all memorize your writings.

Ambassador DOBBINS. Haiti and Bosnia are both characterized as humanitarian interventions, but that, I think, somewhat disguises the broader geo-political reasons that were behind both. Any civil war generates a lot of refugees, and how the international community responds tends to depend on where those refugees go.

In the case of Haiti, they were going to southern Florida, and the United States responded rapidly and forcefully to halt that flow. In the case of Bosnia, they were going to Germany and Western Europe, and the United States and its allies in Western Europe responded similarly.

It sounds rather cynical, but one of the reasons that the international community has responded less effectively in Darfur is that the refugees aren't going to Western Europe and they are not going to the United States. That is, unfortunately, the case.

Nevertheless, there were real reasons for the intervention in both of those interventions, and we were fortunate that we had the staying power in Bosnia and we were unfortunate that we lacked it in Haiti, and had to go back again in 2004, and we are still backing a U.N. intervention which is continuing today, continuing with some success, incidentally, because they haven't set a deadline.

I think that American interests in Iraq are probably considerably more substantial than they were in either of those cases. The region is a highly sensitive one. The potential for broader conflict is certainly greater than it was with respect to Haiti, and at least equal to what it was in Bosnia, in addition to which we have undertaken a great deal of responsibility. We didn't start the refugee crisis in Haiti. We didn't start the war in Bosnia. By intervening in Iraq, we have assumed a degree of responsibility that I think it is going to be very difficult to shed.

That said, I think it is important to recognize that in Haiti and Bosnia and also in Kosova the United States was able very quickly to establish a secure environment. We took no casualties in Haiti. We took no casualties in Bosnia. We took no casualties in Kosova. We didn't lose a single man; neither did NATO in either of those cases.

Many of us wish that we had applied these analogies more rigorously in 2003, that we had looked at what was necessary to establish security in Bosnia, for instance, and in Kosova, and then applied those formulas in Iraq. Instead, we tried a different formula, a low-profile, small footprint formula, which was clearly inad-

equate, which allowed the emergence of a virulent resistance movement.

Now we face a difficult question, how to respond to that. It is probably too late to simply surge in enough forces to suppress all sides in this civil war. We probably don't have enough forces. The war is too virulent. The country is too big.

On the other hand, we probably can't get out either, and so the alternate—the middle option is, unfortunately, you have got a civil war. You pick the least bad side, and you continue to support it until it prevails.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you, Ambassador. I am going to cut you off if I could to let Dr. Rubin respond to my question, and maybe we can have another member ask before we break, Mr. Lantos. Thank you for the time.

Dr. Rubin.

Thank you, Mr. Ambassador.

Mr. RUBIN. Thank you, Congresswoman.

The question is, does Iranian support for militias pose a strategic threat? The answer is yes, for a couple of reasons.

First of all, if the Iranian militia strategy works in Iraq, we can be sure that it will be reapplied in other areas of concern like Afghanistan. The Iranian strategy we see in Iraq today is basically the Hezbollah model. Iran's ambassador to Iraq, not by coincidence, is the former liaison to Hezbollah in southern Lebanon.

This also plays into the notion of diplomacy with Iran. The Iranians use the militias and vigilante groups for plausible deniability. Therefore, oftentimes diplomacy becomes a way to run down the clock, and as Congressman Sherman spoke about in his opening remarks, this has every relation to the Iranian nuclear program as well.

In 2003, we did negotiate with Iran over Iraq, and Khalilzad who at the time was in the National Security Council met with an Iranian diplomat in Geneva to basically work things out, and what we found later was that the Iranians lied. They infiltrated the country with the Badr Corps and with the Jaish al-Mahdi despite what they had said earlier.

How do we counter this? Basically, it is not enough to have diplomatic red lines if the Iranians don't believe we have credibility. It is not enough just to tell them what our red lines are because in that case they are just going to keep testing and if we don't respond, we are going to lose further credibility.

What we need to do and what we have been doing recently is demonstrating where our red lines are so that they don't accidentally spark a wider conflict. This was the case, for example, when we intercepted Revolutionary Guard operatives in Erbil who were planning attacks on American soldiers and on Iraqi civilians. We intercepted them. That needs to continue and that is going to require some presence for it to continue.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you, Dr. Rubin.

Mr. RUBIN. Thank you.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LANTOS. We have three votes on the floor. The committee will stand in a short recess, and we will resume as soon as the votes are over.

[Recess.]

Chairman LANTOS. The committee will resume.

Mr. Rohrabacher.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and as I was just mentioning to the chairman in the hallway, this is a momentous time and we should be going out of our way to try to have an honest discussion of these issues, and try our very best to find the right path for our country and help the American people understand why we are where we are at and where we should be going.

Mr. Simon, I appreciated your very cool-headed and analytical approach to our alternatives, and I think that your testimony today was very worthwhile, and the testimony of the other two witnesses was illuminating as well.

Let me just state for the record that I do not believe that the situation that we are in today it can be traced to a fundamentally flawed concept of going and liberating Iraq from the dictatorship of Saddam Hussein. I believe that there have been political and diplomatic mistakes that have been made, yes, by this administration, that have led to the current very frustrating situation, but this was not a preordained defeat of our military. In fact, it seems to me that our military has been very successful in accomplishing the mission that they were set out to do, and that was to invade Iraq and to displace Saddam Hussein's regime and defeat its military.

So this argument that we didn't have enough boots on the ground, and this is what I would like to ask our witnesses today, I keep hearing this over and over again—we didn't have enough boots on the ground. The President came, went in, we didn't really have the capability to accomplish what we wanted to militarily.

I don't see that as being the case at all considering the fact that in Iraq we had perhaps fewer than 200 boots on the ground at the time the liberation occurred from the Taliban. We pushed out and defeated the Taliban with fewer than 200 men on the ground. Thus it is my belief that the hundreds of thousands that we sent into Iraq to defeat the army of Saddam Hussein, in which they succeeded in doing, was not the cause of our problem, but instead there are fundamental political and diplomatic mistakes have been made in trying, number one, to dismantle the military apparatus, perhaps trying to eliminate the entire Baathist Party when only a few of them probably were loyal to Saddam Hussein to begin with.

The elimination of the, or let us say the rejection of the efforts by tribal leaders to be part of our operation, we did not make the same compromises with the forces that be and the same agreements and the same—how do you say—coalition building in Iraq that we did in Afghanistan, and I know that there is a great deal of building relationships and commitments that we made with the Northern Alliance, and that is why we succeeded there. That, I believe, was not done in Iraq, and that is the basis of our current challenge.

One other thing, one other last point, and I would like you to comment on that point, but it is a diplomatic and a political failure and not a military failure that is going on now, but number two,

that the other political failure was the unwillingness of this administration to hold the Saudis accountable for the despicable role that they have been playing in financing the insurgency in Iraq from the early days of the insurgency, and not cracking down on those suicide bombers who could cumulate, and the other radical Islamists that continue to come from Saudi Arabia into that theater.

I would like you to comment on both of those, please, from each member of the panel very quickly.

Ambassador DOBBINS. Why don't I take the first question and you take the second on the Saudis.

I think that you make a good point in terms of what the appropriate troop level in Iraq would have been. Those who criticize the administration for deploying inadequate forces point to the much heavier deployments that took place in Bosnia and Kosova. They point to General Zinni's plans. He was Frank's predecessor as a CENTCOM commander, and they point to the testimony of General Shinzeki, all of which suggested that something in the area of about 400,000 would have been necessary to stabilize a country as large and internally conflicted as Iraq.

On the other hand, I think you quite rightly point out that we were able to succeed, at least for some time, in Afghanistan with a much lighter force presence, and I think that the reasons why we were able to get by with much less in Afghanistan were twofold: First, you had an indigenous resistance movement that had legitimized itself through a decade of conflict, and that occupied most of the major cities by the time American force showed up. So you had a fairly substantial ally on the ground as opposed to a bunch of emigrees who were coming back after 20 years living in Paris or London. That was one factor.

The second was that we had the support of every one of Afghanistan's neighbors. We had Iran, Pakistan, India, Russia, Uzbekista, Tajikistan controlling their borders and helping us build and support an indigenous regime in Afghanistan.

We didn't have either of those factors in Iraq. There was no indigenous resistance movement upon which to build, and we blew off the neighbors rather than tried to co-opt them, and the result was a much more demanding operation. So I do think that if we were going to do this without the cooperation of the neighbors and without any indigenous resistance movement, we probably would have been wiser to assume the requirement for the higher troop figures that some of these earlier analogies would have suggested.

Mr. SIMON. I agree with Jim that you raise a very good question. What I would add to Jim's point on your first question is that we unfortunately had a bit of confusion about war aims at the outset of the conflict, and this created a very difficult situation for us later on because we had one war aim, which was to deal with the WMD issue and deal with the terrorism issue, and that required as an objective a coup d'etat basically.

Then you had this other objective of injecting democracy into Iraq because that was felt to be in America's long-term strategic interest, and our forestructure and our foresize was geared to war aim one, coup d'etat, going in there, kicking down the door, getting rid of the guy and getting out, but our policy turned out ultimately

to be geared to war aim number two for which we had the foresize and structure that was geared to another war aim entirely, and that gave rise to a more enduring mismatch between the very real stakes that the United States had in Iraq and the resources that we as a country and the Bush administration as a government was willing to put in, and that created some problems for us which you identified, I think, very well.

On the Saudis, the Saudis are very worried about blow-back, and they are keenly aware of the number of Saudis—well, they are keenly aware that a large number of Saudis seem to be making their way to Iraq either directly or through Syria to participate in the insurgency. It is a worry for them because they had this problem once before vis-a-vis Afghanistan. So I would say, not having access to secret information, but knowing how the Saudis work and having been there not long ago, that they are attuned to the threat and they are not doing anything, I don't believe, to exacerbate it.

Mr. RUBIN. May I chime in?

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Please. Go ahead.

Mr. RUBIN. Thank you. I think the Congressman raises a very good question. The number of troops required in Iraq differs with time and it is based, of course, on the situation. I do believe our biggest failure early on was not securing the borders, especially with regard to Syria and Iran. This highlights the mistakes of relying too much on the good will of Iraq's neighbors. We did have diplomacy with both the Iranians and the Syrians prior to Operation Iraqi Freedom. Our mistake was trusting them too much and perhaps trusting the Saudis too much as well. Frankly, many of the neighbors, including Iran and Syria, lied.

Now, after the start of the insurgency, we only had enough troops to clear. It was like punching water. We cleared an area, then insurgents regrouped afterwards. The importance of the surge is being able not only to clear but also to hold and to build. Unfortunately, if we don't clear, hold and build, that only gives more incentives for neighboring states, including the Saudis, to try and fight proxy warfare. Unfortunately, they often do this by the financing of suicide terrorists and bombers.

Thank you.

Chairman LANTOS. Mr. Delahunt.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador Dobbins, in your written statement you indicate that opinion polling indicates that the overwhelming majority of the Iraqi people want American troops to leave, if not immediately, then soon. A similar number, but still a majority of Iraqis, actually believe that attacks upon American forces are justified.

My subcommittee had a hearing within the last several months that indicated that that number of Iraqis that felt that attacks on American military, our troops there on the ground are justified, was 62 percent. So 62 percent of the Iraqi people believe that it is justifiable to attack Americans.

Do you have any updates in terms of that number or is that the most recent available?

Ambassador DOBBINS. I haven't seen any new polling statistics, and it would be interesting to see whether any of these figures had

changed as a result of the surge and the greater efforts that the United States is making.

I attribute these numbers in large measure to our failure to provide public security in the early years of the occupation, and a gradual loss of confidence in our ability to protect them. That has taken place over time. I think the figures would not have been that size 3 or 4 years ago and——

Mr. DELAHUNT. Thank you, Ambassador.

I have another observation, and I would solicit your response and that of the other witnesses. I think Mr. Rubin just indicated it is a mistake to rely on the good will of others. I don't have necessarily any disagreement with that, but is it in the interest of the Syrians, for example, to have 1 million Iraqis that are currently displaced in their midst, in your judgment, Ambassador.

Ambassador DOBBINS. I believe the number of Iraqi refugees is becoming a serious concern for all of their neighbors.

Mr. DELAHUNT. For both Syria and Jordan. Mr. Simon, 1 million refugees, Iraqi refugees in Syria, is it in their interests to have that order of magnitude of foreigners within their midst over which, I presume, they have negligible influence and control?

Mr. SIMON. No, it is not in their interest which is why Ambassador Dobbins had said earlier that it is in the interests of all the neighbors to have at least a relatively stable Iraq because they pay the price of instability.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Is it in the interest of Iran to have al-Qaeda growing and being nurtured in Iraq?

Mr. SIMON. Well, Iran takes an instrumental approach to all these groups. Right now Iran's interest is to bait us and bleed us, and supporting in whatever indirect way they might al-Qaeda is a way to do this.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Just a further observation, I know that, and maybe you can indicate the validity of this, that it was reported on a Web site that al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia has issued an ultimatum to Iran—I think it is in 2 months—that if they continue to support an existing government—this is Iran supporting the Al Malaki government—that they will wage an all-out war against Iran. Are you familiar with that?

Mr. SIMON. Yes. I am hard pressed to see al-Qaeda invading Iran. I wish the——

Mr. DELAHUNT. I am, too.

Mr. SIMON. But that is unlikely to happen. It is true though that that segment of the insurgency—well, really the insurgency as a whole, not just that segment—in increasingly focused on Iran as to their strategic enemy, and they see the Iraqi Government simply as being stooges of Iran and the United States.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Well, is it a fair statement to say that there is a rather positive constructive relationship between the existing government in Iraq and Iran? There have been a series of agreements that have been consummated between the Iraqi Government and the regime in Iran, and as Mr. Rubin pointed out in his testimony, Barzani and many of the Kurds are obviously favorably disposed toward Iran. Is that an accurate statement?

Ambassador DOBBINS. Iran is the second most important source of support for the current government in Baghdad. The United

States being the first most important source of support. It is the only neighbor that is unequivocally supportive of the government, and it is the only neighbor that was fully supportive of the electoral process and the constitutional process that led to the government.

On the other hand, as Steve has said, and as I am sure Mr. Rubin would add, the Iranians are capable of playing both sides of the street, and at the moment they do appear to be hedging their bets and supplying and conducting relations with factions that are attacking American soldiers.

Mr. DELAHUNT. So it is really worthwhile to conduct a follow analysis of the interests of the neighbors as best as we can discern in terms of making our own decisions as far as the withdrawal is concerned. Is that a fair statement?

Ambassador DOBBINS. Absolutely.

Chairman LANTOS. Dr. Rubin, would you like to add something?

Mr. RUBIN. Sure. The chief interest of all the neighbors are going to be exploiting the vacuum that develops and exploiting U.S. weakness. They have shown absolutely no inclination—and when I say "they," I mean the Syrians and the Iranians—to compromise.

With regard to the refugee figures, no, it is not in anyone's interest to have so many refugees. However, the metric they are using isn't simply the refugee issue.

I should also note that according to *The Guardian* newspaper of London, I believe it was on August 15 or 16, 2002, citing statistics I believe provided by the United Nations, said that one out of every six Iraqis at the time was a refugee. This was before the war while still under Saddam Hussein. That equals around 4 million people, which is around the same number we are talking about today. Some refugees returned to Iraq and were resettled. Because of the deterioration of the security situation now many of them have left again.

What I would also just say, and I would agree with the other panelists on this, is that pragmatism often involves inconsistency. The Iranians have worked with Shia Islamists. They have worked with Sunni Secularists, and they have worked with Marxists as well, and this assumption that the Iranians will only work with the most logical proxy and not have multiple proxies isn't necessarily an accurate one upon which to base United States policy.

Chairman LANTOS. Mr. Royce.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I wanted to ask Mr. Simon, Mr. Simon, what gives you confidence that a multilateral structure can be established to effectively support economic recovery as you suggest, given the conditions on the ground you describe?

If you write off oil, the security, and political sphere, why would we have anymore success in the economic sphere as you have postulated here?

Mr. SIMON. Thank you, Congressman Royce.

I do not have high confidence that it can be pulled off.

Mr. ROYCE. But you are saying it might have.

Mr. SIMON. We ought to be trying to do as a precursor, a necessary precursor to a withdrawal that I think will have to occur.

Mr. ROYCE. Let me ask Mr. Dobbins a question because, Ambassador, you testified that the United States must make stabilizing

Iraq its top objective in the region, and then you go on to state that the success that was achieved in Bosnia was because nothing else was more important. All the other issues, as you say, took a back seat, and I was going to ask which Middle East priority here would you demote because Iran's nuclear program would seem to be the one that we are talking about here because that is one of our priorities; and clearly Iran has a very different perspective in terms of their achieving this nuclear weapons system that they are working on, and I want to ask your view on that.

Ambassador DOBBINS. I think that one can make the case that preventing Iran from developing nuclear weapons is our most important objective in the region, but it is not our most urgent. Iran is still several years away from developing a nuclear weapon. Iraq is several months away from total disintegration.

So I would assign stabilizing Iraq my top priority. I would continue to pursue but with a different level of intensity our other interests in the region. As I suggested with respect to Bosnia, we ultimately achieved all of our objectives, you know, peace in Bosnia, liberating Kosova and overthrowing Milosevic, but we didn't try to do them all at once, and I do think that if we similarly sequence and prioritize we have a chance of achieving all our objectives in the region, probably not in the rest of this administration's term of office, which is less than 2 years, but over time, but I think as long as we pursue all of them we are going to achieve none of them.

Mr. ROYCE. I had one last question for you, Ambassador, and that was in your testimony you cautioned that congressional action not circumscribe the President's discretion as to when is diplomacy ineffective, and I was going to ask you, what would you advise Congress do, and what would you caution Congress against?

Ambassador DOBBINS. That is a hard question to answer because the President and his administration have shown so little interest in pursuing the diplomatic track in the manner I suggested, and I am not sure that there is an effective way Congress can compel them to do so.

Congress has the power of the purse and can cut off funds to sustain troop levels. There is no similar instrument at which it can force the administration to conduct an active and intense diplomatic campaign. You can lead a horse to water, you can't make him drink. And so I don't, other than advocating it, and I think that the Lugar/Warner language that was introduced in the Senate just a couple of days ago has a very substantial section on the diplomatic aspects of Iraq. I think pushing language like that and, frankly, pushing the administration to see the military component of its strategy as an instrument of policy and rather than as the lead element is the way to go, but I hesitate to advise you exactly how to do it. I do think that the language the Warner and Lugar has introduced moves in the right direction.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you. Mr. Rubin and Mr. Simon, any thoughts on the question?

Mr. RUBIN. Yes. I would respond to what I thought was a very apt question, a very apt series of questions.

If we fail in Iraq, which goes to the issue of priorities, Iran will feel that they can push forward regardless of what the United

States and Europeans say. Our credibility is at stake. I am not so sure whether it is so easy to suggest that the Iranian nuclear program and our response to it, and the situation in Iraq can be so separate in this point.

Indeed, I would say no amount of diplomacy is going to convince the Iranian leadership, the Revolutionary Guards, and the Supreme Leader that they should abandon their covert nuclear program should they feel that we have lost our credibility in Iraq, and that they can successfully push us around.

The greatest danger in the region right now, I would argue, is that Iran is growing increasingly overconfident. It overestimates American weakness. It overestimates its own success. It underestimates American resolve and strength, and increasingly is feeling itself immune from consequence. That more than anything else is going to really complicate the diplomacy in the short term and in the long term.

Thank you.

Chairman LANTOS. Dr. Simon.

Mr. SIMON. I think if we were seen to be winning in Iraq by others, our credibility would be enhanced by staying. But since we are not and we are too all appearances ineffectual, then if we are going to deal with other strategic priorities, like Iran, we need to begin to close the kitchen in Iraq.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Chairman.

Chairman LANTOS. Very good. Before turning to Ms. Woolsey, may I pose a question to all three of you since you are not only students of both Iran and Iraq, but you are close observers of the American political scene.

What is your prediction, irrespective of your preferences, as to the size of the American troop deployment in Iraq in mid-year 2008, at the end of 2008, and beyond? Dr. Simon.

Mr. SIMON. By mid-year 2008, we might be closer to 100,000 than 165,000. By the end of 2008, I don't see very much difference actually between the summer and election season. Beyond that, well, it depends entirely on a new administration. If I could just make a point about casualty tolerance, I would like to, if you will give me just 10 seconds to do this.

Casualty tolerance depends on three things: The public has to believe that victory is achievable in the near future; that the stakes are worth it; and that decision makers and opinion makers are united on those points. When the public sees an opinion fractured, as it is today, severely, severely fractured, then casualty tolerance drops very rapidly, and my fear is that it will crack and public opinion will force a faster and more radical drawdown that it is actually in our strategic interest.

Chairman LANTOS. Ambassador Dobbins.

Ambassador DOBBINS. Well, I think your question underscore the difficult and dangerous period we are entering. Sometime in the next 6 to 12 months the American commitment to Iraq is going to stop going up and start going down, and this is going to be an important pivot point which could be quite dangerous because of the volatility in the Iraqi political scene and maybe even more in the American political scene, and so it might not be the kind of control de-escalation that probably most of us would like to see.

I support the Iraq study group's recommendations of last December which called the United States to adopt a smaller profile concentrated largely on advisors and enablers, leaving the street fighting, urban patrolling and major combat to the Iraqis. I think a force of that size would probably require somewhere between 40,000 and 60,000 troops. People who are more expert than I would need to judge on that.

There are certainly dangers with moving toward that kind of presence. The Iraq Government might collapse entirely. It would probably engage in large-scale human rights abuses with which we would be associated, but I still think that is probably better than leaving altogether.

I tend to think that is more or less where we will be headed by middle of next year, and then the question is can that be sustained or will the political processes in both Iraq and the United States have veered entirely out of predictable control.

Chairman LANTOS. Dr. Rubin.

Mr. RUBIN. Mr. Chairman, there are two scenarios and which is chosen depends on the Congress. If the surge continues and we can train the Iraqi security forces, United States forces can be steadily withdrawn. Basically that option is the short-term surge followed by long-term withdrawal.

Withdrawal prior to stabilizing Iraq, as the Baker-Hamilton Commission found, could lead to the necessity to re-engage in Iraq sooner rather than later. So that scenario is more of a short-term withdrawal, followed by a long-term deployment.

I would hope that Congress would continue with the surge through General Petraeus' report with 160,000 plus United States troops in Iraq, enabling the trainers to do their work. It is simply not militarily possible only to deploy trainers and not have the background support to protect them and to create the space in which for them to do the training. I would hope that we would continue with the surge until at least we hear from General Petraeus.

Chairman LANTOS. Ms. Woolsey.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to our witnesses for this very important hearing today.

I have two questions for Mr. Simon and Ambassador Dobbins, and my colleague talked about the unpopularity of the American troops in Iraq by the Iraqis, and I would like then to move that over to the United States population with the sense that about 62 percent of Americans say that we know that we shouldn't have gone there in the first place. It was a mistake. But they don't know how to get out, and you know what, why would they know how to get out? That is not their job. It is our jobs, all of us.

The other reason is, given the sense that every time we talk about bringing our troops home, that language is parsed into abandoning our troops by the press, the media, by the administration, by both sides of the House, the House and the Senate, and I would like to change that.

I truly believe, and I would like your opinion about what you think it would cost and what the timing would be, I believe we can support our troops, that we fund their coming home safely, that over a period of time, and I would like you to tell me what you think that period of time will be, and not only bring our troops

home safely, but then we invest in Iraq, pay for it, fund it, have the funding available to reconstruct and reconcile, give the Iraqis back their country, give them their sovereignty, and invest in a diplomacy surge. So your opinions on that would be very valued by me.

Mr. SIMON. Bringing the troops home is entirely a political decision that needs to be made by the Executive Branch and the Legislative Branches together, taking into account the views of Americans because it is Americans who determine what their national interest is. So to me, it is not simply a matter of what can be paid for and how fast things could be done. Obviously, every day that the troops are not brought home we lose three more with an additional 10 being wounded. The cumulative effect is already apparent.

But from my perspective as a witness here today, our withdrawal has to be based as much as possible on strategic considerations within the constraints of domestic politics, and perhaps events on the ground in Iraq. But these are so unpredictable that it seems to me we need to begin planning for these things and for withdrawal sooner rather than later or we will be hostage to events happening over there and happening politically here over which policymakers have little control.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Ambassador.

Ambassador DOBBINS. I am not sure I have a lot to add. I think a withdrawal——

Ms. WOOLSEY. Paid for, funded.

Ambassador DOBBINS. I think a withdrawal is technically feasible. The conditions under which one would withdraw are quite unpredictable. It might be possible to withdraw under reasonably orderly conditions, but it could be that the American withdrawal would occasion a further collapse of whatever structure is there, and the conditions will be quite disorderly, and one might even suffer significant casualties in the course of withdrawing. I don't think one could exclude that, although I am not particularly recommending it.

My own view is that we ought to be moving to a smaller and more sustainable deployment, and one of the reasons I say that is because it is clearly easier to withdraw if you only have 50,000 troops there than if you have 150,000 troops there. So I would like to try a smaller and more sustainable deployment, and if, as some have predicted, that turns out to be unsustainable one can then move to the next unhappy option. But I mean I think the real issue is not whether or not we can get out, the real issue is what we leave behind.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Well, speaking of what we leave behind let us talk about equipment and the training of the security forces. We need to leave, of course, civilian law enforcement that is established, but there is a fear that we are arming and training enforcement and military to then just work against our own American troops.

So what would be your ideas of what we should do with our equipment and how much more should we invest in training the security and the military?

Chairman LANTOS. We will let Dr. Rubin go first this time.

Mr. RUBIN. I will answer both of those questions together if I may. I have written in my submitted testimony about why I don't think reduced deployments will work so well. I am not going to repeat that.

In response to the Congresswoman's first question, I don't really believe there is any magical formula to spin what would be a defeat. If it is the policy of the United States to abandon Iraq prior to stabilization and cede it to the terrorists seeking to kill Americans, there is no way that we can convince the American people and the American electorate, to which the Congress and the administration respond, that it is a responsible formula.

When it comes to training the Iraqi security forces, one of the major problems the Iraqi security forces have is with regard to logistics. It is one issue to train them to be able to counter the insurgents, the terrorists, the militias and so forth. It is quite another issue for them to be independently able to get from point A to point B. And so in that regard some transfer of equipment to enable their logistical redeployment within their country to the hot spots should be a policy goal of the United States, but I would leave it to the military experts in that, and I direct the questions to the military experts in that to give a more precise answer.

Ms. WOOLSEY. So Mr. Chairman, I would like to respond to that, and that is why I didn't have Dr. Rubin answering my questions because I knew that what his responses would be.

I know Dr. Rubin believes totally in what he is saying. I personally believe that is exactly why we are paralyzed and cannot see out of the envelope on what to do there because there is this idea that there is only one way to do this, and there is some way to win an occupation. You can't win an occupation.

So could I have the other two answer my questions?

Ambassador DOBBINS. I expect that we will want to take most of our equipment with us. I think some of the facilities that we have created might well be of use to the Iraqi Government and the Iraqi forces, and they might inherit them, or perhaps some types of equipment that they might be able to operate and could usefully acquire, trucks for instance. I don't think we are going to be giving them M1 tanks or some of the more sophisticated equipment.

I think we do need to move more expeditiously to better equip Iraqi forces. We have been reluctant to give them heavy equipment and more lethal arms because we felt that they were likely to use them indiscriminately on their own population. But if we were leaving, there is not going to be much alternative, and we are probably going to have to bite that bullet and equip them more substantially.

Chairman LANTOS. Dr. Simon.

Mr. SIMON. I think the answer depends to some extent on how you want to see the civil war playing out. Right now there is a rough military balance which is one of the reasons that you don't see outbreaks of truly genocidal violence. The Sunnis and the Shia are basically in a standoff. If you think that it would be better for the United States and for Iraq to bring a more rapid conclusion to the civil war, well, then you put your thumb in the scales, and you start to give the Iraqi army a lot more equipment, and to the ex-

tent that it is actually possible to train any military force in the middle of a civil war, well, then you proceed down that road.

Now, that probably would have the effect of killing Sunni dreams of restoration faster and bringing a more rapid end to the civil war, but it would be very ugly. It would be very ugly indeed, and I personally wouldn't endorse that. I am a stalemate man you could say.

Chairman LANTOS. Well, let me thank all three of our witnesses for their most valuable testimony and insights. We have all learned a great deal, and this hearing is adjourned.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing.

[Whereupon, at 1:33 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING RECORD

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE DONALD A. MANZULLO, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF ILLINOIS

Mr. Chairman, thank you for calling this important hearing regarding the July 12 interim report on benchmarks. I understand that the purpose of this hearing is to review progress; however, I cannot help but wonder how much real progress could have occurred in the two weeks since the last hearing on Iraq was held. Let me note for the record that I share the concerns of many Americans that the Iraqi government is not moving quickly enough to adopt the political and military reforms necessary to assume control of the country. At the same time, the brave men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces are doing a heroic job.

Former Major General John Batiste stated at the June 27 Committee hearing on the surge that, "[America's] two vital interests are that Iraq can not become a launching pad for world-wide Islamic extremism or become a source of regional instability." Over the weekend, Major General Rick Lynch, the commander of the Third Infantry Division in Iraq also cautioned against premature departure. He is quoted in the *New York Times* saying an early withdrawal will create "an environment where the enemy could come back and fill the void." So, after hearing from retired Major General Batiste, who is openly critical about the Administration's handling of the war, and from Major General Lynch, I must say that the argument is fairly strong against premature withdrawal.

I look forward to the testimonies from our witnesses.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE SHEILA JACKSON LEE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS

Mr. Chairman, I thank you for convening this extremely important and timely hearing. There is no more important issue facing the Congress, the President, and the American people than the war in Iraq. It is a subject which agitates the passions of all Americans, including members of Congress. Let me also take this opportunity to thank the Ranking Member, and to welcome our panel of witnesses: Dr. Steven Simon, Hasib J. Sabbagh Senior Fellow for Middle Eastern Studies, Council on Foreign Relations; the Honorable James Dobbins, Director, International Security and Defense Policy Center, the RAND Corporation, and Dr. Michael Rubin, Resident Scholar, American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research. I look forward to your informative testimony.

Mr. Chairman, it has now been over four years since the U.S. invasion of Iraq and over four years since our President stood on the deck of an aircraft carrier, in front of a banner proclaiming "Mission Accomplished," to announce the end of combat operations in Iraq. And yet, we continue to pour our nation's most precious resources, the lives of our sons and daughters, into ongoing military campaigns in Iraq.

The misguided, mismanaged, and costly debacle that is the Iraq War, preemptively launched by President Bush in March 2003 despite the opposition of me and 125 of my colleagues in the House of Representatives, has lasted longer than America's involvement in World War II, the greatest conflict in all of human history. Unfortunately, our nation has not enjoyed that same quality of leadership throughout the Iraq War as it did under President Franklin Roosevelt. The results, not surprisingly, have been disastrous.

To date, the war in Iraq has claimed the lives of 3,611 brave servicemen and women. The last three months of the war have been among the deadliest (104 in

April, 123 in May, 101 in June, and 32 in the first week of July). More than 26,690 Americans have been wounded, many suffering the most horrific injuries. American taxpayers have paid nearly $450 billion to sustain this misadventure.

It is long past time for a change in U.S. policy in Iraq. It is time for the people and government of Iraq to take primary responsibility for their own country. It is time for the President to recognize the reality on the ground in Iraq. The time when a surge in troops is useful and necessary is past. We must now redeploy our troops and launch a diplomatic surge for national and political reconciliation in Iraq. I cannot support the President's waging of a war that has no clear direction, does not meet the benchmarks that he himself set, and has no visible target.

All accounts, including those of General David Petraeus and U.S. Ambassador Ryan Crocker, indicate that progress toward political reconciliation has been unsatisfactory. Splits between Sunni and Shiite political elites appear to be widening, while Kurdish participation in the Baghdad political structure faces looming threats as controversial decisions on issues including oil laws and provincial referendums draw near. Progress toward numerous benchmarks agreed upon by the U.S. and Iraqi governments also remains stalled. Additionally, political divisions within the dominant Shiite groups have begun to widen alarmingly. Fragmentation became apparent in March 2007, and threatens to further delay progress on the benchmarks.

Mr. Chairman, I continue to believe that it is time to change our strategy in Iraq. It is time to engage the key stakeholders in the Middle East and to make real strides towards securing a just and lasting peace in Iraq and for the Iraqi people. And, most importantly, it is time to bring our troops home so they can be reunited with their families, friends, and neighbors. That is why last week I was proud to support H.R. 2956, the Responsible Redeployment from Iraq Act, requiring a responsible redeployment of U.S. troops beginning within 120 days of enactment and ending by April 1, 2008. I believe that legislation, like this bill, that is consistent with the advice of military and foreign policy experts ensures the safety of our men and women in uniform, addresses our commitment to fighting terrorism, and reflects the will of the American people.

President Bush and Vice-President Cheney have been given numerous chances and ample time by the American people and the Congress to achieve their goals in Iraq. They have failed. Not surprisingly, criticism of the Administration's policy has mounted, and respected military leaders have begun to speak out forcefully about the need for a new direction. According to Lt. General William Odom: "No effective new strategy can be devised for the United States until it begins withdrawing its forces from Iraq. Only that step will break the paralysis that now confronts us."

Mr. Chairman, it is not a small, liberal, minority calling for these changes. Just last week, in a USA Today/Gallup Poll, more than 70% of Americans indicated that they favored the removal of almost all U.S. troops from Iraq by April 2008, leaving a limited number for counter-terrorism efforts. A number of Republican Senators are also joining in calls for troop redeployment from Iraq, including Foreign Relations Committee Ranking Member Senator Richard Lugar (R–IN) and some of the President's allies in Congress. Senator Pete Domenici (R–NM) stated: "There's no reason to wait . . . [I am] trying to tell [Bush] that he must change his ways because there is nothing positive happening." Senator Elizabeth Dole (R–NC) said: "It is my firm hope and belief that we can start bringing our troops home in 2008." Senator Lamar Alexander (R–TN) stated: "The president needs a new strategy."

I, too, believe a new strategy and a new direction for U.S. policy is imperative. To address these serious issues, I have introduced H.R. 930, the "Military Success in Iraq and Diplomatic Surge for National and Political Reconciliation in Iraq Act of 2007," which offers an honorable deliverance from Iraq.

My bill recognizes that the October 2002 Congressional authorization for the President to use military force in Iraq enumerated five specific objectives. Every one of these objectives has long since been accomplished. Iraq does not possess weapons of mass destruction. Saddam Hussein has been deposed, captured, and dealt with by the Iraqi people. The American military has caught or killed virtually every member of al Qaeda in Iraq that was even remotely responsible for the 9–11 attack on our country. Last, all relevant U.N. resolutions relating to Iraq have been enforced. Our objectives for military action have all been successfully realized by our brave troops.

Mr. Chairman, since the objectives which led Congress to pass the 2002 Authorization to Use Military Force (AUMF) have been achieved, I believe the authorization to use that military force expires automatically. My legislation affirms this proposition. Additionally, I believe, and my legislation provides, that it is the Congress that is the ultimate arbiter as to whether the objectives set forth in a congressional AUMF have been achieved. My legislation requires the President to obtain

a new authorization to continue to use force, and it mandates the redeployment of American forces out of Iraq if such a reauthorization is not secured.

I am not talking about "cutting and running," or surrendering to terrorists. And I certainly am not talking about staying in Iraq forever or the foreseeable future. The Armed Forces won the war they were sent to fight. However, their civilian leadership has not succeeded in winning the peace. For this reason, the United States should surge diplomatically and politically, rather than militarily.

Mr. Chairman, in addition to the enormous financial cost, the human cost to the men and women of the United States Armed Forces has been devastating, though they have willingly paid it. Operation Iraqi Freedom has exacerbated the Veterans Administration health care facility maintenance backlog; placed an undue strain on the delivery of medical treatment and rehabilitative services for current and new veterans; and exacted a heavy toll on the equipment, training and readiness requirements, and the courageous families of the men and women of the United States Armed Forces.

Every day, when I walk into my office, I am reminded of the courageous young men and women who have given their lives in service to our nation. Outside my office I have displayed a poster-board that displays the names and faces of those who made the ultimate sacrifice. The poster board in nearly full. I do not want to start another board.

Last November the American people signaled clearly their loss of confidence in the President's leadership and their desire for a new direction in Iraq. The new Democratic majority, led by the Progressive Caucus and the Out of Iraq Caucus, has ushered in a new era of oversight, accountability, and transparency to defense and reconstruction contracting and procurement.

We still have a long way to go though, and we will not rest until we see American troops redeployed out of Iraq.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I yield back the balance of my time.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE GENE GREEN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS

Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this hearing on our policy options in Iraq.

Four years since we overthrew Saddam Hussein, Iraq is still in turmoil and our troops are trying to police a civil war.

We gave the President the Authority and flexibility he asked for, but his stay-the-course policy and the troop surge have not worked.

Despite the President's surge, widespread violence still exists, preventing significant progress from being made in other areas.

Sunni insurgent groups are conducting increasingly complex and well-coordinated attacks on police stations and other fixed positions, suicide attacks on markets frequented by Shiites, and occasional mass kidnappings of 50 or more people at a time from fixed locations.

Since January 2007, insurgent groups have, on about ten occasions, exploded chlorine trucks to cause widespread civilian injury or panic.

Targets of insurgent grenades, IEDs (improvised explosive devices), mortars, and direct weapons fire are U.S. forces and Iraqi officials and security forces, as well as Iraqi civilians of rival sects, Iraqis working for U.S. authorities, foreign contractors and aid workers, oil export and gasoline distribution facilities, and water, power, and other facilities.

There is still tremendous instability in the country, and the President's surge plan he implemented earlier this year is showing few signs of pacifying the country.

By all accounts, including those of top U.S. commander in Iraq General David Petraeus and U.S. Ambassador Ryan Crocker, and discussed in the July 12, 2007 progress report, progress on the most significant political reconciliation efforts has been unsatisfactory to this point.

Senior Administration officials, including Vice President Cheney, deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte, and Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, have visited Iraq within the last two months, expressing disappointment at the relative lack of progress to date and urging accelerated efforts.

The major political benchmarks pledged by the Iraqis in August 2006 have largely gone unmet.

Last week we passed a bill that would begin redeploying U.S. forces in 120 days, and would complete redeployment by April 1, 2008.

I supported this legislation because we cannot continue policing a country that will not make the political and security decisions necessary to move forward with creating a self-sustaining, unified country.

The President's stay-the-course plan did not work, and his surge has not produced significant results.

After four years and more than 3,600 American casualties, it is time we let the Iraqi government know we will no longer be there to support them if they are not willing to make the choices necessary to move their country forward.

Mr. Chairman, thank you again for holding this hearing, and I look forward to hearing from our panel on how best to end our involvement in Iraq.