

Testimony of Eric P. Schwartz
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Before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
Tuesday, March 10, 2002

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee:

I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify on the critical issue of post-conflict Iraq. I have looked at these questions rather closely in recent months, in my capacity as director of the Council on Foreign Relations independent Task Force on post-conflict Iraq. That Task Force, which is chaired by Ambassador Thomas Pickering and Dr. James Schlesinger, will release its report tomorrow morning, and I'd be grateful if the Committee would agree to include the Executive Summary of that report in the written record of this hearing.

Although much of my testimony is informed by the work of the Task Force, I'm here today in my personal capacity.

In addition to my work at the Council, I was formerly a senior NSC aide during the Clinton Administration, and had responsibilities for humanitarian assistance, United Nations issues, and the management of complex crises. I have some appreciation for the enormous challenge confronting the Bush administration. And while much of what I say may be somewhat critical in tone, I want emphasize that there is a lot of good work being done by committed public servants to ensure that, if a war takes place, battlefield victory will not be lost in the post-conflict environment.

If the United States goes to war and removes the regime of Saddam Hussein, American interests will demand an extraordinary commitment of U.S. financial and personnel resources to post-conflict transitional assistance and reconstruction. These interests include securing the elimination of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction; ending Iraqi contacts, whether limited or extensive, with international terrorist organizations; ensuring that a post-transition Iraqi government can maintain the country's territorial integrity and independence while contributing to regional stability; and promoting an internal democratic process in which the people of Iraq have a meaningful voice in the policy decisions that impact their lives.

Given the limited time, let me offer five key questions which I would encourage Committee members to raise with administration officials, and then briefly offer my own perspectives.

1. What is the extent of our long-term political commitment to Iraq? What are we prepared to spend, and when will the administration describe this in detail to the American people?

It is critically important that the president step up his efforts to explain to the American people the rationale for U.S. engagement in post-conflict Iraq, and it is also essential that he begin to describe the magnitude of the American post-conflict commitment. This is necessary if we are to sustain long-term support to Iraq even after senior officials have turned to other crises in years to come.

So what are the costs? If you estimate a requirement of about 75,000 peace stabilization troops—at a cost estimated by Congressional Budget Office (CBO) at \$1.4 billion per month—and you add, say, a first-year U.S. contribution of humanitarian and economic assistance of about \$3 billion, then you are at about \$20 billion in year one. These estimates of requirements are, in fact, quite modest—other credible estimates are far higher. Moreover, the United States will need to be prepared to spend comparable amounts in future years.

I should add that it is unrealistic to assume that Iraqi oil revenues will provide all of the resources necessary for rebuilding of Iraq, especially in the early post-conflict period. First, much of the revenue is already being used for humanitarian purposes under the Oil for Food Program, and additional reconstruction requirements will amount to tens of billions of dollars, at a minimum. Secondly, large oil capacity and production increases, which might generate much greater revenues, are many years away. Third, the bulk of U.S. post-conflict expenses will be for U.S. peace stabilization troops, and it would be awkward at best to use oil revenues to pay those costs.

2. What specific actions will the U.S. military take to protect Iraqi civilians in the context and the aftermath of conflict?

U.S. officials must be certain that U.S. troops involved in combat operations will be in position to focus, in a systematic manner, on threats to civilians. In particular, from the outset of the conflict, the U.S. military should deploy forces with a mission to prevent reprisals and other

acts of lawlessness, and to provide humanitarian aid. And U.S. military and civilian officials should maintain this public security focus throughout the transition.

None of the other U.S. objectives in rebuilding Iraq will be realized in the absence of public security. If the United States fails to address this issue effectively, we will fuel the impression that the result of the U.S. intervention is an increase in humanitarian suffering by the people of Iraq.

The U.S. military, in some cases in cooperation with coalition partners, should also assist civilian victims of weapons of mass destruction if exposure occurs; press neighboring governments to provide refuge within their borders for fleeing Iraqis; seek to ensure protection for internally displaced persons—especially if Turkey and other governments establish camps inside Iraq; sustain the basic structure of the UN Oil for Food Program; and actively recruit international civilian police (civpol) and constabulary forces to assist U.S. troops in public security—and in the training of Iraqis to take on responsibilities in this area.

3. *What action is the administration taking to ensure that international organizations and other governments will contribute meaningfully to the post-conflict transition effort?*

The administration needs others if it is to succeed in post-conflict Iraq. This will not only lighten the load for the United States, but will also help diminish the mistaken perception that the U.S. seeks to control Iraq.

There is much the administration can do to involve others in the initial stages and over time without sacrificing unity of effort in the post-conflict structure. While the law of occupation will provide the general authority for U.S. actions, we should also work toward UN Security Council resolutions that endorse post-conflict transition structures and enhance the likelihood of buy-in by others. And even if those resolutions endorse a U.S. lead, initially, in post-conflict security and interim civil administration, they should also promote the lead of the United Nations and other international organizations on issues such as humanitarian assistance, the political consultative process leading to a transition to Iraqi rule, the management of the UN Oil for Food Program, and international reconstruction efforts. In addition, a resolution could indicate that responsibilities in other areas should be furthered transferred to the United Nations and/or other governments as conditions permit.

4. What actions are being taken to ensure the Iraqi character of the political transition process?

Post-conflict conditions would make an immediate transfer of sovereign authority to Iraqis extremely difficult and inadvisable. Nonetheless, the Bush Administration has strong interests in ensuring that Iraqis continue to play key roles in administration of public institutions, subject to adequate vetting. Continuity of basic services will be essential, and thousands of Iraqi civil servants will have to stay on their jobs. In addition, the administration should support a broadly representative political consultative process leading to a transition to Iraqi rule, and—to enhance legitimacy—endorse UN leadership in this effort. Finally, we must make sure that Iraqis play key roles in the rehabilitation efforts that U.S. and other reconstruction funding is likely to support.

5. As a government, are we well organized to meet this challenge?

In late January, the president issued a National Security Presidential Directive placing responsibility for managing the post-conflict rebuilding of Iraq within the Department of Defense. Defense Department planning efforts appear to complement or incorporate a range of other administration initiatives, including the State Department's "Future of Iraq Project." The key challenge will be to transform these activities into a coherent and unified effort and to ensure that policies formulated in Washington are accepted internationally and effectively implemented in Iraq.

There are many questions that are worth raising with administration officials—not to slow them down, but to encourage them to resolve important organizational issues that are often deferred, or never addressed, within the bureaucracy. First, what role is the new Pentagon office playing in the policy formulation process, and how will it continue in this role after many of its personnel have been deployed to Iraq? If it is not a policy formulation body, in what forum will policy be developed below the level of principals and deputies? And if action is now centered at the Defense Department, how can our government take better advantage of the considerable expertise in managing the post-conflict requirements that exists in other U.S. government agencies, including the State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)?

In conclusion, recent history has demonstrated that post-conflict peace-building can be exceptionally complex. In Iraq, where U.S. efforts will involve uncertainty, trial and error and

uneven progress, U.S success will depend on our determination to sustain a long-term and substantial commitment of American resources and personnel, to ensure the active involvement of others in post-conflict reconstruction, and to promote participation by the people of Iraq in a process that validates their expectations about political reconciliation and a more hopeful and democratic future.

Thank you.