

**UNITED STATES POLICY IN AFGHANISTAN:
CURRENT ISSUES IN RECONSTRUCTION
(PART II)**

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2003

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The Committee met, pursuant to call, at 10:35 a.m., Room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Henry J. Hyde (Chairman of the Committee) presiding.

Chairman HYDE. The Committee will come to order.

I have convened the Committee on International Relations for a hearing on United States Policy in Afghanistan: Current Issues in Reconstruction.

The purpose of today's hearing is to receive testimony from the Administration about the coordination and implementation of United States policy in Afghanistan. This past June, at the initial hearing on this topic, the Committee heard testimony about the concerns from former policymakers, academicians and the NGO community regarding the reconstruction process in Afghanistan.

At that hearing, the overriding issues presented to the Members of this Committee were the increasing lack of security in the region and the inability of the central government to implement fully its rule throughout Afghanistan. A number of witnesses voiced concerns about what appears to be a lack of coordination among the United States agencies operating in Afghanistan, and the ramifications this has had on the reconstruction of the country. Undoubtedly, Afghanistan is doing far better now than it was under the misrule of the Taliban. However, violence is increasing and has been hard to quell with deadly clashes in northern Afghanistan last week in which dozens of people were killed, including innocent civilians. In addition, the south and southeast of Afghanistan continue to be a stronghold for resurgent Taliban forces.

Serious questions need to be addressed and answered: Should we be comfortable with a military victory? How can we assist in building a nation that is viable, independent and capable of running its own affairs and securing its own borders?

The fact remains that a stable Afghanistan will require cooperation and a strong effort by the Afghans and a unified United States policy. In the end, the responsibility lies with the Afghan people to ensure that security, rule of law and, most of all, stability take root in their nation.

Through the passage of the Afghanistan Freedom Support Act of 2002, Congress sought to establish the foundation for the United States to assist the Afghans in achieving this goal. However, security challenges have made it difficult to deliver an efficient and effective reconstruction process.

For example, this past month, four Afghan employees who worked for an international aid organization, the Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees, had just completed installing water pumps in the south when they were captured and murdered in cold blood. The organization these employees work for had been operating in Afghanistan for 18 years and was perceived by the Afghan people as neutral. The forces working against freedom and progress in Afghanistan have now turned against those who have been assisting Afghans for generations.

If the efforts toward a secure environment which will permit the installation of a basic infrastructure are not successful, one must ask how it is possible to ensure free and fair elections in less than 1 year's time. According to the United Nation's assistance mission in Afghanistan, the registration process for elections will begin this December.

We expect that our policies will be supportive of this laudable goal and that security challenges will be overcome so the Loya Jirga process can proceed and the authority of the central government will be strengthened in order to allow free and fair elections to take place.

As Peter Thomsen, the former special envoy to Afghanistan, stated in our previous hearing:

“Continuing implementation of the Bonn process will thus mainly depend on enhanced security accompanied by the successful extension of the Kabul government's authority into Afghanistan's region.”

I welcome NATO's commitment in principle to expand the International Security Assistance Force. The adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1510, which widens the mandate of the International Security Assistance Force outside of Kabul is a positive step.

Today, we will be hearing from Administration about the operations of executive agencies working in Afghanistan and what they are doing to ensure that their programs are consistent with the provisions in the Afghan Freedom Support Act of 2002.

We have a distinguished panel representing the Administration today, and I warmly welcome you to the Committee. I look forward to hearing from you about these important issues of concern and the recently announced Accelerating Success initiative in Afghanistan. We hope that this supplemental funding of over \$1 billion will support the Afghan government in meeting the benchmarks in the Bonn process by giving it the assistance Afghans need to determine freely their own political future.

I now recognize with pleasure the Ranking Democratic Member, Mr. Tom Lantos, so he may make his opening statement.

Mr. Lantos.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Hyde follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE HENRY J. HYDE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, AND CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The Committee will come to order. I have convened the Committee on International Relations for a hearing on United States Policy in Afghanistan: Current Issues in Reconstruction.

The purpose of today's hearing is to receive testimony from the Administration about the coordination and implementation of U.S. policy in Afghanistan. This past June, at the initial hearing on this topic, the Committee heard testimony about the concerns from former policy-makers, academicians, and the NGO community regarding the reconstruction process in Afghanistan.

At that hearing, the overriding issues presented to the Members of this Committee were the increasing lack of security in the region and the inability of the central government to implement fully its rule throughout Afghanistan. A number of witnesses voiced concerns about what appears to be a lack of coordination among United States agencies operating in Afghanistan, and the ramifications this has had on the reconstruction of the country.

Undoubtedly, Afghanistan is doing far better now than it was under the misrule of the Taliban. However, violence is increasing and has been hard to quell with deadly clashes in northern Afghanistan last week in which dozens of people were killed, including innocent civilians. In addition, the south and southeast of Afghanistan continue to be a stronghold for resurgent Taliban forces.

Serious questions need to be addressed and answered. Should we be comfortable with a military victory? How can we assist in building a nation that is viable, independent, and capable of running its own affairs and securing its own borders?

The fact remains that a stable Afghanistan will require cooperation and a strong effort by the Afghans and a unified United States policy. In the end, the responsibility lies with the Afghan people to ensure that security, rule of law and, most of all, stability take root in their nation.

Through the passage of the Afghanistan Freedom Support Act of 2002, Congress sought to establish the foundation for the United States to assist the Afghans in achieving this goal. However, security challenges have made it difficult to deliver an efficient and effective reconstruction process.

For example, this past month, four Afghan employees who worked for an international aid organization, the Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees, had just completed installing water pumps in the south when they were captured and murdered in cold blood. The organization these employees worked for had been operating in Afghanistan for eighteen years and was perceived by the Afghan people as neutral.

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by giving it the assistance Afghans need to determine freely their own political future.

I will now recognize my colleague, Ranking Democratic Member Tom Lantos, so that he may make his opening statement.

Without objection, any Member may place his or her opening statement in the record of today's proceedings. Mr. Lantos.

Mr. LANTOS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I want to commend you for holding this hearing.

Mr. Chairman, the United States-led military campaign in Afghanistan liberated the Afghan people from the horrific despotism of the Taliban and Osama Bin Laden. For the first time in over 2 decades Afghanistan has a chance of becoming eventually a democratic state responsive to the needs of all of its people.

Unfortunately, Mr. Chairman, the United States-led effort to transform Afghanistan is in serious jeopardy. United States and international assistance to Afghanistan has been and continues to be insufficient to meet Afghanistan's needs. Financial pledges and delivery of long-term aid by international donors are woefully inadequate. There are serious doubts that the current draft constitution will have adequate public support and will promote democracy, gender equality and protection of basic human rights. National elections in June will require a massive effort to register and educate voters and to ensure a free and fair electoral process, but that process has barely begun. The creation of an Afghan Army is seriously behind schedule. Police training lags, and the process of disarming the warlords' militias is only just beginning.

There are simply not enough United States and International forces in Afghanistan, Mr. Chairman, to secure the country and lay an effective foundation upon which democratic institutions could be built. The United States-led Coalition and Afghan militia forces have been fighting with Taliban guerillas in southeastern Afghanistan for many months, killing scores but missing many more who scurry back into Pakistan to regroup and to attack again somewhere else.

But there are some faint signs of hope. Just this week, consistent with the direction in the Afghan Freedom Support Act and an amendment passed by the House earlier this year, the United Nations Security Council authorized the expansion of the 4,500 member International Security Assistance Force, ISAF, beyond the capital of Kabul. Parenthetically I might indicate, Mr. Chairman, that you and I have been calling for this for many, many months. Thanks principally to German efforts, the International Security Assistance Force will be increased slightly and permit a limited deployment outside of Kabul. This is a start, but it is nowhere nearly enough.

I am also gratified that Administration has finally recognized what this Committee has been saying for over a year, that a more robust approach to Afghanistan is required.

The additional funds in the supplemental for fiscal year 2004 is a good step, but a single step will certainly not complete this long journey. We must recognize that Afghanistan's security cannot wait for the evolution of a national army and police force. This is why you, Mr. Chairman, and I included a provision in the House-passed foreign relations authorization bill requiring the President to provide more security for reconstruction, to protect the highways, to

terminate and deter acts of banditry, illegal checkpoints, human rights abuses and all pervasive intimidation, particularly intimidation of women, to take immediate steps to support the disarmament of Afghan militias and irregulars.

NATO members in particular must do more. NATO at least must double the International Security Assistance Force. It must increase its mobility and expand its mandate to provide greater security along major highways. Today I am calling on the President to take steps to secure greater commitments from our NATO allies to contribute troops to Afghanistan.

Let me suggest again, as I have earlier, that just as we have been calling for NATO to assume a significant role in Afghanistan, soon we will be calling on NATO to assume a significant role in Iraq. Coalition forces cannot continue to permit drug lords and traffickers to operate freely. The hundreds of millions of dollars of drug money is creating an infrastructure of corruption and crime which will undermine all of our efforts at security and political reform. These huge drug profits are funding the Taliban and al-Qaeda attacks on United States and Afghan forces and officials, and they are providing the warlords ever larger resources to establish themselves beyond the reach of any central government or system of law.

Mr. Chairman, I also call upon the President to direct our forces to seek out and destroy the drug trade and labs in Afghanistan. The drug lords and their supporters must know that the United States will come after them with force. We and the Kabul government must find more effective means to persuade poor farmers not to grow opium. If we do not stop the explosive growth of the drug trade in Afghanistan, then that country will again become a narcoterrorist state, and we will have failed in our mission.

Mr. Chairman, in Afghanistan, as in Iraq, we must do what is necessary to bring true freedom and security to this long-suffering nation. Our credibility and our security as a nation depends on that. We do not have the luxury of failure.

I look forward to hearing from our distinguished witnesses, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HYDE. Thank you, Mr. Lantos.

It is the custom and the preference of the Chair to invite opening statements from any other Members to be made a part of the record at this point, but I am told that some Members have a compelling need to, for some reason, to deliver an opening statement; and we will accommodate them, being assured—

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Ackerman.

Mr. ACKERMAN. I am one of them, as you, who felt compelled to make a statement.

Chairman HYDE. I was advised of that some time ago, so we are ready for you, Mr. Ackerman.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Just wanted to make you aware, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Ackerman will be recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ACKERMAN. I am pleased that the Committee is turning its attention this morning to Afghanistan because I believe that the Administration's attention to that war-ravaged nation has waned.

For over a year now, Mr. Lantos and I and, quite frankly, many others on this Committee have been talking about the need to provide a secure environment in Afghanistan as a precondition to the success of anything else we, the international community or Afghans themselves try to do. At first we were told by the Bush Administration that the security situation in Afghanistan had stabilized and that ISAF in Kabul was sufficient. Then, even though it was painfully obvious that the security situation had not stabilized, the Administration continued resisting the expansion of ISAF beyond Kabul but suggested that if other nations wanted to expand ISAF the United States would not object, knowing full well that without American leadership ISAF would not expand.

Instead of that, the Administration proposed Provincial Reconstruction Teams, a novel concept that has yet to prove itself. But even this step has been limited in its reach. PRTs operate only in four provinces, although there are plans to expand them.

Finally, NATO assumed command of ISAF, and the calls by the Afghan government officials have been heeded.

Earlier this week, the United Nations Security Council approved the expansion of ISAF's mission outside of Kabul, not a moment too soon either. Violence against Afghans, against aid workers and against us has been increasing as the Taliban regroup and with the help from supporters in Pakistan continue to fight from across the Afghan-Pakistan border.

In order for us to prosecute the ongoing war against the Taliban, we continue to rely on local Afghan militias. While this may be a necessity in the near term, it undermines our longer term goal of consolidating the central government and makes it more difficult to put in place the next important piece of the security puzzle disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of militia fighters.

The process has only just begun. The United Nations and the Afghan government signed an agreement on DDR only last week. In the supplemental that the House is debating today, there are \$60 million for DDR efforts. But if we don't accelerate this process the environment necessary to conduct anything that even looks like free and fair elections in Afghanistan will not exist.

As Human Rights Watch pointed out in its report last summer, political intimidation by locally armed groups is commonplace. But the crucial question about our DDR efforts is, when a local warlord refuses to give up his guns, who forces him to do so? Are we relying on the nascent Afghan national army, or will the United States military be the ultimate force behind DDR? It is against that backdrop that Afghans face some of their most important political challenges.

The Bonn Agreement calls for a constitutional Loya Jirga this year, followed by elections next year. Well, the constitutional Loya Jirga has been postponed until December; and there is talk about postponing the elections until next fall and perhaps even limiting them to presidential elections only. While we should only proceed with these things when the Afghans are ready, we should also recognize that delay serves the purpose of those who would thwart the process entirely.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you for calling this important hearing, together with the leadership of Mr. Lantos; and I look forward to

hearing from our witnesses today and hope they can address the issues that we have raised. I do thank you.

Chairman HYDE. Thank you, Mr. Ackerman.

Are there any more opening statements to be delivered? Very well.

Our first witness, Ambassador William B. Taylor, Jr., is the Afghanistan Coordinator in the U.S. Department of State. For 9 months he served as the Special Representative for Donor Assistance to Afghanistan. Ambassador Taylor previously served as Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia in the U.S. Department of State, and he graduated from the U.S. Military Academy in 1969.

Peter W. Rodman is the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs. He is a principal advisor to the Secretary of Defense on the formulation and coordination of international security strategy and policy. Mr. Rodman was most recently Director of National Security Programs at the Nixon Center between 1995 and 2001, and he is an alumnus of Harvard Law School.

James Kunder is the Deputy Assistant Administrator of the Bureau for Asia and the Near East at the United States Agency for International Development. He was previously Director for Relief and Reconstruction in Kabul, Afghanistan; and he, too, received his degree from Harvard University.

We are pleased to have you three appear before the Committee today. We will hear first from Ambassador Taylor, then Assistant Secretary Rodman and, finally, Deputy Administrator Kunder.

Ambassador Taylor, would you proceed with a 5-minute summary of your statement, and the full statement will be made a part of the record. Ambassador Taylor.

**STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE WILLIAM B. TAYLOR, JR.,
COORDINATOR FOR AFGHANISTAN, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
STATE**

Mr. TAYLOR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is a pleasure to be here. We appreciate the opportunity.

Chairman HYDE. Would you help with the microphone?

Mr. TAYLOR. I have a green light that indicates that it is working. Is it working? Very good. Is that better?

Chairman HYDE. Not really. You must have a dead mike.

Mr. TAYLOR. I will try this one. This sounds better.

Chairman HYDE. That is better.

Mr. TAYLOR. Very good.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is a pleasure to be here.

This is an opportunity, as you say, to focus attention on Afghanistan that may not have been there for some time, and this is a good opportunity to resume that discussion and to give you a sense of where we are and where we intend to be over the next several months.

Afghanistan remains a desperately poor country. It has tattered infrastructure, as you know. The security environment in the south and the east in particular is deteriorating.

There is an unacceptable level of poppy cultivation that we have talked about, and the central government has difficulty in making

itself felt all across the country. There are areas where it is clearly in charge, but there are areas where it is clearly not.

Increased violence against international security and development personnel, against innocent Afghans is also cause for concern. The security situation all along the border with Pakistan has clearly worsened recently. It is particularly worrisome that the Taliban units appear larger and better organized.

Deterioration has led some humanitarian organizations to curtail aid programs, jeopardizing development goals in these affected areas. The central government continues to have difficulty extending its authority and providing services due to financial and other constraints.

Too many regions remain under the sway of local strongmen that we have talked about here already today, supported by private armies that only have—sometimes have limited loyalty to the central government. These men terrorize local Afghans, extort money from businesses, steal from the government and fight one another. The fighting in Mazar-e-Sharif last week is only the most recent example.

Poppy production and narcotics trafficking have continued within Afghanistan since Operation Enduring Freedom began in late 2001. We estimate that some 30,000 hectares were under cultivation last year, and the crop this year will very likely be even larger.

Mr. Chairman, that is the sobering story. But there is a more hopeful story also coming out of Afghanistan.

Women are more free to work and go to school. Gradually, as they appear in public, women are replacing their burqas with scarves. A variety of media and press outlets have emerged, representing a range of political and social viewpoints. Numerous radio stations are up and running.

Politically, Afghanistan is now governed by a legitimate leader selected by Afghans themselves in a peaceful representative process. That in itself is unprecedented in Afghan history.

The Karzai government is finalizing a draft constitution that should be released to the public within days and adopted by a constitutional Loya Jirga late this year, as several people have mentioned already. By most accounts, the constitution will protect human rights, will establish its separation of powers and institutionalize democracy. The elections are planned for next summer.

President Karzai has taken strong steps recently to extend his government's reach across the country. He has replaced seven governors, including the powerful governor of Kandajar. He stripped military command from the governor of Herat. He has demanded that governors remit customs and other revenues that they collect to the central government, and he sent his finance minister to each of the major provinces to enforce this demand. President Karzai has recently reformed the Ministry of Defense.

Meanwhile, the Coalition is deploying small military teams around the country to enhance security, extend the reach of the central government and help with reconstruction. These Provincial Reconstruction Teams, established in Gardez, Bamiyan, Kunduz, and Mazar-e-Sharif have been well received by the local population and have begun to prove themselves to the skeptical NGO community. The United Kingdom and New Zealand are leading two of the

PRTs, and the Germans are preparing to take over a PRT in Kunduz. The United States is preparing to dispatch similar teams to other areas, including Kandajar, Jalalabad, Parwan, Herat and Ghazni in the next 2½ months. The British PRT in Mazar played an important role in calming the tensions between two competing commanders in that region last week.

In August, NATO took over the International Security Assistance Force in Kabul. NATO has given its preliminary approval for an expansion of the ISAF mandate beyond Kabul, and the U.N. Security Council, as several people have already mentioned, has just approved the resolution allowing the expansion of ISAF beyond Kabul to the provinces of Afghanistan.

Led by the United States, the international community is training and equipping the new Afghan National Army. By next summer, Mr. Chairman, this effort will give President Karzai the single largest, best-trained military formation in that country.

Later this month, a pilot disarmament program will start in Kunduz, to be followed shortly by similar efforts in Gardez, Mazar-e-Sharif and Kabul.

On the economic front, the major cities of Afghanistan are experiencing new growth. The shops are full of goods, and the streets are bustling. Legal economic growth last year was 30 percent. It is estimated to be 20 percent this year.

Afghanistan is expected to have the best harvest in 25 years, with more stable northern areas producing a significant surplus.

Let me take this opportunity, Mr. Chairman, to point out the good work that USAID is performing in country—and my colleague Jim Kunder will describe this in more detail—but in particular the construction of the road from Kabul to Kandajar. By the end of December, Afghans will be able to drive from their capital to the second largest city in 5 hours, a trip that just last spring took 15 hours. The political and psychological benefits of this achievement should not be overlooked. Not only does this road connect the predominantly Pashtun Kandajar to the capital, it runs through the volatile Pashtun belt of the country, demonstrating that reconstruction and economic development is not just for the north.

The act of war, Mr. Chairman, that took place on our soil 2 years ago that took us back to Afghanistan reminds us of another important measure of success. Afghanistan no longer harbors terrorists that threaten the United States or the world.

Those are the two stories of Afghanistan, Mr. Chairman, one sobering, the other is optimistic, and both are true.

Failure is not an option, as Mr. Lantos has indicated, but, unfortunately, it is still possible. That is why the President announced a new initiative to accelerate progress in Afghanistan. My full statement has many of the details. Let me give you the highlights. It consists of new funds, new people and new focus.

As part of the supplemental appropriation that you are debating right now, the President is asking for \$799 million in additional funding for the accelerating success in Afghanistan. Together with the \$390 million that is being reprogrammed from existing DOD and State Department sources, almost \$1.2 billion will be committed between now and next June. Almost half of this package will be devoted to security: Accelerating the training and deploying

of the Afghan National Army, building a new police force, encouraging disarmament and demobilization of militias and protecting Afghanistan's leaders. About 30 percent of the package will be for reconstruction assistance, including roads, schools, health facilities, small projects and initiatives to provide the framework for private sector growth. A third element of this package, accounting for about 20 percent of the total, will be for funding democracy and governance programs, including support for the constitutional Loya Jirga and the elections for next summer.

In addition to new funds, Mr. Chairman, the President is sending new people to Kabul. The Embassy will be strengthened by a group of senior advisors to the Ambassador who will help accelerate the reconstruction efforts. The Embassy staff and security detail will be increased. USAID is sending new people to manage its programs.

All of these new people will require additional space, as anyone has who visited Kabul recently can attest. The government of Afghanistan is allowing us to build a temporary facility right across the street from the existing compound to house these new people.

Finally, new focus. To enhance the unity of effort that you have called for both in your statements and in legislation in Afghanistan, the military headquarters previously located an hour north of Kabul is moving to Kabul so the military and civilian authorities can be colocated. The Combined Forces Commander's office will be right down the hall from the Ambassadors.

Mr. Chairman, there is no question that the challenges are daunting and much remains to be done. But it is equally true that we have much to build on, and we have the Afghan people on our side and on the side of their many friends in the international community.

After Mr. Rodman and Mr. Kunder speak, Mr. Chairman, I will be glad to answer your questions; and, again, I am glad to be here.

Chairman HYDE. Thank you, Ambassador.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Taylor follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE WILLIAM B. TAYLOR, JR., COORDINATOR
FOR AFGHANISTAN, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to testify today before the Committee. I welcome this chance to review where we are in Afghanistan and where we are going.

There are, in fact, two stories to be told about Afghanistan: one is sobering, the other hopeful. Let me begin with the sobering one.

AFGHANISTAN: HALF-EMPTY

By late 2001, when U.S. forces helped drive Al Qaeda and the Taliban from power, Afghanistan had suffered more than two decades of devastating conflict. Its physical infrastructure was destroyed and its human and social infrastructure lay in ruins. An estimated twenty percent of the population lived as refugees in Pakistan and Iran. About 200,000 Afghans had been disabled by mines. National roads, some built by the United States in the 1950s, were barely usable. Irrigation systems, ravaged by conflict and lack of maintenance, and agricultural production, once the foundation of the economy, had collapsed. Livestock herds had been depleted and legitimate industries had ceased functioning, replaced by an economy based on narcotics and terror.

The Taliban government had essentially stopped providing health care, education and other services to the Afghan people, leading to a dramatic decline in social indicators, particularly affecting women and girls. The enrollment rate in primary education had dropped to only 38 percent for boys and barely 3 percent for girls. Infant mortality was estimated to be among the highest in the world, with malnutrition

affecting over 50 percent of children under the age of five. Average life expectancy was a little over 40 years. The IMF estimated that Afghanistan's per capita income was between \$150 and \$180, among the lowest in the world.

That was the country inherited by President Karzai and his team following the Bonn Conference almost two years ago.

Mr. Chairman, I wish I could report this morning that a night-to-day change has taken place. But in fact many of the problems persist. I will be frank. Afghanistan remains a desperately poor country, with tattered infrastructure, a deteriorating security environment in the south and east, an unacceptable level of poppy cultivation and a central government whose authority is resisted in the some of the provinces.

Increased violence against international security and development personnel and against innocent Afghans is also a cause for real concern. The security situation all along the border with Pakistan has clearly worsened recently. It is particularly worrisome that Taliban units appear larger and better organized. The deterioration has led some humanitarian organizations to curtail important aid programs, jeopardizing key development goals in affected areas.

The central government continues to have difficulty extending its authority and providing services due to financial and other constraints. Too many regions remain under the sway of local strongmen supported by private armies that have sometimes only limited loyalty to the central government; these men terrorize the local Afghans, extort money from businesses, steal from the government and fight one another. The fighting in Mazar-e Sharif last week is only the most recent example.

Poppy production and narcotics trafficking have continued within Afghanistan since Operation Enduring Freedom began in late 2001. We estimate that some 30,000 hectares were under cultivation last year and that the crop this year may be even larger.

That is the sobering, genuinely worrying story about Afghanistan.

AFGHANISTAN: HALF-FULL

But there is another, more hopeful story: a story of a country that has taken significant strides forward in less than two years.

Women are more free to work and to go to school. Increasingly, as they appear in public, women are replacing their burqas with scarves. A variety of media and press outlets have emerged, representing a range of political and social viewpoints. Numerous radio stations are up and running.

Politically, Afghanistan is now governed by a legitimate leader, selected by Afghans themselves in a peaceful, representative process. That in itself is unprecedented in Afghan history.

Since the inauguration of his government 16 months ago, President Karzai and his government have been actively implementing the Bonn Agreement. They have established judicial and human rights commissions to try to protect the rights of minorities and women. They have established a Constitutional Commission that is now finalizing a draft Constitution that should be released to the public within days and adopted by a Constitutional Loya Jirga later this year. By most accounts the constitution will protect human rights, establish a separation of powers and institutionalize democracy.

The Afghan Government is steadily strengthening the institutional capacity of its ministries. It has put a systematic budget process in place and overseen the issuance of a new currency one year ago.

The Government has also established an electoral commission that is now working with the UN and international donors to prepare for nation-wide elections next summer.

President Karzai has taken strong steps recently to extend his government's reach across the country. He has replaced seven governors, including the powerful governor of Kandahar. He stripped military command from the governor of Herat. He demanded that governors remit the customs and other revenues that they collect to the central government, and he sent his Finance Minister to each of the major provinces to enforce this demand. President Karzai has recently reformed the Ministry of Defense.

Meanwhile, the Coalition is deploying small military teams around the country to enhance security, extend the reach of the central government and help with reconstruction. These Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), established in Gardez, Bamiyan, Kunduz, and Mazar-e Sharif, have been well received by the local population and have begun to prove themselves to the skeptical NGO community. The U.K. and New Zealand are leading two of the PRTs, and the Germans are preparing to take over the PRT in Kunduz. The United States is preparing to dispatch similar teams to other areas, including Kandahar, Jalalabad, Parwan, Herat and Ghazni in

the next two and a half months. The British PRT in Mazar played an important role in calming the tensions between two competing commanders in the region last week.

In August, NATO took over the International Security Assistance Force in Kabul, the alliance's first major deployment outside Europe. NATO has given its preliminary approval for an expansion of the ISAF mandate beyond Kabul, which could further extend security through PRTs or another ISAF mechanism. In New York, the UN Security Council has just agreed on a UNSC resolution approving the expansion of ISAF beyond Kabul to the provinces of Afghanistan. The international community and the United Nations are working very well together in Afghanistan.

Led by the United States, the international community is training and equipping the new Afghan National Army. By next summer, this effort will give President Karzai the single largest, best-trained military force in the country.

Later this month, a pilot disarmament program will start in Konduz, to be followed shortly by similar efforts in Gardez, Mazar-e Sharif and Kabul.

On the economic front, the major cities of Afghanistan are experiencing new growth. Shops are full of goods; streets are bustling. Legal economic growth last year was 30 percent; it is estimated to be 20% this year.

Afghanistan is expected to have the best harvest in 25 years, with the more stable northern areas producing a significant surplus.

I will leave it to my colleague Jim Kunder to describe the progress that USAID has made in rebuilding Afghanistan's infrastructure and providing health, education and other services. Let me take this opportunity to point out the good work USAID is doing in general, but in particular the construction of the road from Kabul to Kandahar. By the end of December, Afghans will be able to drive from their capital to the second largest city in five hours, a trip that just last spring took 15 hours. The political and psychological benefits of this achievement should not be overlooked: not only does this road connect the predominantly-Pashtun Kandahar to the capital, it runs through the volatile Pashtun belt of the country, demonstrating that reconstruction and economic development is not just for the north.

The American and international presence in Afghanistan is welcomed by most Afghans. The concern most Afghans express is that we not leave too soon, before the job is done. We did that before.

Last month we marked the act of war that took place on American soil two years ago, and this is the point to stress: Afghanistan no longer harbors terrorists. It is no longer a threat to the United States and the world. On the contrary, it is a country whose leaders and people are committed to a new future as responsible members of the world community.

These are the two stories of Afghanistan. One sobering and daunting; the other encouraging—and both are true.

The Afghan people have accomplished a great deal—and Congress, the American people and the international community can take pride in what we have done to assist them—but the gains to date remain tenuous, and much remains to be done. Failure is not an option in Afghanistan, but it is still possible.

CONSOLIDATING AND ACCELERATING PROGRESS

That is why the President announced a new initiative to accelerate progress in Afghanistan. Let me outline the key components of this initiative. It consists of new funds, new people and new focus.

As part of the Supplemental Appropriation, the President is asking for \$799 million in additional funding for accelerating success in Afghanistan. This sum will be augmented by \$390 million that is being reprogrammed from existing DoD and State Department resources, for a total of almost \$1.2 billion to be committed between now and next June. This will be on top of regularly appropriated funds, which have totaled over \$900 million annually in 2002 and 2003.

This new assistance will be used to address the three major challenges we confront in Afghanistan: the need, first and foremost, to improve security; the need, secondly, to accelerate reconstruction; and finally, the need to support liberal democracy as Afghanistan writes a constitution and prepares for elections next year.

The most significant challenge today is security, especially in the south and east along the border with Pakistan, where the Taliban still has support. Continued insecurity risks slowing down the essential development efforts now underway, undermines the credibility of the central government and threatens prospects for free and fair elections next year. Therefore, almost half of this package will be devoted to security: to accelerate the training and deploying of the Afghan National Army, to build a new police force, to encourage disarmament and demobilization of militias, and to protect Afghanistan's leaders.

Developing the Afghan government's own capacity to address security threats is in Afghanistan's interests and ours. Afghan National Army units are already participating in operations against the Taliban. Strengthening Afghan security institutions is the single most important step we can take in extending the reach and authority of the central government. Afghanistan's legitimate leaders must have the capacity to fill the security vacuum now being filled by local militia leaders and their forces.

- The support for the ANA will help establish and equip the essential core of a multi-ethnic national army, with approximately 10,500 soldiers trained by next summer.
- Assistance to the police will enable training of 18,000 additional national police by mid-2004 and their deployment throughout the country. It will also provide training, equipment and infrastructure for 4,000 members of a new Afghan Border Police, a 12,000-strong force that will help the Afghan government combat drug trafficking and infiltration of terrorists. Finally, it will fund a new 2,600-person highway patrol to protect commerce and travelers on Afghanistan's roads and end the unapproved tolling stations that are financing private militias.
- Hand in hand with these programs to build the central government's security capabilities, we will provide additional funds for programs to disarm and demobilize members of Afghan militias and reintegrate them into society.
- We will also increase funding for measures to provide physical security to Afghanistan's President, which is critical to the stability and progress of that country.

About 30 percent of the \$1.189 billion package will be for reconstruction assistance, including roads, schools, health facilities, small projects and initiatives to provide the framework for private sector growth. These infrastructure projects will also have a broader impact, especially roads that will link together the major cities of Afghanistan, drawing the country together economically and politically.

- A top priority for the new funds will be accelerated work on roads, including the road linking Kandahar and Herat, as well as over 600 miles of secondary roads that farmers use to bring their crops to market.
- Funds will also be used to build or rehabilitate 150 schools—with the target of raising enrollment to 85 percent—and to build 60 additional health clinics that could reach an additional 3 million Afghans.
- Other areas that will receive additional funding include community-level projects implemented by Provincial Reconstruction Teams, as well as industrial parks, power generation projects and other initiatives to improve the physical and institutional infrastructure for private sector growth.

The third element of this package, accounting for about 20 percent of the total, will be funding for democracy and governance programs, including support for the Constitutional Loya Jirga and elections, which will give Afghans from every corner of the country a voice and stake in the country as a whole, and help strengthen Afghanistan's identity as a nation. Some of our planned governance funding will be used to help the government pay salaries; that too will strengthen the authority of central institutions. We will provide technical experts to ministries and will enhance the capabilities of the U.S. embassy to support the Karzai government.

We expect that strengthened security institutions, including the border police, will help address the scourge of narcotics trafficking. Improved roads will help farmers produce legitimate, perishable crops that can be competitive in faraway markets, instead of cultivating poppy. Roads will also strengthen the central government's ability to respond to reports of poppy cultivation. Other reconstruction and development programs will offer alternative livelihoods. But I would stress that our most effective strategy in combating narcotics will be to strengthen the central government's authority throughout Afghanistan.

In addition to new funds, the President is sending new people to Kabul. The embassy will be strengthened by a group of senior advisors to the Ambassador who will help accelerate the reconstruction efforts. The embassy staff and security detail will be increased. USAID is sending new people to manage its programs. These new people will require additional space, as anyone who has visited Embassy Kabul will attest. The Government of Afghanistan is allowing us to build a temporary facility right across the street from the existing compound to house these new people.

Finally, new focus. To enhance unity of effort in Afghanistan the military headquarters, previously located an hour north of Kabul, is moving to Kabul so the mili-

tary and civilian authorities can be co-located. The Combined Forces Commander's office will be right down the hall from the Ambassador's.

A HOPEFUL FUTURE

Mr. Chairman, we are at a defining moment in Afghanistan. Our success in consolidating and building on the progress to date will have lasting implications for Afghans and Americans alike.

This three-pronged strategy, focusing on security, reconstruction and democracy is our best opportunity to ensure success.

There is no question that the challenges are daunting and that much remains to be done. But it is equally true that we have much to build on, and we have the Afghan people on our side and on the side of their many friends in the international community. Afghans are eager to turn a new page in their troubled history.

In February, President Bush and President Karzai reaffirmed

their common vision for an Afghanistan that is prosperous, democratic, at peace, contributing to regional stability, market friendly, and respectful of human rights.

With Congress's support, I am confident that we will realize that vision.

After Mr. Kunder speaks, we would be pleased to answer your questions. Thank you.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Rodman.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE PETER RODMAN, ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Mr. RODMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to come here and speak about our policy in Afghanistan, the challenges that we all acknowledge are very serious and also about the progress that we do think is being made.

I think some perspective is in order. I am not going to read my prepared statement, just highlight a few points, however, if I may.

Twenty-five years ago, before Afghanistan's recent nightmare began, Afghanistan was already one of the poorest, most-isolated countries in the world—and then the nightmare really began. Then you had the Communist coup, Soviet invasion, a war of liberation against the Soviet occupation; and when that was defeated then you had 10 years of Taliban rule. So Afghanistan has been through 25 years of nightmare on top of the difficulties it already faced to start with.

We have had 2 years since the liberation of Afghanistan. In historical perspective, that is not a long time. We shouldn't lose sight of the fact that, first of all, the war that liberated Afghanistan was a great success that we can all be proud of and that, secondly, those 2 years have seen progress. Those 2 years have seen the beginning of our help and the international community's support for the Afghan people as they try to rebuild their institutions, try to build new institutions, try to build a more modern economy and so forth. So I think it is the classic "is the glass half full or half empty," and we should approach the President's supplemental budget request with the attitude that something good is happening.

We are beginning to help this country get on its feet. We should invest in the success that we have already achieved and should not lose hope. Because I don't think the people of Afghanistan have lost hope.

I am here to focus obviously on issues of security. It is clear that the Afghans face at least two different kinds of challenges to secu-

riety. One is the continuing war against al-Qaeda and the Taliban. As Ambassador Taylor mentioned, we see the Taliban and al-Qaeda attempting to regroup, attempting to launch new offensives; and that is a serious issue.

The other security challenge is the kind of instability which accompanies President Karzai's attempt to assert national authority over the country. That process obviously is not complete. There are these independent centers of power, the militias, the warlords; and I think there is a consensus among most Afghans to transcend that, to build a unitary government that extends its authority across the country.

So these two challenges exist, but it is our assessment that neither of these challenges is a threat to the consolidation that is going on. Neither of these challenges poses a significant threat to the progress that is being made. We think we can handle both of these challenges.

First of all, it is absolutely correct that the Taliban attempted in recent months to organize themselves in larger units and to take us on. Well, they badly miscalculated. They suffered an enormous defeat. Now it is also true that they are probably going to come back at us again. It is very likely that they will attempt a fall offensive. But whether they attempt it and whether they succeed are two different things, and we and the Afghans and the Coalition believe that we are ready for this. We will not be surprised. If we defeat this offensive, then it is the enemy, not we, who will face some very hard strategic choices. So we believe we can manage that.

The other issue, as I said, is the instability in the country that comes from the lack of national authority extended over the country. That is an issue on which we have been talking with President Karzai for many, many months.

We believe we have a strategy in support of his strategy. It includes the elements that Ambassador Taylor mentioned—the Afghan National Army and police, the effort we are making to build national institutions.

Part of the strategy is the political strategy that President Karzai has devised. It began, as Ambassador Taylor mentioned, with getting customs revenues to flow into the center. It begins with replacing provincial governors, replacing them with governors who are responsive to national authority. We believe that process is under way and moving forward.

The strategy also includes the Provincial Reconstruction Teams, the PRTs. This is a concept that we came up with a year ago. We think it has been very successful. These are military/political teams that we were able to put together very rapidly. We have four of them already deployed, another four of them to come in the next few months. This has proved to be a very useful instrument for supporting reconstruction efforts, for contributing to security to some degree and also helping to extend the authority of the central government around the country.

A fourth element of the strategy is engaging international partners. We have already discussed the Germans taking over one of these PRTs, which we were delighted to have. We also have the British and the New Zealanders involved in PRTs. The Germans have requested that their PRT be under ISAF aegis, and we sup-

port that. So we and our NATO allies are involved in not only the ISAF activity but thinking about how around the country, outside of Kabul, the PRTs and ISAF can do the job that we all want them to do.

But I will conclude as I began, just referring to the challenges that we all know are serious. We have no illusions about how difficult it will be to turn this country rapidly into a modern country. After a quarter century of what they have been through, we think we are on the right track.

We are also delighted that our policy in Afghanistan is a bipartisan policy. It is great to have the debate being only about: How can we do more? Are we doing enough? That is a good debate to have. Because there is, obviously, a national consensus in this country to stay the course, to help finish what we began and give the Afghan people a fair chance to get on their own feet and run their own successful country. The President's supplemental request is an opportunity, we believe, for this country to demonstrate that commitment and reaffirm it.

I might just add a point. Our military operations in Afghanistan cost about \$11 billion a year. And our view is that if this country can make an additional commitment now of a significant nature at a significant level, which we believe the \$1.2 billion amounts to, it is worth it. If that amount of money now can shorten the period of our involvement there by even 1 year, then we will have saved money. We have done the right thing. We have done the smart thing, rather than drag this out over a long period.

We think this is the time for this country to make a significant new commitment to accelerate the progress that is being made. Our involvement in Afghanistan, as I said, is something we as Americans should be very proud of. We did it for our own security; we didn't do it out of pure altruism. And the same is true of the efforts we want to make now to ensure that Afghanistan becomes a successful, viable, modern state, never again to be a safe haven for terrorists. So we think our partnership with the Afghan people is a success and potentially a greater success. But we certainly agree that we, the Administration and the Congress have much more to do together to complete what we have begun.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HYDE. Thank you, Mr. Rodman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Rodman follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE PETER RODMAN, ASSISTANT SECRETARY
FOR INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Mr. Chairman, distinguished members, I am pleased to have this opportunity to testify before the Committee about our policy and our progress in Afghanistan.

The Afghan people have been through a terrible ordeal, over the last quarter-century. Their country was one of the poorest and least developed in the world, even before the ordeal began. But then came Communist misrule, a Soviet invasion, a war of liberation against the Soviet occupation, and then the Taliban. An entire generation of war and tyranny left the country's institutions, economy, and social structure in shambles.

In the two years since Operation Enduring Freedom helped Afghans liberate their country, we see a nation rebuilding, we also see large-scale international support for that rebuilding;

- The Bonn Agreement filled the political vacuum by bringing Afghan political forces together in a process to build first an interim government, then a tran-

sitional government, and soon an elected, permanent constitutional government.

- Famine was averted in 2001; tons of hybrid feed were distributed. A new currency was introduced; International Monetary Fund arrears were cleared. International development assistance is flowing in. A national ring road is being built to promote not only economic growth and regional trade but national unity.
- Two million refugees have returned home,
- New security institutions are being built—Ministries of Defense and interior, a National Army, national police, and border and highway police.

This is, overall, a remarkable story. We acknowledge the continuing problems; no one can doubt how serious some of them are. But how could these problems be unexpected in a country that has been, through such an ordeal? Recognizing these challenges, the United States is redoubling its effort to accelerate the pace of the progress being made. This effort is reflected in the President's Emergency Supplemental Appropriation request for more than \$900 million for Afghanistan and in renewed efforts to galvanize international support.

THE SECURITY SITUATION

Let me focus on the security situation.

The Afghan people face two sources of insecurity. The first are the operations of the enemy—the Taliban, al Qaeda, and spoilers like Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. The second is the degree of instability occasioned by rivalries among local commanders (or 'warlords') not yet fully responsive to the authority of the central government.

We take seriously both of these challenges. The Coalition is working with the government of President Karzai to address them. We think that neither challenge is a threat to the consolidation of the political process laid down in Bonn, or to the progress being made.

We have seen the Taliban step up their military activities in recent months. After operating in only small units, the Taliban have attempted to graduate to larger-unit attacks, sometimes with more than 100 fighters. The net result so far, however, has been that CJTF-180—and Afghan forces—have disrupted enemy operations and inflicted serious casualties on the enemy.

Operations Warrior Sweep (since early August) and Mountain Viper (since early September) have driven the enemy out of sanctuary it sought in the south and southeast; it resulted in the capture of over 800 weapons, grenades, mortars, and rockets, and over 50,000 lbs. of ammunition. As many as 200 Taliban and other enemy fighters were killed.

We anticipate that the challenge from the enemy will continue. They may attempt a fall offensive of some kind. But the Coalition and the Afghan government are ready. The enemy will certainly test us, but we expect that this offensive will fail. At that point, the enemy—not we—will face hard strategic decisions.

We are greatly encouraged by Pakistan's recent military operation—Operation al Miwan—against the Taliban in the Federally-Administered Tribal Areas (E.ATA). Pakistan's cooperation is crucial.

The second Security concern, as I mentioned, is the instability that remains as the central government gradually extends its authority over the country. We are working with President Karzai and the international community in four principal areas to deal with this challenge.

The first is the development of effective, national, and professional security institutions, particularly the Afghan National Army (ANA) and the national police and border and highway police.

This Committee is familiar—with our program to build and train the ANA. In September the Afghan government appointed the leadership of and activated the Central Corps in Kabul. Eleven ANA battalions have now graduated from the Kabul Military Training Center, and a twelfth is in training. Next year, we hope to accelerate the rate of training from 6,000 a year to 10,000. Of the eleven graduated battalions, we have 4,000 soldiers either deployed with Coalition forces or completing more advanced or specialized training.

ANA battalions have ably conducted presence patrols and combat operations. The reaction of the Afghan public to ANA presence patrols has been uniformly positive. As one local leader said, "Wherever the ANA goes, stability breaks out." The ANA has also performed well in combat.

The two greatest challenges are attrition—a problem that is very real but that has recently diminished—and a large gap between the high demand for the ANA for a variety of missions and the limited supply so far of ANA units.

In parallel with the building of a truly national army, we have also worked to help President Karzai and Defense Minister Fahim reform the Ministry of Defense, so that all Afghans will see it as a genuinely national institution. In September, President Karzai announced new appointments for the 22 top positions, introducing greater political and ethnic balance. This reform process, we expect, will continue.

The Ministry of Interior controls the National Police and the Border Police. The Department of Defense hopes to be able to support our State Department colleagues in assisting these efforts as well.

Second: At bottom, the warlord problem is a political problem. Since last spring, our government has worked with President Karzai in support of his political strategy to extend his national authority. We believe he has a well-thought-out strategy, and we have made clear the U.S. Government's backing of his reform efforts:

- Last May, with our support, the central government concluded an agreement requiring provincial governors who controlled customs posts to turn over revenues to the Ministry of Finance. Virtually nothing had been received before that agreement. Since then, more than \$90 million has been turned over, putting the central government ahead of its revenue projections for this year.
- In 2003, President Karzai and the Ministry of Interior have replaced about one-third of Afghanistan's provincial governors and about one-half of its provincial police chiefs—all in a concerted effort to improve governance outside of Kabul and to extend the authority of the national government.
- In August, President Karzai simultaneously transferred the governor of Kandahar, Gul Agha Shirzai, to a ministry in Kabul; changed the governors of Zabol and Wardak provinces; and replaced Ismail Khan as corps commander in Herat.
- This move was a significant assertion of authority by President Karzai. At the time, the United States made an important public declaration that it endorsed President Karzai's reforms to assert the legitimate authority of the central government and to improve provincial governance.
- In addition, more recently, we have supported the efforts of President Karzai's commission, led by Minister of Interior Jalali, to find a solution to the frequent military clashes in Mazar-e-Sharif between Generals Dostam and Atta. Special Presidential Envoy Dr. Khalilzad engaged himself in support of this process on his recent visit, and our Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in the area also played a role in defusing tensions.

The third dimension of our accelerated effort is the further deployment of these Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs)

The PRTs, as we anticipated a year ago when their concept was devised, are a flexible instrument for achieving several purposes, including: to facilitate reconstruction efforts around the country; to contribute to the facilitation of security where needed; to bolster the presence and authority of the central government; and to provide another vehicle for internationalizing the overall effort.

PRTs typically comprise 60–100 military and civilian personnel representing several agencies in the U.S. Government. Their composition is meant to be flexible, adapting to the particular needs of a region; they include a civilian led reconstruction team, engineers, security and military observer teams, linguists, and interpreters, and a medical team. The PRTs work with Afghan government ministries, local officials, UN agencies, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to facilitate their efforts.

Four PRTs, as you know, are already deployed, and four more should be deployed in the next few months. The U.K., New Zealand, and now Germany are taking over some of these teams.

Our fourth line of activity is support for international partners, including on security issues where they have the lead. We will work with the UN Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA) and with Japan on disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) of militia forces. We support U.K.-led program against narcotics. We are supporting German efforts in police training and Italian efforts in judicial reform.

In addition, we welcome the fact that NATO has taken over command of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Kabul, and that Germany (as noted) has proposed to take over the PRT in Konduz.

The Germans, as you know, have proposed that their PRT in Konduz come under ISAF. We have agreed to this idea and are working out the details. We are open, as well, to expanding ISAF's mandate more broadly—as the new UN Security Council Resolution 1510 earlier this week now permits. ISAF's role does expand, some of the issues we will need to pay attention to are:

- That the new arrangements ensure deconfliction between ISAF and OEF and do not impede OEF operations;
- That all these activities support the political strategy of President Karzai that the U.S. is supporting; and
- That the new arrangements be backed by real commitments of forces from NATO partners.

CONCLUSION

Let me conclude, Mr. Chairman, with an example of how these diverse strands of policy can come together to help win the war against the Taliban.

In 2002, Paktia province in the east was considered one of the areas with the highest levels of enemy activity. Since then, the United States deployed a PRT near Gardez, the capital, and supported civil affairs and reconstruction activity. President Karzai replaced the governor, police chief, and sidelined local commanders who had been abusing the people. New national police were deployed, and we sent in the Afghan National Army on presence patrols. PRT activities—sometimes in concert with ANA deployments—have reinforced stability and won the confidence of the local population. Together, these reforms and deployments have transformed the security situation.

As we continue our efforts to improve security and to support reconstruction, the lesson of Paktia province should inform the work of all of the departments and agencies of the U.S. Government. PRT team members, through their patrolling and interactions with local Afghan elders and officials, have enhanced security. The PRTs are also extending the reach of the Afghan central government, which now has a representative at each PRT location. And quick-impact projects like the building of schools and clinics, or the drilling of wells, have helped PRTs to develop close relationships with Afghan communities. Our challenge is to expand the geographical impact of these activities, both by increasing the number of PRTs and extending their reach through satellite locations.

While the State Department and USAID are the lead agencies for Afghan reconstruction, DoD has also gladly supported them. DoD—primarily through civil affairs teams (300 civil affairs personnel deployed) and PRTs—is supporting the rebuilding of over 300 schools and 50 medical facilities, installing over 600 wells, and hiring over 30,000 Afghans countrywide.

I will conclude as I began, acknowledging the seriousness of the challenges that we and the Afghans face in rebuilding a country devastated by a quarter century of war. But we have a strategy, and we are accelerating our effort.

Our goals in Afghanistan clearly have bipartisan support. The President's Emergency Supplemental request is an opportunity for this nation to reaffirm and strengthen its commitment. That appropriation can make a significant difference.

Our nation's role in liberating the Afghan people is a success story. All Americans can be proud of what we and our Coalition partners helped accomplish. We did it for our own security, not simply out of altruism, and that is equally true today of our effort to ensure that Afghanistan becomes a successful modern state and never again a safe haven for terrorists.

Our partnership with the Afghan people continues to grow and strengthen. The Administration and the Congress have much to do together to complete what we have begun.

Thank you.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Kunder.

STATEMENT OF JAMES KUNDER, DEPUTY ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR, BUREAU FOR ASIA AND THE NEAR EAST, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. KUNDER. Thank you, sir.

When I arrived in Kabul in January of last year, one of my first visits was to the Ministry of Education. Because the Taliban had used textbooks as a tool of intimidation and ethnic divisiveness, we

wanted to redo the textbooks. That was one of the first visits, and I say in my statement that could be a metaphor for the condition of Afghanistan a year ago. I walked into a building with broken windows. The Minister of Education, who was a ex-pat who had just arrived from California, was huddled over a kerosene heater, had no telephones, no computers, no staff list, and hadn't paid his staff in some time.

Now when I was last in Afghanistan in August and went back to that same ministry, the building had been redone with United States taxpayer support. We built a daycare center so that the women employees of the ministry can get back to work and have someone to take care of their children. We got textbooks distributed, more than 25 million, that emphasize the good things about Afghanistan instead of ethnic divisiveness across the country.

Now, as both Ambassador Taylor and Mr. Rodman have said, it is a cup half full. It is not a cup full all the way yet, and there are still a lot of problems. In fact, so many children have wanted to go back to school in Afghanistan in the post-Taliban period that, frankly, we can't keep up with the school construction and can't keep up with the teacher training. So we have got a lot more work to rebuild a country that was devastated by 23 years of war. But from the reconstruction point of view I would agree with both Ambassador Taylor and Mr. Rodman that we have made an enormous amount of success in the last 18 months.

I also want to emphasize that while there has been a fair amount of criticism about or focus on the problems of the Afghan government, the Afghans have been darn good partners for the United States Government, by and large, in the rebuilding of their country. The ministries have taken their job seriously. The Afghan people have worked hard.

We like to point out that in 1 year after the fall of the Taliban agricultural production went up 82 percent. That is not by U.S. Government statistics. It is by the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization's statistics. Once freed from the Taliban yoke, once some demining took place in the countryside and with a little good rain from the Almighty, 82 percent increase in agriculture production in 1 year, an almost astonishing result. So the Afghans deserve a lot of credit as well.

I will not go into a lot of details on the more than 760 projects in Afghanistan that the U.S. taxpayers are funding, because we provided all that material, although I will be glad to answer questions. I would like to address a couple of issues that I know are of deep concern to the Committee.

One is the issue of coordination. From the USAID perspective, the coordination among U.S. Government agencies on the ground has been excellent. We have relied extensively on our military colleagues to get out to parts of the country where we haven't been able to get to ourselves because of the security concerns. The United States military has worked extensively with us on getting that highway built that Ambassador Taylor referred to from Kabul to Kandajar. We have embedded USAID technical experts into the Provincial Reconstruction Teams out in the provincial capitals so that the diplomatic security and reconstruction parts of the U.S.

Government are working well together. So from my perspective that has been a success, not a failure.

Also on the security side, to address that issue directly, we still have serious security concerns in Afghanistan. So far, in pushing the main highway from Kabul to Kandajar, we have had more than a dozen Afghans working with us on the highway killed and more than 20 wounded. It is by the grace of God that I am not here reporting to you that some Americans were killed, because we had a shooting incident within the last 3 days where one of our U.S. contractors had his forehead grazed by a bullet.

But, all in all, we understand these security risks. The folks we have got out there are professionals and, from my perspective, the security risks, as serious as they are, have not significantly impeded the reconstruction effort in most parts of the country. We are moving forward with the reconstruction of schools. We are moving forward with the reconstruction of health clinics. We are moving forward with our agricultural products, projects to help undercut the poppy production in the country side; and we are moving forward with our infrastructure reconstruction projects.

I just spoke with our NGO colleagues recently, and I know they testified before this Committee about the security concerns in the countryside. They are real. I am not here to give you some sense of false bravado. We take them seriously. But the reconstruction projects are going forward, and as far as we are concerned we are going to ram that highway right down the Taliban's throat. We are going to show that there can be success in Afghanistan, and we are going to help win that battle against terrorism in that way.

In closing, I would like to say that we very much appreciate the Afghan Freedom Support Act. I reread it before this hearing, and I feel confident that we have complied with both the letter and the spirit of the Afghan Freedom Support Act. We take it as a serious piece of guidance. We believe we are in compliance with it.

Some parts of the Afghan Freedom Support Act that we have not yet fully implemented, like the call for a venture capital fund, we are looking at it seriously. We probably will implement something like that in the coming year. We are working on the preconditions to get to the point where we could implement it.

So I would concur with Ambassador Taylor and Mr. Rodman that the cup is half full. An awful lot of progress has been done in the last year, as much a result of the Afghans' hard work as the foreigners. There is a lot of work to be done, but I think we will get the job done. Thank you.

Chairman HYDE. Thank you very much, Mr. Kunder.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Kunder follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JAMES KUNDER, DEPUTY ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR, BUREAU FOR ASIA AND THE NEAR EAST, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Chairman: On behalf of the U.S. Agency for International Development, I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify today on the reconstruction situation in Afghanistan. I also want to thank the Committee for the leadership and support it has provided for those U.S. government personnel working in Afghanistan, through hearings like these today that focus attention on Afghanistan and especially for taking the lead with the Afghan Freedom Support Act. The Act provides a useful framework for reconstruction efforts, as well as a welcome foundation for USAID's efforts.

Administrator Andrew Natsios dispatched me to Kabul in January, 2002, to reopen the USAID Mission there shortly after the fall of the Taliban regime. Since that time, I have been managing the USAID reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan, either from Kabul or Washington. I returned to Kabul in August of this year to serve as Acting Mission Director, providing an opportunity to assess first-hand the progress we have made over the past eighteen months.

First, in order to establish a baseline for analysis of the reconstruction effort, I believe it bears repeating that Afghanistan provides one of the most complex reconstruction challenges the U.S. government has encountered anywhere. Afghanistan was one of the poorest places on the face of the earth *before* the Soviet incursion precipitated more than two decades of conflict and destruction. Although solid data remains hard to come by, Afghanistan remains at or near the bottom of every socio-economic indicator used to measure human and economic progress. In fact, the country's overall human misery index is among the highest in the world. As just one grim reminder of the harshness of this long-suffering land, one of four Afghan children dies before the age of five.

While many analyses of Afghanistan describe the infrastructure damage caused by the long conflict there, I would like to draw the Committee's attention to Afghanistan's institutional devastation, which matches the physical damage in its severity. When our USAID team arrived in Kabul in January last year, we found a nation without a viable security apparatus, without courts, without functioning ministries; in short, a place where all the basic trappings of a nation-state had been obliterated. Compounding these reconstruction challenges, Afghanistan possesses some of the harshest climatic conditions and most difficult terrain on earth, far too much of it laced with unmarked landmines, numbering in the millions.

USAID's first objective in Afghanistan was to prevent a major humanitarian crisis. Programs were put in place immediately to ensure sufficient supplies of food and shelter, especially for returning refugees and displaced persons, and to prevent the outbreak of hunger and epidemic diseases. Despite the challenges noted above, the massive humanitarian relief program launched in cooperation with our U.S. government, UN, NGO and other international colleagues worked effectively, preventing a widely feared and predicted relief crisis. As an example of the scale of the humanitarian effort undertaken since September 11, 2001, more than 400,000 metric tons of Food for Peace commodities has been delivered to Afghanistan.

Now we are putting in place the building blocks of a reconstructed Afghanistan, an Afghanistan that is—to quote President Bush—“prosperous, democratic, at peace, contributing to regional stability, market friendly, and respectful of human rights.”

Six building blocks serve as the focus of our efforts:

1. **Reconstructing the devastated economy:** Since 85% of Afghans participate in the agricultural sector, USAID's emphasis has been on spurring agricultural recovery and rural reconstruction. Since highways are the commercial lifelines in Afghanistan, we have invested heavily in rebuilding key road links and the bridges destroyed in the conflicts of the past twenty-three years.
2. **Creating the conditions for private investment:** Given Afghanistan's commercial traditions and recognizing that foreign aid cannot alone provide long-term economic growth, USAID programs focus on currency and banking reform, investment law reform, sound budgeting procedures by the Afghan government and related “economic governance” initiatives. These mechanisms are necessary to induce the direct private investment that can fuel economic recovery in the long-term.
3. **Providing a “peace dividend” that will improve the lives of average Afghans:** Because the level of health care is abysmal in Afghanistan, and because—in a nation with 80% illiteracy—there are not enough schools for all the children who try to attend, we are investing in basic health clinics and primary education so that more Afghans will sense some hope for their future and their children's future.
4. **Reconstituting the basic organs of governance:** We have helped rebuild the Afghan Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and other institutions wiped out during the conflict and Taliban oppression. We are funding 136 Afghan expatriate advisors in various Ministries, paying the salaries of 879 Afghans who staff these Ministries, repairing buildings and record-keeping systems and retraining competent managers and teachers.
5. **Buttressing the peace process:** Keeping on track the “Bonn Agreement” that forged the post-Taliban government in Afghanistan has required support for the nationwide *Loya Jirgas*, or grand councils, for elections, judicial reforms and

human rights institutions, and especially for the writing of a new constitution for Afghanistan.

6. **Contributing to a vibrant civil society:** As an alternative to the Taliban's emphasis on isolation and close-mindedness, USAID programs support a free media; training for professional journalists; assistance to private organizations of women, professionals and reformers; and other initiatives intended to spur free, open debate about the future of Afghanistan.

Although I do not minimize the very significant obstacles to reconstruction that remain in Afghanistan, our assessment is that significant progress has taken place in each of these key reconstruction building blocks between 2002 and 2003.

In **economic recovery**, for example, the Rome-based Food and Agriculture Organization reported an 82 percent increase between 2001 and 2002 in production of wheat—Afghanistan's staple grain—since the fall of the Taliban, with a further increase in production of 69 percent between 2002 and 2003. We are pushing forward with road construction, aiming to complete the first level paving of the major Kabul-to-Kandahar highway by the end of 2003. In support of **private sector investment**, a new *Afghani*, the national currency, has been placed in circulation, the Afghan central bank has been placed on a sound footing, a new banking law has been written, and the investment code is on the verge of promulgation.

To improve the lives of average Afghans, USAID alone has completed 760 projects, small and large, in the countryside. I have appended, for the Committee's review, a complete list of USAID reconstruction projects, which are under way or completed in 31 of Afghanistan's 32 provinces. The generosity of the U.S. people has provided 25 million textbooks for Afghan children. We have repaired or rebuilt 121 health clinics and facilities and will rebuild or construct 400 more over the next three years. We have also repaired or rebuilt 203 schools and will build or rebuild another 1,000 by 2006.

Much work remains to **establish or reconstitute government functions**, but many ministries have been repaired, an orderly national budget process is in place, and a USG-funded and installed voice and data telecommunications system now permits Kabul-based officials to communicate regularly with their provincial counterparts, in some cases, for the first time in Afghanistan's history. The **Bonn Agreement Peace Process** has been kept on track, with a successful *Emergency Loya Jirga* completed last year, functioning Judicial and Human Rights Commissions in place, programs underway to begin demobilizing factional fighters in the countryside, and a vigorous, and hotly debated, constitutional drafting process underway. Finally, a post-Taliban rebirth of **Civil Society** is under way in Afghanistan, with numerous radio stations up and running, a journalists training center funded with U.S. assistance in operation in Kabul, and a functioning Ministry of Women's Affairs establishing women's centers—with strong Congressional encouragement—across the nation.

As these reconstruction efforts continue, we are working not only with the U.S. military and our civilian counterparts within and outside the U.S. government, but with the Afghans themselves. USAID programs are consciously designed to build Afghan capacity, and to pave the way for the Afghan government and people to secure their own destiny. For example, we are working with President Karzai's government to increase Afghan capacity to collect and manage customs revenues, a major source of government income. Currently, much of the Afghan government's operating costs are funded by foreign aid contributions, and we are working in the customs arena to build the capacity of the government to meet its own recurring costs. Similarly, in the health care field, we worked with the Ministry of Public Health to support the first national survey of health facilities, so that the government could establish its own priorities for rural health care delivery, led by the Afghans themselves.

Mr. Chairman, I am fully aware of the many concerns about security in Afghanistan, and reports of an increase in security incidents in recent months. The security situation *per se* is not within USAID's purview, but I do want to comment on the effect of security incidents on the reconstruction effort. Overall, without minimizing the security threat—and with profound regret for the lives, Afghan and foreign, that have been lost in recent attacks—we have every intention of maintaining the pace of our reconstruction efforts at the very least. We do not believe that the current rate of security incidents, including incidents targeting relief and reconstruction organizations, will significantly slow the reconstruction efforts. On the contrary, we will redouble our efforts out of awareness that our reconstruction efforts are a potent weapon in the fight against terrorism.

The reality is that Taliban remnants and other enemies of freedom recognize full well that paved highways, schools where girls learn to read, caring NGO workers, fair elections, and free radio stations will destroy them. That is why they launch

scattered, but deadly, forays against these harbingers of progress. We have increased and will increase security measures to deter attacks, but frankly—given Afghanistan's levels of poverty and isolation, the legacy of twenty-three years of war, and the fear our work engenders among the enemies of freedom—I do not believe the current level of insecurity should slow our progress.

In summary, Mr. Chairman, much reconstruction work remains to be accomplished in Afghanistan, but much has been undertaken and the pace of reconstruction is accelerating. USAID appreciates the strong support of this Committee in those reconstruction efforts. I am prepared to elaborate on any of the points made in this testimony, or to answer your questions.

Thank you.

Chairman HYDE. I have just received a communication from I guess the *Financial Times*, but I will just read you—all three of you the first paragraph:

Hamid Karzai has lost his original allies and is increasingly isolated, according to the Afghan newspaper *Payam-e Mojahed*. I hope I didn't mangle that too much. The paper said, discord among his top ministers and commanders is holding up the development of the country. *Payam-e Mojahed*, which has links with the Northern Alliance factions, said it would be in the USA's interests not to insist on Karzai remaining in power but to cooperate with Afghans in finding a new leader. And then the text of the long editorial here.

Now we understand factionalism among democracies and free countries, and we understand that Afghanistan is on the brink of becoming a free country and enjoys a free press. But this is a disturbing comment, if it has any substance, and I would like each of you to—or any of you to comment on this.

Mr. TAYLOR. Mr. Chairman, let me take a first stab at that.

This government in Kabul is a coalition government. It is a government that was put together just after the war. It is a government that then went through a period of time before it came to a Loya Jirga that elected President Karzai. He has people in his cabinet from all different sides of the country, all different ethnic groups, all different parts of the country geographically. Are there disputes within the government? Yes indeed. Are there concerns that this is going to spill into military? No.

What we are seeing right now in Kabul, in Afghanistan is real politics. As you would expect, we are in an election year in Afghanistan. There is going to be an election there next summer, at least on the presidential side, and probably on both, on the parliament as well. That pressure for elective success is there, just like it is in this country. So I am not surprised to hear about squabbles within the cabinet, and I don't deny that they take place. They are certainly there.

I do suggest, though, that it is not a threat to this government. It is not a threat to President Karzai. He remains the single most popular politician in the country. He has announced that he is going to run for re-election. There has been one or two suggestions that there might be somebody running against him but not from very credible kinds of concerns, of a concern of a real competitor. We will see how this goes.

What we are after is a moderate government that can control the countryside, that will never again allow that country to be the home of terrorists; and we want to see the disputes take place on the political side, not on the military side.

Chairman HYDE. Thank you very much. That will suffice. We will save the—Mr. Lantos.

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

I want to commend all three of our distinguished witnesses for very informative and helpful testimony. I have several questions, and I would like to throw them out, and whoever wants to answer them is fine with me.

The first relates to—let me preface my comments by saying that there are probably no two people in this country who want us to succeed in Afghanistan more than the Chairman and I. So our questions and our probing is intentioned to elicit responses which will be helpful to the process.

First, I want to talk about the role of NATO, present and potential, in Afghanistan. I am convinced that, while Afghanistan desperately needs NATO, NATO desperately needs Afghanistan. We now have a gigantic, successful, powerful, vast military alliance which basically lost its *raison d'être* with the collapse of the Soviet Union; and it is self-evident that if NATO is to survive, as I hope it does and as I believe it must, it must find its mission out of area.

I find it extremely disturbing that even though NATO has now taken over the responsibility, at least initially in Kabul and now in a minimal way outside of Kabul, the effort appears to be so utterly puny in terms of NATO's capability. One cannot help but be reminded of the guns of Singapore during the Second World War aiming at the sea when the enemy came from land and the guns of Singapore were never fired. This vast NATO military apparatus in Europe today serves very little useful purpose except a marginal one in the Balkans.

Now I am wondering if any of you could enlighten us as to why we have been unsuccessful in getting a dramatically more significant NATO presence in Afghanistan. My understanding is that several countries—Norway, Belgium, Spain, perhaps others—have indicated willingness to participate. I don't understand why the very sizeable Turkish contingent which was in Afghanistan for a while, has now been reduced, I understand, dramatically. I would like to get the figures from you why the Turkish contingent has not been persuaded to stay. Because, clearly, all of our goals fundamentally depend on the establishment of a pattern of security; and NATO is the perfect instrument to provide security.

I am also wondering, at a time when we are more than prepared to bear financial responsibility for non-NATO forces in Iraq and we have made major efforts along these lines, my staff is told that any foreign military units that might be deployed in Afghanistan must be completely self-sustaining. If that is the policy, I think it is a self-defeating and counterproductive policy, because it would be extremely helpful to achieve our goals in Afghanistan to have countries which cannot afford to maintain troops but are ready to do so.

So I would—my first question really deals with this broad issue of security. This is a huge country. The force even with the current slight increase in the German contingent is negligible compared to the need; and, as you have indicated, while we rhetorically say failure is not an option, in point of fact, failure is very much of an option.

Now to avoid that option, to preclude that option from becoming a reality, what is the Administration doing to bring NATO in in a dramatically more significant way? Because, clearly, the political obstacles which historically have been present vis-a-vis Iraq seem not to be present vis-a-vis Afghanistan.

Mr. RODMAN. You have raised an number of very serious questions, Congressman. Let me attempt to touch on a few of them.

NATO is now in Afghanistan. That is one of the new developments this summer. We consider that a positive thing for a number of reasons, including definitely the reasons you mentioned. It is a good thing for NATO as well as a good thing for ISAF and for the responsibility that the international community had undertaken under the ISAF mandate.

One of the disappointing things is that if you look at the troops that NATO countries have, the number of usable forces they have for expeditionary uses is surprisingly small. These are countries that have small forces, many of which are already extended in other places, other peacekeeping missions in Africa or elsewhere. So one of the issues now is, precisely as we consider the expansion of ISAF around the country, as we seek to internationalize PRTs, NATO has made some very important decisions in the last few days in fact to study these things and to undertake these things. But one of our worries is that NATO may not be able to identify forces to carry out whatever ambitious new things they undertake. So that is a problem.

What I can say in mitigation is that we strongly supported NATO's taking over the ISAF responsibility. We welcome the idea of expanding ISAF's mandate and thereby concomitantly NATO's mandate around the country. One of the constraints will be whether NATO countries other than ourselves have additional forces of any significant numbers.

ISAF, in our view, has been successful. The countries that have led it—the British, the Turks, the Germans and Dutch—have done their force generation exercise each time and have, you know, managed to staff ISAF; and we hope they will be able to do it. If ISAF expands, then they will have to undertake that.

Why the Turks drew down I am not sure what the right answer is. Various countries, when they were in the lead of ISAF, had a large presence, including the British; and when they handed off the lead to someone else, they reduced their own contribution. But, as I said, the new country that was in the lead was able to generate forces to keep ISAF at the adequate level for its previous mission.

Mr. LANTOS. Well, the previous mission was a singularly inadequate mission because the previous mission was Kabul, and this is a big country. I mean, it is like saying, you know, you have adequate security in New York City but not outside in the rest of the country. To an outside observer, this notion that 5,000 NATO troops are adequate to provide security in a country the size of Afghanistan is absurd. Turkey has a standing army of about a half a million. I would like to know if any of you know how many Turkish troops are in Afghanistan as we speak.

Mr. RODMAN. I could get you that number. I don't have it.

Mr. LANTOS. It is probably several hundred, not more than that. So it is not unreasonable for those of us—and I am sure this in-

cludes the three of you—who want to see the mission succeed to ask the obvious questions.

There is a huge NATO military alliance. It has no basic function in Europe today. There are tremendous functions elsewhere. What is the Administration doing as the principal member of NATO to aggressively generate NATO forces so that these two critical assignments, Afghanistan and Iraq, will prove to be successful?

Mr. RODMAN. What I can say is, now we are engaging. Now that NATO took over ISAF, and the issue of ISAF expansion is on the table, you see Lord Robertson and the NATO Council in the last few days undertaking to take on a much bigger responsibility in the country.

In fact, I should try to answer the point that was made earlier, that we have stood in the way of this, which is not the case. We are very pleased that NATO is undertaking this, with our full support, and this is the opportunity before us to make the countries put up their forces to live up to the ambitious thing that they are now speaking about doing.

Mr. LANTOS. If I may have one more quick question, Mr. Chairman. What is the role of Iran in Afghanistan at the moment?

Mr. RODMAN. Let me start on that one, and Ambassador Taylor may have something to add. In a nutshell, Iran is creating options for itself, I would say. They have some of the regional leaders in the West that are close to them. And they are keeping an eye on American forces. They, I think, do not wish us well.

But at least in the military dimension, I think we are able to handle the challenges we face. Iran's challenge is a political one, that Iran seeks to have influence in the country, as other neighbors do. And our job is to strengthen the institutions of Afghanistan so that it is, among other things, able to resist undue influence from neighboring countries.

Mr. LANTOS. Would you like to add something, Ambassador?

Mr. TAYLOR. Just briefly, Mr. Lantos. Yes, we see different parts of the Iranian influence. On the one hand, they have a responsible Embassy in Kabul. They are providing some reconstruction assistance. Mr. Kunder talked about his road. Well, the Iranians are building a road from Iran into Iraq.

But there is the other side as well, exactly as Mr. Rodman said. There is a concern that their influence in the western part of Afghanistan is not altogether benign, that they will provide support to some of what we call the warlords in this discussion, which is not helpful, does not support the central government.

On the other hand, they clearly want to have a stable Afghanistan, as all of the neighbors should want. That is what we are trying to do. That is what we are after in terms of our support for the government of Afghanistan.

Mr. LANTOS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ROYCE. [Presiding.] Thank you, Mr. Lantos.

Let me go to a question that I have, and I have brought it up before. I and others on this Committee have been enthusiastic about this PRT concept for some time, and I have had the opportunity to see them in operation in Afghanistan and see the response that the people of Afghanistan are giving to these PRT

teams. There are 60, 100 soldiers in a team, whose aim it is to facilitate the reconstruction and improve the security.

I think the important side benefit is the amount of appreciation generated in the towns for what the U.S. is doing. We still have only four teams deployed. We still have only four. I am pleased to hear your testimony about your plans to expand into Kandahar, Jalalabad and Herat. These are critical areas.

But when we look at the supplemental, we are envisioning here at least a dozen provinces. So can you give me a quick answer in terms of—is that what you envision, maybe a dozen teams being deployed here as a result of this legislation?

Mr. TAYLOR. Mr. Royce, let me just make a couple of points on the funds that we are asking for in the supplemental and then Mr. Rodman may want to talk.

Mr. ROYCE. I think it is 50 million for this purpose.

Mr. TAYLOR. It is. You have indicated that there are several functions that these PRTs perform. One is, just by being out there, as you say, you have seen these. And the benefits to the people on the ground, the villagers, they see those provincial reconstruction team convoys go through their village is dramatic.

One of the things these teams do when they go through the villages is identify projects that need to be done. Whether it be schools or clinics or wells in conjunction with Mr. Kunder's AID colleagues, they are identifying reconstruction projects.

Mr. ROYCE. You have got the New Zealanders and the British and the German teams working?

Mr. TAYLOR. The New Zealanders are doing it in Bamiyan, and the British are doing it in Mazar, that is correct.

What we are looking for in our supplemental request, is additional funds that will allow USAID and the State Department and the military, to do more of these reconstruction projects. These funds are separate from the operations, the funds that actually pay for the troops that are in the PRTs that pay for the military equipment that the PRTs use. That comes out of the actually 11 billion, that is also part of that request.

Now, Peter, I don't know if you want to talk about the question about the plans for the next steps.

Mr. RODMAN. First of all, what Ambassador Taylor said is correct. There is 50 million or so that we hope to see in the supplemental that would go to PRT projects. As for additional PRTs, this is something that we would certainly be interested in. We and President Karzai had worked out the original schedule and the priorities and locations; we sought his advice, and that of the Minister of Interior and his colleagues, where he thought these PRTs would be most useful. I am not aware of discussions to identify additional positions.

Mr. ROYCE. But, Mr. Rodman, getting back to my precise question. I am clearly trying to get an answer to the question: Will they be operating in a dozen provinces as we envisioned in this supplemental? And are we going to have more than four additional teams? I assume the answer to that must be, yes. So far we only have four teams.

Mr. TAYLOR. You are right.

Mr. RODMAN. We will have eight by the end of this year.

Mr. TAYLOR. There is consideration for a ninth in Ghazni. There is also a consideration, to get at your exact point—the question is how can these eight or nine teams have a broader effect than just the single province that they are in?

The first point is the PRT in Gardez, for example, is responsible for five provinces, and it sends its patrols out to five different provinces. That is a large territory.

An idea that we are looking at is having satellite PRTs, if you will, out from the main PRT in Gardez out into Khost, down into other parts of Patika and in Paktya. So that is the idea that we are looking at.

We share your enthusiasm for this concept. It is an excellent concept. It has an opportunity to make a real contribution.

Mr. ROYCE. I have one last question. You mentioned President Karzai's attempt to bring provisional governors, including Ismail Khan, who is the Governor of Herat, to obey the nation's laws, to send regional revenue to the capital and so forth. How have they reacted? Have those dictates now been enforced, or are they being ignored?

Mr. TAYLOR. They are being enforced. It took some time. There are actually two parts of this that I can talk about. One is the revenues. Back in May, President Karzai said you Governors need to send the revenues that you collect from import tariffs into the center.

Then, as I mentioned in my statement, he sent out Dr. Ghani, his Finance Minister, to pick up—and Dr. Ghani came from Herat with \$20 million. That was a stock, that was from the bank account out there. More importantly, he set up a procedure, a process, that would regularly send in the revenues into the center.

Mr. ROYCE. That revenue stream right now is—

Mr. TAYLOR. That revenue stream continues. It does.

The second thing that he said is, you Governors can't have both a Governor's title and a military title. That took a while. But then, as we have indicated, just in August, President Karzai enforced that one with respect, specifically with respect to Governor Ismail Khan out in Herat, took away the military role, his military command, and sent another commander out there. So that he is doing as well.

And finally, he has replaced other Governors, a total of about seven, but the most recent out—Gul Agha Shirzai—out of Kandahar, has brought him up into Kabul, and put a trusted minister, Minister Pashtun, into the governorship down there.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am out of time.

Chairman HYDE. [presiding.] Mr. Ackerman.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I have two bottom-line, what-do-we-do questions. And the first one goes to the DDR process that I expressed concerns about during my opening statement. I am interested in how just—a quick overview in a couple of sentences, if you can, how this process works, and from whom might we expect the most difficulty.

And the bottom-line question is, how do we handle the situation where there is a local warlord who will not turn over his guns?

Mr. TAYLOR. Mr. Ackerman, in a couple of sentences, the DDR process, as you have indicated, starts on the 25th of this month.

It starts in Konduz. No coincidence that it is going to one of the places where we have a PRT. It is going to be a pilot program in Konduz. It will be followed by another pilot in Mazar and in Gardez, also no coincidence, that are places of two other of our PRTs. And as I said, a voluntary program that has been set up by the U.N., funded to a large degree by the Japanese, but with contributions from us—

Mr. ACKERMAN. How does it work?

Mr. TAYLOR. It works as follows. The U.N. will have a compound, and into this compound will come soldiers with weapons. They need to do two things. They need to have a weapon that works and they need to be on the rolls. They need to be on the rolls of a military organization.

Because we are trying to dismantle military organizations in—let's say we are talking about Konduz in this first pilot. If they meet those two criteria, then they will be given an option of some funds and training and equipment to be able to go start a business. Or if they can meet the physical and literacy requirements, they will have the option of going into the Afghan National Army. A limited number will go into the Army because the requirements are very strict.

But that will be a pilot program to gain some experience over the next months. Then it will be broadened up.

Mr. ACKERMAN. And what happens when a warlord won't give up his guns?

Mr. TAYLOR. There—

Mr. ACKERMAN. Do you have enough bait in this trap to draw in all the mice?

Mr. TAYLOR. In the first phase, we have bait in the trap, exactly what you are saying. We have incentives for the soldiers to come in. There may well be problems down the line. There may well be problems.

Mr. ACKERMAN. I will start again with the question, what happens when you get down the line? What happens when a guy is a warlord and he doesn't turn over the guns?

Mr. TAYLOR. There are several—

Mr. ACKERMAN. Is there a plan?

Mr. TAYLOR. There is a plan. And the plan is, number one, to rely on Afghan forces. And we are not doing this everywhere at the same time. We are focused on a pilot at the beginning, and then one at a time they will move around.

So there are police, there is the Afghan National Army. There are backups to these forces that will be there. The PRT—I mentioned that the PRTs, the Provincial Reconstruction Teams, are in each of these places where our pilot DDR programs are starting.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Let me cut to the chase. We are going to play no role in helping disarm them?

Mr. TAYLOR. We are playing a major role. The international community is playing a major role in terms of setting up this system.

Mr. ACKERMAN. No, no, no. You are missing the point. I don't want to keep missing it. If you don't want to answer, that is fine; just tell me, I will go somewhere else.

But the question is, when they don't show up, do we go and—do we go and take away their guns, rather than just, you know—prayer is not a plan. Hope is not a plan.

Do we go in with U.S. people, with U.S. uniforms, under U.S. command, and do we take away the guns?

Mr. RODMAN. Let me relieve you for a minute.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Is this a tough question?

Mr. TAYLOR. Sure.

Mr. RODMAN. Let me add a point—

Mr. ACKERMAN. I guess we don't have a plan.

Mr. RODMAN. Let me try. President Karzai has been very astute up until now, sir, in preparing—

Mr. ACKERMAN. I have a second question. I just don't want to run the clock on it. Do we have a plan or—do U.S. forces go in and take away the guns?

Mr. RODMAN. The plan is to prepare the ground politically before we undertake a step to go after—

Mr. ACKERMAN. We have heard all of that three times, five times. After we prepare the ground, after we talk to everybody, after we do everything, if they don't turn over the guns, do we take away the guns?

I will go to the next question. Obviously we don't have a plan. Drug interdiction. Can you tell us what our efforts are in drug interdiction? Are we getting rid of all of the stuff? Are we going in and taking it away? We have a lot of money in this budget to take it away or whatever it is that we are supposed to do?

Mr. TAYLOR. Mr. Ackerman, you are right. Let me try to answer your question very directly. You are exactly right. We have a lot of money in this request. We have a lot of money in our regular request to deal with this problem of drugs. Drugs are a long-term problem. And it is something that needs short-term work that will eventually pay off in the long term.

What needs to be done are three things. You need to have enforcement, you need to have alternative livelihood, and you need to have social procedure not to grow opium poppies. And we are pushing on all three of those.

Last year the British, who are in the lead as you know, on the counternarcotics work in all of Afghanistan, we are supporting them. Last year they went in and tried to eradicate some fields, tried to knock down some poppy fields.

This program, run by outsiders did not work. President Karzai has recognized that that didn't work, and he has directed his Governors to go through their processes with their forces to eradicate fields. That has worked to some degree, not a great degree. It needs to be improved. It can be improved and made a success if there are alternative livelihoods and if there is enforcement both on police, which is a major portion of our request, as well as a judicial system that will focus on this problem.

Mr. ACKERMAN. President Karzai pressured the British to back off of their pilot interdiction effort. Did we step in, or are we relying on President Karzai? And if we are relying on him rather than our efforts with all of this money that you are getting to do this, how successful are his efforts and why is it that we are not step-

ping up to the plate on this as we help in other places and spray those fields?

Mr. TAYLOR. President Karzai asked the British to modify their program, and the British have done that. The British, however, stay in the lead. The British are not backing off.

Mr. ACKERMAN. The British have abandoned the program, as I understand it.

Mr. TAYLOR. No, sir. They have not abandoned the program. They are very much in the lead. They are constantly in touch with all of their allies, ourselves and others, to continue to focus on counternarcotics. So they have not backed down from that commitment, which they continue to do.

Mr. ACKERMAN. The commitment, but not the effort.

Chairman HYDE. The gentleman's time has expired. Mr. Bereuter.

Mr. BEREUTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Gentlemen, thank you very much for your testimony. I have a number of things I want to cover. I will just make a couple of observations at first, especially for the first one, Mr. Rodman.

With respect to the PRTs that the Germans will be providing, one is good news. It is a very large commitment I understand. I have had members of the German Bundestag who say it is going to the wrong place in Afghanistan. This is a safe area in relative terms. I will just bring that to your attention. I don't expect you to comment on it.

I heard about the 82 percent increases in agriculture production in 1 year, Mr. Kunder, but of course it is from what base? I was concerned from the beginning that we needed to replace seed stock, which was all gone; we needed to replace the breeding stock; and we needed to use the food for work program to restore those relatively primitive but important irrigation systems. I hope work has been proceeding on that.

I do know that with respect to opium production, much larger crops now than when the Taliban was in control. It is helping to destabilize countries further in middle and central Asia. It is, I suspect, arming some of these drug lords. And perhaps some of the so-called warlords are also involved in production, but not all, I think.

You are setting up a different kind of force in Afghanistan by permitting these huge profits to come to these new drug lords or reconstituted drug lords. We are not doing well with respect to the opium production, and I had hoped that we would be in there very early to help farmers have another alternative instead of growing poppies.

I want to come now to Mr. Kunder in particular and to USAID. I don't usually bring up parochial matters, and this one is not in my district. When the Soviets took over Afghanistan, in effect, people were surprised to find the biggest center of expertise on Afghanistan was at the University of Nebraska-Omaha. The center was participating and, indeed, has been in a lot of programs up to this point.

I think, though, the relationships between USAID and that program have deteriorated dramatically. I know that the head of it is a Democrat. I think that shouldn't be a factor, if it is. Four-fifths of the delegation from Nebraska are Republicans. The State has a

predominant party; that is, the Republican party. I hope that partisanship is not a part of cutting off the University of Nebraska-Omaha.

Mr. KUNDER. Not a factor at all, sir.

Mr. BEREUTER. We have textbooks produced, surprisingly, with USAID funds, by UNICEF. I don't know that we expected that USAID would send the money to a U.N.-affiliated organization, despite its reputation, and then they produce textbooks that read from front to back and have to be replaced. When you have that lack of understanding among the people at UNICEF in terms of cultural linguistic understanding—that they don't know you have to have the books that read from the back to the front to go to school children, that shows me that was a bad choice to send the contract to UNICEF.

I would like to know for the record, Mr. Kunder, if you would provide me the number of employees at Creative Associates that are former USAID or State Department personnel.

Mr. KUNDER. We certainly will. Yes, sir.

Mr. BEREUTER. Thank you.

I would like to say to my colleagues, and to you gentlemen, that I think that we are underfunding our operation in Afghanistan. I am very pleased that some adjustments have been made in the reconstruction funds for Iraq by Chairman Kolbe and his bipartisan effort in the Foreign Operations Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations.

Some of those very ill-advised items on that lists funds being sent to Afghanistan operations instead. I think that is a move in the right direction. One, we don't have to support things that are ill advised in that list of reconstruction, but the other was we need more funds.

Chairman HYDE. Would the gentleman yield? We have three votes pending: A 15-minute vote, a 5-minute vote, and a 5-minute vote on House Resolution 198, concerning debt relief by Russia and France. There is a previous question and another vote. So what is the disposition of the Committee? Do you want to come back?

Mr. MENENDEZ. Yes.

Chairman HYDE. Do you want to come back?

Mr. BEREUTER. Fine.

Chairman HYDE. I hate to impose on you. It will be a little bit of a wait, but what you are telling us is very important, and so we will be back. So we will stand in recess until after the last vote. And we will come back as quickly as we can.

Mr. BEREUTER. I yield back my time, in any case.

Chairman HYDE. Thank you. We will stand in recess.

[Recess.]

Chairman HYDE. The Committee will come to order. I want you gentlemen to know that you are here by popular demand, but I don't know where our demand has gone. But we do have one very demanding Member, and that is Mr. Menendez whose turn it is to interrogate you. So, Mr. Menendez.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the testimony of all of our witnesses.

Ambassador Rodman, I am concerned about how you characterize the situation in Afghanistan, And I am concerned, because

I think it may be much too much optimistic, as you testified before the Committee. You say that the Afghan people face two sources of insecurity in your testimony, the operations of the enemy—the Taliban, al-Qaeda and spoilers—and as well as the second—the degree of instability caused by the rivalries among warlords.

Then you go on to say, while we take these challenges seriously, neither is a threat to the consolidation of the political process. I find that—to make that statement so bluntly, that neither is a threat to the consolidation of the political process somewhat flies in the face of what I got a sense in the first part of Ambassador Taylor's comments, what I get in the sense of the PRTs not having the manpower, when you consider both force protection and patrol as part of their total composition, not having the manpower to do it.

I have real problems in seeing that optimistic view when Pakistan does just enough to keep us at bay, but certainly not enough for us to be able to win this at the end of the day, when they permit so many of the Taliban fighters in their part of the porous region with Afghanistan.

And we don't seem to push them hard enough on that issue, and they increasingly allow those Taliban fighters who are ultimately shooting at our people, shooting at our people, and maybe they have told them now, start shooting at the Afghans so that the pressure gets off. But the reality is, is that that is a huge problem.

And then I look at Mr. Kunder's remarks. And while maybe there are significant parts in which there is enough security for the ability to do reconstruction work and development work, the reality is the one area that Karzai needs the most, which is in the Pashtun area, that there is no sense of security there whatsoever. That is his biggest challenge.

And then, finally, I look at the what Congressional Research Service tells us, that the preliminary assessments that were presented by the UNDP, the World Bank, and the Asian Development Bank with reference to reconstruction costs were estimated in Afghanistan to be between \$15 billion over the next decade, and then that the U.N. and the Afghan Government have reportedly said that same \$15 billion will be needed over 5 years, over less than half—about half of the time that was the originally estimated. Yet, only international donor countries have committed nearly 4 billion of that, but only 1.7 has been distributed.

So I look at all of that and I say to myself, as someone who supported that effort originally—because I sit on the west bank of the Hudson River and we lost several hundred of our citizens, and I clearly believe that Afghanistan was the place, the nexus for the terrorism—that we have lost our eyes on the prize here.

We went to Iraq. And instead of continuing to do the job and cement the elements of what we seeded in Afghanistan, we now have a set of circumstances that is far less rosy than you projected.

So could you speak to the concerns that I have raised on the reality of the PRTs don't really have the manpower, the realities that Pakistan continues to harbor the Taliban in significant ways, and that is costing us in terms of lives and in terms of security; the reality that in the Pashtun area we don't have the security that is necessary, which is the key to redevelopment, the key to strength-

ening Karzai and a central government? And how can you be, you know, somewhat overly optimistic to say these challenges pose no threat at the end of the day to the central government?

Mr. RODMAN. Sir, let me start. When I said neither of these challenges is a threat, I meant neither one of these challenges is going to derail what is happening. Maybe I could have been clearer. I think both of these challenges are manageable and being managed. The Taliban and al-Qaeda would like very much to disrupt everything, but I think they will fail.

The second issue was the warlord problem. That problem is being managed politically. I think it was Mr. Royce who mentioned a newspaper article, I think one explanation for that article was that some Northern Alliance people are nervous that President Karzai is, in fact, asserting his authority more forcefully than before. So I think both of these issues are being managed. When I said they were not a threat, I don't think they seriously threaten to undermine what is going on and the progress that is taking place.

I am sure it will be a good idea to have more PRTs, to expand their role. That is also underway. We think the PRTs are a success. It is an idea that we had; we were able to field these teams fairly quickly. There are four more teams coming on board, maybe five. So we think this is a useful device, a valuable device, that serves a number of good purposes. We think the German involvement signals a greater international interest in taking on some of the PRTs, which is a good sign in itself.

So it goes back to what we were discussing before. Is the glass half empty or half full? We see progress being made. We think the direction of events is clear. And there are lots of people trying to frustrate it, but we think we are the ones advancing, and the people trying to frustrate it, we think they in turn will be frustrated.

That is our assessment. It is a judgment call. Maybe it is part of our job to be optimistic so that we keep moving and certainly not despair at the problems.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Chairman, if I may quickly follow up. Pakistan, you didn't address that. The Taliban, al-Qaeda fighters, we know that they are using their borders. We seem to accept them doing what is just enough, but clearly not enough, and not enough certainly within their capacity.

So I don't understand how it is that we expect to not have a long-term conflict under which we are constantly attacked by a porous border, that we have a "ally" who is not doing what they need to do to engage, and therefore consistently becomes a huge wound that will not heal.

Mr. RODMAN. You earlier used the word "increasingly." Pakistan was "increasingly" not cooperating, or consistently. And I don't think that is the case. I think Pakistan is responding to the pressure we have been putting on them to respond.

There are a number of difficulties in controlling that border which have nothing to do with the good faith of Pakistan. The terrain is horrendous. The population, such as it is, is sympathetic to some of these terrorists.

These are areas that, you know, have never been governed from the capital, even from British times.

Mr. MENENDEZ. So you believe that the Pakistani Government—

Mr. RODMAN. We credit the good faith of the Pakistan leadership, particularly the President. There are obviously elements in the Pakistan Government who are still maybe sympathetic to the old policy of 2 years ago. So there may be elements that are sympathetic to the bad guys. But we credit the Pakistan Government, the military. We have had the Chairman of their Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee here this week.

We talk to the Pakistan military all of the time. They say they understand their interest the same way that we understand ours: The destabilization of Afghanistan is a threat to them. So they tell us they understand the necessity to get more control over the border. And in the past week, we saw a very effective operation against Taliban in Waziristan. We think that is a good sign.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Do you believe, Mr. Secretary, that they are doing everything that they could within their power to do, yes or no?

Mr. RODMAN. It is hard to assess given the inherent difficulty of doing it. We credit their good faith. And they have done a number of things that are very valuable to us—catching some al-Qaeda leaders, and the operation recently which was the most successful operation of that kind.

Mr. TAYLOR. If I can just add to what Mr. Rodman says, because I agree with that. Secretary Armitage, Deputy Secretary of State Armitage was just in Islamabad. He was in Kabul and Kandahar but also in Islamabad this last week.

And he had the conversation, exactly as Mr. Rodman said, which we have had before with the officials in Islamabad about cooperation with the United States, cooperation with the Afghans. And there are some institutions that have those three components: Afghan, Pakistan, and the United States.

But Secretary Armitage came away from these discussions convinced that the Pakistanis are now on the right track, they are going in the right direction. This operation that Mr. Rodman just mentioned last week where the Pakistanis had people killed, they went into areas where no Pakistan, or indeed British, going back into the 1800s military forces, have ever been.

So they are now, according to Secretary Armitage, on the right track.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Chairman, if I might have one last question.

Mr. KUNDER, how about the shortfall in the goal that is established by everyone as what is necessary for Afghan reconstruction and the internal donors' shortfall in terms of both that which they have committed and that which they have actually dispensed with in the context of what they have committed. Lastly, how about that part about the Pashtun area, where there isn't security, and where you need some of the greatest redevelopment and buy-in in order for the central government to be able to sustain themselves?

Mr. KUNDER. These are all fair questions, sir. The brief answer is, first of all to establish a baseline, there was a very preliminary World Bank assessment mission that was done early last year. I was there on the ground when they showed up. That was the one that gives you the 10 to \$15 billion reconstruction estimates over

a decade. Then there was the Tokyo pledge number where the donors got together in Tokyo and came up with that approximately \$4 billion, which was some countries pledged for 1 year, some countries pledged for 3 years, but it was a much shorter time frame.

At that conference the U.S. pledged 873 million. We have far exceeded that, already having spent, \$960-some million in Afghanistan on reconstruction alone, nonsecurity issues.

So I think part of the discussion is there are different bases, different time lines. But in general to your point, I take your point is that we could use more reconstruction resources in Afghanistan.

I think the President's request for the additional billion dollars, which I believe the Congress will be supportive of, is in fact a recognition that we have found that we can use more reconstruction dollars in Afghanistan.

We have also gone to our—repeatedly through the Department of State—to the other donors and said, we need you to ratchet up what you pledged in Tokyo as well. That has yielded only partial results so far.

So can we use more dollars? Yes, sir. Are we asking for more dollars? Yes.

I also believe that this is going to be a long-term reconstruction project that is not going to be finished in the next couple of years.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Bereuter.

Mr. BEREUTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have no further questions.

Chairman HYDE. Thank you. Well, I want to thank our three witnesses. You have been excellent. You have been instructive, illuminating, and long suffering. Thank you.

The Committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:50 p.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING RECORD

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE NICK SMITH, A REPRESENTATIVE IN
CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MICHIGAN

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AFGHANISTAN FREEDOM SUPPORT ACT OF 2002 (AFSA)

Mr. Chairman, though other issues such as Iraq or the Mid-East Peace Process may have captured most of our attention over the last several months, it is important for us to pick up the discussion that we began in June of this year, assessing the effectiveness of United Nations efforts in Afghanistan and exploring what can be done better.

The U.N. has left much to be desired in their management of rebuilding and reorganization of government in Bosnia. In Afghanistan, security continues to suffer in areas outside of International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) or Afghan National Army (ANA) patrols. With NATO's assumption of command in August and the contribution of significant numbers of German and Canadian troops, there is renewed interest by Afghani and United Nations officials in expanding the ISAF to cities outside of Kabul. Germany has agreed to send 450 additional troops to expand the ISAF to Konduz, but further expansion could require anywhere between 2,000 and 10,000 additional troops. The force currently consists of about 5,500 international troops. Expansion of this international force would be of great benefit, but it remains to be seen whether the U.N. and international community can deliver the number of troops that they advocate.

Meanwhile, efforts to train recruits for the Afghan National Army continue to move forward with the help of the British and French. The central government can currently call upon 5,500 Afghani soldiers and 9,000 more should graduate from training around the time of next year's elections. Still, the targeted troop strength of 70,000 men is several years off. Concurrent with these efforts, the Japanese and United Nations are attempting to reduce the number of unemployed or regionally controlled militiamen. These efforts have been delayed by regional concerns over the predominantly Tajik composition of the Ministry of Defense, but hopefully recent reforms and reassignment of senior defense positions will reinvigorate these efforts.

Finally, the American security presence in Afghanistan is still predominant with 9,000 American troops in the area including Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) of 60–100 troops each deployed to protect reconstruction workers and create safe-havens for political and infrastructure building projects.

While these international, Afghan, and American efforts to improve security continue, the critical political building process continues to proceed. The *loya jirga* (traditional Afghan assembly) tasked with drafting a national constitution expects to unveil its product publicly by the end of this month. We are still optimistic that elections will take place sometime after June of next year. I understand the Administration is considering 120 U.S. officials to Afghanistan to advise Afghani counterparts on running the various ministries of the national government more efficiently. On the floor today, we are also including \$1.2 billion in the Emergency Supplemental to bolster American reconstruction efforts in the country.

Still, we hear reports of Afghanis becoming frustrated with the pace of reconstruction. There is no doubt in my mind that the situation for the majority of Afghanis has improved tremendously since December of 2001 when the Taliban was toppled from power. Still, we have to ask whether their lives are continuing to improve and whether their country is continuing to proceed toward stability at an adequate pace? I thank the witnesses for coming today to share their insight on how we can improve the process and possibly speed up the pace of reconstruction efforts. Is there a way to improve security outside of the initiatives that are already underway? How

significant are reports of Afghanis returning to poppy cultivation and other illicit activities? Is the reliance on international humanitarian aid creating a culture of dependence among ordinary Afghanis? Is the pace of efforts to rebuild roads, water systems, and other infrastructure enabling Afghanis to return to agricultural and other constructive pursuits or are we failing to empower the population to provide for themselves in a timely manner?

I look forward to hearing the witnesses thoughts on these issues and I thank the Speaker for yielding me this time.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JOSEPH R. PITTS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN
CONGRESS FROM THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

Chairman Hyde, I would like to thank you for convening this hearing today on such an important issue.

As we all know, prompted by the horrific attacks of September 11th, the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan began on October 7, 2001, and by mid-November the Taliban had lost control of most of the country. Despite this defeat, however, Taliban groups reportedly continue to operate in Afghanistan, mostly in the southeast, targeting U.S. and Afghan forces and creating continuing insecurity.

I would like to commend the United Nations Security Council for passing a resolution to expand the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) outside of Kabul. The 33-nation force under NATO command may soon expand to several major cities.

I have seen firsthand the suffering of the Afghan people while visiting Kabul and refugee camps in Pakistan in early 2002. Afghans who continue to face threats due to a lack of security and food shortages as a result of twenty-two years of war desperately need our help.

The unveiling of the draft constitution for public discussion is expected to go forward by late October 2003, and it is imperative that this new constitution protect all ethnic and religious minorities in order for the government to be seen as legitimate.

I am concerned, however, by the lag in reconstruction due to pressing humanitarian issues.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), mostly based in Kabul, have large overhead costs to due security needs, and most Afghans are not seeing a significant change in their living conditions. For this change to happen, the United States should support, promote, and encourage NGOs that are currently working outside of the capital city.

Reconstruction needs to move forward aggressively in order to help stabilize the central government by bringing credibility and credit to them for key projects. This will also help undermine the power of warlords who remain in control of much of the country and stop the spread of pro-Taliban elements.

Most importantly, certain sectors need to be developed immediately—electricity, water sources, roads (both large and secondary in addition to market roads to help increase economic activity and commerce), and security.

We must also reallocate our resources to maximize their efficiency. For example, the U.S. military would be better used in large-scale reconstruction projects, such as roads, versus building schools. NGOs already on the ground are capable of building schools, but cannot undertake large-scale projects.

Tangible reconstruction successes are vital in order to meet the U.S. objective of a stable and democratic Afghanistan, and the Afghan objective of a government with recognized legitimacy throughout the nation.

As the Congress moves forward with the FY04 Supplemental, we must keep this in mind.

Mr. Chairman, I welcome the opportunity today to hear testimony from the Mr. William B. Taylor, Jr., Mr. Peter W. Rodman, and Mr. James Kunder.

