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UNITED STATES POLICY TOWARD IRAQ

COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED FOURTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

HEARING HELD
SEPTEMBER 26, 1996

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UNITED STATES POLICY TOWARD IRAQ

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY,
Washington, DC, Thursday, September 26, 1996.

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 9:40 a.m. in room 2118, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Floyd Spence (chairman of the committee) presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. FLOYD D. SPENCE, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM SOUTH CAROLINA, CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY

The CHAIRMAN. The meeting will please come to order. We have time conflicts this morning, and we are waiting on other people to arrive, but we will go ahead and get started with the witnesses we do have.

Today, the committee reviews the issue of United States policy toward Iraq and, in particular, whether the administration is executing that policy successfully. President Clinton contends that we are.

Immediately following the recent cruise missile attack on Iraq, the President went on national television to claim that the mission had been accomplished and that Iraq was, "strategically worse off." But a different and contradictory picture emerged very quickly. Just last week John Deutch, the Director of Central Intelligence, testified before the Senate that, "In the past 6 weeks, Saddam Hussein has gotten stronger politically in the region."

Director Deutch's contrary assessment seems to reflect an administration in disarray. In my opinion, it is a stark admission that the administration's policy toward Iraq is failing.

Over the course of the past month Saddam Hussein has won three important victories. First, he has greatly strengthened his position within Iraq not only by consolidating gains in the north, but also by crushing internal opposition.

Second, as the broad Desert Storm coalition and, in particular, the alliance of Arab States fractures, Saddam Hussein stands much taller in the region.

Third, by taking bold and ultimately successful action in the face of strong American warnings, Saddam has called into question American leadership and credibility relative to our critical role as the principal guarantor of the world's energy supply.

Consider what each of Saddam's victories means. Within Iraq, Saddam has secured his northern flank and in the process has badly damaged the internal opposition to his regime. The administration claims that the Iraqi opposition led by the Kurds in north-

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ern Iraq proved too hard to keep united. While this is not a surprise, neither is it an excuse.

We have lost 5 years of investment in our efforts to contain Iraq from the north. We have also blown the cover for our covert operation and put in jeopardy the lives and efforts of our agents and their contacts.

Saddam Hussein's second victory is even greater. He has cracked the American-led coalition that won the gulf war and which had been key to our post-war policy of containment. The silence of our allies is deafening. Saudi Arabia, the keystone of our gulf strategy and the primary staging basis for our military operation over Iraq is now a more reluctant partner.

Turkey, another key regional ally and member of NATO, is also less enthusiastic about hosting American troops on its soil.

Jordan, persuaded by our victory in the gulf war to make historic peace with Israel, nonetheless refused to base United States war planes on its soil.

Even Kuwait, completely defenseless without United States protection, has only reluctantly agreed to what should have been a routine augmentation of our forces.

France is beginning to hedge on its bets in anticipation of reviving its historic ties to Baghdad.

Likewise, Russia seeks to regain its traditional influence in the region; and only Great Britain is willing to participate in the expanded air operation over southern Iraq.

In sum, the international support to contain Iraq continues to crumble. Without the strong support of these allies, our ability to operate in the region is greatly limited.

After the damage Saddam Hussein suffered and recovered from in the gulf war, cruise missile attacks against a handful of air defense radars are meaningless. Extending no-fly zones mean little against a pitiful Iraqi air force and proved no deterrent whatsoever against Saddam Hussein's army in the north. The overall result is then to present Saddam with his third and greatest victory. From the rest of the world's perception, American leadership and credibility in the region of vital national security interest is now in question.

Our pinprick response to Saddam's aggression in the north has strained our own coalition without hurting Saddam either militarily or diplomatically. Iraq only had to repair some air defense sites while the United States must try to repair a 5-year coalition policy of containment.

If the President perceives this as success and believes that Saddam Hussein is strategically worse off, I would hate to know what his definition of failure is.

Indeed, it is not Saddam Hussein who is worse off; it is the United States. It is the United States that now finds itself with more military challenges. It is the United States that now has fewer strategic options. It is the United States that now is confronting the very real prospect of a strategic policy failure of some magnitude.

I hope today's hearings will help us to understand in greater detail our policy with regard to Iraq. As such, we begin with a panel of independent experts, and they are: Mr. Richard Haass, the

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Brookings Institution, former director of Middle East Policy, the National Security Council during the Bush administration; Michael Eisenstad, Senior Fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy; and Richard Perle of the American Enterprise Institute.

Following this panel will be a panel of administration witnesses including Mr. Bruce Riedel, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Near East and South Asian Affairs. The military people will not testify, but they will be here: Maj. Gen. James King was to come and Lt. Gen. Peter Pace on the Joint Staff.

Gentlemen, I look forward to your testimony. Before we begin, let me recognize the gentleman from California, Mr. Dellums, for any remarks he would like to make.

STATEMENT OF HON. RONALD V. DELLUMS, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM CALIFORNIA, RANKING MINORITY MEMBER, COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY

Mr. DELLUMS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to first join you in welcoming our witnesses in today's hearing. I look forward to the views of Messrs. Eisenstad, Perle, and Haass. I hope that their comments will assist in framing the questions that we must subsequently pose to Deputy Assistant Secretary Riedel and Major General Van Alstyne.

Many troubling issues are raised by recent developments in Iraq and the Persian Gulf. As an advocate for utilization of alternatives to armed action to achieve United States interests, I am troubled by the military actions undertaken against Iraq. I am concerned to know why other alternatives, such as waiting to see how continued constraints on oil sales, might have impacted adversely on Iraqi military actions.

Mr. Chairman, as a jealous guardian of the Congress' constitutional prerogative to determine whether or not to commit U.S. military forces to combat, I have shared personally with the President my concern that offensive military actions should be preceded by consultations with the Congress and authorization by Congress of those actions. I look forward to the insights of these witnesses that are before us this morning on the current legal basis existing or required for committing any further military action in Iraq.

Many other obvious questions arise in connection with these developments: What is our continued commitment to the stated purpose of providing relief to Iraqi Kurds from harassment and genocidal attack? Who among our allies on this front is prepared to assist in these efforts?

How do the cruise missile attacks and the unilateral extension of the no-fly zone in the south comport with international law, the U.N. resolutions, and our broader strategic objectives?

These are significant and important questions, Mr. Chairman. How do they support the growth and maintenance of the thus far successful international coalition, organized under international sanction and with broad consensus, to deter Iraqi aggression and to dismantle the Iraqi program to produce weapons of mass destruction?

As Mr. Haass, one of our distinguished witnesses, wrote in an article in Foreign Policy magazine in the fall 1994, and I think elo-

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quently states, and I quote, "Multilateralism is closely tied to international legitimacy."

This is a vital issue both of strategy, cost, and legitimacy. I look forward to both panels helping us to understand how this issue might play itself out in both the near and far term. With those opening remarks, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate your generosity and yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. We will begin with Mr. Haass and, gentlemen, without objection your complete statements will be submitted for the record.

STATEMENT OF RICHARD N. HAASS, DIRECTOR OF FOREIGN POLICY STUDIES, THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

Mr. HAASS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I welcome this opportunity to appear before you and your colleagues to discuss United States policy toward Iraq and the Persian Gulf region.

United States policy since the gulf war has been marked by the reality that United States relations with the two strongest states of the region, Iran and Iraq, are adversarial. The problem facing us is that no combination of friendly local states can offset either Iran or Iraq. As a result, continued U.S. involvement in the region will be necessary for the foreseeable future to square this circle of strong enemies, weak friends, and vital interests.

The Clinton administration dubbed its posture "dual containment." The goal was to limit the ability of either Iran or Iraq to threaten United States interests in the region and beyond. Still, this phrase is less than ideal. Iran and Iraq pose different threats and call for different responses.

Also, limiting their reach, as containment suggests, is not enough. The United States can and should aim for more. Moreover, the isolation of Iran and Iraq is increasingly challenged by a number of states whose support is necessary if this policy is to succeed. The result is that dual containment gives us a slogan when what we really need is a strategy and sustained efforts on its behalf.

Now, about 6 years after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, just over 5 since Kuwait's liberation, on one level, the United States has fared extremely well. Economic sanctions against Iraq remain in place and for the most part are complied with. One can also point to substantial progress in the effort to uncover and eliminate Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. Iraq is in all sorts of economic trouble and it is politically divided.

The net result is that Saddam Hussein's Iraq is significantly weaker today than it was at the start of this decade and is better understood as constituting a dangerous nuisance rather than an actual strategic threat.

But the glass is also half empty. Saddam Hussein remains in power despite numerous attempts to oust him. He has rebuilt the strength of his military capability above where it was when the war ended. France and Russia regularly champion for lifting sanctions, while in the Arab world there is growing opposition to sanctions on humanitarian grounds. Recent developments have altered the reality and the perceptions.

On balance, Saddam Hussein gained more than he lost. Indeed, September 1996 has been Saddam's best month since March 1991,

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when he was able to put down the Shi'a and Kurdish uprisings and deflect attention from his catastrophic handling of the gulf war. To some extent, these gains were the inevitable consequence of Kurdish infighting, but U.S. foreign policy over the past new weeks has come up short. Several things should and could have been done differently and two stand out.

The first was coalition maintenance. The anti-Saddam consensus has simply been allowed to weaken over the past 4 years. In diplomacy, neglect is almost never benign. The United States had done precious little over the past few years to keep this coalition intact and robust. This applies to Turkey. It applies to the Arab governments. It applies to the Europeans. It applies to Russia.

In addition, the lack of United States reaction to Turkish and Iranian incursions into northern Iraq, months ago, increased Saddam's incentive to act at the same time that it increased the likelihood that any such action on his part would be understood by his neighbors.

The second principal United States error involved the use of force itself. This United States action, if you recall, just using some 44 cruise missiles to destroy several Iraqi air defense sites, was too small and too remote. To be sure, there was coalition resistance to using any military force against Saddam widely, because of a lack of sympathy for the Kurds and concern over Iran. But the United States will only have a limited number of occasions when it can use force against Iraq. It must make the most of them.

Any military intervention on our part or the coalition's part should be large enough to hurt Saddam militarily and demonstrate his inability to protect his country.

Still, despite these setbacks, it would be wrong to conclude that the United States position in the area is irretrievably damaged. The weakness in the coalition in responding to Saddam inside his country should not be determined by anyone as the demise of the coalition more generally. A good deal of consensus continues to exist, enough so that it should be possible to keep the sanctions in place and to prevent Iraq from again becoming a threat to its neighbors.

The first priority for the United States, though, ought to be to reinvigorate this coalition. This means, above all, repairing the United States-Turkish relationship. We need to consult closely about how best to deal with future crises in the north. We shouldn't delude ourselves. It is a question of when, and not if, such a crisis will come about.

Saddam Hussein, if nothing else, is a serial prober; at some point, he will turn on his new Kurdish friends, and as a result, we will have a large refugee flow heading toward Iraq's border with Turkey. It must, thus, become a foreign policy goal of the United States to continue Operation Provide Comfort in order to—first of all, to avoid suggesting to Saddam that he now has a free hand in the north and also to make sure that we and the Turkish Government are prepared for this new crisis if and when it comes about.

We similarly need to make sure there is a consensus in the region that Saddam will not be able to mass his forces, his military forces against any of his neighbors, as he did in July 1990 just before he invaded Kuwait and as he did again in October 1994. If he

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does so, if he again masses his amored forces, we and other members of the coalition need to strike then and strike hard.

The key to such a policy is that Saddam not reemerge as a strategic threat. I would add that this policy also has the benefit of creating a context where the Iraqi people might move against Saddam. Toward that end, and to increase that likelihood, the United States Government needs to do a much better job of articulating publicly just how Iraq would benefit under an alternative leadership.

Such a comprehensive, overt policy—I underline the word "overt"—a mixture of tough sanctions, substantial uses of military force, if and when we use it, and clear public diplomacy about United States policy toward an alternative government in Iraq should prevent Saddam from breaking out; and it also has the potential to accomplish more, to actually bring about his ouster.

I also think there are two things we ought to avoid in United States policy at this point. The first would be to make Saddam's ouster an explicit goal. If we did so, every day he survived would be a victory for him, and also, I simply don't believe we have the tools to confidently accomplish that goal.

Second, I think we are right to keep in place the policy of supporting Iraq's territorial integrity. The splitting of Iraq would stimulate all sorts of fighting between Iraqis, between Iraqis and their neighbors, and between those neighbors. I also believe, in the process, that the outcome would only benefit Iran which would then emerge as the single strongest state in the region.

What else does the United States need to do? Let me suggest about other policies very briefly. The first involves intelligence. The United States simply needs more and better intelligence, especially the sort of intelligence we can only get from human sources, if we are to understand what is going on in Iraq and in the region.

The second consideration is the military one. United States diplomacy can only succeed against the backdrop of military forces that are available, and if they are to be used, are used in serious force.

Third, the United States policy toward Iraq has a much better chance of succeeding if United States policy toward Iran is effective. We should never forget that many countries in this part of the world see Iran more than Iraq as their principal danger. What this means then is that we cannot allow Iran to emerge as a country with weapons of mass destruction, that an Iran that broke out of the box that we have now tried to create for it, I think would fundamentally change Arab attitudes and would significantly diminish Arab willingness to work with us against Iraq to what do we need to do with Iran.

First, we need to continue efforts to deny Iran any weapons of mass destruction capability; we need to use force decisively if there is a clear evidence of Iranian support for terrorism; and we need to communicate that any future incursions into northern Iraq are unacceptable.

This said, we cannot achieve these goals alone, and one of the things we need to change is our policy toward Iran and make it a more multilateral policy; approach our friends in Europe and the Asian Pacific and propose a structured dialog with Iran. There

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could then be a degree of economic interaction; if not, everyone could agree to hold back and institute multilateral sanctions.

Fourth, we need to understand better the risks and costs of unilateralism. A strategy against Saddam, a strategy against Iraq can only succeed if it is supported by others in the region and beyond.

This translates, first of all, into a call for far more frequent and more senior consultations with these governments. The sort of unilateralism demonstrated by the Clinton administration over the past few weeks is not so much the exercise of leadership as its abandonment.

Fifth, we need to encourage our friends in the region to undertake reforms that will leave them less vulnerable to internal political revolutionary change. States that are facing unrest at home will prove less able and less willing to confront Iraq.

Sixth, the United States needs to do more in the realm of energy. As you know, we now import roughly half the energy we consume in this country and though only a modest percentage of this comes from the gulf, the United States will be affected directly and indirectly by any supply disruption.

Last, I would say, particularly in context of this morning's events, we cannot insulate ourselves in this part of the world from the events in the Arab-Israeli peace process. If there is a breakdown in that process, the willingness of our friends in the region to work with us will be diminished. We need the lubrication that is the result of progress in the peace process in order to carry over to facilitate our cooperation in the gulf against both Iran and Iraq.

Mr. Chairman, those are my remarks, and I look forward to answering any questions you and your colleagues may have.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you Mr. Haass.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Haass follows:]

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TESTIMONY OF

RICHARD N. HAASS

DIRECTOR OF FOREIGN POLICY STUDIES

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

ON U.S. POLICY TOWARD IRAQ

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 26, 1996

Mr. Chairman:

I welcome this opportunity to appear before this Committee to discuss U.S. policy toward Iraq and the entire Persian Gulf region. Before starting, I only wish to note that the views you are about to hear are my own and do not necessarily reflect those of staff members, officers, or trustees of the Brookings Institution.

U.S. policy toward the region of the Persian Gulf has changed more and more often over the years more than any other foreign policy I can think of. Current U.S. policy can be traced back more than half a century. This said, the most useful place to begin to understand how we arrived where we are today is to return to the late 1960s, when Great Britain decided it could no longer sustain its commitments east of Suez.

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Plunging Into The Gulf

The British decision and the challenge it posed to the United States were reminiscent of the decision twenty years earlier when the United States was informed by His Majesty's Government that it could no longer keep its commitments to Greece and Turkey. But the situations could not have more different. Whereas in the 1940s the United States was prepared to assume new global responsibilities--the Marshall Plan and ultimately NATO were the results--in the late 1960s and early 1970s this was not possible. Already overburdened by the war in Southeast Asia, the United States had neither the will nor the ability to fulfill the British role.

The result was a foreign policy in which the United States tried to protect its interests--then, as now, largely oil and gas along with the stability of traditional friends in the area--indirectly and inexpensively. The principal threat was the Soviet Union and Soviet-backed radicalism. The preferred policy instruments were maintaining a modest naval presence in the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean and arms sales, especially to the so-called twin pillars of Iran and Saudi Arabia.

This policy lasted for the best part of a decade, until Iran's revolution effectively removed the chief pillar of American strategy. Thanks to developments both local and global--the war between Iran and Iraq that served to distract and drain the region's two most powerful states as well as the increasing weakness of the Soviet Union--the United States could get by and protect its interests in the region with little additional effort. The principal departure to U.S. policy was a limited tilt toward Iraq--then seen as the lesser of two evils--when it appeared as though Iran was gaining the upper hand in their conflict.

The Iran-Iraq war ended in 1988. Over the next two years, the United States mostly continued its policy of the previous decade, namely, continued military support for Saudi Arabia and other friendly Gulf states, exploration of limited relations with Iraq, and isolation of Iran tempered only by a willingness to talk.

The exploration into the possibilities of building a broader and deeper relationship with Iraq formally ended with its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait, although the U.S. effort had essentially been abandoned months before in reaction to a number of Iraqi statements and actions that demonstrated it was uninterested in becoming a more responsible actor. Desert Shield and Desert Storm marked a major departure in U.S. policy, though, from one of modest and largely indirect U.S. military support of friends to that of major and direct U.S. presence and involvement.

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After the termination of the Gulf War, it was neither desirable nor necessary to maintain a large U.S. military presence in the region. The United States could not afford to devote so large a percentage of its assets to one region. In addition, local governments feared a domestic backlash if such a large and visible U.S. presence remained. Also, Iraq posed much less of a military threat than was the case before the war. The result was that security could be maintained through what might be described as "presence without stationing," namely, some prepositioning of material, regular exercising of visiting U.S. forces, an off-shore naval and air presence, and arms sales to friendly states.

U.S. policy since the Gulf War has been marked by the reality that U.S. relations with the two strongest states of the region--Iran and Iraq--are adversarial. The problem facing the United States is that no combination of friendly local states can offset either. As a result, continued U.S. involvement in the region will be necessary for the foreseeable future to square the circle of strong enemies, weak friends, and vital interests.

The Clinton Administration dubbed its posture "dual containment." The goal was to limit the ability of either Iran or Iraq to threaten U.S. interests in the region and beyond. Still, the phrase is less than ideal. Iran and Iraq pose different threats and call for different responses. Also, limiting their reach (as containment suggests) is not enough. The United States can and should aim for more. Moreover, isolation of Iran and Iraq is increasingly challenged by a number of states whose support is necessary if the policy is to succeed. The result is that "dual containment" gives us a slogan when what we really need is a strategy and sustained efforts on its behalf.

The United States and Iraq

It is now some six years after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and just over five since Kuwait's liberation and the end of Desert Storm. On one level, the United States has fared extremely well. Economic sanctions against Iraq remain in place and for the most part complied with. One can also point to substantial progress in the effort to uncover and eliminate Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. Iraq is in economic trouble and is politically divided. The net result is that Saddam Hussein's Iraq is significantly weaker than it was at the start of this decade, better understood as constituting a dangerous nuisance than an actual strategic threat.

But the glass is also half empty. Saddam Hussein remains in office despite numerous attempts to overthrow him. He has rebuilt the strength of his military, not to where it was before

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the Gulf War, but considerably above where it was when the war ended. France and Russia regularly champion for lifting sanctions--presumably in order to tap Iraq's potential as a market for their exports--while in the Arab world there is growing opposition to sanctions on humanitarian grounds despite the fact that the relevant UN resolutions explicitly include provisions for allowing Iraqi imports of food and medicine.

Recent developments have altered both reality and perceptions. What happened is by now fairly clear. A number of factors--mounting Turkish and Iranian incursions into northern Iraq, a new Islamic-led government in Turkey that was less disposed to cooperating with the Gulf War coalition, a split between the two principal Kurdish factions in northern Iraq and the decision of one to turn to Iran and the other to Baghdad--combined to provide Saddam an opening. In addition, there is reason to believe Saddam was anxious for such an occasion to use his troops, if only to occupy them so that there would be less of an opportunity for disgruntled officers to mount another coup.

Saddam, never one to resist exploiting an opponent's weakness, moved in with some 40,000 troops and numerous plain clothes police and intelligence personnel. In a matter of days he had regained substantial influence in Iraq's north. In so doing, however, he violated UN Security Council Resolution 688, which demands that he end any repression of the Iraqi people, including the Kurds. The Clinton Administration responded indirectly, by using cruise missiles to destroy a number of air defense sites south of Baghdad, by extending the southern No Fly Zone one degree north, and by suspending implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 986 and its allowance of limited Iraqi oil exports.

On balance, Saddam gained more than he lost. Indeed, September 1996 has been Saddam's best month since March of 1991 when he was able to put down the Shia and Kurdish uprisings and deflect attention and opposition stemming from his catastrophic handling of the entire Gulf War. To some extent, these gains were the inevitable consequence of Kurdish infighting and the opportunity it created. But U.S. foreign policy over the past few weeks also came up short.

Several things could and should have been done differently. Two stand out. The first was coalition maintenance. The anti-Saddam consensus had been allowed to weaken. In diplomacy, neglect is almost never benign. The United States had done precious little over the past few years to keep the coalition intact and robust. This applies to Turkey, the Arab governments, the Europeans and Russia. In addition, the lack of U.S. reaction to Turkish and Iranian incursions into northern Iraq only increased Saddam's incentive to act at the same time it increased the likelihood that any such action on his part would be

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understood by his Arab neighbors.

The second principal error involved the use of force itself. The U.S. action--using a few dozen cruise missiles to destroy a number of Iraqi air defense sites--was both too small and too remote. To be sure, there was coalition resistance to using military force against Saddam at this time, a view that reflected a lack of sympathy for the Kurds and concern over Iranian behavior. But the United States will only have a limited number of occasions to use force against Iraq and it must make the most of them. Since any use of force will create unhappiness, any military intervention on our or the coalition's part should be large enough to hurt Saddam militarily and demonstrate his inability to protect his country from continuing pain and humiliation.

Next Steps Vis-a-Vis Iraq

Despite these setbacks, it would be wrong to conclude that the U.S. position is irretrievably damaged. The weakness of the coalition in responding to Saddam's actions inside his country should not be interpreted as the demise of the coalition more generally. A good deal of consensus continues to exist, enough so that it should be possible to keep the sanctions in place and to prevent Iraq from again becoming a strategic threat to his neighbors. What will such a policy take to succeed?

The first priority ought to be to reinvigorate the coalition that won the war against Saddam and has kept the peace since. This means repairing the U.S.-Turkish relationship and consulting closely about how best to deal with future crises in northern Iraq. We should not delude ourselves. It is more a question of "when" than "if" such a crisis will come about. Saddam is a serial prober; at some point he will turn on his new Kurdish friends, in the process triggering a large refugee flow in the direction of the Turkish border. It must thus become a foreign policy priority to continue Operation Provide Comfort, both to avoid suggesting to Saddam that he enjoys a free hand in the north and so that we and the Turkish government are prepared for a new crisis that would require U.S. military use of Turkish bases.

We similarly need to make sure that there is consensus in the region and beyond that Saddam will not be able to mass forces against any of his neighbors as he did in July of 1990 and again in October 1994. If he does, we and others need to strike--and strike hard. More generally, any use of force by the coalition--be it to prevent an attack on Kuwait, respond to state support of terrorism, or punish Iraq for violating UN resolutions or preventing UN weapons inspectors from carrying out their mission--needs to be large enough to hurt Saddam militarily and

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politically.

Such a policy should at a minimum make sure that Saddam does not re-emerge as a strategic threat. This policy also has the potential to create a context where the Iraqi people move against Saddam. Toward that end, the United States needs to do a much better job of articulating just how Iraq would benefit under a different leadership that demonstrated it was prepared to act responsibly. Such a comprehensive overt policy--a mixture of tough sanctions, substantial uses of military force when warranted, and clear public diplomacy--should at a minimum prevent Saddam from breaking out and has the potential to accomplish more.

It is also useful to point out what we want to avoid in the way of policy toward iraq. One trap would be to develop an obsession with Saddam. As I have already said, it is wrong to exaggerate the threat he currently poses. Similarly, it would also be wrong to make his ouster an explicit goal. If we were to do so, every day he survived would be construed as a victory for him. Moreover, we lack the tools to achieve the goal. Our conventional military forces are all but irrelevant to the task, while our intelligence assets are limited in what they can be expected to accomplish. The United States encountered great difficulty in apprehending Manuel Noriega with 20,000 troops on the ground and Panama fully occupied. It is difficult to see how we could undertake and succeed in so ambitious an effort in Iraq.

I also believe we are wise to continue to support Iraq's territorial integrity. I am aware of the arguments of those who disagree--that it would eliminate Saddam and the threat posed by a rogue Iraq, that it would free up the Kurds and Shia. But I fear that the splitting of Iraq would stimulate all sorts of fighting among Iraqis, between Iraqis and their neighbors, and between those neighbors. I also believe both this process and the outcome would benefit Iran, which would then emerge as the single strongest local state. And even if the United States were to conclude otherwise, we would have to confront the reality that none of our Arab friends in the region (nor Turkey) would be disposed to seeing Iraq dismantled.

Toward a Comprehensive Approach for the Region

Success vis-a-vis Iraq will also require a number of other efforts on our part. The first involves intelligence. Iraq and the Persian Gulf more broadly needs to remain a priority for the intelligence community. Open sources cannot possibly carry the burden of either collection or analysis. In particular, the United States will need to develop more human intelligence if it is to have necessary warning and insight into Iraqi behavior.

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The second consideration is military. U.S. ability to deal with a wide range of scenarios is essential. These include deterring and defeating conventional aggression, preventive and preemptive attacks against weapons of mass destruction, punitive strikes against state supporters of terrorism, and interdiction on behalf of sanctions. All of these needs involve Iraq, although several also might be relevant vis-a-vis others, most notably Iran. The point is a simple one, that U.S. diplomacy can only succeed against a backdrop of the availability of military forces and the will to use them. What makes fulfilling this need more difficult than would be the case in other regions is the requirement that our presence not become too large or visible lest it cause as many problems for our friends as it is designed to manage.

Third, U.S. policy toward Iraq has a far better chance of succeeding if U.S. policy toward Iran is effective. The most important proximate goals ought to be to prevent Iranian acquisition or development of weapons of mass destruction and to stop Iranian-sponsored subversion and terrorism. Iran, like the Soviet Union, is a repressive power at home with imperial ambitions and economic feet of clay. It should be our aim to frustrate its reach and exacerbate its economic problems in order to stimulate domestic forces promoting change. An Iran that "broke out" and threatened the region would fundamentally change Arab attitudes and end any support for efforts to oust Saddam or contain Iraq.

As a result, U.S. policy toward Iran must include concerted efforts to deny Iran an unconventional weapons capability; a willingness to use force if there is clear evidence of Iranian support for terrorism; and a clear message to Iran that future incursions into Iraq are unacceptable. We cannot achieve these goals alone, however. For this reason, the United States should consider approaching its friends in Europe and the Asia-Pacific region and propose a structured dialogue with Iran. If our terms were met, then there could be a degree of economic interaction; if not, everyone would agree to hold back.

Fourth, we need to better understand the risks and costs of unilateralism. A strategy against Saddam and Iraq can only succeed if it is supported by others in the region and beyond. This translates into a requirement for far more frequent and senior consultations with governments of the region. The sort of unilateralism demonstrated by the Clinton Administration over the past few weeks is not so much the exercise of leadership as its abandonment. Much the same applies for our policy toward Iran.

Fifth, we need to encourage our friends in the region to undertake reforms that will leave them less vulnerable to revolutionary change. This does not mean hectoring them publicly

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on human rights or calling for elections in the absence of basic elements of civil society, but it does mean privately urging them to carry out limited political and economic reforms that increase political participation and private ownership, reduce the state role in political and economic life, and discourage corruption and excessive state violence. States that are facing unrest at home will prove less able and willing to act against iraq.

Sixth, the United States needs to do more in the realm of energy. We now import approximately half the oil we consume. Although only a modest percentage of U.S. oil comes from the Persian Gulf, the United States is and will be affected directly and indirectly (in the economic sense) by any supply disruption. This argues for continued diversification of supply and reduction in U.S. demand, something that makes sense not only for foreign policy but as regards the trade deficit and the environment.

The good news is that all of these recommendations are feasible. They will, however, take sustained effort. The not so good news is that even if we succeed, we will not solve our problems with Iraq or in the Persian Gulf region more broadly. Indeed, there is no solution. The only thing that is certain is that this part of the world will continue to pose the most difficult challenges for American foreign policy in the years and decades ahead.

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The CHAIRMAN. Let's proceed to Mr. Eisenstadt next.

STATEMENT OF MICHAEL EISENSTADT, WASHINGTON INSTITUTE FOR NEAR EAST POLICY

Mr. EISENSTADT. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for inviting me to address the committee today.

Recent events in Iraq have spurred calls for a reevalauation of United States policy toward Baghdad. Some have advocated a revival of the balance of power in the gulf, using Iraq or Iran to balance off each other and render the United States presence in the region superfluous.

Others have called for the breakup of Iraq, asserting that Iraq is a failed state, an artificial construct that binds together mutually antagonistic communities in a hostile embrace, resulting in instability at home and aggression abroad.

And finally some have called on the United States to stay the course, continuing its policy of containment despite its manifest problems. Today, I would like to attempt a preliminary examination of the efficacy of each approach and outline options for the future.

The balance of power approach: During the 1970's and 1980's, the United States tried to create a balance of power in the gulf in order to maintain regional peace and stability. In the 1970's, the United States built up the Shah as the region's policeman, but these efforts came to grief as a result of the Islamic revolution. During the 1980's, the United States helped indirectly to build up Iraq as a bulwark against Iranian expansionism. However, this probably contributed to Iraq's 1990 decision to invade Kuwait. As a result of this bitter experience, the United States now no longer depends on unreliable, aggressive regional powers to maintain the balance in the region. Rather, since the 1991 gulf war, Washington itself has emerged as the keeper of the regional balance.

Clearly, it would be desirable if the regional parties could maintain a regional balance without a United States presence, and this should be the long-term goal of the United States in the region. In the short term, however, it is unrealistic. Why? Some people for instance have argued that the United States will eventually have to ease sanctions on Baghdad or rehabilitate Iraq to counterbalance an ascendant Iran. This is wrong for several reasons. First, Iran's military buildup is much less rapid and extensive than widely believed. It will be many years before Iran can achieve numerical parity with Iraq.

Second, because the main threats from Iran are nonconventional capabilities, its capacity for subversion and terror, and its naval capabilities, Iraq is not at all well suited to serve as a counterweight to Iran. In the nonconventional arena, this would require rearming Iraq perhaps with nonconventional weapons, thereby undoing what was accomplished by Operation Desert Storm.

Moreover, Iraq can contribute little, if anything, to counter Iranian terror and subversion. Iraq is primarily a land power. In the aftermath of the gulf war, it has no navy to speak of; it is ill suited to serve as a counterbalance to Iran in the naval arena.

Third, Iraq would not be easily manipulated as a counter to Iran and would use its strength to menace the gulf states against which

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it harbors deep resentment for their participation in Desert Storm. On the contrary, the removal of Saddam Hussein is the best way to restrain Iran's freedom to maneuver.

The status quo in Iraq serves Tehran well; Baghdad is militarily contained, it does not threaten Iran and cannot sell its oil freely. Were the regime in Baghdad to change, all of this could change. Thus, the overthrow of Saddam Hussein and his regime would not only offer a way to deal with the threat that Iraq poses to regional security, but would facilitate the containment of Iran.

It would be equally futile to attempt to cultivate Iran as a counter to Iraq. First, simply put, the Iranian and United States interests in the gulf are diametrically opposed. Iran is an antistatus quo power. The United States is a status quo power.

Second, it seems unlikely that the United States and Iran could effect reconciliation any time soon. While the United States remains open, in principle, to establishing a dialog with Tehran, politics in both countries make it unlikely that this will happen.

Furthermore, the military arguments against using Iraq to balance Iran more or less parallel those against using Iran to balance Iraq. The main threats from Iraq are its nonconventional weapons and the threat its ground forces pose to Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. For Iran to serve as a counterweight to Iraq, the United States would have to encourage Tehran's nonconventional weapons programs, a development clearly counter to United States interests in the region, and would have to encourage it to serve as protector of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. There is no reason to believe that Iran wants to play this role or that Kuwait or Saudi Arabia would want Iran to play this role.

As for those who advocate the dismemberment of Iraq, these people argue that the United States would gain from the dismemberment or disintegration of Iraq. According to this line of argument, the disintegration of Iraq would be in the interest of the United States and its allies by ending the threat Iraq poses to the region, but it would also be the humane thing to do from the point of view of the peoples of Iraq and the region. However, there are several problems with this line of argument.

First, it seems unlikely that Iraq will disintegrate on its own if Saddam remains in power. He appears to be getting enough income from authorized and illicit oil sales, plus what he dishes out from his own cash reserves, to retain a firm grip over the areas that the central government controls.

Second, for Iraq to disintegrate, the United States would have to actively pursue this goal by arming Kurdish and Shiite opponents of the regime in the north and south of the country. Washington's allies—Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait—would almost certainly not allow the United States to use their territory for such a venture, nor is there a reason to believe that the effort would produce the desired results.

Third, neither the Iraqi Kurds nor the Shi'a are working for the breakup of Iraq at this time. While Iraq's Kurds may dream of seceding, they recognize that independence would be opposed by all neighboring states and is an unrealistic option at this time. Accordingly, Iraq's Kurds want autonomy in the framework of the Iraqi

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state, while Iraq's Shi'a simply want a political voice commensurate to their preponderant democratic weight.

Fourth, even if Iraq would break up, the largely Sunni center of the country, which would inherit nearly all of Iraq's Armed Forces and military-industrial infrastructure, would try to recreate Iraq by reasserting control in the north and the south of the country to gain control of the vast oil resources and access to the means to bring it to market. Such efforts would likely push the Kurdish and Shiite entities into the arms of local powers such as Iran if only for self-preservation.

In order for the United States to keep Iraq apart, it would have to assume an open-ended commitment to use force against Baghdad to prevent its return to the north and the south, while simultaneously trying to prevent Iranian intervention. As for America's regional allies, those who count most here—Turkey, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia—would probably not be averse to seeing Baghdad return to the north and south, if only to prevent Iran from acquiring greater influence there. They, therefore, probably would not support United States efforts to limit Baghdad's influence to the center of the country.

In sum, the disintegration of Iraq would probably not end the problem of conflict and instability in Iraq, while imposing severe strain on the coalition.

Finally, containment: Containment has proven, at least for now, a useful approach for dealing with the difficult challenges the United States faces in the region, though the contradictions inherent in the policy have proven increasingly difficult to manage with the passing of time. It is now clear that this policy of containment attempted to use economic sanctions to create the necessary conditions for the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, while curtailing his troublemaking potential.

Efforts to overthrow Saddam Hussein have failed. His recent success in Irbil probably restored some of his aura of invincibility for domestic opponents and enhanced his standing among his Armed Forces, making a coup less likely, at least in the near term.

On the other hand, efforts to curtail Iraq's troublemaking potential have been reasonably successful. First, the imposition of a no-drive zone in southern Iraq and extension of the no-fly zone to central Iraq has increased the amount of early warning time available to coalition forces to parry any future threats to Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

Second, the ban on arms transfers to Iraq has prevented it from rebuilding its conventional forces since the war.

Third, the general atmosphere of privation and hardship in Iraq, caused in part by sanctions, has contributed to the widespread demoralization of the Armed Forces. This is a major constraint to Iraq's military freedom of action. Only the Republican Guard—and not all of the divisions in the Republican Guard, maybe three or four—and a few regular divisions could be relied on to stand and fight in the event of a war. Other units would probably suffer massive desertions.

The Armed Forces suffer from a number of shortcomings that inhibit their ability to engage in sustained combat such as poor maintenance, deficiencies in the logistical system, lack of spares, and

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low morale. None of these problems are likely to be rectified as long as sanctions remain in place.

On the other hand, recent events have shown that the containment policy is becoming increasingly difficult to sustain. There is a growing pressure for easing or lifting of sanctions. Second is, fissures in the coalition are increasing. Third, growing tensions in the Arab-Israeli arena could create fertile ground for Iraqi efforts to rally opinion for the lifting of sanctions and create pressures for the reintegration of Iraq into the Arab mainstream.

All of these factors are likely to make it more difficult for the United States to preserve the international coalition and maintain sanctions. This makes the removal of Saddam a more urgent concern than ever before at a time when prospects for success in this endeavor are less favorable than at any time in recent years.

On balance, while the containment policy has limitations and shortcomings which have been clear for all to see, no other approach offers a better way of dealing with the security challenges posed by Iraq and Iran, at least for now.

In light of this assessment, where does the United States go from here? United States policy toward Iraq must aim for a more active containment of Saddam and intensify efforts to oust him from power. The main obstacle to success in earlier efforts to overthrow Saddam has not been a lack of will on the part of the military to get rid of him, but the efficacy of the regime's protective apparatus.

As long as the Republican Guard remain intact and loyal, coup attempts are likely to fail. Such efforts are thus not likely to succeed without a military action by the United States to set the stage for, and to act as, a catalyst for action for Saddam's domestic opponents. This has been the ingredient that has been missing from United States policy up to now and attacks on the Republican Guard, not air defense facilities, are a necessary condition for a successful coup against Saddam.

Thus, the United States must make it clear to Saddam that any further provocations could prompt retaliation against the three or four divisions of the Republican Guard that constitutes the backbone of Saddam's offensive might and the main pillar of his regime. This will not be easy. It might require an operation lasting several days, the use of manned aircraft—thus entailing a degree of risk since the task cannot be accomplished by cruise missiles alone—and the support of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey where United States combat aircraft are based. This, however, is perhaps the only way to have a lasting impact on Iraqi military capabilities and create the conditions under which efforts to topple Saddam and his regime may succeed.

Thank you, sir.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Eisenstadt follows:]

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U.S. Policy Towards Iraq: Balance, Dismember, or Contain?

Statement before the U.S. House of Representatives, National Security Committee
September 26, 1996

by Michael Eisenstadt[1]

Recent events in Iraq have spurred calls for a reevaluation of U.S. policy towards Iraq. Some have advocated a revival of the balance of power approach in the Gulf, using Iraq or Iran to balance off each other, and thereby render the U.S. presence in the region superfluous. Others have called for the breakup of Iraq, asserting that Iraq is a failed state—an artificial construct that binds together mutually antagonistic communities in a hostile embrace, resulting in instability at home and aggression abroad. And finally, some have called on the U.S. to stay the course, continuing its policy of containment, despite its manifest problems. This paper will attempt a preliminary examination the efficacy of each approach and outline possible options for the future.

A New Balance of Power?

During the 1970s and 1980s, the U.S. tried to create a balance of power in the Gulf in order to maintain regional peace and stability. During the 1970s the U.S. built up the Shah as the region's policeman, but these efforts came to grief as a result of the 1978-79 Iranian revolution, with the unintended consequence of bequeathing to the new Islamic Republic a large, modern military. Then, during the 1980s the U.S. helped (indirectly) to build up Iraq as a bulwark against Iranian expansionism. However, the failure of the U.S. to adjust its policy of support for Iraq following the end of the Iran-Iraq War emboldened Iraq, and probably contributed to its 1990 decision to invade Kuwait. Thus, the second attempt to build up a regional power to maintain the regional balance had unintended consequences that resulted in the U.S. fighting its first major war since Vietnam. As a result of this bitter experience, the U.S. now longer depends on unreliable, aggressive regional powers to maintain the balance in the region. Rather, since the 1991 Gulf War, Washington itself has emerged as the keeper of the regional balance of power.

Clearly, it would be desirable if the regional parties could maintain a regional balance without a U.S. presence, and this should be the long-term goal of the U.S. in the region. In the short term, however, it is unrealistic. As long as Persian Gulf oil remains key to America's economic future, and as long as Iraq and Iran are ruled by regimes that harbor aggressive designs toward their neighbors, a policy predicated on establishing a regional balance between Iraq and Iran (other than a balance of weakness—which is the current state of affairs), is unviable.

Why? Some people, for instance, have argued that the U.S. will eventually have to ease sanctions on Baghdad or even rehabilitate Iraq to counterbalance an ascendant Iran. This is wrong, for several reasons. First, Iran's military build-up is much less rapid and extensive than widely believed. The quantitative balance of

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[1] The author is a Senior Fellow at The Washington Institute for Near East Policy. He previously served as an analyst with the United States Army, and the U.S. Air Force Gulf War Air Power Survey (GWAPS), contributing a chapter on Iraqi strategy and planning. He is author of *Like a Phoenix from the Ashes? The Future of Iraqi Military Power* (Washington, DC: The Washington Institute, 1993).

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forces between Iran and Iraq currently favors the latter, and given the slow pace and narrowly focused scope of the Iranian build-up, it will be years before Iran can achieve rough numerical parity with Iraq.

Second, because the main threats from Iran are its nonconventional capabilities, its capacity for subversion and terror, and its naval capabilities, Iraq is not at all well-suited to serve as a counterweight to Iran. In the nonconventional areas, this would require re-arming Iraq—perhaps with nonconventional weapons—thereby undoing what was accomplished by Operation Desert Storm and restoring Baghdad's ability to threaten regional stability. Moreover, Iraq can contribute little if anything to efforts to counter Iranian terror and subversion, which must be addressed through deterrence (by the United States), greater international cooperation in the field of counterterrorism, and the promotion of political participation and economic development in the Middle East. Finally, Iraq is primarily a land power; in the aftermath of the Gulf War, it has virtually no navy to speak of and, due to geography, its access to the Gulf is easily threatened by Iran. Thus, Iraq is ill-suited to serve as a counterbalance to Iran in the naval arena.

Likewise, experience shows that Iraq would not be easily manipulated as a counter to Iran and would almost certainly use its strength to menace the Gulf states—against which it still harbors deep resentment for their participation in Operation Desert Storm. Only the United States can offset the Iranian military threat without actively promoting the revival of Iraqi military power.

On the contrary, the *removal* of Saddam Hussein and his regime is the best way to further constrain Iran's freedom to manouver. The status quo in Iraq serves Tehran well; Baghdad is militarily contained (at least for now), it does not threaten Iran, and it cannot sell its oil freely. Were the regime in Baghdad to change, however, sanctions would probably be relaxed or lifted. Iran would once again have to worry about Iraq as a military threat, about the impact of Iraqi oil sales on its foreign currency earnings, and about the possibility of a *rapprochement* between Iraq and the Arab Gulf states that would further isolate it. Thus, the overthrow of Saddam Hussein and his regime would not only offer a way to deal with the threat that Iraq poses to regional security, but it would further facilitate the containment of Iran.

It would be equally futile to attempt to cultivate Iran as a counter to Iraq. First, simply put, Iranian and U.S. interests in the Gulf are diametrically opposed. Iran is an anti-status quo power, the U.S. is a status quo power. There is no way to square this circle. Second, it seems unlikely that the U.S. and Iran could effect a reconciliation any time soon. While the U.S. remains open, in principle, to establishing a dialogue with Tehran, politics in both countries makes it unlikely that this will happen. The very legitimacy of the Islamic revolution regime in Tehran rests in large part on keeping the U.S. "at bay"—at arms length. And while significant parts of the population likes Americans, and admires the U.S., its values, and what it stands for, many Iranians—particularly among the clerical establishment—continue to regard the U.S. as the "great Satan" and with their supporters they will go to great lengths to prevent the resumption of contacts with the U.S. Anyone advocating renewed contacts with the U.S. can expect to be harshly denounced, and accused of endangering the major achievement of the revolution. In this climate, renewed ties between the U.S. and Iran seem unlikely.

Furthermore, the arguments against using Iraq to balance Iran, more or less parallel those against using Iran to balance Iraq. The main threats from Iraq are its nonconventional weapons and the threat its ground forces pose to Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. For Iran to serve as a counterweight to Iraq, the U.S. would have to encourage Tehran's nonconventional weapons programs (a development clearly counter to U.S. interests in the region), and encourage it to serve as protector of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. There is no reason to believe that Iran wants to play this role, or that Saudi Arabia and Kuwait would want Iran to play this role. Finally,

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Iran would be as difficult to manipulate as Iraq, and rather than use its power to save the upper Gulf states (such as Kuwait and Saudi Arabia), it would use it to menace those of the lower Gulf (Bahrain and the U.A.E.). For these reasons, the U.S. is probably destined to remain the keeper of the Gulf balance for years to come.

Dismember Iraq?

On the other hand, some analysts have advocated that the U.S. would stand to gain by the dismemberment or disintegration of Iraq. According to this line of argument, the disintegration of Iraq would be in the interest of the U.S. and its allies—by ending the threat Iraq poses to the region—but it would also be the humane thing to do, from the point of view of the peoples of Iraq and the region.

From the point of view of U.S. policy, America has no vital interest in the unity of Iraq *per se*. It does have a vital interest in the stability of the Persian Gulf region, and access to the oil resources of the region at reasonable prices. Thus, America's interests in the unity or disintegration of Iraq is relevant only in as far as it impinges on the larger issue of Gulf oil. On this basis, it seems that a case can be made that while Saddam's continued existence in power threatens the oil resources of the region (he attacked Iran's oil producing region in 1980 and burned Kuwait's oil wells in 1990 and could do so again), the breakup of Iraq and turmoil in the oil-rich south of that country could hinder oil exports from that region.

Having said that, it is important to note that while the breakup of Iraq might have some benefits for the U.S. and its allies in the region, there are a number of problems with this line of argument:

First, it seems that Iraq is unlikely to disintegrate on its own if Saddam remains in power. Saddam appears to be getting enough income from authorized and illicit oil sales (100,000-200,000 b/d) plus what he dishes out from his own cash reserves to maintain a firm grip over the areas that the central government now controls, while extending his influence to northern Iraq (as he recently did). It is possible, however, that if Saddam were killed by an assassin or in a coup, turmoil might follow as members of Saddam's family and senior army commanders fight over the succession.

Second—barring such a scenario—for Iraq to disintegrate, the U.S. would have to actively pursue this goal, by arming Kurdish and Shiite opponents of the regime in the north and south of the country, respectively. The U.S., however, refused to do so during the 1991 uprising and since then, and there is no reason to believe that it would do so now—especially since Washington's allies—Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait—would not allow the U.S. to use their territory for such a venture, which they almost certainly would view with horror. Nor is there reason to believe that even such an effort could produce the desired results.

Third, neither the Iraqi Kurds nor the Shi'a are working for the breakup of Iraq. While Iraq's Kurds may dream of seceding, they recognize that independence would be opposed by all neighboring states, and is an unrealistic option at this time. Accordingly, Iraq's Kurds want autonomy in the framework of the Iraqi state, while most of Iraq's Shi'a simply want a political voice commensurate to their preponderant demographic weight.

Fourth, even if Iraq would break up, the largely Sunni center—which would inherit nearly all of Iraq's armed forces and military-industrial infrastructure—would almost certainly try to recreate Iraq by reasserting control in the north and south in order to gain control of the country's vast oil resources and access to the means to bring it to market (i.e. ports and pipelines). Such efforts would likely push the Kurdish and Shiite

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entities into the arms of local regional powers—such as Iran—if only for self-preservation. In order for the U.S. to *keep* Iraq apart, it would have to assume an open-ended commitment to use force against Baghdad to prevent its return to the north and the south, while simultaneously trying to prevent Iranian intervention (although Tehran's reliance on surrogates to do it bidding—such as the Badr Brigades—are likely to stymy these efforts). As for America's regional allies, those who count most here—Turkey, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia—would probably not be averse to seeing Baghdad return to the north and south (if only to prevent Iran from acquiring greater influence there). They therefore probably would not support U.S. efforts to limit Baghdad's influence to the center of the country. The U.S. would find itself in a similar situation to that which it found itself recently when trying to counter Baghdad's efforts to restore its control to Irbil in northern Iraq.

The disintegration of Iraq would therefore probably not end the problem of conflict and instability in Iraq, while imposing severe strains on the coalition. Does the U.S. have the capability and the staying power to impose indefinitely such an outcome against a determined adversary and against the wishes of our allies? Recent experience would seem to suggest that the answer to this question is no.

Active Containment?

Containment has proven, at least for now, a useful approach for dealing with the difficult challenges the U.S. has faced in the region since the 1991 Gulf War, though the contradictions inherent in the policy have proven increasingly difficult to manage with the passing of time. It is now clear that this policy of containment attempted to use economic sanctions to create the necessary conditions for the overthrow of Saddam Husayn, while curtailing his trouble making potential.

Efforts to overthrow Saddam Husayn have failed. The U.S. may have played some role in at least three unsuccessful attempts to foment coups in July 1992, March 1995, and June 1996. The recent conquest of Irbil--base of a CIA operation to overthrow the regime--will probably hamstring such efforts for some time to come. Moreover, Saddam's success in Irbil probably restored some of his aura of invincibility for domestic opponents and enhanced his standing among his armed forces, making a coup less likely, at least in the near term.

On the other hand, efforts to curtail Iraq's trouble making potential have been reasonably successful.

First, the ban on the sale of oil has denied Iraq the funds needed to engage in large-scale smuggling of equipment and technology that could be used to resume large-scale clandestine production of nonconventional weapons (although Iraq's residual capabilities in this area--particularly relating to biological warfare--remain significant).

Second, the ban on arms transfers to Iraq has prevented it from rebuilding its conventional forces by replacing Gulf War losses, modernizing its aging equipment inventory, or acquiring spare parts for damaged equipment

Third, the ban on trade has prevented it from acquiring the spare parts and raw materials needed to restore its military industrial base; as a result, military production remains far below pre-war levels.

Fourth, the imposition of a no-drive zone in southern Iraq and the extension of the no-fly zone to central Iraq have increased the amount of early warning time available to coalition forces to parry any future threats to Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

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Fifth, the general atmosphere of privation and hardship in Iraq caused in part by sanctions has contributed to the widespread demoralization of the armed forces. This is a major constraint on Iraq's military freedom of action. Only the Republican Guard and a few regular divisions could be relied on to stand and fight in the event of a war. Other units would probably suffer massive desertions.

Finally, the armed forces suffer from a number of critical shortcomings that inhibit their ability to engage in sustained combat: poor maintenance, severe deficiencies in the logistical system, a lack of spares, and low morale. None of these problems are likely to be rectified as long as sanctions remain in place.

On the down side, it need be said, that sanctions—though a response to the aggressive policies of Saddam Hussyn and his regime—are imposing severe hardships on the Iraqi people, who are likely to hold the U.S. at least partly responsible. On the other hand, the easing of sanctions would likely help perpetuate Saddam's rule and thus the suffering of the Iraqi people—and perhaps that of other peoples in the region if Saddam again launches military adventures against his neighbors. The moral argument in this case cuts two ways. The national interest argument, however, clearly supports the continuation of sanctions as long as Saddam remains in power, and Iraq is not in compliance with relevant UN resolutions.

Moreover, recent events have shown that it is becoming increasingly difficult to manage the contradictions inherent in America's containment policy.

First, there is growing pressure for the easing or lifting of sanctions by countries—France, Russia, and China—eager to resume trade with Iraq. To help fend off these pressures, the U.S. sponsored the drafting of UNSCR 986 ("food for oil") which would permit the limited sale of Iraqi oil to generate income for food and medicine for the suffering Iraqi people. However, even if arrangements prevent this new income from falling into Saddam's hands, the arrangement will enable him to divert funds now being used to feed his people to underwrite arms smuggling operations and pay off his Republican Guard and security services, thus strengthening him in the short term. Implementation of this resolution was suspended, at least temporarily, after Iraqi forces retook Irbil.

Second, fissures in the coalition are increasing. While the Gulf War coalition was assembled to deal with a specific scenario (threats to Kuwait and Saudi Arabia), and while it is wrong to exaggerate the extent to which the coalition has weakened on the basis of recent events in northern Iraq, there can be no doubt that U.S. freedom of action has been eroded since 1991. For a variety of reasons (for Turkey—the economy, for Saudi Arabia—domestic politics), some of our allies are increasingly wary of the U.S. approach for dealing with Iraq.

Third, growing tensions in the Arab-Israeli arena, if left unresolved (and things look they might get worse before they get better), could create fertile ground for Iraqi efforts to rally Arab opinion for the easing or lifting of sanctions and create pressures for the reintegration of Iraq into the Arab mainstream.

All of these factors are likely to make it more difficult for the U.S. to preserve the international coalition and maintain support for sanctions on Iraq in the coming months. This makes the removal of Saddam a more urgent concern than ever before, at a time that prospects for success in this endeavor are less favorable than at any time in recent years.

Some analysts have stated that the perpetuation of Saddam in power is a U.S. interest, since he is a convenient focus of concern which makes it easier to contain Iraq and to maintain sanctions and preserve the

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coalition. While this may have been true in the past (and that is debatable), it is unlikely to remain so in the future, with pressure to ease or lift sanctions and reintegrate Iraq into the Arab mainstream growing. And while there is no guarantee that any successor to Saddam will be a great improvement, just about any successor is likely to be free of the personal baggage Saddam carries, in terms of his desire to avenge his humiliation and defeat at the hands of the coalition during the 1991 Gulf War. There could be nothing more dangerous for the U.S. and its allies than a rehabilitated, rearmed Saddam. At any rate, any successor regime will be required to meet most--if not all--outstanding UN resolutions concerning weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, the territorial integrity of Kuwait, and human rights. Twenty five years of Ba'athist rule in Iraq (and to a lesser extent six years of sanctions) have brutalized and degraded Iraq's society and political culture in a way that is likely to have unforeseeable consequences for years and decades to come. Iraq is thus likely to pose difficult challenges for U.S. policy for years and perhaps decades to come.

No one policy offers an optimal approach for dealing with these challenges. While the containment policy has limitations and shortcomings which have become clear for all to see, no other approach offers a better way of dealing with the security challenges posed by Iraq and Iran, at least for now.

What Next?

In light of this assessment, where does the U.S. go from here? U.S. policy towards Iraq must aim for a more active containment of Saddam by continuing and intensifying efforts to oust Saddam Husayn from power. The main obstacle to success in earlier efforts to overthrow Saddam has not been a lack of will on the part of the military to get rid of him, but the efficacy of the regime's protective apparatus. As long as the Republican Guard and Special Republican Guard remain intact and loyal, coup attempts are likely to fail. Such efforts are thus not likely to succeed without military action by the U.S. to set the stage for, and to act as a catalyst for action by Saddam's domestic opponents. This has been the ingredient that has been missing from U.S. policy up until now. Attacks on the Republican Guard--not air defense facilities--are a necessary condition for a successful coup against Saddam. Furthermore, given flagging international support for American policy towards Iraq, the U.S. must make every military strike against Saddam count, choosing its targets for maximum effect. The U.S. cannot squander political capital and opportunities by hitting inconsequential targets.

The U.S. must make it clear to Saddam that any further provocations--new efforts to change the status quo in northern Iraq, obstructing UN weapons inspections, additional challenges to the no-fly zones--could prompt retaliation against the 3-4 divisions of the Republican Guard that constitute the backbone of Saddam's offensive might, and the main pillar of his regime. This would not be easy: it might require an operation lasting several days, the use of manned aircraft--thus entailing a degree of risk--since this task cannot be accomplished by cruise missiles alone, and the support of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey--where U.S. combat aircraft are based. (To do this, the U.S. must convince these allies that it is serious about getting rid of Saddam, while Turkey should be given financial inducements for maintaining Operation Provide Comfort and the northern no-fly zone.) This, however, is perhaps the only way to have a lasting impact on Iraqi military capabilities and to create the conditions under which efforts to destabilize Saddam and his regime can succeed.

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The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Perle.

STATEMENT OF RICHARD PERLE, THE AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE

Mr. PERLE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I welcome this opportunity to appear once again before you, this time to discuss American policy with respect to Iraq.

This is no easy task, not least of all, because the United States does not have a policy with respect to Iraq. Indeed, I don't believe we had a coherent policy in place before August 31, and we certainly do not have one now.

If you had asked administration officials to describe their Iraq policy before August 31, they would have said it was a policy of dual containment. But a slogan is not a policy. And if the idea of containing Saddam meant anything, it must surely have meant limiting his influence in Iraq and beyond; influence that has been growing.

At the very least, such a policy would have entailed keeping him at bay in the one area of the country he did not fully control: The northern zone, which had long been denied to him and which was protected by Operation Provide Comfort.

Mr. Chairman, the pretense of an Iraqi policy has now collapsed. Saddam has achieved his biggest victory since the end of Desert Storm. The American objective of containing Saddam has been shattered. The coalition that was formed to oppose him in 1990, has disintegrated.

We have abandoned—betrayed really—betrayed friends who trusted us. We have seen our partners in northern Iraq lined up and executed. The credibility of the United States in a region of unquestioned vital interest has been damaged, perhaps irreparably.

The administration's claim that Saddam's actions would meet with a disproportionate response has turned out to be embarrassingly true. His forceful, widespread, and effective aggression was met by a disproportionately weak, narrow, and ineffective response.

Indeed, this is perhaps the most serious development of all. Despite the massive damage that has been done to the United States position in Iraq, the region, and the world, the administration has responded with feckless pinprick air strikes against repairable targets which are only important when suppressing them is necessary to enable us to mount air operations on a large scale, something the administration never seriously considered.

Against this background, it is an act of monumental nerve, a towering conceit, for the administration to claim that it has achieved a victory in the continuing struggle with Saddam Hussein. As a Member of this House recently observed: The side that is forced to evacuate its people is usually not the victor.

In a transparent attempt to salvage some sense of competence and purpose, both of which have been wholly absent in this sordid episode, the administration has sought to redefine American interests in Iraq. Thus, we have been told that our interests lie to the south, not the north, as if honor and credibility can be lost in one place and found in another.

The idea that enlarging the no-fly zone in the south could somehow compensate for our abject defeat in the north is ludicrous. No

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one outside the White House takes seriously the claim that we have strengthened our position by enjoining Saddam from flying over parts of the south that he controls with his superior ground forces; not even, one hopes, the administration itself.

For however unappealing this disingenuous pretense may be, the possibility that the administration believes its own lies is downright dangerous. We will never even try to fix our Iraq policy if we nurture the illusion that it is not broken. I urge you to bear that in mind as you hear the administration witnesses.

Our interests in the north of Iraq, which was supported by Operation Provide Comfort, included but were not limited to, demonstrate that this opposition to Saddam Hussein was such that he could not control a large part of Iraqi national territory. Moreover, control over the north was, and remains, a necessary precondition for any effective concerted action against Saddam Hussein's regime.

In any case, the United States offered protection to the Kurds of northern Iraq and others, worked with them and sought to reconcile differences among them, supported non-Kurdish opposition groups based in northern Iraq, and promised to deter action against them by making it known to Saddam Hussein that an attack against them would have, and I quote, "serious consequences."

When tested, those interests were abandoned. The promises were broken and the fiction that we never had any interests in the north was created to excuse the failure. The serious consequences turned out to be a few dozen costly cruise missiles delivered against low-cost targets.

In sum, the 7 weeks since Saddam invaded Irbil and other northern cities and towns, have been a disaster for American policy in Iraq that calls into question the underlying competence of the departments responsible for developing and administering administration policy as well as the competence and resolve of the most senior officials in this Government.

Let me just add, Mr. Chairman, that I am critical here not only of this administration, but its predecessor as well. And in this regard, permit me to observe that Mr. Eisenstad has demolished the cliche to which the administration and its predecessor so erringly subscribed; that we should look with equanimity on the continued rule of a thug like Saddam Hussein because, however objectionable he may be, Saddam is necessary to contain Iran.

And I was disappointed to hear my friend Richard Haass repeat that rubbish here this morning. In what sense? In what sense does Saddam Hussein in power inhibit Iran from its support for international terrorism?

In what sense does Saddam's continuation in power diminish Iran's search for nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction? In what sense does Saddam in Iraq diminish Iran's support for radical fundamentalist insurgencies around the world?

The truth is this is a simplistic cliche that was adopted unhappily by the previous administration and has been continued by this. And I urge this committee to examine it in detail, because it won't stand up.

Mr. Chairman, the essential points about Saddam Hussein can be stated simply: He rules Iraq by force without legitimacy and

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over the objections of a broadly representative elected opposition known as the Iraqi National Congress.

He has not abandoned his goal of dominating the gulf and controlling the region's wealth and resources.

He will continue to use force, including terrorism to achieve this purpose.

He has failed to comply, and continues to fail to comply, with a number of U.N. resolutions, including those relating to his weapons of mass destruction.

He will gain, continue to gain, political and economic strength unless we act decisively and in a manner that integrates military and political policies in a coherent whole, to reverse his recent gains in the north.

And finally, no one can exclude the possibility that he will once again use force to seize control over Kuwait.

And we can only ask ourselves whether we could mount an effective opposition again as we did once before.

Given these facts, and the situation we must now confront, what should be the future of United States policy toward Iraq? First, we must not repeat the administration's mistake in acquiescing in a partial lifting of the sanctions that have been in effect since 1990. We should announce immediately that Saddam's action has ended any possibility that the United States would agree to permit even a limited sale of Iraqi oil.

The idea that a lifting of the sanctions was necessary for humanitarian purposes was wrong and shortsighted. You know, and I know, where the revenues from that oil would have wound up and who would have benefited from it. And you know, and we all know, that if Saddam wished to put the resources that now go to rebuilding his military to the mitigation of his humanitarian problems, he could do so and far more effectively than lifting the sanctions would allow.

That decision to lift the sanctions signaled an end to the isolation of Saddam's regime and I believe encouraged him to believe that he could get away with his attack in the north.

Second, we should openly support the Iraqi National Congress as the best hope for a future Iraqi Government that is broadly based and democratic and that would live in peace with its neighbors. We have political options. It is time we looked seriously at implementing them.

We should ask the Iraqi National Congress to reestablish the coalition of Iraqis opposed to Saddam's regime on terms acceptable to all the members of the INC. Until this is accomplished, we should regard the KDP, Barazani's Kurdish faction, as allied with Saddam Hussein against the INC.

It is appalling that Assistant Secretary Pelletreau, who is one of the architects of this disaster, should now be saying that we should welcome, we should welcome Barazani's treachery because now we have a single Kurdish faction with which to deal. If necessary, we should be prepared to use air power and the supply of military equipment to protect the coalition of the INC.

Third, future actions taken in response to unacceptable behavior by Saddam Hussein must be aimed at the Republican Guard and the secret police, Saddam's elite forces and the instrument by

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which he retained power, not at isolated radar sites that can be quickly reestablished.

Fourth, we should no longer consider that Saddam Hussein is entitled to the respect accorded the legitimate head of a sovereign state. By his actions, including the execution of unarmed civilians in early September and his wanton disregard for U.N. resolutions, he has lost any claim to the normal trappings of sovereignty. Instead, we should seek as a matter of priority to obtain an indictment at the Hague for his many war crimes.

Fifth, the Congress, this committee one would hope, should launch an independent investigation with eventual public hearings on the development and implementation of American policy toward Iraq. All of the Government departments responsible for the debacle should be scrutinized with respect to substance and procedure at whatever level of detail is necessary to establish responsibility. It is time that we looked seriously at major failures of these proportions, because they will continue until we explore and understand how they come about.

Mr. Chairman, I hope the committee will forgive the tone of outrage that I have failed—I knew I would fail—to suppress in making these remarks. But following the administration's shameful policy toward Bosnia, which left thousands dead who believed they were assured safety, the magnitude of this latest failure, the human cost of the abandonment of promises on which people, now dead, had relied, and the damage to our honor and our interests, I find it hard to be dispassionate and harder still to abide the lies and deceit with which it is being explained away.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Perle.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Perle follows:]

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STATEMENT OF RICHARD PERLE

NATIONAL SECURITY COMMITTEE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

September 26, 1996

Mr Chairman, I welcome this opportunity to appear once again before you, this time to discuss American policy with respect to Iraq.

This is no easy task, not least of all because the United States does not have a policy with respect to Iraq. I don't believe we had a coherent Iraq policy in place before August 31; and we certainly do not have one now.

If you had asked Administration officials to describe their Iraq policy before August 31, they would have said it was a policy of "dual containment." But a slogan is not a policy. And if the idea of containing Saddam meant anything it must surely have meant limiting his influence in Iraq and beyond. At the very least such a policy would have entailed keeping him at bay in the one area of the country he did not fully control: the northern zone which had long been denied to him and which was protected by Operation Provide Comfort.

Mr. Chairman, the pretense of an Iraqi policy has now collapsed. Saddam has achieved his biggest victory since the end of Desert Storm. The American objective of containing Saddam has been shattered. The coalition that was formed to oppose him in 1990 has disintegrated. We have abandoned--betrayed, really--friends who trusted us. We have seen our partners in northern Iraq lined up and executed. The credibility of the United States in a region of unquestioned vital interest has been damaged, perhaps irreparably. The Administration claim that Saddam's actions would meet with a "disproportionate" response turned out to be embarrassingly true: his forceful, widespread and effective aggression was met by a disproportionately weak, narrow and ineffective response.

Indeed, this is perhaps the most serious development of all. Despite the massive damage that has been done to the U.S. position in Iraq, the region and the world, the Administration has responded with feckless pinprick air strikes against repairable targets which are only important when suppressing them is necessary to enable us to mount air operations on a large scale, something the Administration never seriously considered.

Against this background it is an act of monumental nerve, a towering conceit, for the Administration to claim that it has achieved a victory in the continuing struggle with Saddam Hussein. As a member of this House observed, the side that is forced to evacuate its people is usually not the victor.

In a transparent attempt to salvage some sense of competence and purpose--both of which have been wholly absent in this sordid episode--the Administration has sought to re-define American interests in Iraq. Thus we have been told that our interests lie to the south, not the north--as if honor and credibility can be lost in one place and found in the other. The idea that enlarging the "no fly" zone in the south could somehow compensate for our abject defeat in the north is ludicrous. No one outside the White House takes seriously the claim that we have strengthened our position by enjoining Saddam from flying in parts of the south he controls with his superior ground forces, not even, one hopes, the Administration itself. For however unappealing this disingenuous pretense may be, the possibility that the Administration believes its own lies is downright dangerous. We will never even try to fix our Iraq policy if we nurture the illusion that it is not broken.

Our interests in the north of Iraq, which was supported by Operation Provide Comfort,

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included, but were not limited to, demonstrating that the opposition to Saddam Hussein was such that he could not control a large part of Iraqi national territory. Moreover, control over the north was--and remains-- a necessary precondition for any effective concerted action against Saddam Hussein's regime. In any case, the United States offered protection to the Kurds of northern Iraq, worked with them and sought to reconcile differences among them, supported non-Kurdish opposition groups based in northern Iraq and promised to deter action against them by making it known to Saddam Hussein that an attack against them would have "serious consequences." When tested, these interests were abandoned, the promises were broken and the fiction that we never had any interests in the north was created to excuse the failure. The "serious consequences" turned out to be a few dozen costly cruise missiles delivered against low cost targets. In sum, the seven weeks since Saddam invaded Irbil and other northern cities and towns have been a disaster for American policy in Iraq that calls into question the underlying competence of the departments responsible for developing and administering Administration policy as well as the competence and resolve of the most senior officials of this government.

Mr. Chairman, the essential points about Saddam Hussein can be simply stated:

- He rules Iraq by force, without legitimacy, and over the objections of a broadly representative, elected opposition known as the Iraqi National Congress.
- He has not abandoned his goal of dominating the Gulf and controlling the region's wealth and resources.
- He will continue to use force, including terrorism, to achieve this purpose.
- He has failed to comply with several United Nations Resolutions, including those relating to his weapons of mass destruction.
- He will gain political and economic strength unless we act decisively, and in a manner that integrates military and political policies in a coherent whole, to reverse his recent gains in the north.
- No one can exclude the possibility that he will once again use force to seize control over Kuwait.

Given these facts and the situation we must now confront, what should be the future of U.S. policy toward Iraq?

First, we must not repeat the Administration's mistake in acquiescing in a partial lifting of the sanctions that have been in effect since 1990. We should announce immediately that Saddam's action has ended any possibility that the United States would agree to permit even a limited sale of Iraqi oil. The idea that a lifting of the sanctions was necessary for humanitarian purposes was wrong and short-sighted. It signaled an end to the isolation of Saddam's regime and, I believe, encouraged him to believe that he could get away with his attack on the north.

Second, we should openly support the Iraqi National Congress as the best hope for a future Iraqi government that is broadly based and democratic and that would live in peace with its neighbors.

We should ask the INC to re-establish the coalition of Iraqis opposed to Saddam's regime on

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terms acceptable to the membership of the INC. Until this is accomplished, we should regard the KDP as allied with Saddam Hussein against the INC. The INC still holds territory in northern Iraq. If necessary, we should be prepared to use air power and the supply of military equipment to protect it.

Third, future actions taken in response to unacceptable behavior by Saddam Hussein must be aimed at the Republican Guard and the secret police, Saddam's elite forces and the instruments by which he retains power.

Fourth, we should no longer consider that Saddam Hussein is entitled to the respect accorded the legitimate head of a sovereign state. By his actions, including the execution of unarmed civilians in early September and his wanton disregard for United Nations resolutions, he has lost any claim to the normal trappings of sovereignty. Instead, we should seek, as a matter of priority, to obtain an indictment at the Hague for his many war crimes.

Fifth, the Congress should launch an independent investigation with eventual public hearings on the development and implementation of American policy toward Iraq. All of the government departments responsible for the current debacle should be scrutinized with respect to substance and procedure at whatever level of detail is necessary to establish responsibility.

Mr. Chairman, I hope the Committee will forgive the tone of outrage that I have failed to suppress in making these remarks. But following the Administration's shameful policy toward Bosnia, which left thousands dead who believed they were assured safety, the magnitude of this latest failure, the human cost of the abandonment of promises on which people, now dead, had relied and the damage to our honor and our interests--I find it hard to be dispassionate and harder still to abide the lies and deceit with which it is being explained away.

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The CHAIRMAN. Thank you gentlemen.

I just have one sum-up question to our witness this morning. I don't know if I have to ask it of Mr. Perle. I think he was pretty straightforward in his remarks, but I would just like to assess the overall situation in Iraq from the standpoint of Saddam Hussein's strength coming out of this whole episode. Is he stronger now or weaker now than before?

Mr. Haass.

Mr. HAASS. Mr. Chairman, I would say unfortunately he is clearly stronger as we meet on September 26 than, say, he was on August 26. He has regained an awful lot of influence, if not absolute control in the north. He has gained a lot of public appeal in the country and the region; face, if you will.

Clearly the coalition is not nearly as strong as it was for any scenario involving developments within Iraq, though I think also it is very easy to exaggerate how much he has gained.

So let me end my answer by saying it is not, though, all dark. I think the coalition remains fairly robust for scenarios involving Iraqi threats to Kuwait or Saudi Arabia. I also think that there is still a chance that we could bring about Turkish cooperation for scenarios that involved a large number of Kurdish refugees. I think that Saddam is objectively weaker militarily today than he was 5 years ago.

Certainly at the time before the gulf war. He has reconstituted to some extent, but I wouldn't exaggerate it. Very few of his divisions are clearly loyal. So, yes, he is stronger than he was a month ago, but I, for one, would not exaggerate it nor would I feel that our options at this point are hopeless or anything like that.

Mr. EISENSTADT. I agree. Basically, we have to look at this as one battle in an ongoing struggle. While we might have setbacks, perhaps Saddam continued the struggle after his defeat and has made some gains recently, but I think we have to look at this as a long-term struggle and not be flustered by temporary setbacks and have the long-term game in mind and plunge forward.

Mr. PERLE. I would only say I would much rather that we be flustered than oblivious to what has happened.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Mr. Dellums.

Mr. DELLUMS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I have several questions. I know that in the body politic it is a very easy strategy. It is almost nonintellectual, to personalize and demonize issues that go beyond personalities.

Mr. Haass, you indicated let's not be obsessed with Saddam Hussein; yet in the opening remarks of the chair, in the testimony of all of you, Saddam Hussein, Saddam Hussein, and not one person gathered in this room, in my opinion—if you can, I will be shocked and surprised—can guarantee that whatever the alternative to that will indeed be better.

The assumption is that is better. You can't predict, doctor. So it would seem to me that to shape foreign policy on the notion of demonizing and personalizing it seems to me is wrongheaded.

You know, we play the Gingrich game, the Clinton game, the Saddam Hussein game, as opposed to coming together as a group of people to really grapple substantively with incredible, almost in-

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tractable problems and I think we need to move beyond that. I would like you to comment on that.

Second, I listened very carefully to the discussion with respect to the coalition. The question that needs to be addressed with respect to the coalition is why wasn't the coalition strong? Was it not strong because we fired missiles or was it not strong because you couldn't gather greater support for more military action.

Is Saddam Hussein now, given your assertions, stronger now because of what we did or what he did? He moved. He got the hell out of the way. The point there is that we need to address those issues very cleanly and that has not been brought up. I think it needs to be discussed. Again, first, this demonizing and personalizing; how do we move past that to challenge each other to a higher order of understanding. Second, let's address why the coalition is not strong.

Third, Mr. Haass suggested that multilateral diplomacy may provide an avenue to induce cooperation and stability in the region. In the context of the post-cold-war world, isn't this the only real course to reach an enduring solution to the problems we face? Isn't that really at the end of the day the only real approach to it as opposed to the demonizing, the personalizing, let's overthrow, let's do whatever. These, in my opinion, are cold war ideas dragged into a new era in world history.

Mr. Perle, I would like to come directly to you. I thought earlier, Mr. Perle, and I have had interesting back and forth. I am too tired today, but I will get off this one question. It is easy, incredibly easy to say what we should have done. We should have done more, we should have done different than the administration. Easy. Euphemistically particularly we call it Monday morning quarterbacking, very easy. Other than unilateral war by the United States, what could have been done differently and at what cost to the coalition?

So I appreciate your remarks with respect to what coulda, woulda, shoulda, as my grandmother used to say, but what could have been done? Short of unilateral war, what else would you have done and at what cost to the coalition?

So to summarize, what about the demonizing and personalizing? How do you guarantee that on the other side of that you get something better? What are the real questions with respect to why Saddam Hussein is stronger now and the coalition was weak? Was it because of what we did or because people did not want to expand war? That is an important issue that we need to deal with.

I have already addressed my issue to Mr. Perle. And finally, Mr. Haass suggests that we come together on a multilateral basis to communicate with people. Isn't that at the end of the day the only real way we do it, or do we end up unilaterally moving around the world waging war, death, and destruction, at a time when we desperately need to communicate?

Mr. Haass, you said we need multilateral communication with Iran. As I understand Mr. Eisenstadt, he said the politics of both countries are such that you can't communicate. Those are two different points. Maybe we don't try to do it on a unilateral basis. Maybe we do it on a multinational basis. Those are the kind of

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questions that I would like to see you respond to and I will listen carefully and take notes.

Let's go with demonizing, personalizing, and what does that really do and can you guarantee differences when you use that as the framework and then we will go from there.

Mr. HAASS. Let me just respond briefly to that. When I say we should not get obsessed with Saddam Hussein, I am trying to say I don't think we ought to make his removal an explicit goal of American foreign policy which no one should read that to understand that I am in any way against his removal. We and the people of Iraq and every person in the region would be far better off if he were to go.

Mr. DELLUMS. Why do you assert that?

Mr. HAASS. I think it is a mistake for the United States to make explicit goals that it can't carry out. I don't want to give people the sense that we are failing every day he survives. I take your point. There is no guarantee about what comes after Saddam. There could be messy scenarios and it is even possible to imagine what you might describe as Saddamism without Saddam. One might imagine other fellows from the same town he comes from in Iraq coming to power. It is unlikely that he would be succeeded by some Iraqi Thomas Jefferson.

That said, it is also unlikely that anyone in Iraq could enter power and have anything remotely approaching his degree of control and authority. He has now had roughly two decades to amalgamate authority. Without putting him on the couch and talking about his peculiar psychological and pathological behavior, I would say that it is unlikely we would have someone who would have exactly his characteristics and more important, it is extremely unlikely that anyone could act them out even if they were so inclined.

It has taken time for him to build up all the mechanisms of power. So I think there is a good case for saying that even taking your point that what follows him may not be wonderful. It would clearly, I believe, be less bad, and second, it would begin the process of political change and I think that is what we want to see in Iraq. I don't know any other way to get from here to there without first seeing this man out of power.

Mr. EISENSTADT. The only thing I could add to that is that I see Saddam burdened by a lot of personal baggage. He lost the gulf war. He wants revenge against the Arab gulf States as well as the United States for his defeat. I think the worst thing that could happen for United States policy is for him either to remain in power and perhaps emerge strengthened and kind of triumphant.

I think he has a tendency, that would kind of give range to his worst kind of instincts. Once he is on a roll he loses his sense of proportion and I think it is only a matter of time before we will be involved in another crisis with him. So again, because of the personal baggage, a successor might be bad, but I think it is unlikely that a successor will embody the combination of traits that makes Saddam such bad news for the region.

The bottom line is, anyhow, we have basic interests engaged in the gulf. We are in there for the long haul whether physically or whether—we are going to have some kind of role there, and any

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successor regime will have to meet the same criteria that the current regime has to meet in terms of meeting U.N. resolutions.

You can either do it with Saddam and once a year deploy forces to the region, be engaged in an occasional crisis or there is a chance that a successor won't be as willing to test the limits and thinks it will result in a less tense situation in the region. I think it is a gamble worth taking.

Mr. PERLE. I would like to try to answer your question, Mr. Dellums. If I might say, first, and this is in part responsive to your question, too, I disagree emphatically with my friend, Richard Haass, that it would be unwise to make explicit policy of the United States that Saddam should go because we are not guaranteed that we can do that or do it quickly. That seems to me almost a total abdication of leadership.

We may not be able to do it quickly, but to fail to embrace an objective simply because you are not assured of success guarantees that the objectives we do embrace will always be the easy ones, and I think we would have a galvanizing political effect if we were straightforward about this, and I was appalled to hear the President waffling on the question of whether Saddam's continued tenure is tolerable or not.

As to the demonization of Saddam, I don't think any of us have said anything about Saddam that fails to do him justice, that portrays him as worse than he really is. It would be hard to imagine a more brutal, murderous tyrant. And when faced with someone like Saddam, I think we ought to be clear about who we are dealing with because policies based on the notion that we are dealing with a Head of State like other Heads of State are certain to fail. We have to be realistic about the nature of our opponent in this case.

Why was the coalition not stronger? Because it wasn't led. It is a coalition, the coalition we are talking about is broadly speaking NATO and our friends in the Arab world, and when the United States fails to lead, in Europe we do not get support. This has its origins and I am reminded of it looking at Les Aspin's portrait there, in an early administration approach to our allies to our coalition partners on Bosnia.

You remember the Secretary of State was sent to Bosnia to explain the President's policy of lifting the arms embargo and using air strikes to contain Serb aggression. He had campaigned on a pledge to do that, and when the French and the British expressed reservations about it, we abandoned that policy and with it any claim to leadership, and it has been downhill since then. Never in the history of the North Atlantic Alliance has an administration so failed to lead as this one and our credibility is at an all time low.

Moreover, we gave every reason for our allies to believe that we were not prepared to make a serious response, and we will not be followed unless we are determined ourselves.

On the question of Sunday morning quarterbacking, my remarks this morning are not the first time I have commented on what should be done in Iraq either publicly or privately to administration officials, and I don't think I would feel as confident in saying what I did if I had not urged long before Saddam moved against

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the north that we do the things I indicated in the list of measures that I think we should now adopt.

I have said those things in the past publicly. I have written articles to that effect and I have discussed those issues with senior officials of the administration. That they failed to adopt those measures, I think, is in large part responsible for the situation we now find ourselves in.

Mr. DELLUMS. With all due respect, though, your final answer was not complete, because I said at what cost to the coalition. You have a point-by-point statement there. At what price to the coalition to do the things that you pointed out?

Mr. PERLE. That is a fair question and there are elements of the policy I propose that would be objected to by some members of the coalition. But until we seek to lead the coalition, there will be no coalition, and I believe that at the end of the day we would emerge with a stronger coalition by insisting on policies that they may not find terribly congenial than by abandoning any claim to leadership, which is what I think we have now done. They won't all follow us. But if we take those actions that will be universally acclaimed, we will find ourselves as weak and ineffective as the British and the French in Bosnia or the French in this most recent situation.

We have to be prepared to sit down with our allies and say this is important to us, gentlemen, and we are going to proceed along these lines, and we hope we will proceed in concert as a coalition, but if we can't proceed in concert, then we will proceed alone. Unless we are prepared to do that, we will never move the coalition.

Mr. DELLUMS. If you were to go down to one last question that you didn't respond to was Mr. Haass' assertion that multilateral diplomacy may at the end of the day provide the kind of inducement for cooperation and stability in the region, I assert that at the end of the day isn't this the only real option that we have?

Mr. PERLE. Again, I think that the ability to do things on a multilateral basis depends ultimately on our willingness to do them unilaterally, if necessary. So I am very much in favor of doing things with allies and I think we should work with determination to maintain good alliances.

We do that in part by recognizing the concerns of allies across a broad spectrum of issues. For example, if you want the British to cooperate with you on that tough situation, maybe you don't invite Jerry Adams to the White House. If you want the Turks to be there when you need them, maybe you don't deny them the military equipment they need for their own defense.

We have a policy that ignores and in some cases even punishes our allies for trivial reasons, and sometimes to achieve shallow political purposes, and when it is important we can't always count on them because they haven't had the treatment from us that would encourage them to acquiesce in our preferences when we have important purposes to serve.

Mr. DELLUMS. Thank you for your response.

Mr. EISENSTADT. I would say that the recent events, I think, highlight the fact that the coalition is scenario-specific. It was formed initially to deal with aggression toward Kuwait and Saudi Arabia and the apparent lack of our allies' willingness to allow us to use combat aircraft bases in Saudi Arabia or Turkey shows that

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there is a lack of consensus on the issue of northern safe haven, and it shows, I think, that some work needs to be done in repairing this consensus. So clearly, I would endorse the statement before that.

We have to do a lot more, pay more attention to Turkey, keep them on board, keep operation provide comfort, maintain access to Insulic for patrolling the no-fly zone in the north, but if Saddam were to move against Kuwait or Saudi Arabia I have no doubt that the coalition would coalesce very quickly.

So I would just say, I think we are limited in our response against Saddam's movement to Irbil by the fact there was no consensus. We did act unilaterally, which was, I think, appropriate. The only other thing we could have done, which we didn't do, aside from target selection, which I had my own problems with was I think to use naval aviation, but the problem is aircraft carriers don't carry a lot of strike aircraft. They are short-legged.

There are problems with hitting targets in the north of the country. So I think we had a limited range of options or dealing with the targets in the north near Irbil as long as Turkey was not on board, which is why Turkey is critical.

Mr. HAASS. By the time we got to this crisis, our options were significantly limited. I would have used more force against more visible targets, but that is beside the point. The fact that we didn't have the basing access that we needed to launch serious military efforts was the problem already, and that comes from neglect. You can't begin a policy of consultations when the crisis comes upon you. That is where we should have been over the past 3½ years. To be blunt, this should have been a higher priority than basically cajoling the Syrians to accept the Israeli offer of the Golan Heights.

This is part of a larger problem of an administration that has not taken consultation seriously. When people have not spent the time dealing with the anti-Saddam coalition, have not spent the time dealing with the anti-Iran coalition, have not spent the time thinking about China or Russia, but have essentially chosen more often than not either particular regional negotiations like the Middle East or Northern Ireland or certain humanitarian issues, they have not invested sufficiently in our major relationships.

Once situations like this come about then we find it is too late to call upon those relationships. The damage has been done, the coalitions or the alliances have been allowed to decay, and the crisis happens and we essentially find our responses terribly limited.

Mr. DELLUMS. I thank all three of you gentlemen. I appreciate your responses.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Bartlett.

STATEMENT OF HON. ROSCOE G. BARTLETT, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM MARYLAND

Mr. BARTLETT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman for convening this meeting and thanks to the witnesses for their thoughtful and insightful testimony.

Whatever the reason that we went into Iraq this last time I am concerned about a public perception. If we had a vital national security interest for going in, I think that should have been stated and that should have been the basis for going in. It was not.

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The reason that I heard stated was that Saddam Hussein had violated a U.N. resolution and therefore we were going in to punish him for doing that. Is it not dangerous to set a precedent where one member of the United Nations can determine that another member of the United Nations has violated a U.N. resolution without any action by the United Nations itself and then to go in and start bombing that nation? I am concerned about the justification given for this attack. Do I have a reason to be concerned?

Mr. PERLE. Could I suggest, Congressman Bartlett, that what is more dangerous than choosing unilaterally to enforce U.N. resolutions is the excessive emphasis we place on U.N. resolutions when we had ample geopolitical justification for doing a great deal more than we actually did.

Instead of invoking U.N. resolutions, we should have made it plain that we considered Saddam's action to threaten vital interests to the United States and it is for that reason that we should have taken decisive action. If you are going to act on the basis of U.N. resolutions, you are more likely to design anemic responses of the sort that in fact resulted.

Mr. BARTLETT. In your judgment why did we not cite a national security interest rather than this violation of U.N. resolution for our actions?

Mr. PERLE. Because I don't think the people we pay to make those judgments understand the situation. I really don't think they are on top of this issue.

Mr. HAASS. I would say that we had two justifications for doing not simply what we did, but for doing more if we had so decided. One was, as you suggest, violation of Security Council Resolution 688——

Mr. BARTLETT. The Security Council determined that their resolution had been violated. How can any one member determine that a U.N. resolution has been violated and then start bombing another member of the United Nations? That seems to me to be a predicate for chaos.

Mr. HAASS. All along over the last 5 or 6 years the United States and coalition members have acted pursuant to U.N. resolutions. Not every U.N. resolution has a clause in it and I don't think that basically requires going back to the U.N. Security Council.

Indeed, I wouldn't want to do it. You are concerned about one country perhaps acting on its own interpretation. I would be more concerned about a single country having a veto over our ability to act when we thought our national interests were at stake.

At the end of the day, I think there are limits to how much one can take a legal approach to these things, and I think one has to say what we did was legitimate in the court of public opinion, domestically and internationally; that we think that a use of force in this case was warranted. I think if one gets into a narrow legal sort of battle, while we can justify it on those terms I would be concerned about establishing that as the only basis on which the United States could act in this or other situations.

Mr. BARTLETT. I wasn't arguing whether or not what we did was appropriate. I was arguing about the justification stated for doing it. If we had a vital national interest at stake, should we not have

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stated that and would not that have been adequate justification for going in?

Why do we have to start down what I consider is a dangerous path of one U.N. member deciding unilaterally that another has violated the treaty and then start bombing them? That seems to me to set the stage for chaotic conditions later.

Mr. HAASS. I would think that there are two reasons, one dealing with the resolution and one dealing with the broader problem of Saddam's actions, that one had to take a larger look at this rather than be narrow. I would point out that an awful lot of things go on that are pursuant to U.N. resolutions, including Operation Provide Comfort, including Operation Southern Watch, that all of these steps were instituted 5 to 6 years ago by the coalition of which the United States is the leading member pursuant to those resolutions, so this is something we have been doing all along in Iraq, not something new. I think it remains the best and realistic way of maintaining stability there.

Mr. BARTLETT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Skelton.

STATEMENT OF HON. IKE SKELTON, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM MISSOURI

Mr. SKELTON. Thank you, and I welcome you gentlemen to our committee. Mr. Haass, I was going to ask you how to keep the anti-Saddam Hussein coalition together, but Mr. Dellums has already discussed that. My question in that regard is how should we treat the United States-Turkey relationship, which evidently was a subnote under that. Also Mr. Haass, you indicated we didn't use enough force. How much force should we have used?

Mr. Perle, a question for you, sir. How should we have treated things differently in the north without the use of ground troops?

Mr. HAASS. Congressman, on the United States-Turkey relationship, I would think the priority right now ought to be, one, to start paying it a lot more attention. Second, I think we ought to make the extension of Provide Comfort, which comes up in several months, a major priority.

I can't think of a worse signal to send to Saddam than the winding up of that operation. He would think we had lost all interest in the north and any capacity to act there. I think in order to do that we are probably going to have to engage broader concerns of the Turkish Government, and it is going to have to be a much broader set of consultations.

Turkey has been ostracized by the European Union. It often gets the back of the hand of this body when it comes to questions of aid or symbolic statements, and that is a relationship that has suffered as a result.

My hunch is, though, there is still an opportunity where there is an overlap in United States-Turkish interests, which is the avoidance of a massive refugee flow up north. Turkey does not want to see a replay of the situation that we saw in the spring of 1991. So I think there is a possibility that we can build arrangements not simply for the extension of Provide Comfort, but for certain types of contingency planning if, and I am afraid, when that

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scenario develops, the day after Saddam decides to turn on Mr. Barazani, which he is likely to do.

The question of where I would have used more force, we discussed it to some extent. I would have gone after targets that were militarily meaningful and that were visible. The problem with what we did is that they were neither militarily all that meaningful and they were certainly invisible. They were too remote. Because what we want to do any time we use force against Iraq is we want to weaken Iraq militarily, but we also want to humiliate. We also want to send the psychological and political message that so long as Saddam Hussein runs that country, not only can he not defend it, but people in Iraq will pay a price for his being there. And the people who will pay the most direct price are the military, which has the advantage of these are the people in the best position to, hopefully, move against him.

So I think any use of force, which we will take some heat for in the coalition, if we are going to take heat for it, I would say we might as well get something for it, in for a penny, in for a pound, so whenever we use force it ought to be enough to accomplish some good, since we know we are going to be punished, if you will, diplomatically for the exercise.

Mr. PERLE. Congressman Skelton, I believe we had options available to us without the use of ground power that could have made a significant difference, military options. We should have assisted our friends in the north to develop a capability to deal with an incursion of this kind by themselves. Had they been better armed and better equipped, they might well have been able to deal with Saddam's tanks, and it was the armor that made the difference.

I would not have hesitated to consider, and there are technical questions here, but to consider the use of the B–2 which without dependence on overseas facilities could have delivered very sizable bomb loads against significant targets. And the targets need not all have been in the north, although it would have been highly desirable to go after the armor that was the immediate menace. The targets could have been elsewhere in Iraq, targets of value to Saddam Hussein, such as the Republican Guard bases from which the aggression was launched.

But the worst possible response, it seems to me, is a response that is sufficient to annoy our friends and allies, but inadequate to impress Saddam Hussein and that is what we ultimately chose, inexplicably, to do.

Mr. SKELTON. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Hefley.

Mr. Bateman.

STATEMENT OF HON. HERBERT H. BATEMAN, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM VIRGINIA

Mr. BATEMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the witnesses for a very stimulating morning.

I am very taken with the expression that our response to Saddam Hussein's activities in the north was indeed disproportionate. It seems to me it was extremely disproportionate. I am more interested, though, in something that you have not spent as much time on as I think would be useful, and that is at least my understand-

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ing that Saddam Hussein has been virtually totally uncooperative with the U.N. inspection groups that are supposed to be monitoring his military capability and most especially dealing with chemical, biological and nuclear weapons.

If he has indeed obstructed their efforts, delayed and obfuscated, prohibited them in a timely manner from entering various facilities, it seems to me we should have been reacting a great deal more strongly to those considerations than we have to date, and that perhaps he needs to be on notice that each and every time there is any obstruction of access to any location, it becomes a target which we will strike because of the denial of an opportunity to verify whether or not they are in violation of things which are contrary to our very strong national security interests.

Do you have any comments about that aspect beyond what you have already said?

Mr. EISENSTADT. I would agree that it was a mistake. There were a number of cases where there was obstruction going back several months now where there was no action taken. I think it was a mistake and has possibly created a situation where I think Saddam perhaps felt he could move in the north unchallenged.

I think it would be unwise to hit the sites we are trying to get access to. It is better to hit other sites in order to gain access to the sites that we want to observe, simply because it is best not to destroy the files and documents that we are trying to get access to. That is the only thing that I would say with regard to that comment. I agree there is a need for a more vigorous response to obstruction in that area.

Mr. HAASS. I would only add that, again, we are not totally unitary agents there. The teams doing the inspections, the U.N. Special Commission by definition is a U.N.-sponsored entity, which I think has done an extraordinarily good job against all odds in difficult conditions.

The only thing I am confident of is that they have not completed their work. Although you never know how much you don't know the pattern of behavior strongly suggests that there are still an awful lot of things being hidden. So I would want to work out a relationship with them, which is something we tried to do when I was in the government, where we support them and our willingness to use force is orchestrated with their desires to inspect in a way that ultimately we support their efforts rather than create problems. At the end of the day, we want to create problems for Iraq, not with ourselves and our relationship with UNSCOM and what it does.

Mr. BATEMAN. A further area is the situation in the north that unfolded in late August into September with the dispute among the Kurdish factions that offered to Saddam Hussein at least the excuse of being invited in by one faction and his successful military operation there. Did we drop the ball? Were there things that we could and should have done to avoid this conflict between the two Kurdish factions which procured the scenario that made it attractive for Saddam Hussein to move?

Mr. PERLE. Could I suggest that quite apart from what I am about to say, that it would be useful for the committee to have a closed session on this subject and to invite people with detailed

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knowledge of what was going on in the north and our activities in relation to that.

I think you should ask those questions and I think you should ask them in sworn testimony. My answer to the question is, we did indeed drop the ball, that decisions had to be made on a number of occasions over the last year, even more, about what we would do in order to support a reconciliation among the two principal Kurdish factions and sound advice as to the way it was either rejected or where promises were made, they were not implemented.

I think the result of that was the action ultimately taken by Barazani, which I in no way wish to excuse, but I think we could have prevented this and a skillful diplomatic and political effort would have prevented it.

Mr. BATEMAN. Is there a contrary view?

Mr. HAASS. I would say clearly it was not a diplomatic success. Whether it was something that could have been avoided I tend to agree is something to find out. I think there are two issues. We might have been able to do more to bridge the differences between the two different Kurdish parties, a fair question; second, whether there was more we might have done to deter or any way discourage either the PUK from tilting toward Iran or Mr. Barazani's party in entering into a relationship with Baghdad. Again, worthy questions.

Mr. PERLE. There was plenty of cooperation between Barazani and Iran when it was useful. This is a complicated situation and the administration oversimplifies to the point of distorting often in describing what was going on there, which is why I urge you to investigate it thoroughly.

Mr. BATEMAN. I thank you all. Let me add parenthetically, Mr. Chairman, that I have difficulty negotiating the rocks and shoals of American domestic politics. The idea of negotiating the politics of the Kurdish factions and Iraq is beyond me, but I think it is critical that we know more about how that situation unfolded and essentially how our position became unraveled and embarrassing.

The CHAIRMAN. The other gentleman from Virginia, Mr. Sisisky.

STATEMENT OF HON. NORMAN SISISKY, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM VIRGINIA

Mr. SISISKY. Thank you. I would agree with my colleague on one thing except it is very complicated. This is not an easy problem. Let me just say, I think you all three agree on two things, if I remember, whether Saddam—I think you said Saddam is stronger today than he was a month ago.

I may disagree with you there, and I am sure other people will disagree with you. I think you also agreed and where I agree with you that the response should have been more serious, no question. But you got to make that determination.

If I was doing it and I wanted to punish Saddam, it would be very easy to take our missiles into the electric grid of Baghdad or into the waterworks and punish the people, but you have to make a decision what you do with your allies. There is no question that the coalition is weaker than it was in 1991. No question about that.

But let's understand the difference and the problem. Before, Iraq invaded an Arab country, Kuwait. Also, the national security of the

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European partners and ourselves was oil; no question about it. Now we have got the thing with the Kurds that I don't believe that anybody really cared about, to be honest. We had enough problem with Provide Comfort. Nobody really cared about it. Certainly there was not an attack on oil.

So, let's talk about stronger or weaker. I will agree that Saddam used the brave thing of shooting some missiles at, I think, two F–16's; I am not sure how many. You notice when we brought the other carrier in, we brought the 117 in, there was no response. He said we are not going to shoot anymore missiles. We are not going to do anything, because they knew that we could pull the trigger any time we wanted to. Is it the right time to pull the trigger though.

But in making the determination, and I think somebody said it, was the Israeli-Arab talks, of not messing those talks up and that complicates the situation. So, I would like to have some comment on whether I make any sense in talking about whether he is stronger or weaker. You all agree that he is stronger. I question whether he is or not because we have delayed the humanitarian, allowing him to sell oil so I can't see where he is really stronger now.

Mr. EISENSTADT. Making assessments of his domestic standing and his relative strength is a subjective kind of thing. It is very difficult to judge how he is perceived by his people and the military and the people who might otherwise have been planning coups against him. But I have to believe that, first of all, the disruption of the CIA operation in Irbil, even though it had not yielded fruit yet, certainly there was always a possibility that in the future it would succeed, and I hope it will continue and that they are able to reconstitute the effort. But that disruption has to be a victory for him.

I have to believe that in the eyes of his military they are probably saying good show. You have reasserted central government control in parts of the north where it wasn't before. You have split further the Kurdish parties even deeper than before, and now the PUK and KDP aren't even talking to each other. So, I think, he could probably claim in the eyes of the Republican Guard people he has proven his manhood once again and in the eyes of his enemies he has kind of restored his aura of invincibility, that there is no way to get rid of this guy. He trumped the CIA, and there is no hope for us now.

It is an argument that can be made. I don't know if it can be proven, but my sense is that he probably has emerged stronger.

I would say also that I don't think he has achieved a strategic victory. I think he has laid the basis, the groundwork for a strategic victory. It is not there yet and it is up to us now to challenge him and to prevent him from reaping the fruits of his successes, and that is a challenge for United States policy in the future.

Mr. PERLE. The most worrisome sign, in my view, is the reaction of his neighbors and the regional powers who have begun to trip, who have been moving toward the view that Saddam is going to be there and they are not so sure that we will, and that the political deterioration that will follow unless we take some action to reverse these losses is very serious, indeed, and hard to put back to-

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gether. You just watch King Hussein, watch the Sauds and you will see a change in their attitude and a change in their tone and it is a direct result of Saddam's success in this operation.

Mr. SISISKY. I would say one thing, Mr. Chairman. I would agree with Mr. Perle that we should have a closed hearing. We are speculating that this administration—and I don't know—I am not privy to all the private meetings and other things. We are speculating that they didn't do these things that maybe should have been done and only in a closed meeting with State Department representatives and the military can we know. I think it is a very good idea. Because we don't know. We don't have closed meetings anymore.

The CHAIRMAN. We don't have time to have any meetings since we are about to adjourn for the year. We do know that our CIA operation has been blown, the cover has, and that affected a lot of people from the north and that is pretty good evidence of what happened.

Mr. Hefley.

STATEMENT OF HON. JOEL HEFLEY, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM COLORADO

Mr. HEFLEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This has been an extremely interesting and helpful panel and I thank you for it. My problem in dealing with this and trying to explain it to the press and others when they ask why we are there and what are we doing and what do we hope to accomplish, it has been very difficult.

What I think I have picked up this morning is that we really didn't have any consistent policy for why we did what we did and that we didn't accomplish anything positive as a result of it and that we have no real direction in the future. We don't really know where we are going there.

So, I guess, my first question would be, and Richard, you partially answered it from your standpoint. I think in your last response, but what charges do we have when a real crisis now occurs in that part of the world, and we know more real crises are going to occur in that part of the world. What real chance do we have of pulling off a coalition that could reach in there and try to solve that problem as George Bush did in the Persian Gulf war situation?

I know he worked diligently to pull that coalition together. That was a masterful thing. Whatever you think of George Bush, he was probably the only guy in the world that could have done it. Almost everybody in that part of the world had great respect for George Bush and for Baker. Should we do something like this if we need to do it in the future.

The second question, it seems like the forgotten element in the equation here are the Kurds. Supposedly we went in to do something to help the Kurds. Most of our questions have not been about the Kurds. I guess I would ask you, I know you don't have time to educate me on Kurdish history, but I don't know as much about it as I should.

Why are the Kurds, they seem to be so hated by everybody in that part of the world. No one wants them, and what is the basis of the current friction between the two major elements in the Kurds? Is it just strong men who want to control? Is it other out-

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side powers using them as pawns? If you could shed some light on those two things I would appreciate it.

Mr. PERLE. Without getting into the complicated history of the Kurds, let me just say that since the gulf war, the Kurds, who have exercised significant control over northern Iraq, have been prevented effectively from earning a living, if I can put it that way. We have, because of the embargo on Iraq, prevented the Kurds from exporting from their own area. So they have suffered more than the regime in terms of holding their people together and feeding their families, to say nothing of strengthening their ability to resist Saddam Hussein.

For example, there is a great deal of oil in areas under Kurdish control, but we would not allow that oil to be shipped outside, outside the Kurdish areas. So they were embargoed in effect both by Saddam and the United States and its coalition partners, an incredibly stupid policy. So the two groups were in effect quarreling over a shrinking pie. Obviously, one of the solutions would have been to assist them in finding a way to survive.

Beyond that, we became important to their efforts to reconcile longstanding differences and at crucial junctures when a modest effort on our part might have gone a long way toward holding them together, because through much of this period despite quarrels, they managed to put things together, we didn't make those efforts at crucial times.

I believe that the history of American handling of this set of issues is a very discouraging history. We are simply not competent to do it very well. And this is a bipartisan condemnation against Republican and Democratic administrations alike who have failed to handle this well.

Under these circumstances, I have kind of a simple rule. That is, if you have a friend who shares your goals and aspirations who understands something better than you do, subcontract. Which is why I put the emphasis in my remarks on turning to the Iraqi National Congress and asking them to organize in the north, which they have done. They understand the situation a great deal better than we do. They know how to put a coalition together. They need and deserve support. They are broadly representative. They have Democratic aspirations.

And I see no reason why we shouldn't support them fully and give them an opportunity to demonstrate that they know better than we how to manage the process of maintaining that coalition in the north against Saddam, and they still have territory in the north from which they can operate.

The administration has been urged to do this on a number of occasions and have chosen not to do so. I hope that if you do have the inquiry I am urging that you get into the question of why, given our dismal history, we didn't ask people who know more about this than we do to act in our behalf.

Mr. EISENSTADT. If I could provide my understanding of the nature of the conflict between the Kurdish factions, you have personal rivalries between Barazani and Talabani, partly ego-driven. Over money, basically Turkish trucks, there is a crossing on the Turkish-Iraqi border used by Turkish trucks that come in on a daily basis and get Iraqi oil. This is an area controlled by the KDP. They were

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taxing the trucks, the money wasn't going to the PUK; the PUK was very upset about this, feeling they should get a cut.

In addition, officials in both parties in the unified administration in the north were accused of skimming money from the joint pot for party purposes which caused resentments. There were some cases in which local conflicts spread out of control where property disputes between local landlords and their tenants, the landlord was from one party, the tenant was from another party, there was a dispute, they all pull in members of their family and tribe and it gets out of control.

You also have the distinction between KDP and PUK. The two Kurdish factions also to a certain extent corresponds between cultural differences among the Kurds. They speak two different dialects and both parties are regionally based. So you have all these factors coming together.

Mr. HAASS. The first question was about the coalition and what would happen in the future if we really were tested. It would depend upon two things. First, would be the nature of the crisis and, second, the nature of the response. The more any crisis is seen as an internal crisis in Iraq the more difficult it will be for us to create international support. The more, on the other hand, the crisis looks to be a renewed Iraqi threat against Kuwait or Saudi Arabia, the less difficulty we are likely to have.

The second key variable will be what the United States does. As you know, there are all types of consultations. There are consultations where you lean forward and say this is what needs to be done, this is what we are prepared to do, are you with us. And there are consultations that say, gee, we have a big problem on our hands. We are not sure what we are prepared to do. We are not sure what needs to be done, what do you think? If we go at it the former, I think we will be OK and if we approach it in the latter fashion I think it will be something more like we have seen in the last couple of weeks. So the starker the scenario, the more forward leaning United States consultation, the better off we will come out.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Taylor.

Before we get to the next question, let me announce ahead of time that we are going to start having a series of votes in about half an hour, six I think, so that will mean it will take a good while to get through those. We might try to finish up with this panel by that time and then have a break for votes and give folks a chance to get a bite to eat and come back at 1 o'clock.

Mr. Taylor.

STATEMENT OF HON. GENE TAYLOR, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM MISSISSIPPI

Mr. TAYLOR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to question the panel. Do the members of the panel recommend that United States troops be put under U.N. command?

Mr. HAASS. In the case of the Persian Gulf, I won't speak for my colleagues, but I think it would be a big mistake politically and organizationally for us to approach this under U.N. command. I think what is useful——

Mr. TAYLOR. Can you keep it short? I only have 5 minutes.

Mr. HAASS. We will leave it there.

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Mr. TAYLOR. Would you recommend the putting of U.S. troops under U.N. command?

Mr. EISENSTADT. No, sir.

Mr. PERLE. Absolutely not.

Mr. TAYLOR. Do you think the United Nations should ever be in the position of deploying United States troops into a hostile situation?

Mr. HAASS. In a hostile situation, no.

Mr. EISENSTADT. I will pass on that.

Mr. PERLE. No.

Mr. TAYLOR. What triggers those questions, I point to your testimony Mr. Haass, the written testimony, when you say Saddam should be punished because he violated U.N. Security Council Resolution 688. The United Nations didn't vote that he should be punished. The coalition didn't vote that he should be punished. So I am seeing something crazy.

One day my colleagues and I vote that U.S. troops should not be wearing U.N. patches and under U.N. command, and then on another day and we have a panel of people who just told me they shouldn't be, while criticizing the President because, in effect, he didn't strongly enough respond to U.N. Resolution 688. I realize this town is full of inconsistencies, but that strikes me as an incredible inconsistency on your part.

Mr. HAASS. Let me beg to disagree. I think it is important to remember that we have roughly two dozen U.N. Security Council resolutions that create the box.

Mr. TAYLOR. I am pointing to your testimony in particular.

Mr. HAASS. First, he violated this one and, second, I don't want Saddam to basically take an a la carte approach to how he wants to behave. If he violates an U.N. resolution I think it is important that we react strongly. This is not a man that begins with a clean slate.

Mr. TAYLOR. You go on to talk about the need to repair United States-Turkish relationships. Correct me if I am wrong, but I thought the Turks did not particularly care for the Kurds.

Mr. HAASS. That is correct.

Mr. TAYLOR. So why would the Turks want us to rush to the defense of the Kurds? Why would they get excited about our doing that?

Mr. HAASS. Because what the Turks want to avoid is a scenario where the roughly 2 million or so Kurds who live in Iraq become a refugee problem that threaten to come up against the Turkish border like we saw 5 years ago. They have a stake in the stability of northern Iraq and the avoidance of a massive flow of refugees. They also have a stake that northern Iraq not be used as ground by which terrorist actions by Kurds are launched into Turkey, as one of the Kurdish factions, the PKK has done over the years.

Mr. TAYLOR. Let me pose a question to the panel. You weren't satisfied with the President's response. Would you have been satisfied if the President had, say, bombed Iraqi oil installations, refineries? What would have made you happy?

Mr. HAASS. I would not have gone after targets that were economic or humanitarian; I would have gone after clear military tar-

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gets in and around Baghdad, Republican Guard divisions, military headquarters, command and control headquarters and the like.

Mr. TAYLOR. Well, I thought one of your criticisms was that we did not attack the troops that were actually attacking the Kurds. You have the same disconnect. You are not actually going after the ones that are causing the problem if you are shooting at barracks in downtown Baghdad.

Mr. HAASS. That was not one of my criticisms. In this case, one, it would have been awfully difficult, without access to Turkish bases, simply doing it in any militarily feasible way.

Second, given that fact that one of the Kurdish factions did invite in the Iraqis, I was, for one, nervous about finding the United States possibly caught up in the internecine struggles there. I thought it was better to put the battle on the battlefield of our choosing rather than Saddam's.

Mr. EISENSTADT. I would just add that I don't think that every response has to be symmetric. And I don't mean proportional. If he is threatening Irbil and it is difficult to hit there, we can hit other Republican Guard targets in other parts of the country that he needs very much to stay in power. I would say that it does not have to be symmetric. It could be an asymmetric response, but I do think it should be disproportionate.

Mr. TAYLOR. Mr. Chairman, my last question, again, I am just curious about this whole thing. At the same time that Saddam was attacking the Kurds in his own country, the Russians were attacking the Chechens in their country. I have seen a lot of people say that we didn't do enough in the case of Iraq, but those same people didn't say anything about what was happening in Russia. Could you gentlemen please explain that to me?

Mr. HAASS. Congressman, I think the intelligent conduct of foreign policy is about double standards, triple standards, quadruple standards. In each case you have to look at what you can accomplish, the costs and benefits and what your priorities are.

I don't like much Russian attacks on Chechnya, but there are certain aspects of the United States Russian relationship which are higher priority, for example, the command and control of nuclear materials. We have to ask what are our priorities and what can we usefully accomplish?

Mr. EISENSTADT. I second that.

Mr. PERLE. At the same time, it seems to me we would have done Boris Yeltsin a good turn if, when he made the initial mistake in Chechnya, we had tried to discourage it rather than standing on the sidelines and, in effect, giving a blessing to what turned out to be a disastrous misadventure for him, the Chechens and for Russia. So I wouldn't have gone in militarily, but I would have certainly tried to dissuade him from what turned out to be a very foolish decision.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Hunter.

STATEMENT OF HON. DUNCAN HUNTER, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM CALIFORNIA

Mr. HUNTER. Thank you.

Mr. Taylor, if you had a followup, you were trying to give, go ahead, I will yield to you.

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Did you have a comment?

Mr. TAYLOR. No; thank you.

Mr. HUNTER. Gentlemen, thank you for being here. I apologize for not being here for the full hearing because I think you have really enlightened us to a great degree.

Let me just ask a real brief question that has to do with Desert Storm and the situation we are in today with regard to what we thought at that time, at least following the Scud attacks on the barracks, was a national priority. I was looking through kind of reviewing Desert Storm and its aftermath the other day.

It seems like a long time ago. We passed the Missile Defense Act in the wake of Desert Storm, with great fanfare, and almost everybody signed on to it. And I read it and we said in part that the Secretary of Defense was directed to aggressively pursue deployment of missile defense with a goal of deploying those defenses in theater. And we had a national defense component also, but theater missile defenses, effective theater missile defenses by the mid-1990's. It occurred to me that the mid-1990's are past us at this point, and we are now looking at some time in the next century for some type of deployment.

And upon reading that, I sent a letter to the CRS and engaged one of our CRS researchers into what do we have today? Are we much better off than we were when the Scud missiles hit the barracks at Riyadh? And the answer was, his first sentence was: Nothing much has changed with respect to our ability to defend against those attacks. And it was interesting because MIT placed our capability or our destruction of Iraqi Scuds at zero, and the Army placed it at 80 percent, and the CRS said it is probably somewhere in-between.

But we obviously had a lot to do. At that time we were very concerned about missile defense when the missiles impacted and killed American soldiers, the first time ballistic missiles had been used against American military personnel.

Do you have any comments on that? Do you think that we were just—we passed this thing, we were just doing something in the passionate aftermath of the well-televised attacks on the barracks and that slowing down this program needed to be slowed down? Or do you think that we are missing a—we had a national priority well-pegged then, and we have wrongfully strayed from that priority over the succeeding years? What do you think?

Mr. PERLE. In my view, Congressman Hunter, we missed an opportunity to build on the Missile Defense Act and take the program seriously and advance it.

The last administration wasn't very enthusiastic about ballistic missile defense and this administration is fundamentally and emotionally opposed to it, and that is why we are in the situation we are in.

Mr. HAASS. Congressman, I think one of the perverse reactions, if you will, to Desert Storm, is the thinking in that part of the world that the one place you don't want to take the United States on anymore is with conventional forces on a traditional battlefield.

I would think that if there is another large-scale war in that part of the world, things like ballistic missiles will become more, not less important to the people who are likely to be fighting, and I

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would think that a theater missile defense capability will have to be far more part of whatever forces we bring to the theater the next time than was the case in Desert Storm.

Mr. EISENSTADT. The only thing I could add to that, first of all, I think we probably can't move too fast on the development of these defenses. Perhaps the only saving grace—I want to be careful because some unclassified information is often incorrect or misleading—but the proliferation of these systems in the region, more advanced types of systems and capabilities, apparently has gone slower than people thought 5 to 10 years ago would happen. And perhaps that is the only saving grace, that the threat has not moved forward as fast as perhaps we thought it would initially.

And I would add to that, though, that I think one of the main areas that we have to be worried about in the future is nontraditional delivery means; cars, terrorists, boats, and even a highly capable missile defense is not going to enable us to deal with all potential delivery systems, and we have to take a comprehensive approach to this. We have a tremendous number of ports of entry in this country and each one is a potential means by which WMB can be delivered.

Mr. HUNTER. We should be addressing this nonconventional means, for example, ports and things, at this point? We should be focusing on that?

Mr. EISENSTADT. Absolutely, sir.

Mr. HUNTER. Along with other things?

Mr. EISENSTADT. Yes, sir.

Mr. PERLE. Just one footnote, Congressman Hunter. The reference to MIT, I believe, was a reference to the arguments of Professor Postal at MIT, which I think are both wrong and deeply tendentious.

Mr. HUNTER. I do, too. I doubt more than none.

The CHAIRMAN. Gentlemen, we have a vote coming up—well, on right now. We will try to conclude this morning's session in time to make the votes. I apologize to the three people we have left, but if we can go ahead and start and recognize Mr. Geren, if we can try to get as many as we can before we have to break.

STATEMENT OF HON. PETE GEREN, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM TEXAS

Mr. GEREN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to inject a note of levity into an otherwise very somber hearing. But I want to acknowledge the legislative skill of two of my colleagues. I thought it was something that Mr. Sisisky led our questioning to the conclusion that if it hadn't have been for carriers, the disaster would have been worse. Mr. Skelton had a question that led to the conclusion that if we had had the B–2's there, the problem would have been averted. I never cease to be impressed by the skills of some of my colleagues.

I would like—and this is a subject for another hearing, but we do talk about—we made many illusions to Iran and the counterbalance that Saddam Hussein may, or may not, hold in their perspective as far of the balance of interest in the Middle East.

In 30 seconds, each of you all, how does Iran react to this at this point? Could they perhaps see this as a need to do something to

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bolster their image in the region? They are loading up over there by the billions of dollars' worth in weapons, building nuclear power plants.

What is their reaction to this? Do they see weakness they are going to have to exploit? Do they—how do they react?

Mr. HAASS. I don't think Iran needs a lot of stimulation. I think it is an imperial power that will seek out any weakness it finds. The danger is that if and when Iran does that, Iraq will be able to use that as a way to weaken Arab opposition to Iraq.

They will be able to exploit Iranian threats in a way that will make it more difficult for us to keep the coalition intact against Iraq. That is the scenario that concerns me.

Mr. EISENSTADT. One of the main consequences of the gulf war has been a major, if you will, United States buildup in the region in terms of prepositioned equipment and forward-deployed forces. Now while being primarily directed against Iraq, these forces would also have utility against Iran in the event of Iranian aggression. And I think they are feeling very hemmed in by this and they are very worried about this and they perceive these forces, whatever our justification in terms of Iraq, they see it as also being directed at them. I think they feel that their freedom of action has been limited by the United States buildup in the region since the gulf war.

Mr. PERLE. I don't know whether Iranian Ayatollahs dance, Congressman, but if they do dance, they are dancing at the prospect of a weak and indecisive American policy. This is exactly consistent with the combination of portraying the United States as the great satan and taking comfort in our ineffectiveness.

Mr. GEREN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Edwards.

STATEMENT OF HON. CHET EDWARDS, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM TEXAS

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman thank you, very much.

I am sorry this comes in so quickly at the end of this, but I want to thank you for having the meeting. It is an important subject. I want to thank all of you for coming.

Mr. Perle, I would be remiss if I didn't say something on a personal note. I came into this hearing as a Democrat who supported President Bush in Desert Shield and Desert Storm. I came in today as a Democrat not being an apologist for what the Clinton administration has done on this important policy matter. I am open to criticism of the administration and I am open to your substantive suggestions, which, I think, are specific and helpful for this committee.

But I would be remiss if I didn't say that I am somehow offended that in a meeting before this committee to address very complicated serious issues where people of integrity have strong differences of opinions, the use of words in your written statement such as "towering conceit," "sordid episode," "disingenuous pretense," "possibility the administration believes its own lies," "shameful policy," "lies and deceit," I don't think that adds substance to very complicated and important issues and I would appreciate in further testimony if we could keep our remarks focused on your substantive suggestions, which I do respect; allow you the

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freedom of speech to put out any press release you want to at any time, and perhaps those sort of statements are appropriate for press release.

In one Member's opinion, I don't think that contributes to the substantive discussion of which you have been a very important and constructive part today. But I appreciate your being here and hope you would consider one Member's effort to try to bring back civility to an institution that on both sides of the aisle, Democrat, my side of the aisle, as well as Republican, desperately needs civility rather than character assassination and personal attacks.

This is a complicated issue and good people perhaps might have different opinions on the issues of substance.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Chairman, could I be recognized for 10 seconds?

The CHAIRMAN. We have a vote on. Make it fast, we have 7 minutes to vote.

Mr. HUNTER. I just take issue with my colleague. He has just used the words "character assassination." I don't think Mr. Perle's statements were character assassination. And when you are dealing with life and death, which we are in Iraq, and thousands of people die because of American policy, I think the words "sordid episode" is appropriate if you really believe it and you think it is a fact. But I think the harshest words that have been used so far have not been used by Mr. Perle, but by my colleague.

Mr. EDWARDS. Reclaiming my time.

I think when you say that perhaps somebody believes their own lies, the disingenuous pretense, their lies and deceit, he has every right to have those beliefs, and I respect that. Our soldiers are fighting to protect the freedom of speech and he has a right to make those statements. I think they are more appropriate in a press release that Mr. Perle could put out rather than in a statement before this committee.

I do not think that contributes to the substantive discussion, because I think the substantive proposals in his written report are very specific and very helpful for our consideration, and I will not——

Mr. HUNTER. Let me say to my friend, that the words "character assassination" is an attack on Mr. Perle, and I don't think that is appropriate.

The CHAIRMAN. We have to go and vote.

I have to modify my earlier announcement. We will reconvene at 12:30 instead of 1.

[Recess.]

Mr. HUNTER [presiding]. The committee will resume.

Obviously, we are on a tight schedule here and we apologize to our witnesses for the fact that this is a carnival-like atmosphere in the last week of the Congress and as you know everybody has 55 things to do and no time to do them in, so we have got votes both just ending on the House floor a few minutes ago, lots of wrap-up deals, so we apologize for the sparse attendance. Nonetheless, the record that you are establishing is pretty doggone important to us.

So Bruce Riedel is with us, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Near East and South Asian Affairs of the Department of Defense and

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Maj. Gen. J.A. Van Alstyne, director for Operations of the Joint Staff.

Gentlemen, the floor is yours, at your pleasure. Mr. Riedel, would you like to proceed first?

STATEMENT OF BRUCE RIEDEL, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR NEAR EAST AND SOUTH ASIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. RIEDEL. OK. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

With your permission, what I would like to do is enter my entire statement into the record and summarize the high points of it now.

Mr. HUNTER. Without objection. And I don't think there is any.

Mr. RIEDEL. You will not be surprised to hear that I have a different view of the strength of the coalition and the results of recent United States actions against Iraq than some of the thought you heard this morning. I can only say the views you will hear here are based on an extensive amount of time sitting face-to-face with our coalition allies, not just during this crisis but in the months proceeding it.

What I would like to do is give you a brief summary of the political-military aspects of our Iraq policy and a short readout on Secretary Perry's recent visit to the region, then turn to General Van Alstyne to highlight current operations in the area.

As you know, Mr. Chairman, Iraq has been a major focus of American foreign policy throughout this decade. The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990, dramatically changed the security dynamics and the United States presence in the gulf region. The United States, acting to protect its vital national interests, led a coalition that deployed more than ½ million men and women to the gulf to defend Saudi Arabia and the smaller gulf states and to free Iraq—free Kuwait from Iraq's brutal occupation. Through Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, they won an impressive victory, although threat to the region from Iraq was not destroyed.

The primary American interest that we are acting to protect in the gulf is the access to the vast energy resources of the region: Nearly two-thirds of the world's proven oil reserves upon which our own economy and those of the entire industrial world depend so heavily. This fact alone justifies our actions since 1990, but America also has other vital national interests in the region.

The security of the gulf states and of Israel, Egypt, Jordan, and Turkey are endangered by Iraq's aggression and Saddam's desire to dominate the politics of the region. America has vital interests in protecting United States citizens and property abroad and ensuring freedom of navigation through the air and sea lands that connect Europe and the West with Africa, Asia, and the Indian Ocean, all of which pass through and alongside the Arabian Peninsula.

The threat to these vital interests in the region from Saddam Hussein did not end with Desert Storm. While the Desert Storm coalition dejected the Iraqi Army from Kuwait in 1991, the goals of the coalition was not to dismember Iraq or to advance to Baghdad to change the regime. Saddam has, unfortunately, remained in power and continues to try to ignore or obstruct the U.N. Security Council resolutions that define the terms of the 1991 cease-fire.

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We believe that Saddam's goal remains to dominate this region and that he has been prevented from this goal only by our containment policy. The critical elements of this policy are the coalition of regional allies, each contributing incredible military forces, and our own United States formal military forward presence. The linchpin of that containment policy is Operation Southern Watch, conducted by United States, British, and French aircraft from Saudi, Kuwaiti, UAE, and on temporary occasion also bases in Jordan, Qatar, and Bahrain.

Since 1992 Operation Southern Watch has flown over 115,000 sorties to enforce the no-fly zone. There is also a very strong ground, air, and naval presence throughout the region designed to send a signal of support to our allies and a warning to Saddam. In addition to the air assets I mentioned already, we have powerful naval assets, the 5th Fleet in Bahrain and ground force assets prepositioned in the Kuwait and Qatar as well as afloat. These forces remain in the region at the invitation of the gulf countries to enforce U.N. resolutions.

Mr. HUNTER. Could you, Mr. Riedel, just briefly recap what we have in the terms of air power—Air Force air power and naval air power?

Mr. RIEDEL. Why don't I let General Van Alstyne show you on the chart.

Mr. HUNTER. He is going to do some specifics. Go right ahead then.

Mr. RIEDEL. As I said, Saddam Hussein continues to pose a serious potential military threat to his neighbors and the security of the region. Despite all of the damage inflicted on Iraq in Desert Storm, his military remains among the largest in the area, with some 400,000 soldiers, more than 2,000 tanks, and over 300 combat aircraft.

He has repeatedly challenged the containment box we put him in. He did it in 1993 by trying to kill former President Bush. He did it in 1994 by actually sending several elite Republican Guard divisions down to the Kwaiti border, again in 1995 by threatening Kuwait and Jordan and he is doing it now. This time it began against the Kurds in the north and then became a confrontation in the no-fly zones. In each case the administration has faced this challenge and left him in the box at the end the day.

The real danger is in allowing Iraq to go unchecked in its use of military force. Again and again Saddam Hussein has demonstrated the means and the motivation to use his Armed Forces recklessly. If his repeated transgressions go unchallenged, he will be emboldened by his actions and break out of containment. In doing so he will develop weapons of mass destruction—so far that has been prevented by the U.N. sanctions—and move to either coerce or even attack his neighbors to the south again. We have no doubt that if the U.N. sanctions regime were removed, Iraq would recreate its weapons of mass destruction arsenal again in months.

Thus, we believe it is necessary to take firm action to keep Iraq contained. The key to our action this time was expanding the no-fly zone up to the 33d parallel almost to the southern border of Baghdad thereby striking at Saddam's strategic center. This no-fly zone extension effectively closed down the operations of two major

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Iraqi air bases and limits the ability of his forces to move in any direction but particularly toward the south where our vital national interests are.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Riedel follows:]

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TESTIMONY OF BRUCE RIEDEL, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECDEF

FOR NEAR EAST AND SOUTH ASIAN AFFAIRS

BEFORE THE

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. It is a pleasure to be here today to discuss the current situation in Iraq. I would like to give you a summary of the political-military aspects of our Iraq policy and a short readout on Secretary Perry's recent visit to the region.

Saddam's attack on Irbil on the 31st of August clearly showed that he is ready at any time to use force to achieve his ends. While this began as a Kurdish factional dispute, Saddam's violence against Irbil changed the rules of the game in northern Iraq. He intervened with 40,000 men, 300 tanks and 300 artillery pieces. His military venture was a clear violation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 688. It ran counter to our stated policy of providing humanitarian support to the people of northern Iraq—a policy declared in April of 1991, which formed the basis for Operation Provide Comfort.

The United States has worked for years to help the two major Kurdish parties (KDP & PUK) overcome their differences. The Kurdish factions that had been fighting had accepted a U.S. sponsored cease-fire and were meeting with U.S. representatives in London to arrange a permanent end to the fighting. These talks held the promise of progress.

We directly warned Iraq twice (28 August and 30 August) not to interfere in this factional conflict. Iraq was told it would be a serious mistake. Saddam ignored these warnings and chose instead to carry out this violence.

As you know Iraq has been a major focus of American foreign policy throughout this decade. The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990,

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dramatically changed the security dynamics and the U.S. presence in the region. The U.S., acting to protect its vital interests, led a coalition of Western and muslim military forces that deployed over half a million men and women to the Gulf to defend Saudi Arabia and the smaller Gulf states and to free Kuwait from Iraq's brutal occupation. Through Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm they won an impressive victory, although the threat to the region from Iraq was not destroyed.

The primary American interest that we are acting to protect in the Gulf is access to the vast energy resources of the region, i.e. nearly two-thirds of the world's proven oil reserves upon which our own economy and those of the entire industrial world depend so heavily. This fact alone justifies our actions since 1990, but America also has other vital interests in the region. The security of the Gulf states and Israel, Egypt, Jordan, and Turkey are endangered by Iraq's aggression and Saddam's desire to dominate the politics of the region. America also has vital interests in protecting U.S. citizens and property abroad, and in ensuring freedom of navigation through the air and sea lanes that connect Europe and the West with Africa, Asia, and the Indian Ocean, all of which pass through and alongside the Arabian Peninsula.

The threat to U.S vital interests in the region from Saddam Hussayn did not end with Desert Storm. While the Desert Storm coalition ejected the Iraqi army from Kuwait in 1991, the goal of the coalition was not to dismember Iraq or to advance to Baghdad to change the regime. Saddam has remained in power and continues to ignore or obstruct the U.N. Security Council Resolutions that defined the terms of the cease-fire.

We believe that Saddam's goal remains to dominate this region and that he has been prevented from this goal only by our containment policy. The critical elements of this policy are the coalition of regional allies, each contributing credible armed forces, and our own U.S. formal military presence. The linchpin of containment is Operation Southern Watch, conducted by United States, British and French aircraft from Saudi, Kuwaiti, UAE and, on temporary occassions also bases in Jordan, Qatar and Bahrain. Since 1992 Operation Southern Watch has flown over 115,000

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sorties to enforce the no-fly zone. There is a very strong ground, air and naval presence throughout the region designed to send a signal of support to our allies and a warning to Saddam. In addition to the air assets I mentioned already, we have powerful naval assets, the 5th fleet headquartered in Bahrain and ground force assets prepositioned in Kuwait and Qatar, as well as afloat. These forces remain in the region at the invitation of the Gulf countries to enforce U.N. resolutions.

Saddam Hussayn continues to pose a serious potential military threat to his neighbors and the security of the region. Despite all the damage inflicted on Iraq in Desert Storm his military remains among the largest in the region—with some 400,000 soldiers, more than 2,000 tanks and over 300 combat aircraft. He has repeatedly challenged the containment box we have put him in. He did it in 1993 by trying to kill President Bush, he did it in 1994 by actually sending several elite Republican Guard divisions down to the Kuwaiti border, again in 1995 by threatening Kuwait and Jordan and he's doing it now. This time it began against the Kurds in the north and then it became a confrontation in the no-fly zones.

The real danger is allowing Iraq to go unchecked. Saddam has demonstrated the means and the motivation to use his armed forces recklessly. If his repeated transgressions go unchallenged, he will be emboldened by his actions and break out of the box. In doing so he will develop weapons of mass destruction—so far the UN sanctions have restrained him—and move to either coerce or even attack his neighbors in the south again. If sanctions are removed Iraq will recreate its WMD arsenal in months.

Thus, we believe that it is necessary to take firm action. The key to this action was expanding the no-fly zone up to the 33rd parallel almost up to the southern border of Baghdad, thereby striking at Saddam's strategic center. This no-fly zone extension effectively closed down the operations of two major Iraqi air bases, and a large training center located near Baghdad, and limited the ability of his forces to move in any direction, particularly to the south. Because of the serious constraints this placed on him, we expected that Saddam would resist this expansion of the no-fly

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zone. As we expanded it, we ordered a limited strike against air defenses in the no-fly zone. This was done for the single purpose of force protection for our and coalition pilots as they flew Operation Southern Watch.

In our attacks we determined that we should focus our actions where our interests lie— in the strategic heartland near Baghdad and in the south. Extending the southern no-fly zone supports the strategic objective in two ways. By improving our ability to monitor Saddam's actions and constraining his ability to attack his neighbors.

These strikes warned the Iraqi government not to challenge the no-fly zone. Additionally, we sent them two messages which clearly warned them not to challenge our enforcement of the no-fly zone. The Iraqi government defied these warnings. Saddam strengthened and reinforced his air defenses south of 33°N and fired on coalition aircraft six times. We will not tolerate that threat to our aircrews nor do we believe we can rely solely on Saddam's recent declaration that he will not fire on coalition aircraft. We are interested in action not just words.

We will take whatever action is necessary to enforce the no-fly zone up to the 33rd parallel and we will take whatever action is necessary to protect coalition aircrews. In line with that we have moved to reinforce our military units in the region, most of which you already know about. We have moved four B-52's to Diego Garcia. Secretary Perry ordered a second carrier battle group to be moved into the Arabian Gulf. With the authority and permission of the Kuwaiti government, we have deployed eight F-117s to Kuwait. They are there now and ready to conduct operations. Additionally, a Patriot battery was ordered to Kuwait. With the permission of the government of Bahrain, we have moved F-16's to that country. Finally at the NSC meeting on Sunday, September 15, 1996, Secretary Perry asked for and received from the President, approval to send to Kuwait, Army units that would round out the brigade of heavy armored equipment which we have prepositioned in Kuwait. The Kuwaitis quickly gave their permission when Secretary Perry asked for it during his recent visit to Kuwiat.

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As you know, Dr. Perry traveled to meet with our regional allies just over a week ago. I had the pleasure to accompany him. In Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Turkey the Secretary explained our policy and sought their views. In all of these states he received assurances of support. Media claims of reluctant allied backing in the region are much exaggerated. Kuwait gave its approval for our F-117 deployment in less than 12 hours from the request. Bahrain approved the F-16 deployment in less than 36 hours and Saudi Arabia supported extension of the no-fly zone to 33 degrees north and allowed use of its bases to fly to extend the zone.

The effect that our actions to date have had is significant. First, the expanded no-fly zone leaves Saddam militarily worse off than he was before the crisis. He has greatly reduced mobility and we can keep track of his forces more closely. He has lost the use of several key airbases. Second, the missile attacks against the air defense sites dismantled much of his air defense in the south and there can be no doubt that this presents a much safer flying regime for coalition aircrews. Third, the force enhancements added to the region this week provide us with a wide array of military options should they be required. Combat sustainability and an expanded array of target options are a few of the benefits.

Let me recap our overall strategy toward Iraq.

- We will maintain and help enforce the sanctions regime—the tightest ever imposed by the UN.

- We will vigorously support UNSCOM's inspection regime—the world's most intensive international WMD control system.

- We will support the continued arms embargo in the sanctions regime.

- We will vigorously enforce the no-fly zones and the limits on Iraqi military activities south of 32 degrees.

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- The purpose of these measures is to respond to the long-term threat Saddam's Iraq poses. They increase our ability to monitor the Iraqi military and reduce its ability to threaten neighbors important to us.

- We chose the time and place to act. We are ready to do so again.

To summarize, the United States has and will continue to counter Iraq's threat to our national interests. Although our current military posture in the Gulf is designed to counter the threat posed by Iraq, our forces, in concert with our allies are engaged in a carefully balanced strategy to ensure that neither Iraq nor Iran can dominate the Gulf, endanger the security of our partners, or control the flow of oil on which the welfare of both producers and consumers depends.

Thank you , Mr. Chairman

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OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

2400 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-2400

INTERNATIONAL
SECURITY AFFAIRS

08 NOV 1996

I-96/27123

Honorable Floyd D. Spence
Chairman
Committee on National Security
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In response to the request from Congressman Dornan, I am attaching the following responses to be entered into the record of my testimony before the House National Security Committee on September 26, 1996, concerning the recent U.S. strikes against Iraq.

Sincerely,

Bruce O. Riedel
Deputy Assistant Secretary
of Defense
Near Eastern and South Asian
Affairs

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Hearing date: September 26, 1996
Committee: House National Security Committee
Congressman: Dornan
Witness: DASD Riedel
Question # 1

AUTHORITY FOR U.S. STRIKES AGAINST IRAQ

Question: On what authority were the military strikes made against Iraq? Has the Senate or House authorized these attacks? The Clinton Administration loosely bases its authority to strike at Iraqi targets in the "no fly zone" on U.N. Resolution 688. Where is the enforcement clause of U.N. Resolution 688? Assuming that the White House had several days indication that Iraq was preparing for an attack on the Kurds, why wasn't there time to consult with Congressional leaders?

Answer: In ordering the strikes, the President used his authority as commander-in-chief to defend vital national interests in the Gulf region. In addition, the President's actions were covered by U.N. Security Council Resolution 678, which authorizes member states to "use all necessary means" to ensure Iraqi compliance with relevant UN resolutions, including Resolutions 687 and 688. I understand that the White House contacted a number of Hill offices prior to, and after, the strikes against Iraq.

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Hearing date: September 26, 1996
Committee: House National Security Committee
Congressman: Dornan
Witness: DASD Riedel
Question # 3

RELEVANCE OF U.N. RESOLUTION 688

Question: Kurdish factions rely on both Baghdad and Tehran for support in their battles for prominence. Given the obvious division within the Kurdish population, what is the relevance in 1996/1997 of U. N. Resolution 688? Resolution 688 condemns the repression of the Iraqi civilian population, including the Kurds. Is Kurdish repression of Kurds also to be condemned and how does internal Kurdish fighting hinder the mandate to protect that population? Doesn't internal fighting complicate the goals of the mandate to such an extent that it becomes impossible to achieve them?

Answer: Iraq today remains a "republic of fear" in which Saddam Hussayn continues to rely on torture and other repressive means to intimidate and control the Iraqi people. Fighting between Iraq's Kurdish leaders does not alter the barbaric human rights record of Saddam Hussayn's regime and should not lead us to abandon our insistence that the Iraqi government comply with all UN resolutions, including Resolution 688.

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Hearing date: September 26, 1996
Committee: House National Security Committee
Congressman: Dornan
Witness: DASD Riedel
Question # 2

WAS THE U.S. RESPONSE "PROPORTIONAL?"

Question: Please state for the record, in your opinion, whether or not the recent cruise missile strikes in Iraq were a proportionate response to the original transgressions (Iraqi attacks on the Kurds).

Answer: In his public address on September 3, the President made clear that Iraq's attack on Irbil required a strong response and that a strong response was given. I believe this meets the definition of "proportionality."

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Mr. HUNTER. Were those airbases used and major instruments in the move against the Kurds, the ones that you say we closed down?

Mr. RIEDEL. Not in the move against the Kurds. He did not use significant airpower with the Kurds. But has used them in previous military operations and they were used to support Iraqi forces during Desert Storm.

Mr. HUNTER. These were military airbases. We effectively closed down two military airbases with our cruise missile attacks?

Mr. RIEDEL. With the extension of the no-fly zone by not allowing him to fly out of those bases. And he moved the aircraft that were based in those two airbases out of the region immediately.

Mr. HUNTER. OK. I am just trying to link up what we did in terms of extending the no-fly zone. We didn't physically with cruise missiles destroy those airbases but by extending the no-fly zone we prohibit, assuming that they live within the prohibition, the use of the airbases?

Mr. RIEDEL. That is correct. Effectively they can't use them to fly.

Mr. HUNTER. Where did he move his aircraft when they moved them out?

Mr. RIEDEL. He moved them to airbases north of the 33d parallel.

Mr. HUNTER. How did that disadvantage him?

Mr. RIEDEL. By keeping them further away from what we regard as our most strategic interest, the oilfields and energy resources in our gulf allies, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. His ability to threaten what is important to us has been reduced by literally forcing his forces further back.

Mr. HUNTER. How much further back do we send them? If the general wants to help on that, fine.

Mr. RIEDEL. We expanded it roughly by 60-nautical miles from south to north.

Mr. HUNTER. So you moved—this forced him to displace his military aircraft maybe 60 miles?

General, do you have any elucidation on that? I am just trying to figure out what happened as a result of this. It sounds good; I just want to know what happened.

STATEMENT OF MAJ. GEN. J.A. VAN ALSTYNE, VICE DIRECTOR FOR OPERATIONS, JOINT STAFF

General VAN ALSTYNE. As a direct result of the close down of the airfield, a number of high performance Iraq aircraft were moved at least 60 miles north of those air bases to 75 or 80 miles.

Mr. HUNTER. What were those aircraft? What general types of military aircraft was he forced to move?

General VAN ALSTYNE. These were high performance MiG 25 aircraft.

Mr. HUNTER. Does this really—has the Iraqi air force really been a threat to us in the past?

Mr. RIEDEL. It certainly makes it far more difficult for him to contemplate an operation moving south because he would have to move without air support.

Mr. HUNTER. And how many planes did he move again?

Mr. RIEDEL. Roughly 45 to 50.

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Mr. HUNTER. Sixty miles?
Mr. RIEDEL. Correct.
Mr. HUNTER. OK. Please proceed.
Mr. RIEDEL. Because of the serious constraints the extension of this no-fly zone placed on Saddam, we expected that Iraq would resist the expansion of the no-fly zone. As we expanded it, we ordered a limited strike against air defenses in the no-fly zone. This was done for the single purpose of force protection for our and coalition pilots as they flew Operation Southern Watch.

In our attacks we determine that we should focus our actions where our interests lie—in the strategic heartland near Baghdad in southern Iraq. Extending the southern no-fly zone supported the strategic objective in two ways: By improving our ability to monitor Saddam's actions and constraining his ability to attack his neighbors.

These strikes warned the Iraqi Government not to challenge the no-fly zone. Additionally, we sent them two messages which clearly warned Iraq not to challenge our enforcement of the no-fly zone. The Iraqi Government initially defied these warnings. Saddam strengthened and reinforced his air defenses south of 33 degrees North and fired on coalition aircraft six times. We refused to tolerate that threat to our aircrews and sent a second warning. I am pleased to note that since that second warning Saddam has backed down from his threats and the United States is now enforcing the no-fly zone at will.

As you know, Dr. Perry traveled to meet with our regional allies just over a week ago. I had the pleasure to accompany him. In Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Turkey the Secretary explained our policy on Iraq and sought local views. In all of these important coalition states he received full assurances of support. Media claims of reluctant allied backing in the region are much exaggerated.

Not surprisingly, I have to disagree with the assessments of several of our witnesses this morning who allege the coalition is falling apart. To the contrary, the coalition remains alive and well. Kuwait, for example, gave its approval for the deployment of our F–117 aircraft in less than 12 hours after we made the request, and approved the deployment of ground forces in less than 24 hours after the request was put in. Bahrain approved the deployment of F–16 aircraft in less than 36 hours and Saudi Arabia supported extension of the no-fly zone to the 33d parallel from its beginning and has allowed use of its bases to fly to extend that zone. It is worth noting in this regard as well, Mr. Chairman, that Saudi Arabia funds much of the cost of Operation Southern Watch.

Mr. HUNTER. Just on that point, Mr. Riedel, I have the testimony of CIA Director John Deutch to the Senate who said this: "The initial sentiment in the region"—and I am quoting—"led to no support for United States air strikes for the first time," and that both European and gulf coalition partners, quote, "had a lot more skepticism about American military moves than I think the American people had."

Does that—that is a little bit different than saying the coalition is alive and well.

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Mr. RIEDEL. In all due respect to the Director of Central Intelligence, I can tell you that the requests we have put forward to our gulf allies have been granted very quick turnaround times. As I said, the Kuwaitis in a matter of hours, the Bahrainis in a few hours, the Saudis from the beginning, supported extension of the no-fly zone.

There has been a lot of media criticism in the gulf—in Middle Eastern countries, in European countries with our policy. I can also say that trying to explain to Arabs why we were acting in response to what they saw as attacks on Kurds was not initially an easy sell. But whenever we have asked one of our coalition partners in the region for support we have gotten it throughout this crisis.

Mr. HUNTER. Thank you.

Mr. RIEDEL. The effect that our actions to date have had is significant. First, the no-fly zone leaves Saddam strategically and militarily worse off than it was before the crisis. He has reduced mobility and we can keep track of his military forces more closely. As I said, he has lost the use of two key airbases. Second, the missile attacks against the air defense sites dismantled much of his air defense in the south and there can be no doubt that this presents a much safer flying regime for coalition aircrews.

Third, the force enhancements added to the region this week provide us with a wide array of military options should they be required. Combat sustainability and an expanded array of target options are a few of the benefits.

Let me briefly recap our overall strategy toward Iraq. We will maintain and help enforce the U.N. sanctions regime, the tightest ever imposed by the United Nations. We will vigorously support the U.N. Special Commission's inspection regime, the world's most intense international weapons of mass destruction control system. We will support, and continue to support, the arms embargo that is part of that sanctions regime. We will vigorously enforce the no-fly zones and the limits on Iraqi military activities south of the 32d degree parallel enshrined in Resolution 949. The purpose of this measure is to respond to the long-term threats Saddam's Iraq poses. They increase our ability to monitor the Iraqi military and reduce its ability to threaten neighbors important to us.

Last month we chose the time and place to act in response to Saddam's aggression. We focused on what matters most to the United States and to our national interests, and we took actions to defend those interests and enhance our ability to protect what matters to us. We are ready to do that again.

To summarize, the United States has and will continue to counter Iraq's threat to our national interests. Although our current military posture in the gulf is designed to contain the threat posed by Iraq, it should be noted our forces in concert with our allies are engaged in a carefully balanced strategy to ensure that neither Iraq nor Iran can dominate the gulf, endanger the security of our partners, or control the flow of oil on which the welfare of both producers and consumers depends.

That concludes my statement, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask General Van Alstyne to briefly review the operational deployments in the region as you asked earlier.

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Mr. HUNTER. Just before we do that, and you, General Van Alstyne, jump into this if you want to, you have talked mostly about military operations in the south. What about the north?

Mr. RIEDEL. Operation Provide Comfort has continued throughout this crisis——

Mr. HUNTER. I understand it has continued, but the American military force that we focused on Iraq, we focused to the south; right?

Mr. RIEDEL. That is correct.

Mr. HUNTER. Why—what interest do we have in the north?

Mr. RIEDEL. Our interest in the north and the reason we established Operation Provide Comfort in 1991 flowed fundamentally from a humanitarian interest. We wanted to see the mass exodus of Kurdish refugees in Turkey halted and assist them back to their homes.

Operation Provide Comfort has been very successful in doing that. We got the Kurdish refugees off of those mountains. Since then we have continued a modest humanitarian program and we have continued to operate the no-fly zone north of the 36th parallel in order to ensure that Iraqi aircraft don't try to interfere with those humanitarian programs.

Mr. HUNTER. Let me just get that straight, and General Van Alstyne, this may be of help to stage your presentation here. The major military effect on the Iraqi military posture was that the Iraqi air forces were displaced from these two major airbases.

Mr. RIEDEL. That was one effect. The other was we are now able to fly right to the edge of Baghdad and monitor activity throughout that country.

Mr. HUNTER. By expanding the no-fly zone.

Mr. RIEDEL. That is correct.

Mr. HUNTER. With respect to displacing their air force, you have displaced them maybe 60 miles; is that right?

Mr. RIEDEL. We have pushed them further north away from our interest.

Mr. HUNTER. Is 60 miles an approximate——

Mr. RIEDEL. That is roughly correct.

Mr. HUNTER. How long does it take the military aircraft that we are talking about, the 40 or so aircraft that were displaced to fly 60 miles in terms of time? Was that 10 minutes?

Mr. RIEDEL. It is a short amount of time.

Mr. HUNTER. So for practical purposes, we have displaced their aircraft 10 minutes further from potential targets in the north.

Mr. RIEDEL. We have moved their operational base further away and should they decide to move against Kuwait or Saudi Arabia is a great amount of space that they are going to have to move through with no air cover.

Mr. HUNTER. And with their airplanes at least 10 minutes of flying time.

Mr. RIEDEL. That is correct.

Mr. HUNTER. General Van Alstyne, we have just a couple of us here so for Gene and Pete as we go through this briefing let's to do this thing informally. If you guys have questions, just jump right in anytime here.

General Van Alstyne, go ahead and lead us through this.

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General VAN ALSTYNE. Sir; I believe most of the Members have received several briefings on Desert Strike, the operation to establish the extended no-fly zone. My purpose today is to present an unclassified summary of current deployments in the CINCOM area of operations.

Mr. HUNTER. Why don't you give us just a fast overview of the strike, just very quickly of what you did.

General VAN ALSTYNE. Strikes were conducted on the 3d of September with a following strike on the 4th of September, a total of 44 T–LAM missiles were fired against—with the intent of stripping off and eliminating the air defense capability within the new no-fly zone between the 33d and 32d parallel so that we could enforce the new no-fly zone without concern for air defense systems. Those air defense systems were, in fact, attrited.

Sir, my purpose today is to summarize in an unclassified setting the current deployments in the gulf. In Saudi Arabia, there is a contingent of fighter aircraft, tanker support aircraft, intelligence collection aircraft, and cargo support aircraft, and approximately in an unclassified setting approximately 100 aircraft or so in Saudi Arabia.

In Kuwait, sir, the 117 F–16's, also a brigade that you have been reading about, about 3,500 personnel, that brigade is now on the ground and have begun to conduct training, and there is also a Patriot missile battery currently in Kuwait.

Moving to the other side of the chart, sir, there are two carrier battle groups, the *Vincent* and the *Enterprise* on station with their full contingent of aircraft; again in an unclassified setting, approximately 150 aircraft total. As well as the rest of the battle group cruiser destroyers, F–16's in Bahrain and a contingent of B–52's still at Diego Garcia.

That is a summary of current deployments in the gulf.

Mr. HUNTER. Gene or Pete, do you gentlemen have any questions you would like to ask? I guess, Pete, you sat down first. You walked in the door together but you got to your seat first.

Mr. GEREN. That is the advantage of being in the front row and entering in this door. Very few advantages of being in the front row but that is one of them.

Mr. Secretary, were you here all morning? Did you hear all the testimony this morning?

Mr. RIEDEL. A good deal of it, not all of it, but a good deal of it.

Mr. GEREN. It seems like it is so hard to discuss much of this without getting into areas that I assume you would consider—not that you consider but that are classified, and it is hard to talk about a lot of it. But one of the more disturbing aspects of what has happened in all the reports are the CIA effort in northern Iraq was compromised and folks were killed and our partners up there consider themselves to have been abandoned, and as Mr. Perle quoted, one of our colleagues, the winners in a conflict usually aren't evacuated.

To the extent you can discuss it in a nonclassified setting, what would you say about what has happened to our effort in northern Iraq to establish a base from which we would work against the interest of Saddam Hussein?

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Mr. RIEDEL. Clearly, there is a lot here that deals with intelligence issues that are not appropriate to discuss in an open session, but let me make one or two comments.

Mr. Perle spoke about the Iraqi National Congress, which is an umbrella group of Iraqi Opposition Forces which the United States has supported since its inception in 1992, and we continue to support it and we wish it the very best.

I think we need to be realistic, though, about those opposition forces and how strong their position was in northern Iraq. I don't know of any reputable analyst of the situation in Iraq who believes those opposition forces were on the verge of overthrowing the Saddam dictatorship. They have been weak since their inception, they have been badly divided among themselves, and they remain very weak and badly divided among themselves. It was the leadership of the two largest factions in that umbrella, the two Kurdish groups that in the end couldn't put down their own differences in order to unite against Saddam Hussein.

I think the note that we abandoned them ignores the fact that in the end it was the leadership of these two Kurdish parties who decided to focus 90 percent of their energy for the last year on fighting each other rather than on fighting Saddam Hussein that effectively weakened the Iraqi opposition.

Mr. GEREN. At the end of the day, though, comparing where we were protecting our interests on August 1 and where we are on September 26, has our mission in the north been compromised, would you say?

Mr. RIEDEL. I would like to focus on our overall posture. Are we better off vis-a-vis Iraq today than we were the 1st of August? Different people can honestly differ over where they come out on it.

I think the way we see it is with regard to our strategically vital national interest, the protection of the oil resources in the gulf, and our partners in the gulf, we are better off. We moved the Iraqi air force further away. We fly over more of Iraq. We have the ability to enforce the no-fly and no-drive zone in southern Iraq, even stronger today than we did before.

The situation in the north was always a very fragile one. It remains very fragile. It is likely to change a good deal more over the next several months. As Director Deutch noted yesterday, one of the characteristics of the situation in the north is that alliances shift very, very rapidly and gains turn out to be rather transitory and illusory. Our gains in this crisis will remain intact. The no-fly zone now goes to the border of Baghdad.

Mr. GEREN. Dr. Deutch said a couple of weeks ago in testimony on the Senate side in his opinion Saddam is stronger now than he was before this crisis began. Do you disagree with that?

Mr. RIEDEL. I don't want to try to interpret the Director's words, particularly since I am a detailee from the Intelligence Community to the Department of Defense and have to go home at the end of the day. If you measure the strength of the Iraq opposition, there is no question it is weaker today. I think most of that body blow was inflicted by the Iraqi opposition's own leadership. Whether our strategic position in the region is stronger, I think the answer is unquestionably yes.

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Mr. GEREN. I yield to my colleagues. I would like to follow up on that but I don't want to hog the time.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Taylor.

Mr. TAYLOR. Mr. Chairman, I know you are a very nonpartisan person and I know our chairman is, but I would like to, I think, remind everyone that there is a normal procedure where regardless of who the administration is, don't they normally go first?

Mr. HUNTER. Are you talking about——

Mr. TAYLOR. If an Under Secretary of Defense shows up, don't they normally get to go first, and I would hope that regardless of who the President is, and regardless of who the chairman is, we could stick to that in the future.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Taylor, I don't know. I don't know if there is a rule, and actually I would say this: As you and I know, as people engage in debate as professional debaters as politicians, I always thought the catbird seat in any debate is to be able to go last and be able to take on what the guy said who was there before you, especially when we don't schedule rebuttal time for the first panel to come back and explain why they were really right. So if I had to pick my position, I would always pick it last, but maybe we can ask Mr. Riedel which one he would prefer next time.

Mr. RIEDEL. I am not going to touch that one.

Mr. TAYLOR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The first question is, What, to date, are the Iraqi air assets? What do they have remaining? Did they get any of the fighters back when they went to Iran?

Mr. RIEDEL. We can give you a detailed layout but they have approximately 300 combat aircraft, a good percentage of those are the older model MiG 21, but they do have some of the more advanced Mirage F–1's and MiG–29's still in their inventory. The aircraft that went to Iran, none of the combat aircraft have returned to Iraq, and some of those combat aircraft have been integrated into the Iranian air order of battle.

Mr. TAYLOR. Of the 300, how many of them would be third generation aircraft?

Mr. RIEDEL. I would say the bulk of them are.

Mr. TAYLOR. The bulk of them.

Tell me about the—I am familiar with the no-fly zone. Tell me about the no-drive zone. Does that include armored equipment, any vehicle or——

Mr. RIEDEL. It is a restriction on Iraq's ability to increase or reinforce its forces south of the 32d parallel. Just to recap briefly.

In 1994, you will recall the Iraqis sent two Republican Guard divisions down to the Kuwaiti border clearly with the intent, we think, of once again invading Kuwait. In the wake of that, we deployed forces to the region in Operation Vigilant Warrior and we sent strong messages to the Iraqis to pull their forces back.

When they pulled their forces back, the United Nations adopted a Security Council resolution, 949, that mandates Iraq cannot reinforce its forces in the south again. The coalition, in this case the United States and the British, translated that into a specific line and we said they cannot augment their forces south of the 32d.

No-drive is a catch phrase for something which is better to refer to as a no-reinforcement or no-augmentation of forces. It doesn't

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mean they can't drive a vehicle, it just means they can't bring more forces there. This has the result of keeping the bulk of Iraq's military force far away from the Kuwaiti border.

Mr. TAYLOR. Mr. Riedel, if I could, as a lawmaker I believe very strongly in the rule of law, and I think one of the things that got us in this situation in the first place is that we had no clear national definition of what our interests were in that part of the world. We had, for example, no mutual defense treaties with Kuwait. There is still a lot of speculation as to what Ms. Gillespie did, or did not, tell Saddam Hussein just prior to the August invasion.

Has the administration given any serious thought to defining what the United States interests are in this region, not in U.N. terms but in terms of our Nation then having that ratified by the U.S. Senate?

Mr. RIEDEL. Mr. Congressman, I think what we have done is define what our interests are. We have identified those as protecting the energy resources of the region. This is the energy storehouse of the world. Two-thirds of the world's proven oil reserves can be found in this part of the world.

I think you are correct in noting that prior to 1990 we had some very fuzzy lines about what we would tolerate and what we wouldn't tolerate. I think that the two administrations now have laid down a much clearer line that we will not tolerate Iraqi attempts to move against our friends in the region.

We have also worked with all of the states of the gulf Cooperation Council to develop defense cooperation agreements with the bulk of them that regularize and routinize our defense relationships with them. So much of the vagueness that existed prior to August 1990, I think, is pretty much clarified.

What we tried to do in these responses to Saddam's latest act was to draw those lines even more clearly and more specifically, that we are not going to tolerate Iraqi attempts to threaten our allies in the region, and we will take actions that make it more difficult for him to do that.

Mr. TAYLOR. Getting back to my question, has the administration given any serious thought to having this ratified by the U.S. Senate since under the Constitution a defense treaty's—who we have mutual defense treaties with would fall under their constitutionality responsibilities? Since apparently this is going to be an ongoing thing, why not make it formal? At least, why not allow a formal vote on it?

Mr. RIEDEL. I think that the administration has briefed this issue on the Hill repeatedly, and has—and its predecessor received congressional support for Desert Storm in a clear vote. I don't know of any current plans to ask for treaties or confirmation of such treaties.

Mr. TAYLOR. General, if I may, and I will draw on the reference of NATO, doesn't a clearly defined mutual defense treaty help prevent wars? Isn't it reasonably safe to say that the uncertainty of the American response might well have caused the invasion of Kuwait? And if Ms. Gillespie said what she said which we take no position in inter–Arab conflicts.

General VAN ALSTYNE. Mr. Congressman, I won't waste your time by offering a personal view of that.

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Mr. TAYLOR. You are not wasting my time, sir. I am deadly serious. We are talking about—

Mr. RIEDEL. I don't think we dispute your fundamental point that the vagueness in 1990 sent the wrong message. I think we have drawn that line now pretty clearly in the sand.

Mr. TAYLOR. Mr. Riedel, is this an anti-Saddam sentiment? Is it a regional statement that we are not going to allow any of the neighbors in this region to invade any other neighbor?

What is the message that we are sending? Is it strictly a message aimed at the Iraqis when just two administrations ago we were helping the Iraqis against the Iranians? If, in your mind, you think we have a clearly defined purpose, why not put it in writing and have it ratified by the Senate the way the Founding Fathers had in mind?

Mr. RIEDEL. We think the international commitment to Kuwait is in writing and has been endorsed through the U.N. process. I think the United States commitment to Kuwait is clearly understood.

The question you asked, is it a Saddam oriented? Our answer would be no. We want to see Iraq comply with U.N. Security Council resolutions. If Saddam were to go tomorrow, we would still hold Iraq to the standard of the U.N. Security Council resolution, including the independence and sovereignty of its neighbors, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

Mr. TAYLOR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. HUNTER. Certainly. Mr. Dellums.

Mr. DELLUMS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I apologize for having come in a little late. I just have a couple of questions.

I would like to go to the first concern that I have that I raised in my opening remarks. From your perspective, what was the legal basis upon which this military action was taken?

Mr. RIEDEL. The legal basis was specifically U.N. Security Council Resolution 688 that demands Iraq cease the repression of its people and finds the repression of the Iraqi people in this case to be a threat to regional peace and security. That resolution was the basis upon which the coalition created the no-fly zone in the north in 1991 and the no-fly zone in the south in 1992.

Mr. DELLUMS. You were here this morning. There were a number of references to the policy of dual containment. Walk through that for a moment as a layperson. Ostensibly, Saddam Hussein said he responded to a request from one set of Kurds to defend against actions ostensibly taken by another set of Kurds influenced by the Iranians. How does our then-challenge of that comport with the notion of dual containment? Because you are dealing with both Iran and Iraq.

Mr. RIEDEL. Let me walk you through the sequence of events a little bit because, I think, it helps eliminate this.

There has been an ongoing struggle between two of the—two Kurdish parties in the north for over a year. The United States has tried to persuade them to put their arms down against each other and focus on the real threat in the region, which is the Saddam Hussein tyranny which has been most awful in its application to the Kurdish residents of the north.

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We had reached some success in late August. We had gotten the two parties to agree to come to London and begin negotiations. The morning those negotiations began, Saddam Hussein sent 40,000 men and 300 tanks into the city of Irbil. There was no cause for that. It was a brutal example that this man's reckless use of military force hasn't changed and he hasn't learned one iota since August 1990.

We made a very conscious decision that we were not going to get drawn into the intricacies of that Kurdish civil war and try to back one faction against another. I think that would have been a bad mistake for the United States.

Rather, we felt it was important to demonstrate to Saddam Hussein that the reckless use of force like this had its cost and that cost would come to a place that matters to us, and mattered to him, and that was in the center of the country in expanding the no-fly zone. We had promised Iraq before it moved that if it moved against the city of Irbil there would be serious consequences and we invoked those serious consequences in places that mattered the most to us.

Mr. DELLUMS. You mentioned in response to that question that two group representatives—representatives of the two groups of Kurds were meeting in a third place on the very same day that this military action was taken. Were people in Baghdad aware of this coming together?

Mr. RIEDEL. Absolutely.

Mr. DELLUMS. They were aware?

Mr. RIEDEL. Absolutely.

Mr. DELLUMS. My final question is a sensitive question that I posed to the two people on the panel when I attempted to paraphrase Mr. Haass.

At the end of the day whether one agrees with military force or not, disagrees with military force or not, it seems to me that ultimately we are talking about the greatest hope for stability is, indeed, diplomacy that moves us beyond terrorism and other things.

I would like to get a sense from you as to what is this administration's strategy, longer view with respect to communication with Iran, communication with Iraq. What are the diplomatic dimensions to what it is you are trying to do? It seems to me that ultimately a military force may serve some purpose, but I don't think it ultimately brings stability to continue to be waging battle in the area. At some point you have to sit down and Dellums has to talk with Riedel if we are going to communicate. In some kind of way we have to do that.

Mr. RIEDEL. I would note that is more properly the realm of my colleagues in the State Department. That disclaimer aside, our policy toward Iraq and Iran is called dual containment and was founded on the belief that these two regimes in Baghdad and Tehran each pose unique and very serious threats to our interests. It is not, however, a cookie-cutter approach. We do not try to deal with each in exactly the same way.

Toward Iraq, we have the good fortune of having well over two dozen U.N. Security Council resolutions which form an international basis to contain the Saddam Hussein regime. Those include the strongest sanctions, economic sanctions ever adopted by

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the United Nations, and as some of the witnesses noted this morning, those have been remarkably well-enforced even at the cost, considerable cost to some of our allies in the region such as Jordan and Turkey.

It also includes the most intrusive inspection regime to prevent any country from developing weapons of mass destruction that has ever been created. We support those. We provide a great deal of support to both the maintenance of the sanctions regime, by providing United States naval ships in the Persian gulf to intercept ships en route to Iraq and by supporting the U.N. Special Commission. We provided, for example, with the U–2 aircraft that it uses to take imagery of Iraq in order to try to find out where Iraq is hiding things. We will continue that active support that is both diplomatic and military.

Toward Iran, we do not have, unfortunately, such an international consensus. We have been seeking to develop it. We, more than any other country in the world, have tried to highlight the outrageous behavior of the Iranian Government, and being the world's principal patron state sponsor of terrorism we have some success. However, I would be candid with you, we still have a long way to go in building an international consensus about Iraq.

Toward Iran, in particular, though, we have taken the position, as the Bush administration did before this, that we are prepared to talk to them if they want to talk to us, but that dialog has to be authoritative and face-to-face. It can't be with somebody's niece or nephew in some far off place in which we don't know who we are talking to or what we are talking about. We are prepared to sit down face-to-face with the Government of Iran and discuss our differences with them. They have refused to do that. But our offer remains on the table.

Mr. DELLUMS. Thank you, sir; and thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your generosity.

Mr. HUNTER. Thank you, Mr. Dellums.

Pete or Gene, do you gentlemen have anything else? Mr. Geren.

Mr. GEREN. Could you talk a little bit about Turkey with us, our current policy about Turkey? They have been a very dependable ally. Our Congress likes to beat up on Turkey over a horrible incident, I guess, 80-plus years ago. It has remained a strain between the two nations.

We now have a government in charge of Turkey that is less friendly to us than the one they replaced. They weren't as cooperative with us in this engagement as they were in the past. Have we turned the corner with Turkey? Do you think we have a new relationship with them forevermore?

We had the recent denial of several helicopters there and a lot of things to suggest that perhaps our relationship with Turkey is significantly different. If you could just talk about the administration's policy toward them, where you see it going, what we need to do to repair our relations, if, in fact, we determine it to be in our national interest to do that and also where our interest with theirs overlap.

Mr. RIEDEL. I would be happy to. Turkey is a very important ally of ours. It has stood with us in numerous crises, contrary to, I

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think, some of the media perception. It has stood with us in this one as well.

Dr. Perry visited Ankara as part of his gulf trip. He had meetings with President Demirel, the Turkish Defense Minister, the Turkish Foreign Minister, and the leadership of the Turkish General's staff. In all of those meetings he laid out the basic rationale of our policy toward Iraq of containment, and we received full support from the Turkish leadership for that.

Turkey is going through some profound and complex domestic political transition. It has its first Islamic government since the creation of the Republic of Turkey 80 years ago. Its sorting-out process is likely to be a long and difficult one.

It may surprise you, but there was certainly one thing I agreed with in what Mr. Perle said this morning, which is that, in order to maintain a strong relationship with that country we have to deliver on commitments of military aid to it. When we promise them that we are going to give them some kind of military assistance, we need to deliver on that.

We, as you alluded to, have not had as good a record on that as we should, and this administration continues to believe we should have a responsible military assistance relationship with Turkey, and I think that is one area, in particular, where we need to continue to work with the Congress in coming up with formulas that allow us to go forward with military assistance.

The strength of our relationship with Turkey over the years has long been the security partnership between the Turkish Armed Forces and the United States Armed Forces and that partnership has taken some—has suffered as this process has gone on, and our Turkish counterparts find it hard to understand why, when they are promised something, it doesn't show up.

Mr. GEREN. When you said, in the meetings that Secretary Perry had with them, he received assurances of support but we didn't have access to their bases, we didn't really have the kind of—there were no actions behind those words. It changed our military tactics, it would seem to me, in this engagement.

Mr. RIEDEL. Let me clarify that, because I think that is a misperception.

We never asked Turkey if we could fly strike missions out of its airbase in this crisis. We made the decision where we were going to strike and the means we were going to use, which were cruise missiles in the center and south of the country. We never put to the Turks the question, Would you let us use your bases?

I won't speculate on what the answer would have been because we never put it to them. What we did ask them for was approval to use the bases to continue to enforce Operation Provide Comfort. And we got that support and we didn't have a problem there.

I mentioned earlier to Congressman Dellums that in the buildup to the Iraqi attack on Irbil, we sent several warnings to the Iraqis, many times we backed those warnings up with actions, also. We did what we call a surge of flight operations in the northern no-fly zone to let the Iraqis know we were serious, and we did that surge with the approval of the Government of Turkey which—whose airbase we operate from. So when we ask them for things we got it.

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Mr. GEREN. When they began this 3,000 tank invasion of Irbil, how far away was the base from which those tanks were launched?

Mr. RIEDEL. Very close. Thirty to fifty miles a way. Very close.

Mr. GEREN. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. I appreciate that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. HUNTER. Certainly. Mr. Dellums.

Mr. DELLUMS. I have one question I would like to ask that goes to the whole issue of coalition. It is fairly complex, but the stream of continuity is there. How do these recent unilateral actions advance or retard on the other hand the United States ability to preserve a multinational coalition organized to implement internationally sanctioned activities?

Doesn't such unilateral activity attenuate international consensus on an appropriate course of action to contain potential Iraqi aggression? Thereby undermining in the long run the legal basis for the strategy? Isn't it vital to our success of the region that we not step too far in front of our allies, both those from the region, and those outside the region in our interpretation of both what is allowable under the various resolutions and what is required as a practical matter to maintain security in the region?

Mr. RIEDEL. The short answer to your question is, I don't think we undermined our coalition. The longer answer is, I would say the following: Coalition maintenance is not easy work. It required a great deal of effort.

I can speak for the Department of Defense. Secretary Perry and Chairman Shalikashvili and others spent a lot of time working with our coalition partners of the region not just in crisis but in inviting them to the Pentagon and talking to them in times of noncrisis, in talking with them on the telephone in times of noncrisis, and in visiting the region when we do have serious problems.

By the nature of coalition politics, oftentimes what is said in public is less clear cut than what is said to us privately in meetings that we have face-to-face with coalition partners. In this case when the Secretary went out to the region 2 weeks ago and visited key partners whose support we have to have because it is their bases that we operate from, we got the support we need to have.

It is something I think Dr. Haass and others alluded to this morning that requires a great deal of effort and is subject to a lot of outside events. Events in the Arab-Israeli peace process, events in the history of Russia, events in the European theater all impact on the ability to have this coalition.

And make one final note, the coalition. I was a participant in the process of putting the coalition together in 1990 and 1991. It wasn't so perfect then. There is a tendency to think of it as it was, ironclad and 10 feet tall. If one goes back, one will look and see that even then we had a lot of difficulties holding some of our European partners with us. We had attempts with the Russians and the French right up until the last moments of Desert Storm to try to broker separate deals.

Coalition building is a full-time job. The Secretary and I think his colleagues recognized that, and that is why we have gone out to the region repeatedly to try to hold this coalition together.

Mr. DELLUMS. The final followup—your answer to my question occasions this. This morning there was a very aggressive assertion,

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and I would like to give you an opportunity to respond to the record. There was a very aggressive assertion; First, that there had not been a real ongoing effort to maintain the coalition. I would like you to respond to that. And there was also a very aggressive assertion that the United States attempted to play no role in assuming any leadership in the coalition, and I would like you to respond to that.

Mr. RIEDEL. Obviously, I don't agree with either of those. We have played and we play today the leadership role in putting this coalition together. We have invited every member of the coalition for talks at the Pentagon over the last year on how we would hold our defense partnerships together. In those conversations we always discuss the threat we see from Iraq and Iran and the mutual efforts that we would need to build against it.

For example, last fall, Secretary had his Saudi counterpart, Minister of Defense, Prince Sultan, make a visit to the Pentagon, his first since the 1980s. The Secretary has been to Saudi Arabia four or five times in the last 6 months in order to nurture that relationship. We have had similar contacts with our Kuwaiti counterparts and with our Turkish counterparts.

Mr. HUNTER. I thank the gentleman and I just have a couple of other questions.

General Van Alstyne, you are familiar with the military strength that the country had in terms of fighter air wing divisions, size of our Navy and its air power at the time of Desert Storm. We had roughly 18 divisions. I think we committed 10 to the Middle East. During the Desert Storm operation we had 23 fighter air wings; we now have 10. Or we now have 13. We had about 550 naval ships; we are down to about 350. We haven't had that proportion reduction in carrier battle groups.

In your personal estimation, could we fight a Desert Storm with as overwhelming force as we demonstrated during the Desert Storm operation? Could we refight that operation today with the same overwhelming force?

General VAN ALSTYNE. Sir, your summary of the force then and now is right on track as I understand it. I would also say, though, that on the other side of the fence certainly Iraq has seen a significant reduction in the number of divisions and number of tanks and number of infantry fighting vehicles. So if you are asking for my personal assessment, with difficulty and certainly assuming that a similar coalition as we had in Desert Storm could be put into place, the current force structure assuming that there was not a regional conflict elsewhere, the outcome would be favorable.

Mr. HUNTER. What if there was a regional conflict elsewhere? I am thinking about the fact we had 18 divisions in existence at the time we committed 8 to Desert Storm. Today we have 10. So if you committed the same number in Desert Storm, you would have 2 left over. If you would take that qualifier out, what is your answer? Or we will assume that you did have a contingency elsewhere or you had to reserve some forces for the contingency.

General VAN ALSTYNE. Sir; if, in fact, this were the second major regional contingency that was ongoing with the current force structure, even with the degradation of the Iraqi force, without factoring

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in the coalition, I think it would be a very difficult military problem.

Mr. HUNTER. What is the future of the F–117 or the prognosis for permanently stationing the F–117 in the Middle East? Is that an option that is being discussed at this point?

General VAN ALSTYNE. Sir, the deployment now of the 117's that are in Kuwait is of course a temporary deployment.

Mr. HUNTER. Is there discussion about permanentizing that deployment?

General VAN ALSTYNE. Not about extending that deployment right now. I will have to say I don't know if there are plans or discussions regarding a permanent stationing of 117's. I can take that question and provide a response.

Mr. HUNTER. If you could do that.

[The information submitted for the record follows:]

The Commander in Chief, United States Central Command has neither recommended nor requested the permanent stationing of the planes in the region. Currently, the F117's will remain temporarily in Kuwait, then redeploy back to the United States once tensions have sufficiently relaxed. The F117's have air-refueling capability and can, therefore, respond rapidly to a contingency in the gulf. From an operational perspective, CONUS-based F117's can easily complement the powerful deterrent and war-fighting capabilities of Operation SOUTHERN WATCH already in theater.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Riedel, just one last one for you. I am informed that on three occasions we have discussed the Kurds and I think the sense has been that the Kurd—bringing the Kurds together or trying to build some solidarity, some unity there is a mission impossible. It is a very difficult thing.

I am informed that on three occasions last year Iraqi groups opposed to Saddam approached the United States with plans for preventing the Kurds breaking down into factional fighting. The administration declined to offer the small financial support claimed to be necessary to keep the coalition together and that opened opportunities for Saddam Hussein.

Are you up to speed on that, these initiatives that were brought forth to the administration?

Mr. RIEDEL. I am generally familiar with the issue; I am not familiar with the specifics of each case. The negotiations between the two Kurdish parties were handled by the State Department and the National Security Council, not directly by us. I would say this: We tried very hard to persuade these people to focus on who their real enemy was. At the end of the day we didn't succeed in doing that.

Could we have offered them more support in the process is a question which I am not particularly well-suited to be able to answer, but I would offer you this: If they didn't want peace bad enough between the two of them to find it on their own, I am not so sure that outside support from us would have made all that much difference. We don't want inter-Kurdish peace more than the Kurdish leadership wanted it.

Mr. DELLUMS. Your first question causes me to want to followup. I listened to you, General, as you responded to Mr. Hunter with respect to whether or not you can fight some other regional contingency if you were caught in a Desert Storm-type operation.

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Correct me if I am wrong, and I am certainly not a perfect person, as I understand it the bottom-up review assumption and the gaming assumptions that you folks have played have come to a different conclusion than you responded—and then the answer that you gave to Mr. Hunter and that is it would be a tight fit but if you had sufficient forces within the assumptions—the gaming assumption that you have that a regional contingency in the Persian gulf you could also engage in another regional contingency.

I throw that out. Then I will just make one quick observation——

Mr. HUNTER. Would the gentlemen yield for one question on one point, that I think is important, because I think he is trying to paraphrase my question. What may be the difference in the General's answer is I said, could you win that war in the Persian Gulf in the same overwhelming fashion that we won Desert Storm. The gentleman said—phrased it as we should be able to engage in and that maybe—I am just offering that to try to help the question here.

Mr. DELLUMS. I understand, and I was going to make the second observation that goes to that point. I would assert very aggressively that they didn't need all of those forces in the Persian Gulf and they didn't use them and history records that they did not use all of them.

Second, there was tremendous technological capability that was used and in the aftermath of the Persian Gulf under the rubric lessons learned from the Persian Gulf one of the things that stood out in a very glaring fashion was the fact that our commitments to research and development, to stealth capability, smart bomb capability, standoff capability, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera ad nauseam, were the major factors that contributed to bringing down the Iraqi Army was not 5,000 American troops, we didn't use all of those troops, but we did use technology.

My point being that all of that overwhelming force wasn't needed; therefore, it may be a legitimate question to say could you wage and even though a tight fit have sufficient forces to prevail? You didn't need those forces in the first place.

General VAN ALSTYNE. Sir, my understanding is as yours is, that our basic force structure strategy is based on the requirement to be engaged in a major regional contingency and then at a certain period of time after that be prepared to undertake successfully a second major regional contingency.

For example, if there were a conflict in Korea, then after a certain period or strategy I assume after a certain period of time we would also be successful in Iraq.

My personal assessment, which is what I was asked for, is that it would be very difficult with the current force structure to successfully win in the second regional conflict.

Mr. DELLUMS. I think that is fair and I think that is an appropriate caveat, because he did say in your personal view. I just wanted the record to reflect that based on the assumptions of the BUR that I just wanted to set the record straight and separate that from personal view and policy that has guided the Pentagon.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Pickett, thank you for coming in and finishing this hearing off with us. Mr. Pickett.

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STATEMENT OF HON. OWEN PICKETT, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM VIRGINIA

Mr. PICKETT. Mr. Chairman, I apologize for being absent. There were some other things that took me away, and having heard virtually none of the questions and answers I hope—well, I will try not to duplicate anything.

But the point that I want to clarify here is that in the Persian Gulf war this was not the United States of America going it alone. As I recall, we had 50-some other countries around the world that had signed on to support in one form or the other that effort.

As we proceed to deal with issues in the Persian Gulf area, is it the policy of the United States to go it alone or do we condition action on their part on having allies to go along with us?

Mr. RIEDEL. We clearly seek, and I have testified already I believe, have received a great deal of support from the allies that matter most to us in this part of the world. The military strike that we carried out, the two attacks on Iraqi air defense systems, we carried out through United States systems, cruise missile systems, which had the virtue of not risking our pilots as well as not requiring any third party support. Had we chosen other missions, we may have had to solicit different kinds of support from our allies. In this case we were able to defend—were able to attack those facilities with our own unilateral means.

I think that is a very favorable position to be in that when we need to do it, we can do it that way. We did, however, receive the support of our allies in expanding the no-fly zone to the 33d parallel, which I believe was really the larger strategic issue here. We had that support in a number of ways.

The Saudis and Kuwaitis and the UAE from which we operate that missions to enforce that no-fly zone all continued to let us operate from their facilities. They also provide us with a great deal of host nation support in funding and maintaining those operations.

Our British and French allies who fly with us in the no-fly zone also continue to fly with us. The British all the way to the 33d parallel, the French, only to the 32d parallel.

The answer to your question is when we need to take unilateral measures I am sure we will, but we would prefer to have broad coalition support and where we needed this in this crisis we had it.

Mr. PICKETT. The other question is that in the environment that existed after Iraq took the action in the north where they deployed the forces to take the city of Irbil, that was essentially at that point a civil war between the two factions of the Kurds. Are there circumstances in which the United States is prepared to undertake military operations on one side or the other in what is essentially a civil war of that type?

Mr. RIEDEL. We very deliberately chose not to get involved in that civil war at the beginning of this crisis and I can't read the future. One of the rules of the Government is to never say never, but I can't envision a scenario where we would want to get involved in a war between two Kurdish factions.

Mr. PICKETT. Those are all the questions I have, Mr. Chairman. Thank you very much.

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Mr. HUNTER. I thank my distinguished colleague and I thank the ranking member of the full committee and the chairman of the full committee for their endurance here. Thank you for letting me take the chair here in the last 30 minutes or so. It has been very interesting.

Gentlemen, we appreciate your endurance and please don't look at this as any slight that you testified last. I have always looked forward to testifying last so you can comment on what the other guy said. Thank you for laying out the administration's position I think very concisely, Mr. Riedel and General Van Alstyne.

Thank you for your display of the American superstructure that exists in that region and for your candid comments. We appreciate you, and the hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1:45 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

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