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IRAQ: DEMOCRACY OR CIVIL WAR?

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY, EMERGING THREATS, AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS

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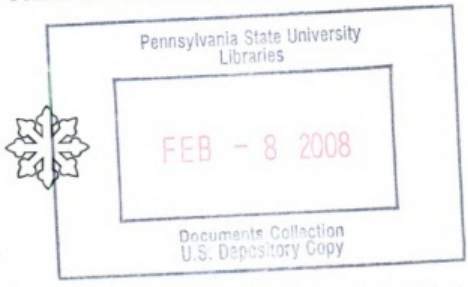

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IRAQ: DEMOCRACY OR CIVIL WAR?

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2006

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY, EMERGING
THREATS, AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:05 a.m., in room 2154, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Christopher Shays (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Shays, Kucinich and Van Hollen.

Staff present: R. Nicholas Palarino, Ph.D., staff director; Kaleb Redden, PMI; Robert A. Briggs, analyst; Robert Kelley, chief counsel; Jeff Baran, minority counsel; Andrew Su, minority professional staff member; and Jean Gosa, minority assistant clerk.

Mr. SHAYS. A quorum being present, the Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations hearing entitled, "Iraq: Democracy or Civil War?" is called to order.

This is an extremely important topic, and thus we want the record to be complete, so this hearing will continue over 3 days today, Monday, Wednesday and Friday. We will hear from 13 witnesses on 5 panels. Today and Wednesday we will recess, not adjourn, at the start of each reconvening session. Members then present will have the opportunity to make opening statements. In all other respects, we will proceed as usual without prejudice to the rights and privileges of any Member.

Today marks the 5-year anniversary of the terrorist attacks on our country. On that fateful day, the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and a field in Pennsylvania became epicenters of a seismic event still generating shocks across our Nation and around the world. It is fitting we begin today by observing a moment of silence in recognition of those lost and the suffering of the loved ones they left behind. And so I would like to ask our panel, our guests, and the Members to stand for a moment of silence.

[Moment of silence.]

Mr. SHAYS. Five years after September 11th, our Nation is engaged in a global war against what the 9/11 Commission called Islamic extremists, and in one of those operational theaters we are meeting fierce resistance. The conflict in Iraq finds United States and Coalition forces up against increasing insurgent, sectarian and terrorist violence.

Thomas Friedman of the New York Times has supported the U.S. objective to foster progressive democracy in the Middle East. Bluntly stated, "it is now obvious that we are not midwifing democracy

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in Iraq. We are babysitting a civil war." While some may take issue with Mr. Friedman's choice of words, the broad contours of his point are clear. The violence in Iraq continues, if not increases. The new Iraqi leadership has not yet shown the political will to confront it, and efforts to promote peace and democracy are stalled.

Iraqi security forces are truly improving and growing in number, but they face an uphill battle if Iraqi politicians are not willing to confront the militias and make peace among themselves.

With their country teetering toward chaos and political differences impeding progress, Iraqi leaders took a 1-month vacation. When their Parliament, the Council of Representatives, returned to session last week, more than one-third was not in attendance.

Let me be clear. I have and I continue to be a strong supporter of our cause in Iraq. I believe it is a noble effort. We have no choice but to win. But we must go where the truth leads us, wherever it leads us. During this week in three separate hearings, our committee will determine security force levels; prospects for national reconciliation; and the consequences of leaving Iraq immediately, later but still prematurely, or when Iraqis are capable of taking over for Coalition forces.

At today's session we are focusing on the numbers of Iraqi security forces required to secure their own country. The answer to this question is critical to the Iraqi people and to Americans here at home.

We will hear first today from Ambassador Eric Edelman, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy at the Department of Defense; and Rear Admiral William Sullivan, Vice Director for Strategic Plans and Policies representing the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

During panel two we will hear from retired U.S. Army Major General William Nash, senior fellow and director of the Center for Preventative Action at the Counsel on Foreign Relations; Dr. Bruce Hoffman, an expert on insurgencies and terrorism previously at RAND Corp. and currently professor of strategic studies as Georgetown University; and Mr. Alan King, who commanded a U.S. Army civil affairs battalion in Iraq and was advisor for tribal affairs to U.S. authorities in Iraq.

We thank all of our witnesses for their participation.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Christopher Shays follows:]

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Statement of Representative Christopher Shays
September 11, 2006

Today marks the five-year anniversary of the terrorist attacks on our country. On that fateful day, the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and a field of Pennsylvania became epicenters of a seismic event still generating aftershocks across our nation, and around the world.

It is fitting we begin today by observing a moment of silence in recognition of those lost, and the suffering of the loved ones they left behind.

Five years after September 11th, our nation is engaged in a global war against what the 9/11 Commission called Islamist extremists. In one of those operational theaters we are meeting fierce resistance. The conflict in Iraq finds US and Coalition forces up against increasing insurgent, sectarian and terrorist violence.

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Thomas Friedman of *The New York Times*, a supporter of the United States objective to foster progressive democracy in the Middle East bluntly stated, "It is now obvious that we are not midwifing democracy in Iraq. We are baby-sitting a civil war."

While some may take issue with Mr. Friedman's choice of words, the broad contours of his point are clear—the violence in Iraq continues (if not increases), the new Iraqi leadership has not yet shown the political will to confront it, and efforts to promote peace and democracy are stalled.

Iraqi Security Forces are truly improving and growing in number, but they face an uphill battle if Iraqi politicians are not willing to confront the militias and make peace among themselves.

With their country teetering toward chaos and political differences impeding progress, Iraqi leaders took a one-month vacation. When their Parliament, the Council of Representatives, returned to session last week, more than one-third was not in attendance.

Let me be clear. I have, and continue to be, a strong supporter of our cause in Iraq. I believe it is a noble effort we have no choice but to win. But we must go where the truth leads us, wherever it leads us.

During this week, in three separate hearings our Committee will examine security force levels; prospects for national reconciliation; and the consequences of leaving Iraq immediately, later but still prematurely, or when Iraqis are capable of taking over for Coalition forces.

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During Panel II, we will hear from retired US Army Major General William Nash, Senior Fellow and Director of the Center for Preventive Action at the Council on Foreign Relations; Dr. Bruce Hoffman, an expert on insurgencies and terrorism, previously at RAND Corporation and currently Professor of Strategic Studies at Georgetown University; and Mr. Alan King, who commanded a U.S. Army Civil Affairs Battalion in Iraq and was advisor for Tribal Affairs to U.S. authorities in Iraq.

We thank all of our witnesses for their participation.

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Mr. SHAYS. At this time the Chair would recognize Mr. Kucinich and thank him for his presence, and then we will go to our colleague from Maryland.

Mr. KUCINICH. I thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and while I think it is very important that we hold these hearings, I want to caution about having a hearing about Iraq on September 11th, because one of the problems that this country has suffered from in the last few years has been the conflation of September 11th with Iraq. The administration now, this administration, that has led us into a war blaming or trying to connect Iraq with September 11th has now itself been confronted with widespread public opinion that insists that everything they told us wasn't so. I don't know that it is particularly productive to have a hearing on Iraq on September 11th, but we are here, and we will proceed.

I also think that we have some new information that has come up in today's Washington Post that would require, I would hope, this committee to proceed with questions of individuals quoted in a story that said the prospects for securing the country's western Anbar Province are dim, and there is almost nothing the U.S. military can do to improve the political and social situation. One Army officer described as saying we haven't been defeated militarily, but we have been defeated politically. There is a report saying there is no function in the Iraqi Government institution in the Anbar Province, leaving a vacuum that has been filled by al Qaeda; another that describes Anbar beyond repair. Another report says the United States has lost at Anbar, that military operations has faced a stalemate, local governments in the province have collapsed, leaving central government with no presence.

I mean, I don't know what we are going to talk about today, but it seems that would be a pretty good place to start. Nevertheless, I want to thank the Chair for the hearing. These oversight hearings have been long overdue. Five years after the national tragedy of the terrorist attacks on September 11th, and more than 3 years after the White House and the Pentagon decided to invade Iraq in 2003, more Americans have thrown away those rose-colored glasses distributed by the White House and the Pentagon and discovered the disturbing truth underneath. We are not greeted as liberators, but, instead, Iraq's occupiers.

There is a war of national liberation going on in Iraq right now, and its goal is to liberate Iraq from Americans. Meanwhile, the factions in the struggle are vying for power. That is the civil war. The situation is grim. Iraq is heading toward an even deepening civil war, and it may be too late for anyone to keep Iraq from tearing itself apart. Contrary to what the White House claims, neither Iraqis or Americans are safer now than they were a few years ago. Violence has skyrocketed, and each day more American troops are put in harm's way, targets of insurgents and deadly IED explosive bombs.

More than 2,600 American troops have been lost in the course of military operations in Iraq. The number of attacks initiated by the insurgents have continued steadily upwards. In spite of a rising numbers of Iraqi police, and in spite of prolonged occupation, in spite of increasing number of IEDs that are detected and disarmed, there is a rising number of deadly IED attacks, each recent month

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deadlier than the last. The average number of daily attacks by insurgents has steadily risen. In the past 3 months, the daily attack rate hasn't fallen below 90.

Now, the Vice President would look at those observations and say, oh, this doesn't serve America's purpose to talk about it. But this Vice President has had difficulty confronting the truth, and he's been one of those who led this country into a war based on falsehoods, statements that he should be held legally accountable for.

Now, if Iraqis—whether it is a vicious cycle of death squad execution-style killings carried out by militia groups or the skyrocketing number of kidnappings, bombs and sectarian violence which occur daily, 120 Iraqis are dying every day. Baghdad's coroner reports that tens of thousands of murders are occurring each month. Is that right? Is that right? Iraqis are not as safe as they were 3 years ago. Between 100,000 and 200,000 innocent Iraqis have died as a result of the U.S. invasion. Hundreds of thousands of Iraqis are internally displaced, afraid to leave their homes at night, and distrustful of the still ethnically segregated and very green Iraqi police force. The unemployment rate is estimated to be between 25 and 40 percent, and the Iraqi Government Ministry places the number at 48 percent.

Now, is it any wonder that despite what the Vice President and Deputy Secretary of Defense told this Congress and the country, we were not, in fact, greeted as liberators? Or is there any wonder in some Iraqis' eyes, Saddam's regime is beginning to look like the good old days?

Last week a coalition of 320 tribal leaders demanded the release of Saddam Hussein and possibly reinstated to the post of President. They are not a majority, but consider what public opinion polling shows in Iraq. Forty-seven percent approve of attacks on Americans. Iraq is, unfortunately for the Iraqis and American soldiers who are ordered to be there, a hopeless and deadly tragedy created by an elective U.S. war and by our elected government.

It was clear to me as it was to many other Members of Congress from the outset that the Bush administration's real goal was not democracy building. It was an arrogant, costly and immoral exercise to win an election at home and flex American military muscle abroad. And I also personally think that it may have had something to do with oil.

Now, Iraq had nothing to do with September 11th. Saddam had no ties to al Qaeda. Iraq did not pose a meaningful threat to the United States or its allies. What do we have today? Iraq a breeding ground for terrorists. The occupation of Iraq is a major, perhaps crippling drain on U.S. military. We went into Iraq looking for many WMDs, but instead all we got were IEDs.

And I wonder, is the Bush White House trying to repeat this bait-and-switch strategy now in Iran? Consider the parallels. In late 2002, the President identified a dangerous Middle Eastern regime whose leaders were intent on possessing weapons of mass destruction including nuclear weapons, and his regime supported terrorists. In 2002, the administration emphasized the magnitude and imminence of the threat even though intelligence agencies put the threat years into the future. Sounds a lot like 2006, doesn't it?

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In 2002, the administration went to the United Nations to make its case against Iraq. Sounds a lot what the administration is doing in 2006, doesn't it?

In 2002, prior to receiving authorization to use military force, the administration launched Operation Southern Focus, a bombing campaign against Iraq's air defenses, and here we are in 2006, prior to receiving authorization, U.S. military personnel are already deployed inside and around Iran preparing the battlefield by gathering targeting information, targeting intelligence, recruiting local fighters according to independent reports published in the New Yorker magazine and the Guardian.

According to independent results published in Newsweek, ABC News and GQ magazine, the United States has been planning and is now recruiting members of MEK to conduct lethal operations and destabilizing operations inside Iran.

Do these reports mean that DOD has already begun hostile actions against Iran, as was the case prior to the Iraq war? Has the administration already taken the decision to attack Iran, and is Congress and the American public now coming under the influence of an orchestrated campaign to take this country into military conflict again, as was the case prior to the midterm elections of 2002? Has the President and Secretary of Defense's recent speeches mentioned Iran in intending to prepare Congress and the American public for war against Iran?

I don't know, but the news reports merit this subcommittee's aggressive investigation. These are precisely the sort of questions this committee is designed to pose, and DOD is the agency with the answers. But get this: The Department of Defense failed to show up for a classified briefing, which was initiated at my insistence on these questions in June. Here we are nearly 3 months later. All the subcommittee has been able to get is a promise from DOD that they'll eventually get a response in writing to the subcommittee. This administration has long misled Congress and the American people, but now they are deluding themselves if they think Iraq is making progress.

With another possible war in the offing against Iran, this is indeed a grim time for America and all of the world. It is a dishonor, too, for the victims of the September 11th disaster. The war in Iraq and possible war in Iran are deadly distractions to apprehend the perpetrators of September 11th and prevent a recurrence.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding these hearings. Thanks to all of the witnesses that are appearing before the subcommittee.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you.

[NOTE.—The Select Committee on Intelligence report entitled, "Postwar Findings About IRAQ's WMD Programs and Links to Terrorism and How They Compare With Prewar Assessments," may be found in subcommittee files.]

[The prepared statement of Hon. Dennis J. Kucinich follows:]

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Opening Statement of Rep. Dennis J. Kucinich

Ranking Minority Member

Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations

House Committee on Government Reform

September 11, 2006

Hearing on "Iraq: Democracy or Civil War?"

Good morning. I want to thank Chairman Shays for calling this hearing on Iraq.

Oversight hearings have been long overdue, and sorely lacking by this Congress. Democrats have consistently demanded an open and frank forum among the American people, Congress, the Administration, Iraqi stakeholders, and with our top Middle East experts, yet have been repeatedly denied. Sadly, five years after the national tragedy of the terrorist attacks on September 11, and more than three years after the White House and Pentagon decided to invade Iraq in 2003, more Americans have thrown away the rose-colored glasses distributed by the White House and Pentagon, and they are discovering the disturbing truth underneath. The war in Iraq was unjustified. America was misled to attack Iraq. We were not greeted as liberators but are instead Iraq's occupiers. There is a war of national liberation going on in Iraq right now, and its goal is to liberate Iraq from the Americans. Meantime, the factions in this struggle are vying for power.

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That is the civil war. The situation is grim, and Iraq is heading towards civil war. And it may be too late for anyone to keep Iraq from tearing itself apart.

Contrary to what the White House claims, neither Americans nor Iraqis are safer now than they were just a few years ago. Violence has skyrocketed, and each day, more American troops are put in harm's way, targets of insurgent and deadly IED explosive bombs. More than 2,600 American troops have been lost in the course of military operations in Iraq. The number of attacks initiated by the enemy has continued steadily upwards, in spite of rising numbers of Iraqi police, and in spite of a prolonged occupation. In spite of increasing numbers of IED's that are detected and disarmed, there has been a rising number of deadly IED attacks, with nearly each recent month deadlier than the last. The average number of daily attacks by insurgents has steadily risen. In the past 3 months, the daily attack rate hasn't fallen below 90.

The same is true of Iraqis, whether it is the vicious cycle of death squad execution-style killings carried out by militia groups, or the skyrocketing number of kidnappings, bombs, or sectarian violence which occur daily. 120 Iraqis are dying every day, and Baghdad's coroners report that tens of thousands of murders are occurring each month. Iraqis are not as safe as they were three years ago. Between 100,000 and 200,000 innocent Iraqis have died as a result of the U.S. invasion. Hundreds of thousands of Iraqis are internally displaced, afraid to leave their homes at night, and distrustful of the still, ethnically segregated, and very green, Iraqi police force. The unemployment rate is estimated to be between 25% and 40%. An Iraqi government ministry places the number at 48%.

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Is it any wonder that, despite what the Vice President and then-Deputy Secretary of Defense told this Congress and the country, we were not in fact greeted as liberators?

Is it any wonder that in some Iraqis' eyes, Saddam's regime is beginning to look like the good ol' days. Last week, a coalition of 300 tribal leaders, are even demanding the release of Saddam Hussein, and possibly reinstating him to his post as President! They are not a majority, but consider what recent public opinion polling in Iraq shows: 47% approve of attacks on Americans, according to World Public Opinion.org poll of January 2006.

Iraq is, unfortunately for the Iraqis and the American soldiers who are ordered to be there, a hopeless and deadly tragedy created by an elective U.S. war.

It was clear to me, as it was to many other Members of Congress, from the outset that the Bush Administration's real goal was not democracy building, it was an arrogant, costly and immoral exercise to win an election at home and flex American military muscle abroad.

Iraq had nothing to do with 9/11. Saddam had no ties to al Qaeda. Iraq did not pose a meaningful threat to the United States or its allies.

Today, Iraq is a breeding ground for terrorists. The occupation of Iraq is a major, perhaps crippling drain on the U.S. military.

We went into Iraq looking for WMDs, but instead, all we got were IEDs! And I wonder, is the Bush White House is trying to repeat this bait-and-switch strategy now in Iran.

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Consider the parallels: In late 2002, the President identified a dangerous Middle Eastern regime, whose leaders were intent on possessing weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, and whose regime supported terrorists. In 2002, the Administration emphasized the magnitude and imminence of the threat, even though intelligence agencies put the threat years into the future. Sounds a lot like 2006, doesn't it.

In 2002, the Administration went to the United Nations to make its case against Iraq. Sounds a lot like what the Administration is doing now in 2006, doesn't it?

In 2002, prior to receiving an authorization to use military force, the Adminstration launched Operation Southern Focus, a bombing campaign against Iraq's air defenses.[1]

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[1] Operation Southern Focus-In response to Iraqi violations of the Southern No-Fly Zone, and in preparation for Operation Iraqi Freedom, CENTCOM and CENTAF conducted a number of airstrikes against Iraq that were part of an operation known as Southern Focus. The goal of Southern Focus was to systematically degrade the Iraqi air defense system prior to the initiation of a Coalition invasion. Essentially, Southern Focus was a significant air campaign designed to prepare the battlefield prior to the initiation of the ground campaign.

While Southern Focus was not a publicly declared operation, coalition air forces dropped 606 bombs, responding to 651 attacks from June 2002 until OIF began March 19, 2003. Press accounts at the time, both from CENTCOM and by the Department of Defense contended that the significant increase in airstrikes during this period were simply part of the ongoing Southern Watch operation.

Southern Focus was designed to counter Iraqi attacks on Coalition aircraft patrolling the Southern No-Fly Zone. These Iraqi attacks peaked with more than a dozen missiles and rockets per day being fired at coalition forces. On one day, Iraqi air-defense forces fired 15 surface-to-air missiles. The Southern Focus responses were specifically aimed at anti-aircraft artillery sites, surface-to-air missile sites, early warning radar sites and command-and-control facilities. The attacks on Iraqi

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Here we are, and in 2006, prior to receiving authorization, U.S. military personnel are already deployed inside and around Iran, preparing the battlefield by gathering targeting intelligence and recruiting local fighters, according to independent reports published in the New Yorker magazine and the Guardian.

According to independent reports published in Newsweek, ABC News and GQ magazine, the U.S. has been planning and is now recruiting members of MEK to conduct lethal operations and destabilizing operations inside Iran.

Do these reports mean the DOD has already begun hostile actions against Iran, as was the case prior to the Iraq war? Has the Administration already taken the decision to attack Iran, and is Congress and the American public now coming under the influence of an orchestrated campaign to take the country into military conflict again, as was the case prior to the mid term elections of 2002? Have the President's and Secretary of Defense's recent speeches mentioning Iran been intended to prepare Congress and the American public for war against Iran?

I don't know, but the news reports merit this Subcommittee's aggressive investigation. These are precisely the sort of questions this Subcommittee is designed to pose, and DOD is the agency with the answers. But the Department of Defense failed to show up for a classified briefing, which was initiated at my insistence, on these questions in June.

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command and control also included precision attacks on the Iraqi fiber-optic cable network, which the Iraqis used to keep southern Iraq in communication with Baghdad.

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Nearly three months later, all the Subcommittee has been able to get is a promise from the DOD that they will eventually give a response in writing to the Subcommittee.

This Administration has long misled Congress and the American people, but now they are deluding themselves if they think Iraq is making progress.

With another possible war in the offing against Iran, this is indeed a grim time for Americans and indeed all the world.

It is a dishonor, too, of the victims of the 9-11 atrocity. The war in Iraq and a possible war in Iran are deadly distractions from the effort to apprehend the perpetrators of 9-11 and prevent a recurrence.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to all of the witnesses that will testify before the Subcommittee over the course of this week.

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Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Van Hollen.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing, and thank you to Congressman Kucinich and to the witnesses who are here today.

We gather here on a solemn occasion, the 5th anniversary of the attacks of September 11, 2001, and I do think it is important to go back to that day to remember where those attacks came from, because this hearing is focused on Iraq, but we all know that the attacks of September 11th had nothing to do with Iraq, had nothing to do with Saddam Hussein. And, in fact, just Friday a Select Senate Intelligence Committee report from the Republican-controlled Senate was released saying there had never been any collaboration between Saddam Hussein and al Qaeda. So it is important to put that to rest as we begin this hearing.

The attacks 5 years ago today came out of Afghanistan, a failed state, where after the Soviet Union withdrew, the United States lost interest, the Taliban Government was able to take root, and in that state of affairs al Qaeda was able to plant itself and flourish.

And the United States did exactly the right thing in the aftermath of those attacks. It took quick action, and it took action with the support of the world. The NATO Alliance fully backed it, invoked the article of the NATO Charter saying an attack on one is an attack on all. The U.N. General Assembly unanimously passed a resolution condemning the attacks on the United States and rallying behind the United States in our fight on terrorism.

And here we are 5 years later where the world is no longer by our side, our country is divided in many ways, and we have not finished the job in Afghanistan, not by a long shot. We know that there has been a resurgence of Taliban activity in southern Afghanistan. General Maples, the head of the DIA, testified before the Senate this year that he had seen a rise in escalation of violence. We see it now in reading the newspapers and following what is going on there every day.

And yet at this time we have actually reduced the number of American forces in southern Afghanistan. We have disbanded the one unit at the CIA that had the specific mission of going after al Qaeda. We now know that the opium harvest in Afghanistan is at an all-time historical high.

And we also know that the Pakistani Government has now entered into a cease-fire nonaggression pact with those in the tribal areas in Waziristan where the Taliban are essentially assembled, and which does provide a fertile ground for al Qaeda to continue to plot and continue to plan to attack the United States and its allies. And just in today's Washington Post, Ahmed Rashid, a Pakistani journalist, writes that if you go up to Waziristan these days, it is now a fully operational al Qaeda base area offering a wide range of services, facilities and military and explosive training. For extremists around the world planning attacks, Waziristan is now a regional magnet. In the past 6 months, 1,000 Uzbeks escaping the crackdown in Uzbekistan after last year's massacre by the government security forces in the town of Andajan have found sanctuary with al Qaeda, and others are coming.

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The point of the fact is here we are 5 years after the attacks upon our country, and yet we have not completed the mission. We all remember the President's statement aboard the USS Abraham Lincoln in May 2003 with the big banner, Mission Accomplished, and yet here we are today 5 years after the attacks on this country from Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda. They are still at large, the Taliban is regaining its strength, and we have not completed the mission.

So I hope as we talk today about Iraq, we recognize that we did as a Nation take our eye off the ball. We are bogged down in Iraq. It is a mess in Iraq, and yet we never completed the job against al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden. That is work we have yet to do.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you.

For the purposes of clarifying the record, Mr. Kucinich.

Mr. KUCINICH. For the purposes of clarifying the record, I made a statement relative to the number of murders that are occurring each month according to Baghdad's coroners, and I want to correct the record to say there are—based on information that I have asked for, that the coroners are reporting that over 1,000 murders are occurring each month. That is corrected to say over 1,000 murders are occurring each month.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SHAYS. I thank the gentlemen.

At this time the Chair would recognize—introduce our panelists. We have Eric Edelman, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy; and Rear Admiral Sullivan, Vice Director for Strategic Plans and Policies, of Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Gentlemen, as you know, we swear in our witnesses. So I invite you to rise, and I will swear you in.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Mr. SHAYS. I note for the record our witnesses have responded in the affirmative. Thank you. Please be seated.

We are going to start with you first, Ambassador, but this is what I would like to be fairly clear on before you start. We are going to invite you to speak. The clock will be on for 5 minutes, and we're going to roll it over for another 5 minutes. Frankly, given the size of the Members here and the fact that our panels are fairly small, I want you to make your statements as long as it takes. We will then do 10-minute questions, and we will do a second round. We may even do a third round.

So the bottom line to this, there will be no rushing. There will be no interrupting of witnesses. Just be able to have as much time as we need, and I would just like to request as a 19-year veteran of this committee that we have total and complete candor; that we are just honest with ourselves about what we are asking, what we are answering, and from that only good can come. So that's my request to everyone who would participate today.

Ambassador, thank you for being here. Thank you for all your good work.

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STATEMENTS OF AMBASSADOR ERIC S. EDELMAN, UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR POLICY, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE; AND REAR ADMIRAL WILLIAM D. SULLIVAN, VICE DIRECTOR FOR STRATEGIC PLANS AND POLICY, JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

STATEMENT OF AMBASSADOR ERIC S. EDELMAN

Ambassador EDELMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Kucinich and Mr. Van Hollen. I am pleased to appear before the subcommittee today at your request, Mr. Chairman, to discuss Iraq, and I am joined, as you noted, by Rear Admiral William Sullivan, the Vice Director of Plans and Policy on the joint staff. We will be providing testimony on whether the Iraqis can assume full internal security responsibilities.

As has been noted by several of the Members, the terrible events of 5 years ago mark this somber day. The terrorist attacks in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania serve as a daily reminder of the type of enemy we are fighting.

The main fronts against this enemy are currently in Iraq and Afghanistan. Our soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines and coastguardsmen are doing a superb job fighting the enemy and laying the foundation in Iraq and Afghanistan to help remove the radical ideology that spawns terrorism.

A peaceful, united Iraq constitutionally ordered to democratic principles will undermine the insistence of radical Islamists that Islam and democracy are incompatible. It will also challenge the legitimacy of theocratic ideologies and the dead end of national socialists' theories of governance. Iraq is the fulcrum for all of this.

The military component of our national strategy in Iraq is to fight terrorists and to train Iraqi security forces. Our goal is for the Iraqis to take responsibility for their own security and be an ally on the war on terror. As laid out in the National Strategy for Victory in Iraq, our goal is an Iraq with a constitutional, representative government that respects civil rights and has security forces sufficient to maintain domestic order and keep Iraq from becoming a safe haven for terrorists.

Iraqi security forces continue to improve and become more effective and on a firm path for self-sufficiency. Our success in training and equipping over 294,000 Iraqi Army and Police personnel has hastened Iraqi assumption of responsibility for their own security. As the Iraqis take control of their country, we continue to hand over forward operating bases to them. The U.S. military is on track to finish the initial training of the currently projected Iraqi forces this December, although the increase recently proposed by Prime Minister Maliki may lengthen the time somewhat.

You have asked the question when we can expect Iraqi security forces in taking the lead in securing territory and population. As of the end of July, there are 5 Iraqi division headquarters, 26 Iraq brigade headquarters and 85 Iraqi battalions as well as several Iraqi National Police battalions operating in the lead across Iraq.

Six months ago there were just 2 divisions, 10 brigades and 43 battalions in the lead. Every day Iraqi security forces take more responsibility for parts of Baghdad and other areas throughout the

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country. Currently over 65 percent of Iraq, including the major population centers, are under the Iraqi Army lead.

Iraq achieved a historic milestone on July 16, 2006, with the transfer of security responsibility in Muthanna Province from MNF-I to the Provincial Governor and civilian-controlled Iraqi Police Service. Muthanna is the first of Iraq's 18 provinces to be transitioned to provincial Iraqi control, which represents the successful development of Iraq's capability to govern and protect itself as a sovereign and democratic nation. We expect to hand over Dhi-Qar soon and several more provinces by year's end.

Iraqis still face the challenges they have struggled with for the last few years: lack of experience, logistic shortfalls, effective vetting, governing capacity, and changing enemy tactics, among other things. One thing I believe that the Iraqis do have is will. Iraqi Deputy President Abdel Mahdi said recently that the lines to enlist for the Iraqi security forces are still long. The Iraqis clearly want to win their fight for democracy.

Conditions on the ground, not arbitrary timelines, will determine our success in Iraq. The newly formed Joint Committee to Achieve Iraqi Security Self-Reliance is composed of the Iraqi Prime Minister, Iraqi National Security Advisor, the Minister of State For National Security Affairs, the Ministers of Defense and Interior, the Director of the Iraqi National Intelligence Service, the U.S. Ambassador, the U.K. Ambassador, and Commanding General and Deputy Commanding General of Multinational Forces, Iraq.

The committee will develop a conditions-based roadmap for full transition of security responsibility to the Iraqi security forces. The roadmap will consist of recommended conditions intended to lead to the eventual and gradual withdrawal of multinational forces from Iraq.

As with the overall war on terror, there are some serious and significant challenges that we must overcome in Iraq. The last several months has seen a rise in violence specifically around Baghdad, although since late July there has been a small reduction. Coalition and Iraqi forces are adjusting their tactics to deal with the rise of this violence. On July 27th, the Secretary of Defense extended the deployment of 3,700 troops to Iraq to help counter the increased violence. Prime Minister Maliki also pledged an additional 4,000 Iraqi troops.

The Baghdad campaign is a critical test, and we have had some initial success. This success now needs to be followed up by the Iraqis with civil projects and civil services. Military commanders and the U.S. Embassy have encouraged the Iraqis to take this sort of action.

During his recent visit to Washington, Prime Minister Maliki made it clear that he does not want American troops to leave Iraq until his government can protect the Iraqi people. As President Bush has said, conditions on the ground and the advice of military professionals will dictate the number and disposition of the U.S. forces in Iraq. The United States will stay on the offensive and continue to support and train Iraqis so they can develop the skills necessary to defend their country. Sectarian violence is leading some groups to see U.S. forces as a reassuring and stabilizing factor es-

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pecially now; for example, the successes in Baghdad mentioned earlier.

There is no denying that conditions that could lead to civil war exist. Sustained enthosectarian violence is perhaps the greatest threat to security instability in Iraq today. Militias and other extragovernmental armed organizations are a major factor in the continuing violence. However, during his visit to Washington in late August, Deputy President al-Mahdi said that Iraq is not in a civil war, nor did—nor, he said, will it be. He further noted that all groups in the country are committed to the unity of the country. He said Iraqis understand the dangers of a civil war, and we agree.

Today the situation is that, one, there is a national government that includes leaders of all communities; and, two, the Iraqi security forces are intact and growing. We can stem the violence by continuing to provide sufficient U.S. presence while Iraqi security institutions develop. At the same time, we will promote wider engagement using nonmilitary elements of the national government and continue reconstruction at the local level to secure popular support.

Every day the men and women of the U.S. military protect not only the United States, but also our allies from our adversaries. They provide the backbone that enables Afghanistan and Iraq to have hope for the future. Our involvement in Afghanistan, Iraq and other places in the world is essential to our fight against terrorism. The men and women of our Armed Forces will not falter in this duty.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my statement, and I would request that it be entered into the permanent record.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Edelman follows:]

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Prepared Statement of
The Honorable Eric S. Edelman
Under Secretary of Defense for Policy
Before the
United States House Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats, and International Relations
Monday, September 11th, 2006 10:00 AM

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Committee. I am pleased to appear before the Committee today to discuss Iraq. I'm joined by Rear Admiral William Sullivan, the Vice Director of Plans and Policy, Joint Staff. We will be providing testimony on when the Iraqis can assume full internal security responsibilities.

The terrible events of five years ago mark this somber day. The terrorist attacks in New York, Washington, and Pennsylvania serve as a daily reminder of the type of enemy we are fighting. The main fronts against this enemy are currently in Iraq and Afghanistan. Our soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and Coast Guardsmen are doing a superb job fighting the enemy and laying the foundation in Iraq and Afghanistan to help remove the radical ideology that spawns the terrorists.

A peaceful united Iraq, constitutionally ordered to democratic principles, will undermine the insistence of radical islamists that Islam and democracy are incompatible. It will also challenge the legitimacy of theocratic ideologies and the dead end of national socialists theories of governance. Iraq is the fulcrum for all of this. The military component of our national strategy in Iraq is to fight terrorists and train Iraqi Security Forces. Our goal is for the Iraqis to take responsibility for their own security and be an ally in the war on terror. As laid out in the National Strategy for Victory in Iraq, our goal

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is "an Iraq with a constitutional, representative government that respects civil rights and has security forces sufficient to maintain domestic order and keep Iraq from becoming a safe haven for terrorists."

Iraqi Security Forces continue to improve and become more effective and are on a firm path for self sufficiency. Our success in training and equipping over 294,000 Iraqi Army and Police personnel has hastened Iraqi assumption of responsibility for their security. As the Iraqis take control of their country we continue to hand over Forward Operating Bases to them. The U.S. military is on track to finish initial training of the currently projected Iraqi forces this December, although the increase recently proposed by Iraqi Prime Minister Maliki may lengthen this timeline somewhat.

You have asked when we can expect Iraqi Security Force units to take the lead in securing all of Iraq's territory and population. As of the end of July, there are five Iraqi division headquarters, 26 Iraqi brigade headquarters, and 85 Iraqi battalions as well as 5 Iraqi National police battalions operating in the lead across Iraq. Six months ago there were just two divisions, ten brigades and 43 battalions in the lead. Every day, the Iraqi Security Forces take more responsibility for parts of Baghdad and other areas throughout the country. Currently, over 65% of Iraq, including the major population centers, are under Iraqi Army Lead.

Iraq achieved a historic milestone on July 13th, 2006, with the transfer of security responsibility in Muthanna province from MNF-I to the Provincial Governor and civilian-controlled Iraqi Police Service. Muthanna is the first of Iraq's 18 provinces to be

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transitioned to Provincial Iraqi Control, which represents the successful development of Iraq's capability to govern and protect itself as a sovereign and democratic nation. We expect to hand over Dhi-Qar soon and several more provinces by year's end.

The Iraqis still face the challenges they have struggled with for the last few years – lack of experience, logistics shortfalls, effective vetting, governing capacity, and changing enemy tactics among other things. One thing I believe the Iraqis do have is will. Iraqi Deputy President Abdel Mahdi said recently that the lines to enlist for the Iraqi Security Forces are still long. The Iraqis clearly want to win their fight for democracy.

Conditions on the ground, not arbitrary timelines, will determine our success in Iraq. The newly formed Joint Committee to Achieve Iraqi Security Self-Reliance is composed of the Iraqi Prime Minister, Iraqi National Security Advisor, Minister of State for National Security Affairs, Ministers of Defense and Interior, Director of the Iraqi National Intelligence Service, U.S. Ambassador, UK Ambassador, and Commanding General and Deputy Commanding General of Multi-National Forces, Iraq. The committee will develop a conditions-based roadmap for full transition of security responsibility to the Iraqi Security Forces. The roadmap will consist of recommended conditions intended to lead to the eventual and gradual withdrawal of multi-national forces from Iraq.

As with the overall war on terror, there are some serious and significant challenges that we must overcome in Iraq. The last several months have seen a rise in violence,

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especially around Baghdad, although since July there has been a small reduction. Coalition and Iraqi forces are adjusting tactics to deal with the rise in violence. On July 27th, the Secretary of Defense extended the deployment of 3,700 troops in Iraq to help counter the increased violence. Prime Minister Maliki also pledged an additional 4,000 Iraqi troops. The Baghdad campaign is a critical test, and we have had some initial success. This success needs to be followed-up by the Iraqis, with civic projects and civil services. Military Commanders and the U.S. Embassy have encouraged the Iraqis take action of this sort.

During his recent visit to Washington, Prime Minister Maliki made it clear that he does not want American troops to leave Iraq until his government can protect the Iraqi people. As President Bush has said, conditions on the ground and the advice of military professionals will dictate the number and disposition of the U.S. forces in Iraq. The U.S. will stay on the offensive and continue to support and train Iraqis so they can develop the skills necessary to defend their country. Sectarian violence is leading some groups to see U.S. forces as a reassuring, stabilizing factor, especially now, for example, the successes in Baghdad mentioned earlier.

There is no denying that conditions that could lead to civil war exist. Sustained ethno-sectarian violence is perhaps the greatest threat to security and stability in Iraq. Militias and other extra-governmental armed organizations are a major factor in the continuing violence. However, during his visit to Washington in late August, Iraqi Deputy President al-Mahdi said that Iraq is not in a civil war nor will it be. He further

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noted that all groups are committed to the unity of the country. No group is fighting for separation. He said that Iraqis understand the dangers of a civil war. We agree. Today, the situation is that: 1. there is a national government that includes leaders of all communities and 2. the Iraqi Security Force is intact and growing. We can stem the violence by continuing to provide sufficient U.S. presence while Iraqi security institutions develop. At the same time we will promote wider engagement between non-military elements of the national government and continue reconstruction at the local level to secure popular support.

Conclusion

Every day, the men and women of the U.S. military protect not only the United States but also our allies from our adversaries. They provide the backbone that enables Afghanistan and Iraq to have hope for the future. Our involvement in Afghanistan, Iraq, and many other places in the world is central to our fight against terrorism. The men and women of our armed forces will not falter in this duty.

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Mr. SHAYS. You remind me of a task of that I'm supposed to remember. But bad staff work here. I ask unanimous consent that all members of the subcommittee be permitted to place an opening statement in the record, and the record will remain open for 3 days for that purpose. And without objection, so ordered.

I ask further unanimous consent that all witnesses be permitted to include their written statements in the record. Without objection, so ordered.

Your statement was read, and anything that you would like to provide in addition to that will be part of the record. I thank you for a statement that is a good launching for the questions that I have. So thank you very much.

Admiral, thank you for being here, and we look forward to your testimony as well.

STATEMENT OF WILLIAM D. SULLIVAN

Admiral SULLIVAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Representative Kucinich, Representative Van Hollen. Thank you for the opportunity and your concern for the Nation's security and the opportunity to testify before you this morning. I appreciate your support of the men and women of our Armed Forces who, around the world, in every climate, and often far from home and family, are serving our Nation.

From a military standpoint, our goal remains an Iraqi Government that transitions to security self-reliance where all Iraqis unite against violence, and where the Government of Iraq provides security, law and order and is a legitimate authority. The Iraqi security forces are on track and continue to make significant strides, as mentioned in Ambassador Edelman's opening comments, toward this goal.

To highlight a recent major milestone, in the first week of September, the Ministry of Defense and the joint headquarters assumed operational control of the Iraqi Ground Forces Command, Iraqi Navy and Iraqi Air Force. The Iraqi Ground Forces Command assumed operational control of the 8th Iraqi Army Division, demonstrating the increased capability of the Iraqi Army to assume control of security tasks. Future transfers will be gradual, but the Government of Iraq will dictate when the Iraqi Ground Forces Command is ready to assume more control.

To reiterate the current status of Iraqi security forces, the Iraqi Army now includes 5 division headquarters, 26 brigades, and 85 battalions in the lead for security operation across Iraq. All 28 Iraqi National Police battalions, in conjunction with 118,000 Iraqi Police service officers, are executing daily security operations.

As the Government of Iraq and Iraqi security forces mature, the capability exists to expand the current 325,000-man security force structure. Plans are being developed by the Government of Iraq to add up to 31,000 security forces to address future capability needs.

In addition to providing security, the Iraqi Army and Police are also assisting in humanitarian efforts and other local civic actions, providing security for essential service construction projects, repairing local schools, and engaging in projects to improve local area appearance and pride. The highlight of current security operations is focused on the nation's capital, Baghdad.

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Operation Together Forward is an Iraqi-planned and -led operation to ensure the security of Baghdad against attacks designed to uproot democracy and derail Iraq's commitment to progress. These operations are designed to reduce the level of murders, kidnappings, assassinations, terrorism and sectarian violence in specific areas of Baghdad, and to reinforce the Iraqi Government's control.

Our joint operations continue to make progress, and we are cautiously optimistic and encouraged by the early indicators. More time will provide a better assessment. This operation will take not weeks, but months.

Let me address the question of setting a timetable for withdrawal. In the military judgment of our commander, a precipitous withdrawal from Iraq would have severe negative consequences. A withdrawal could increase sectarian strife, possibly embolden terrorists and other factions, and also encourage already unhelpful neighbors like Iran.

It is also our assessment that fixed timetables for withdrawal of Coalition forces are not productive. We understand and concur with the need to keep the Iraqi Government motivated to quickly address many of the complex economic and political issues that are contributing to the violence. However, confidence that we as a Nation are committed to succeed with the Iraqis, even when Coalition forces are no longer necessary, is key to enable political accommodation among many of the factions. The enemy, which includes al Qaeda and certain armed militia groups, should not know of our plans. There are many ways to sustain pressure on the Iraqis to solve their political and economic issues. A timetable is not the best option and, in our judgment, would be counterproductive. The U.S. military does not underestimate the challenges that we face in Iran.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to personally thank you for your enduring commitment to our Armed Forces as evidenced by your 14 trips to the Iraqi theater of operation. I also offer my thanks to the committee as a whole for the continuous support of our Armed Forces.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, Representative Kucinich, Representative Van Hollen, thank you for allowing me to testify before you this morning, and I look forward to your questions.

Mr. SHAYS. I thank you very, much Admiral.

[The prepared statement of Admiral Sullivan follows:]

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Opening Statement of RADM Sullivan,
Vice-Director for Strategic Plans and Policy, Joint Staff
before the U.S House Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats, and International Relations
Hearing: "When Can Iraqis Assume Full Internal Security Responsibility"
11 September 2006, 1000 hours

Mr. Chairman, Representative Kucinich, members of the subcommittee, thank you for your interest in our nation's security and the honor of testifying before you this morning. I appreciate your support of the men and women of our Armed Forces who around the world, in every climate, and often far from home and family are serving our nation.

Our goal remains an Iraqi government that transitions to security self -reliance where all Iraqis unite against violence and perceive that the Government of Iraq provides security, law and order, and is the legitimate authority. The Iraqi Security Forces are on track and continue to make significant strides, as mentioned in Ambassador Edelman's opening comments, towards this goal. To highlight a recent major milestone, in the first week of September, the Ministry of Defense and the Joint Headquarters assumed operational control of the Iraqi Ground Forces Command (IGFC), Iraqi Navy, and Iraqi Air Force. The Iraqi Ground Forces Command assumed operational control of the 8th Iraqi Army Division demonstrating the increased capability of the Iraqi Army to assume control of security tasks. Future transfers will be gradual but the Government of Iraq will dictate when the Iraqi Ground Forces Command is ready to assume more control. To reiterate the current status of Iraqi Security Forces, the Iraqi Army now includes five division headquarters, 26 brigades, and 85 battalions "in the lead" for security operations across Iraq (50% of ISF "in the lead"). All 28 Iraqi National Police battalions, in conjunction with 118,000 Iraqi Police Service officers, are executing daily security operations. As the Government of Iraq and Iraqi Security Forces mature, the capability exists to expand the current 325,000-man security force structure. Plans are being developed by the Government of Iraq to add up to 31,000 security forces to address future capability needs.

In addition to providing security, the Iraqi Army and police are also assisting in humanitarian efforts and other local civic actions, providing security for essential service construction projects, repairing local schools, and engaging in projects to improve local area appearance and pride. The highlight of current security operations is focused on the nation's capital ---Baghdad.

"Operation Together Forward" is an Iraqi-planned and led operation to ensure the security of Baghdad against attacks designed to uproot democracy and derail Iraq's commitment to progress. These operations are designed to reduce the level of murders, kidnappings, assassinations, terrorism and sectarian violence in specific areas of Baghdad and to reinforce the Iraqi government's control. Our joint operations continue to make progress and we are cautiously optimistic and

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encouraged by the early indicators. More time will provide a better assessment – this operation will take not weeks but months.

In the military judgment of our commanders, a precipitous withdrawal from Iraq would have severe negative consequences. A withdrawal could increase sectarian strife, possibly embolden terrorists and other factions, and could also encourage already unhelpful neighbors like Iran. It is also our assessment that fixed timetables for withdrawal of coalition forces are not productive. We understand and concur with the need to keep the Iraqi government motivated to quickly address many of the complex economic and political issues that are contributing to violence. However, confidence that we as a nation are committed to succeed with the Iraqis, even when coalition forces are no longer necessary, is a key to enable political accommodation among many of the factions. The enemy, which includes Al Qaeda and certain armed militia groups, should not know of our plans. There are many ways to sustain pressure on the Iraqis to solve their political and economic issues. A timetable is not the best option, and in our judgment, would be counterproductive. We do not underestimate the challenges we face in Iraq.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to personally thank you for your enduring commitment to our Armed Forces, as evidenced by your 14 trips to the Iraqi Theater of Operation. I also offer my thanks to the committee as a whole for their continuous support of our Armed Force.

In closing, Mr. Chairman and Representative Kucinich, thank you for allowing me to testify before you this morning. I look forward to your questions.

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Mr. SHAYS. Let me say there are three Members. I would usually start off. Sometimes I usually go last. What I'll do is I will have Mr. Kucinich go first when he gets back here, and then I'll go, and then I'll go to my colleague from Maryland.

And I just want to say that it is my hope that we can learn from this hearing information that helps guide us to understand what it is going to take to transfer power to the Iraqis, and that is obviously the goal of this hearing, but obviously other things will come up as well.

Mr. Kucinich, you are free to ask any questions you want. You have the floor.

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

To both Ambassador Edelman and to the rear admiral, have either of you read the report in today's Washington Post about the situation—headline: Situation Called Dire in West Iraq?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Congressman Kucinich, yes, I have read both the Washington Post article and the classified document which it appears to refer to.

Admiral SULLIVAN. As have I, both articles.

Mr. KUCINICH. Would you agree or disagree with the article which says that prospects for securing the country's western Anbar Province are dim, Mr. Edelman?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Well, I want to be a bit careful what I say in open hearing, Mr. Kucinich, because the document underlying the Washington Post article is a classified document. I would say that like any operational assessment, it is a snapshot in time. I think it should not be generalized beyond the situation in Anbar to which it refers.

I think it is clear to all of us who have been involved in this issue for a while that Anbar has been the epicenter of the insurgency for some time; that a purely military solution to any insurgency is not possible, it needs a political solution as well. We have had successful operations in Fallujah that have continued to provide some measure of security there. We have ongoing operations in Ramadi. We have a PRT that's been set up in Anbar precisely because General Casey believes that the political dimension, social dimension, as well as the kinetic military dimension are required to succeed there. And I think it highlights the—the article highlights the importance potentially of provincial elections in the future to enable a local government empowered by the residents of Anbar to take responsibility for many of those issues that they have to take responsibility for ultimately.

Mr. KUCINICH. Is there a functioning Iraqi Government institution in Anbar?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Well, I think, again, Secretary Rumsfeld has said that he is hoping to have before the Congress goes out in September an opportunity for an operation intel hearing in a classified session where I think we could go in to perhaps some more detail.

I think clearly the capacity of the Iraqi Government to establish itself not just in Baghdad, but throughout the country, is an important challenge that they face, and it is a challenge to defeating this insurgency.

Mr. KUCINICH. Has local governments collapsed in Anbar?

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Ambassador EDELMAN. I don't know that I could make a judgment to that effect. I would have to get back to—we can get back to you with a better assessment of that than I can give at this moment.

Mr. KUCINICH. Has a vacuum in Anbar been filled by al Qaeda?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Al Qaeda in Iraq has had a presence in Anbar since the very beginning of the insurgency. And I think it is fair so say that there have been a number of forces in the province, including a number of tribal forces, who have reacted to that and have attacked Anbar or attacked al Qaeda in Iraq themselves and have begun to reach out and work with the Iraqi Government to try and curtail the influence of al Qaeda in Iraq.

Mr. KUCINICH. How many Iraqi provinces are there?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Eighteen.

Mr. KUCINICH. How many of those provinces have been turned over to Iraqis?

Ambassador EDELMAN. We have turned over so far one province to the Iraqis for them to take the lead for security. We hope to turn over a second in the future.

Mr. KUCINICH. Isn't it true that General Casey has predicted that all responsibility for Iraqi security will be turned over in 12 to 18 months?

Ambassador EDELMAN. I think we would hope that over the next 12 to 18 months, we can turn over increasing responsibility, but as we've said, that judgment will have to be made on the basis of conditions on the ground at the time and as a result of the work of the joint committee on turning over Iraqi security responsibilities.

Mr. KUCINICH. Would you agree with the prediction that says all responsibility for Iraqi security will be turned over in 12 to 18 months?

Ambassador EDELMAN. I don't know that I would feel comfortable in making a prediction at this point in time, because the enemy gets a vote in this, and we will have to see what happens.

Mr. KUCINICH. Is it true that the Anbar Province accounts for about 30 percent of Iraq's land mass?

Ambassador EDELMAN. It is a very large mass, but not all of it is populated.

Mr. KUCINICH. Here's a map of Iraq that I actually brought down from my office door where it's been since the invasion was discussed, and if you look at Anbar Province, you have a pretty substantial area here which is bordered by Jordan and Syria. And what I am wondering here is what would you call this province, a key province?

Ambassador EDELMAN. It is a key province in order to defeat the insurgency, but Iraq right now has, in addition to the insurgency, other very serious security problems having to do with ethnosectarian violence, with criminal activity, militia activity. So it is one of many, many problems we have to deal with there, and the Iraqi Government and the security forces need to.

I mean, Anbar, while it has a large proportion of the geographic space, is actually, as I said, very sparsely populated. I believe it is less than 5 percent of the population of Iraq.

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Mr. KUCINICH. Would you agree that a report which would say that Anbar is beyond repair would have significance for this administration's long-term strategies for Iraq?

Ambassador EDELMAN. I am not sure that is what the report says. Again, I want to be careful because it is a classified document. I don't want to be quoting from it in an open hearing because it is an operational assessment, and I don't think from the point of view of continuing the fight in Anbar it is productive to discuss it in the public hearing.

Mr. KUCINICH. Wouldn't it be of interest to the parents of American soldiers who are being sent to fight that they would know that a report existed that said that a province was beyond repair, and the thing couldn't be won military? Wouldn't that be of interest, Mr. Edelman?

Ambassador EDELMAN. It is an important report. We have taken it very seriously. We are in contact with our colleagues out in the multinational force, Iraq, to get the commander's assessment, because this is an operational assessment by one very good intel officer. It is a snapshot in time, as I said, and I don't know that one can extrapolate certainly beyond Anbar Province from it. And even with regard to Anbar, it makes the statement that we all agree with, which is that there has never been a purely military solution to the insurgency in Anbar. It's always been a situation that would require both political, economic, social and other efforts, as is the case in all counterinsurgency.

Mr. KUCINICH. Do you think this Congress and this committee is entitled to information relating to the conduct of the war as to whether or not any of the conditions merit the United States' continued presence there?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Absolutely.

Mr. KUCINICH. Do you think that this report should be available publicly to the Congress since elements of it have been published in the Washington Post?

Ambassador EDELMAN. As I said, the Secretary has said he would like to schedule an ops intel briefing for the Members of the Congress, and I think that would be the appropriate time to take up that report.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Chairman, there is like a scam that comes out of this White House. They release information, or information is released through the media, and then when Congress wants to ask further questions, they say, oh, it is classified. I mean, this is one of the reasons I didn't go to the classified briefings, because you read about it on the front page of a major newspaper, and then you are told, well, you can't talk about it because it is classified.

What a bunch of baloney. You have people's lives at stake here, Ambassador, and I am just wondering when you are going to come back to the Congress and be forthcoming about what the real situation is. I mean, I appreciate your nuanced reply here, but that is not adequate enough because there are lives on the line here.

Ambassador EDELMAN. Congressman, essentially I agree with you that the Congress is entitled to information about this. We are here today to try and provide you with as much information as we can. But this—I think an operational assessment of a very hot zone in the battlefield is not necessarily something that ought to be dis-

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cussed in the public session when the enemy, you know, is clearly following the discussion.

Mr. KUCINICH. Here's your testimony. You said conditions on the ground—Mr. Chairman, this is what we are here for, right? You said conditions on the ground, not arbitrary time lines, will determine our success in Iraq. I want to read that again so everybody understands the implications of this. Conditions on the ground, not arbitrary time lines, will determine our success in Iraq.

So if you have a report that says that conditions on the ground are deteriorating to the point of where there is nothing that is to be won, and then you have that report essentially suppressed as classified, and then you have offered to the general public some rosy determination that says that, well, we are going the stay there 12 months, 18 months, they got 1 province of 18 under control——

Ambassador EDELMAN. Congressman, I take issue with the notion that the report has been repressed. On the contrary, a lot of——

Mr. KUCINICH. You won't offer it to this committee right now, will you?

Ambassador EDELMAN. It is a classified document. A lot of us have been looking at it very closely.

Mr. KUCINICH. Well, the dead bodies that are coming back to this country aren't classified, OK, but they are there based on fighting presumably because this administration put them there. They are there because they are told that America is going to win this. Well, you know what? We have the front page of the Washington Post. I didn't make this up. It was in the paper today. You read it.

Mr. SHAYS. I thank the gentleman. And——

Ambassador EDELMAN. If I might, Mr. Shays, I would like to reply to the very last point.

I agree that it is not a good thing for classified documents to be leaked. I think it is important to be able to discuss this in the appropriate settings, and I think we are prepared to do that.

Mr. SHAYS. I thank the gentleman. I yield to myself now for 10 minutes, and to thank both of you again for being here.

I am going to preface my comments that will give you a sense of where I am coming from based on my first-time questioning and my second or third if we go to third round.

I go every 3 to 4 months, and I was there with staff in April 2003. People in Iraq were euphoric, and if we had made progress from that point, I think we probably wouldn't be there in any great number today. It's my opinion we took a huge nosedive, and I can see it happening as I would go 3 months later and then 3 months after that. Iraqis were horrified that we allowed the looting. Frankly, they thought it showed incredible disrespect to their country that we didn't attempt to stop it. And I understand the motivation. We didn't want to have a conflict with citizens right away. But it was a huge mistake.

The disbanding of the army, the police and the border patrol to this day boggles my mind. We basically left a nation of 26 million people with no police, and then we said to 150,000 Coalition forces, give or take, that they would be the security for a nation of 26 million people. We speak English. They speak Arabic.

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It would be, for me, to think of New York State and to think of New York State with Iraqis coming in saying there will be no police in any part of New York State, no police in New York City, no subway police, no security whatsoever. Now, New York is one-third the size of the United States—excuse me, of Iraq, and it has 10—excuse me, it has 19 million people as opposed to 26 million. Imagine all of New York State with no police.

What is obvious to me is there would be things that happen like gangs roving the streets; banks not able to provide security, so hiring separate guards to protect their transactions. I mean, I can just keep going, and you get the gist of where I am coming from.

So for me to then think, well, 150,000 troops who speak English are going to provide the security makes me have a lack of confidence, one, in making the decisions that we made; and, two, a lack of confidence in the numbers that were provided to us.

I saw a huge progress from June 2004 when we transferred power to the Iraqis and gave the government an Iraqi face, and Iraqis started to make decisions, and we brought the State Department in to do the Nation building and relationship, and we kept DOD more focused on the defense part. I saw 18 months of progress, but I saw 18 months of progress because I saw deadlines.

There was a requirement that Iraq in January 2005 elect a government. I was there for those elections, one of the most thrilling moments of my life, and to somehow suggest that Iraqis can't take to democracy blows me away because they took to democracy. They were so proud of what they had accomplished, and 110,000 Iraqis were able to put that together with the help of the United Nations, which did a very positive role, and a lot of organizations that came to help the Iraqis.

We saw a deadline for this new government to establish a commission to write the Constitution. There was a deadline to complete the Constitution. There was a deadline to ratify this Constitution in a public site to which 79 percent voted affirmatively for this new Constitution. And there was a deadline to elect a government under this new Constitution.

All had deadlines, and during that time there was significant success in training particularly the army, and we saw very competent Iraqis risk their lives, give up their lives, queue in line to join the police and the army and be blown up. And we tell them, get away; don't queue up so far. We allowed them to come in, and we protected the 500 we were going to interview, but the rest stayed on the other side of the gate knowing they could be blown up, and they still stayed there.

But then when I saw this new government elected, I was euphoric in January as this new government had been elected in December. But we waited 4½ months, and nothing happened for 4½ months. You had al-Jaafari, and then we went to Maliki. True, we had some sophistication. The Iraqi minority was able to veto the choice of the majority. That was a real success. It is a sophistication that I think deserves credit.

But then we saw a new government take over, and I was there 6 weeks after they had been in power, and I thought, what have you done? What decisions have you made? Why haven't you basically let loose your army to clean up the militia? And I am not see-

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ing the political will to do that. Where is the political will? Not the will of the military, but the political will.

And then I go back 6 weeks later, they've been in office 3 months, and I see nothing happen except Sistani, the cleric, say, come home, politicians. Come home. Stop traveling. Come home and do your job. When I ask military people, Americans, and I ask our State Department people, does this government have the political will, they look me in the face and say, we are not sure.

So where I come from is they need deadlines, a deadline for provincial elections, a deadline for reconciliation, a deadline to establish their Constitution. And when I talked to them about it, they said, we don't want deadlines. We moved too quickly last year.

Well, with all due respect, they need deadlines, and what I hope eventually to get out of these hearings is I want to know real numbers that tell me real things. So I have used a lot of my time to just explain that, but it is what I need to know, and when I come back in more depth, we will get into this.

But I want to know first off why is it that if we had the optimal number of troops of 150- Coalition forces, and we have now built up to 294,000 Iraqi-trained and -equipped, why is it that 150,000 troops isn't enough, or is the right number? Why is that the case? And your answer will then help lead me to the followup questions that I want to ask. I am going to start with you, Admiral.

Admiral SULLIVAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

As we have said all along, the conditions on the ground will determine when we can reduce our troop levels in the country. It is true that going back to earlier strategies, the earlier campaign plans, there were projections for when we might be available to begin reducing those troops on the ground. However, as the security environment has changed and become more complex, the commanders on the ground have made the judgment that they cannot afford to draw down our own troop levels while the Iraqis are still building up theirs.

So I understand your point, sir, and I understand where you are coming from, but the conditions have not permitted the withdrawal of our forces like we would have liked to have seen.

Mr. SHAYS. So what I am hearing you say when you say the conditions on the ground, in other words, it's more violent, it's more dangerous, there are greater numbers of killings. Things have gotten worse, so we need more people; is that basically your answer?

Admiral SULLIVAN. What I said, sir, is that the environment has changed. We have gone from a primarily Sunni-led insurgency a year ago to the sectarian violence which we are now seeing largely, we think, sparked by the mosque attack in February. So the environment has evolved, and we have had to continually adapt our tactics and our strategies to address that environment.

Mr. SHAYS. And also violence between Shia and Shia.

Admiral SULLIVAN. Exactly. And what I would also add, sir, is Iraqi's security forces, as we buildup their numbers, they need to gain the experience, they need to build leaders, and all of that takes time. And we are also focusing on developing their capabilities to sustain themselves with logistics, with command-and-control capability and so forth. All of this takes time. So just the raw num-

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bers of Iraqi security forces that have been trained and equipped and fielded doesn't yield the complete answer.

Mr. SHAYS. Why did we determine that Iraqis only need 225,000, and how did we determine the mix? For instance, right now there are 129,000 defense forces, 165,000 Ministry of Interior forces, which includes about 115,000 police. You have border patrol. You also have the national police. How do we determine that—first, let me say of the 325,000, how many of them are going to be police or going to be military?

Admiral SULLIVAN. The military will be just a little over 137,000. About 137,5- will be in the army, air force and navy.

Mr. SHAYS. OK. I'm just going to express the concern that I can't imagine how 137,000 will ever allow us to bring troops home in any great number. And isn't it true that of the 137,000, most of them—very few of them would be pilots on C–130's or pilots for helicopters, correct?

Admiral SULLIVAN. That's right. It is a very small air force. It is projected to be about 1,600 personnel.

Mr. SHAYS. So that would suggest to me—I'll give my time to my colleague from Maryland Mr. Van Hollen. I will be raising questions in my second round as to how you will help me sort out how we get to this number, and why this number is going to enable us to leave. So I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Van Hollen, you have the floor.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you very much for your testimony and your service to our country.

I want to just sketch out a little bit up front, and then I have a number of questions.

We talked earlier about how the attacks of September 11th were launched from al Qaeda in Afghanistan. We then decided at some point to go into Iraq. It had nothing to do with the September 11th attacks, Iraq didn't. Saddam Hussein didn't. And in going to Iraq, we, in my view, did take the lid off Pandora's box, and we unleashed a lot of forces in Iraq, historical forces, forces that existed between different sectarian groups within the country.

If you go back and look at some of the statements made by Mr. Cheney when he was Secretary of Defense during the first—the Persian Gulf war, he lays out pretty clearly what a mess we might get into if we go into Baghdad, and he lays that out that's the reason we didn't go into Baghdad.

But we went into Iraq now. We took the lid off. And I think if you go back and look at the analyses made by a lot of very knowledgeable people at the CIA and others at the time, they predicted that this could end up being a great unraveling in Iraq. In many ways, we know Iraq is an artificial construct put together by Western powers. After the end of World War I and maybe like Yugoslavia, when the glue that was holding together disappears, comes undone, and we compounded that problem by many of the mistakes we made. Whether it would have happened anyway, I don't know, but certainly, the fact that we disbanded the Iraqi military and sent a lot of Sunnis home with their guns and with a sense that they had no place in the future of Iraq created big problems. The fact that we didn't have more troops on the ground compounded

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the problem. Many other—many other mistakes, and Iraq became a magnet for foreign fighters. Al Qaeda, having really, certainly had no collaboration with Saddam Hussein, maybe a couple of places out in the mountains where they couldn't have been gotten to by Saddam Hussein up in the Kurdish area, but al Qaeda has become a significant presence in Iraq and has created a base of operations there that we continue to fight to this day. It unleashed the insurgency. I think we all know now that the vice president's statement more than a year ago that the insurgency was in, "its last throws," was just dead wrong. In fact, the recent report that came out of the Pentagon, a report that was required by Congress, specifically says that the insurgency remains potent. And on top of that, now we have a budding civil war or civil war, all depends on who you ask. The fact of the matter is, thousands of people are being killed, and the Pentagon report just released says the situation's getting worse, not better.

Now, in all of this, I guess I would agree with the statement that's been made by General Casey and you here at the witness table here today and others that are in this mess, we really need some kind of political solution to the insurgency. I am not necessarily as hopeful as you gentlemen that we're going to be able to get that kind of political solution, but certainly, if we want to reduce the violence, we need that kind of political solution.

So I guess my question to you this morning is, what really realistically are the prospects of getting such a solution? We know just last week, for example, the Shiites in the Parliament were pushing hard for the legislation to essentially create an autonomous region in the south. The Sunnis in the Parliament have resisted that, and they said, hey, hold on a minute, you know, when we got together to support, however reluctantly, the constitution you all promised us that we would be able to revisit certain provisions in the constitution. Well, rather than revisiting those provisions, it seems the opposite is happening, that the Shia members of Parliament are moving ahead to create an autonomous region.

So let me ask you this question: Are we in a position now where we're struggling against the odds to put—to hold Iraq together? Or are we now working to put it back together? In other words, have the different groups within Iraq—the Shia, the Sunni, the Kurds—have they made decisions really? And when I say that, obviously, there's differences of opinion among every—members of all the groups, but have majorities among each of those groups essentially made the decision that their future is not in a united Iraq but their future is in something much closer to a divided Iraq which may at best have a very, very weak central government?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Congressman Van Hollen, let me pull back a little bit and try to take into account both some of the comments you raise about Afghanistan in your opening statement as well as Iraq, because I think the structure of these hearings in one sense may be a bit unfortunate, which is to say that the hearing on Friday about the consequences of the United States perhaps departing Iraq too soon ought to maybe have been the first hearing because I think that really frames the backdrop.

In Afghanistan, we are seeing a shift in tactics by the Taliban insurgency in part, and I think people tend to forget this because

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we're a bit of an amnesiac culture as a nation, and people barely remember what happened last week much less last month or a couple of years ago, but we've gone from a situation where there has never been an elected government in Afghanistan in any real degree to a situation where we had a constitution, a president and a parliament elected, and that parliament is now meeting. I met on Friday with a chairman of the Internal Security Committee and of the Defense Committee, and they are trying to struggle with the problems that country races.

In Iraq, I think Chairman Shays made a very cogent and articulate statement of the progress that we have seen on the political side leading up to the elections in December. It's clear that there are forces in the region more broadly who don't want to see that kind of future for the region, and they are fighting back. And that is the backdrop against which all of this is taking place.

On your question, I think if you look at the poll data that I've seen, a poll taken earlier this summer showed that 94 percent of Iraqis favored the idea of some kind of national unity government, and I think something in the high 70's supported specifically this government, the Maliki government. When you talk to Iraqi political leaders, most of them will tell you they do not want to see the country fragment and break up. And in my experience, I have to say I think we tend—and I think you were quite good at pointing out, Congressman Van Hollen, that there are differences within these national communities. But when you meet with Iraqis themselves, the kind of categorization that we provide, sort of triptych of Kurd, Shia, Sunni-Arab begins to break down when you ask people, you know, what their background is. So, for instance, when Vice President Abdel Mahdi was visiting with us. He had several members of his delegation with him, and they were quite frankly talking about the fact that one was a Shia married to a Catholic, one was a Shia married to a Sunni, one was a Sunni married to a Kurd, one was a Shia married to a Sunni. You know, how are their children going to characterize themselves? I think we tend to make these divisions, which are divisions that certain extreme elements in every community would like to play on the dominant view of the people in that respective ethnic or sectarian community, and I think we do that a bit at our peril. If you asked General Chiarelli who was both in the Balkans and now is the Corps commander in Iraq, he would tell you that although we've seen displaced persons, and some people have mentioned that earlier in the hearing. What you don't see right now is attacks on property that's been vacated by people or efforts by people to occupy that property which is something you did see in the Balkans. So even with regard to the hardening of the sectarian identities that you mentioned and the analogy to the Balkans, I think there are some important differences to bear in mind.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, if I could followup, let me just—I think it is—it's a tragedy what's happening in Iraq because I think you're absolutely right. There are so many examples of Sunni, Shia, Kurds having lived in many cases side by side in parts of the country, but we all can see what's going on right now.

We saw the most recent Pentagon report. The fact of the matter is, sectarian violence is spiraling out of control. Thousands of Iraqis

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are being killed. You have Shia militia. You have Sunni militia. You have death squads that are blindfolding and shooting people in Iraq. We've seen a migration within Iraq now; people moving out of the areas of the areas—Sunnis moving out of the more Shia areas of Baghdad into the more Sunni areas. You are seeing that going on every day. It appears that as time goes on, the country is becoming more fragmented as the different things that held that country together, some partly through brute force, some through other factors, have disappeared.

And I guess—let me just go back to my earlier question with respect to the steps that are being taken by the Shia in the Parliament. Are they not pushing for an autonomous region, No. 1? We could also focus on the fact that the Kurdish militia from day one essentially said, we're not going to give up our weapons. I mean, the Kurds have been subjected to persecution in Iraq for a long, long period of time. The Peshmerga was never going to give up its militia and will not until this day. So you're saying, Peshmerga, you can keep your militia; other guys, Shia, you have to give up your militia. They say, that's not going to happen. You had a referendum up in the Kurdish area in the Kyrgyzstan part of Iraq over a year ago where over 90 percent of the people said that they would like to be part of an independent Kyrgyzstan. Are you familiar with that referendum that took place?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Yes, I am.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. How do you account for that in what you just told me? Over 90 percent of the people in the Kurdish region said they want to be independent. I understand full well that the leaders in the green zone and the government are talking about a united Iraq. That would be terrific. I mean, that would be the solution we'd all want to see. The question is whether reality, whether the situation on the ground tells us that there's much—there's much more hope for keeping that together, and I guess my question to you and I'll end with this is, for example, how does—where do you see the constitutional negotiations going? I mean they were supposed to begin at the end of August. They're not going anywhere. Everyone says from the field, we need a political solution. What is the political solution that's going—what is it going to be that is going to help hold Iraq together rather than allow it to continue to fall apart or that will put it back together?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Well, you have a number of questions in there, Congressman Van Hollen. Let me try to unpack them a little bit. You're certainly correct, and as Ambassador, or as Admiral Sullivan noted, that the—I am not sure whether that was a promotion or demotion I just gave you by calling you Ambassador, Bill. But the violence has shifted, the nature of the violence has shifted from primarily insurgency to ethno-sectarian violence. That has largely come about if you look back historically at the pattern and the numbers of attacks in the wake of the bombing of the Golden Dome Mosque in Samarra at the end of February. It's clearly been part of the ongoing strategy of al Qaeda in Iraq and like-minded groups to provoke an ethnic civil war in Iraq in the hope of driving coalition forces out of the country. And being the first step to the creation of a caliphate as they would like to see it. So the—but what we've seen, the things that you describe and are very real, and we

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describe them of course in the 9010 report which you cited. That's a different thing from saying that's where the majority of folks want to see the country go. The discussion about a nine-province Shia subregion as part of the discussion of federalism is going on. It's been proposed by the SCIRI party. It's not clear that all Shia agree with it. There's clearly, as has been mentioned earlier in a hearing, some push back from some Sunni political leaders. There is supposed to be, under the constitution, a discussion of federalism later on, and that will have to be worked out ultimately by Iraqis. I'll come back perhaps later on to comment about what the chairman started with, which was the question of deadlines of one sort or another in the political process and the progress he saw from June 2004 until the election in December 2005, and there are some things I think that can be said about that. But the point is, this is a process Iraqis are going to have to work through themselves, and we will try and be helpful in that political discussion.

But, again, I think it's a mistake to see all elements of the community as united. You mention the Kurdish referendum at the time of the election. That was a nonbinding vote. It didn't have any legal status I think, as you know, Congressman Van Hollen and as you said, the president of united Iraq is a Kurd. The deputy prime minister, Barham Salih, is a Kurd. The foreign minister of the country, Hoshyar Zebari, is a Kurd. And they see their future and the best future for the residents of northern Iraq and of the Kurdish regional government as being part of a united Iraq. Kurds are the largest group, as you know, in the world without a nation of their own. The fact that, when given the fact on whether or not they would like to have a nation, 90 percent said yes, I don't think is terribly surprising.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank the gentleman.

We'll go now to Mr. Kucinich.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Ambassador, would you agree that post-war Iraq would certainly be the time when we would see our troops come home?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Congressman Kucinich, when you say post-war Iraq——

Mr. KUCINICH. I'll repeat the question.

Ambassador EDELMAN. Yes.

Mr. KUCINICH. Would you agree that post-war Iraq would certainly be the time that we can expect our troops to come home?

Ambassador EDELMAN. I think we would all like to see our troops come home as soon as they possibly can. The major combat phase of operations ended, and we very quickly found ourselves in a situation where we had a major insurgency to deal with. We have put in place a political process that has led to the development of a democratic government in Iraq, and I think we have an obligation to help that government defend itself until it can stand on its own two feet, at which time we will be I think very happy to have everyone in the United States and the coalition side come home.

Mr. KUCINICH. How long have you been with the Department of Defense?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Congressman Kucinich, I was sworn in just a little over a year ago in August 2005.

Mr. KUCINICH. And what did you do before that?

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Ambassador EDELMAN. Before that, I was the U.S. Ambassador to Turkey from 2003 to 2005.

Mr. KUCINICH. And what about before 2003?

Ambassador EDELMAN. From 2001 to 2003, I was serving on Vice President Cheney's staff in the Office of the Vice President.

Mr. KUCINICH. In your service on the Vice President's staff, were you involved in any way in decisions that related to Iraq?

Ambassador EDELMAN. I was a participant from time to time in the deputy's committee meetings that took place on that subject.

Mr. KUCINICH. Were you involved in reviewing intelligence reports that related to Iraq?

Ambassador EDELMAN. It was—we got intelligence on a variety of different issues, including Iraq, as part of our normal daily briefing.

Mr. KUCINICH. So the answer is, yes?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Yes, I reviewed intelligence on Iraq and any number of other subjects.

Mr. KUCINICH. Did you see intelligence reports on Iraq that said that there was no connection between Iraq and September 11th?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Congressman Kucinich, there were a number of both raw intelligence reports and finished products I saw during that time period which said a variety of things, but I don't think it's necessarily appropriate in an open hearing to be discussing specifics about intelligence.

Mr. KUCINICH. Au contraire, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I just asked the witness a question about his role as a member of the Vice President's staff in reviewing intelligence reports that may have been the basis or not for going to war, and he just responded that—I'll paraphrase it—it may not be appropriate in an open setting to answer those questions.

Ambassador EDELMAN. No, Congressman Kucinich. I said I reviewed such reports, I said I would not feel comfortable discussing the specifics of those intelligence reports.

Mr. KUCINICH. Why not?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Because they are classified, sir.

Mr. KUCINICH. Oh.

Ambassador EDELMAN. But I will be happy to answer any questions you might have.

Mr. KUCINICH. You know, Mr. Chairman, some day, we're going to have a hearing where these witnesses raise their hand and they're going to have to testify what they know and not hide behind this idea that things are classified.

Mr. Ambassador, when you were working for the Vice President's staff, did you see any intelligence reports that said that Saddam Hussein was connected to al Qaeda?

Ambassador EDELMAN. There were a number of reports which Director Tenet has testified to in open session that indicated there had been contact between Saddam Hussein and elements of al Qaeda over the years, and I did see those reports.

Mr. KUCINICH. Were there any intelligence reports that you saw that contradicted that information?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Yes, there were.

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Mr. KUCINICH. Did you ever sit with people in the intelligence community and at the request of the Vice President advise people how the intelligence should come out?

Ambassador EDELMAN. No, I did not.

Mr. KUCINICH. Do you have any knowledge whether the Vice President did or not?

Ambassador EDELMAN. I don't believe that, to the best of my knowledge, the Vice President ever directed anybody as to what intelligence products should say or not say.

Mr. KUCINICH. Do you have any knowledge—or have you seen any intelligence reports that suggest that Iraq was trying to obtain uranium from Niger? Did you see those reports?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Yes, I did.

Mr. KUCINICH. When did you see those reports? Do you remember?

Ambassador EDELMAN. I'm sorry. I don't recall precisely. It was over a 2½ year period, Congressman.

Mr. KUCINICH. Did you have any contact with the Italian government relative to those reports?

Ambassador EDELMAN. No, I did not, sir.

Mr. KUCINICH. Did you see any intelligence reports that indicated Iraq had weapons of mass destruction?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Yes, sir. There were any number of reports. There was a vast body of reporting on that subject, which I saw both when I was a career Foreign Service officer serving in the Clinton administration as well as a career Foreign Service officer serving in the Bush administration.

Mr. KUCINICH. Did you see any reports that simultaneously said that Iraq did not have weapons of mass destruction?

Ambassador EDELMAN. There was a vast body of reporting, Congressman Kucinich, that went to a variety of different questions having to do with both the nuclear, biological and chemical weapons programs. You are really talking about thousands of pages of reports.

Mr. KUCINICH. Did you see reports—I'll ask the question again for the purpose of clarification. You were a member of the Vice President's staff.

Ambassador EDELMAN. I may have to answer the question, sir, I may have seen such reports, but I think the vast preponderance of the evidence at the time indicated that he did.

Mr. KUCINICH. So you saw reports that said that there were no weapons of mass destruction; those reports existed?

Ambassador EDELMAN. No, I don't recall ever seeing anything that said no weapons of mass destruction existed. There may have been reports that went to different aspects of different programs and what might have been done or not done, but I don't recall anything saying he had no weapons of mass destruction. But, as I said, there were thousands of reports, and I can't at this point, looking back, not having prepared for that set of questions for this hearing, which I thought was going to be——

Mr. KUCINICH. No, no. It's going to come up in these hearings, Ambassador. Now, did you see any intelligence related to Ambassador Wilson's trip to determine whether or not Iraq was trying to get uranium from Niger.

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Ambassador EDELMAN. No, not until that information began to appear in the public print, sir.

Mr. KUCINICH. Did you see any information regarding—in the intelligence reports regarding Valerie Plame's role?

Ambassador EDELMAN. No, I did not, sir.

Mr. KUCINICH. Now, Mr. Ambassador, were you aware of any statements by the Secretary of Defense that forbade military strategists to develop plans for securing a post-war Iraq?

Ambassador EDELMAN. I'm not aware of such a statement, but I wouldn't have been in a position to be aware of it because I only reported to the Department of Defense in August of last year, sir.

Mr. KUCINICH. Are you aware of any phase four plan that covers security, stability and reconstruction?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Would have had phase four plans in any number of contingency plans that are prepared by combatant commanders for the Secretary. I am not sure which you are talking about.

Mr. KUCINICH. Has this administration built permanent bases in Iraq?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Sir, we have turned over 53 of 110 forward operating bases to Iraq. We have 57 currently under U.S. control. We continue to have plans for turning over more of those, and as far as I am aware, we have no plans for permanent bases in Iraq.

Mr. KUCINICH. And what are the plans specifically to bring the troops home?

Ambassador EDELMAN. The plan is, as Admiral Sullivan described earlier, that we will make an assessment jointly with the government of Iraq through the joint committee on what are the conditions for turning over increasing responsibility for Iraqis to take control of the country as a whole over time, and as that occurs, the commanders in the field will make recommendations to the Secretary of Defense, and he will then make recommendations to the President about how U.S. forces can be drawn down.

Mr. KUCINICH. Will the troops be home in a year?

Ambassador EDELMAN. I am not in a position to say that, Congressman Kucinich.

Mr. KUCINICH. Will they be home in 2 years?

Ambassador EDELMAN. I wouldn't want to make a prediction of a particular point in time. I think the number of troops, we hope, will begin to go down. It's gone up and down over the past year in response to the circumstances on the ground, and I think General Casey and his colleagues continue to make recommendations on that basis.

Mr. KUCINICH. Will they be home in 5 years?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Sir, it's a hypothetical question. I really, at this point, I just——

Mr. KUCINICH. Not hypothetical for the families who are wondering about the young people serving. Will they be home in 5 years?

Ambassador EDELMAN. I can't say whether they'll be home in 5 years or 4 years or 3 years or 2 years. It's going to depend on the circumstances on the ground. We have every reason to believe that increasingly Iraq will take control of the space, the battle space in

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the country, and that we'll be able to bring everybody home sooner than that.

Mr. KUCINICH. Will they be home in 10 years?

Ambassador EDELMAN. I'd certainly hope so.

Mr. KUCINICH. Now yesterday on Meet the Press, your former boss said that, knowing everything he knows today, invading Iraq was still a good idea. Mr. Cheney. You know this means that, regardless of the facts, regardless of whether Iraq had WMDs or not, regardless whether Iraq was a threat to our Nation, this administration was determined to attack Iraq. In other words, regardless of the facts, the administration's intent, maybe even before September 11th, was to attack Iraq. Now, as a former member of the Vice President's staff and as a representative of the administration, can you state this was the administration's policy?

Ambassador EDELMAN. I think it was the administration's policy that the threat presented by a regime that had refused to comply with 16 U.N. Security Council resolutions, 17 after the November resolution in November 2002, to completely account for the stocks of weapons of mass destruction that we knew he had, which he had used in war against Iran and against his own people; that regime, which also had relations with a variety of terrorist groups, like Abu Nidal who was clearly present and with whom the Baghdad regime unquestionably had a relationship; that the payment of suicide bombers, $25,000 per family; that the potential link between that regime and its possible possession of weapons of mass destruction, its unwillingness to accede to the demands of the international community after many, many years and 17 resolutions made it imperative to defend against the prospect that the regime, which according to the Duelfer report, still harbored the desire to produce weapons of mass destruction as soon as the sanctions regime came off, represented a threat that needed to be dealt with.

Mr. KUCINICH. Isn't it true that at a meeting of the National Security Council on September 12, 2001, Secretary Rumsfeld told members of the Council that now is the time to go after Iraq even before any determination had been made over who was responsible for September 11th.

Ambassador EDELMAN. Mr. Kucinich, I'm sorry, I'm not sure, I don't believe I was at that meeting and I certainly didn't hear the Secretary of Defense say that.

Mr. KUCINICH. Have you read Bob Woodward's book, Bush at War?

Ambassador EDELMAN. I have.

Mr. KUCINICH. Check page 49 out, because in that, there's a citation with regard to that exact statement by the Secretary of Defense. Now, let me ask you again, did Iraq have anything to do with September 11th?

Ambassador EDELMAN. To the best of my knowledge, we have no evidence of that.

Mr. KUCINICH. Did Iraq have anything to do with al Qaeda's role in September 11th? Or potential role in September 11th? Did Iraq have anything to do with al Qaeda?

Ambassador EDELMAN. I think, with regard to the relationship between Iraq and al Qaeda, as the 9/11 Commission report indicated, there clearly was a pattern of contact. I think reasonable

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people can differ as to whether that pattern of contact represented an operational relationship or not.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Chairman, I think it's important for us to introduce into the record—I'll get a copy of it—the Senate panel report, Intelligence Committee, that says, prior to the war, Saddam's government, "did not have a relationship, harbor or turn a blind eye toward al Qaeda operative Abu Musab al-Zarqawi or his associates."

One other question, did Iraq have weapons of mass destruction up until the time that we attacked them?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Iraq, we know for certain had weapons of mass destruction before 1991 and used them. The state of our knowledge about the ultimate disposition of their weapons is included in the report that Mr. Duelfer did of 1,200 pages.

Mr. KUCINICH. Was the attack on Iraq because they had weapons of mass destruction, was that well founded?

Ambassador EDELMAN. I think that the preponderance of evidence that was presented to people in the administration as was presented to people in the previous administration was that they had weapons of mass destruction. We've learned subsequently that, from the work of the Rob Silverman commission and others, that there were some flaws in that intelligence assessment.

Mr. KUCINICH. Yes, there certainly were, weren't there. Thank you.

Mr. SHAYS. I thank the gentleman. And I want to thank both witnesses for making really good-faith efforts to answer all questions. And I think you know that a Member can ask any question they want. And I come from slightly maybe a more significant difference with my colleague in regards to this. So when I met with the French, the British, the Turks, the Israelis, the Jordanians, before the war in Iraq, they were all convinced he had weapons of mass destruction. The French were the only ones who said, while they have them, they won't use them.

When this committee conducted our Oil-for-Food program, and we were the ones who initiated those hearings, and I had a call from Kofi Annan saying we didn't need to do these hearings because he said the Russians have agreed to a hearing, and then we get a call from Mr. Volker saying we don't need those hearings. We had those hearings, as did others, and we learned that Saddam had undersold his oil and gotten kickbacks and overpaid for commodities and gotten kickbacks.

We learned from the Duelfer report, while no weapons of mass destruction, he also confirmed that Saddam never thought we would attack because he bought off the French and the Russians in the Security Council. And we also know from just even in the New York Times report in December—excuse me, this year, that in December preceding the invasion, that he for the first time told his own military people, no weapons of mass destruction, and his generals were shot. So even his own people, even his own leaders felt he had the weapons. I would just say, having known that, to have gone based on that, if we had thought he didn't have weapons and have gone in would have been wrong. But I felt very strongly that, one way or the other, we needed to deal with Saddam, and the

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sooner the better, but it should have been, obviously, on factual, accurate information.

And I'll just make a point that I've been—with Joe Wilson, I've seen him promote his book in which he blames the White House. And finally, we get an issued report saying it didn't originate from the White House. It emanated from a comment that the State Department deputy director had shared, and it had come from that direction. And there are really no stories now about that. And the fact that the White House didn't mastermind this effort, it seems to me that Joe Wilson made a better effort of disclosing to everyone that his wife was connected with the CIA.

I want to say, in regards to Anbar province, that I think it was pretty clear from the DOD reports even earlier, this was the one area in our 18 provinces that we called critical. And I think DOD has been very clear that you can't win it just militarily. But it has gotten worse. And this is the whole point of what motivates me to have these hearings. I am not seeing the political will on the part of the elected officials to do the reconciliation that is required to bring in Sunni, Shias and Kurds. I realize that the Sunnis are asking for more than they should. But the Shias are giving them less than they deserve, and somewhere in between is an answer. And we also know that Iraq is awash with oil, and if anyone thinks this is about oil, our getting it, when you spent nearly $400 billion, it would take a long time for there to be a payback on oil. But what I want to do is get a sense from both you, and I want to go back to you, Rear Admiral, I want to know what the numbers mean. There's ultimately a base number that then says, from that base number, as we keep adding competent Iraqi military, that we should be able to draw down, and the one area where I agree with Mr. Kucinich on is that it is in the best interest of the Iraqis as well as the Americans to know when that will start to happen. Now, what I think, and this is my bias, is I think we have so underestimated the enemy continually that we've never had the right numbers. So we are really doing what is clear now, we just continue to buildup more Iraqis without seeing Americans come home. And I fear, and I want to say this, that this number of 325 is just—it's a number without meaning. That's what it is to me. It's a number that is somehow there, but it has no meaning to me because I can't basically reconcile the fact that we have 325,000 security—and that is, we hope, Admiral, to have that number achieved by December, correct? Sorry. The nodding head doesn't get in the transcript.

Admiral SULLIVAN. That is correct.

Mr. SHAYS. Obviously, some of that will not have a year's worth of experience. That is, they're trained and on the force and named but they're not yet competent; correct?

Admiral SULLIVAN. That's correct, sir. That number represents a milestone in terms of fielding and training equipment.

Mr. SHAYS. Let's just say this, a year from December then, we can make the assumption, minus those who will be killed, and there will be a number, that we have 325,000 security people who are all trained, and they've had on-the-line experience. And as the military tells me, nothing trains you better than being shot at. So the question I ask is, is it fair for me to assume that a year from

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now, we will have 325,000, less those who quit and less those who are killed? Is that correct?

Admiral SULLIVAN. I think that's a fair assumption, and it may actually be more than that, depending on the decisions that are made in the country about growing the forces even larger.

Ambassador EDELMAN. Mr. Chairman, if I could add one thing to what Admiral Sullivan just said.

Mr. SHAYS. You can always add. I am going to pursue my questioning a little bit. Feel free to jump in.

Ambassador EDELMAN. One of the things that I think is important to remember is, if you talk to, you know, Generals Petraeus and Dempsey, who have been commanders of MNSTC-I, the cooperation and training command, is that our first effort was to try and get combat boots on the ground. And so the initial part of the training has been focused on producing battalions that we can get into combat. If you will, I think it's what General Dempsey calls kind of putting out bricks. So we're putting out one kind of brick at a time.

Mr. SHAYS. So what's your bottom line?

Ambassador EDELMAN. The point is, now we need to work on developing the ministerial capacity at the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of the Interior to take these combat units and be able to provide them with command and control and sustainment and logistics, and that is where much of the effort is going into. We've now trained three training battalions, so now some of them can be remedied and the numbers can be brought up.

Mr. SHAYS. I understand that the next year would be to improve quality which is your basic bottom line point; correct?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Correct.

Mr. SHAYS. But if I subtract the 137, we're looking for a Ministry of Interior of 188,000; is that correct, Admiral?

Admiral SULLIVAN. That is correct, yes, sir.

Mr. SHAYS. Tell me—but isn't it true that when you just—let's just take the military for now, most of the military will be army. It will not be navy. It will not be air force. Is that correct?

Admiral SULLIVAN. That's correct. We are looking at about 118,000 Army out of that 137.

Mr. SHAYS. And isn't it correct that this military is being trained for insurgency, not to defend borders?

Admiral SULLIVAN. Yes, sir, the decision was made when—you asked how we arrived at that number, and the decision was made that we needed to shape this force. We did this in conjunction with the Iraqis to be able to conduct counterinsurgency operations inside their borders.

Mr. SHAYS. That part is logical.

Admiral SULLIVAN. Right.

Mr. SHAYS. But Iraq has some unfriendly neighbors. So am I wrong in making an assumption that we're going to have American troops there or nearby for a long time to be able to—unless the Iraqis ask us to leave—in order to defend this nation or discourage attempts by its neighbors to in any way violate Iraqi space; is that not true?

Admiral SULLIVAN. It is very much a possibility, sir. But there have been no decisions made.

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Mr. SHAYS. Let me ask it backward, OK, if you don't have troops that are trained in other than insurgency work, who—isn't that an indication that there are certain—that Iraqi forces do not have the capability to be a defensive force with artillery and all the other things that a military needs.

Admiral SULLIVAN. Well, they will have some artillery, and the intention was to develop a force that would have a modicum of its own self-defense capability without being an Army that could threaten its neighbors.

Mr. SHAYS. I just really need to—I mean, we—the advantage for both of you is that I get my questions answered in the third or fourth round and not have to stay until the seventh round because multiplied times three, three Members here. It is—I think it's a no-brainer answer. The bottom line to the question is, the people we are training, we are training for insurgency; we are not training them as a typical army. Is that not correct, Ambassador?

Ambassador EDELMAN. I think the main task is, right now, the counterinsurgency and to be able to, you know, provide basic defense for the country. As long as we're there, I think the security guarantee for them is our presence.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you. And I think you would agree with that, Admiral, correct? The nodding head, I'm sorry I don't mean to——

Admiral SULLIVAN. Yes, sir. I would agree with you.

Mr. SHAYS. So that tells me that one, we will have a role in the future, or some other country will have that role to fill in the void the Iraqis won't have. Now, isn't it true that we're not really developing an air force. I mean, they don't have many pilots, and they don't have—either fixed wing or helicopter. Is that correct?

Admiral SULLIVAN. It's primarily going to be a logistics force, C–130's and helicopters; no fixed wing attack-type aircraft at this point in time. The Iraqis may decide at some time in the future to develop that on their own.

Mr. SHAYS. But let me ask you this, in this force of 137—excuse me, 118 military, how many pilots will there be at the end of this year, fixed wing and helicopter?

Admiral SULLIVAN. I don't know the answer to that, sir, but I will have to take that one for the record.

Mr. SHAYS. But you would acknowledge it is very small.

Admiral SULLIVAN. It will be a relatively small number, sir, yes, out of an air force of 1,600, quite a few of those will be support personnel and maintainers and so forth.

Mr. SHAYS. So, again, isn't it logical for me to assume that we or some other country is going to have to provide that for the Iraqis, not just in the short term but in the long term, until they're able to do that, help train their pilots for fixed wing and helicopter.

Admiral SULLIVAN. It's a logical assumption, yes, sir, but we don't know yet what kind of arrangements our government is going to set with the government of Iraq.

Mr. SHAYS. Well, it's going to be Iraq's decision, but the bottom line is someone's going to have to fill that void for them.

Admiral SULLIVAN. I think that's a fair assumption, yes, sir.

Mr. SHAYS. It is a fair judgment in my assumption. I am not going to ask you to answer it, but it's a fair assumption on my part to assume it is most likely going to be asked. I am not complaining

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about it. I just want the record to state it. And then I am trying to work from that knowledge.

I am basically dividing up Iraq's needs in two ways. They need a force that can patrol the streets and deal with insurgencies and the insurgency, and we have a part in fulfilling that role; I know that because four of the people that we buried or have had church services in the Fourth Congressional District have been blown up by IEDs, and that is basically doing patrolling type of work not typical in military operations. It's more like police work. You would acknowledge that to be true?

Admiral SULLIVAN. Yes, sir. And if you'd allow me, there's an effort underway right now in conjunction with the government of Iraq to look out into the future, out 5, 10 years into the future, and figure out what kind of a military ultimately they need and figure out also what kind of equipment they should have, what they can afford, what they have the capability to maintain as we move toward normalizing our security relationship with the government of Iraq. And that's not final yet, but at some point in time, they'll have a vision for what they think their military ought to look like.

Mr. SHAYS. And given that——

Ambassador EDELMAN. Congressman Shays, I might just add one thing to Admiral Sullivan because your question is a very good one I think. And one of the reasons—some of our casualties are a function of the fact that we have still been in a position of having to supply the combat support and combat service support to the Iraqi security force units because they lack right now the logistical and mobility capability to do that. General Dempsey is aware of that. He is accelerating, has been accelerating the training of motorized transport regiments that are required for that as well as the headquarters' service companies that will provide the kind of organic logistic and supply support that will allow the Iraqis to take on more and more of the CS, CSS role. And I think that's important to note going forward.

Mr. SHAYS. It is important to note, but the bottom line is, when we talk about U.S. troops leaving, I really break it up—for me, I break it up into two parts. Excuse me, when we talk about American troops leaving Iraq, I break it up into two parts: the function that we do that is for police work dealing with insurgency, and the other function that we do dealing with mobility, logistics, medics, even our 20,000 contractors, security folks. I break it up into two parts. And it seems logical to me if your numbers are accurate and wisely determined, and when these 118,000 police—excuse me, 118,000 military, plus 188,000 Ministry of Interior police and border patrol become competent, then we should at the very least be able to take out those troops that are doing the police type of work, patrolling the streets and getting blown up. And I also happen to believe that these numbers are somewhat predictable. In other words, we know how long it takes to train them. We know how long—how many stay in once they are trained. We know what their capability is after a year's worth of training, and but what I suspect is that we are using the Iraqis and keeping building up the forces to in a sense deal with the fact that we have not yet had the full complements of our own people there to do what we need to do, and that's why we are not seeing our troops come home.

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So let me just segue into in just 2 minutes here, and then I'll give the time to my colleague again from Maryland. I want to talk about the police. Based on my trips, based on my conversations, the real weakness isn't necessarily with the police who are in every community doing what we traditionally call police work. It's with the national police. And my understanding is, it's probably a concern that at least 20 percent shouldn't be in the force. Is that a force of about 12,000, Admiral? Of national police?

Admiral SULLIVAN. The national police is a force of about 24,000, Congressman.

Mr. SHAYS. OK. And of the 24,000, is it not true that we have concern that probably 20 percent were—should be, you know, kind of asked to leave because they were brought in as militia and not properly trained and they tend to not have been integrated like the military?

Admiral SULLIVAN. Yes, sir, that is a concern, and we are working with the prime minister to do a vetting plan of the existing forces as well as retrain some units, but it is a concern, yes, sir.

Mr. SHAYS. OK. Well, I'll come back to that in my next round of questions. I am just going to end by saying that, in this conversation, I want to kind of add some emphasis to your point. When I go to Iraqis, and I say, what's your biggest concern, it's that—their answer to me is, you will leave before we're ready. That's their biggest concern. It's not the bombings. And when I speak to Iraqis, they don't have any fondness for the past regime. I can say that with absolute conviction because I have had more than enough conversations in 14 visits. That's like saying to the Koreans that they love the security they have because they're secure. They're really secure; they're starving, but they're secure. It's like saying to Iraqis, somehow because there's 40 percent unemployment in Iraq, I should be surprised. There was more than 40 percent unemployment before. The only program they had before was the oil-for-peace program. They had no trade. They had no commerce. And also, when I ask Iraqis, are you a Sunni, they will say I am a Sunni, but I am married to a Shiite. I will ask a Shia: I am a Shia, but my brother is married to a Sunni. When I asked my Iraqi intern whose parents live in Baghdad, he says, they ever thought of themselves as Sunnis, but they are Sunnis, but when you start getting killed because you are a Sunni, you start finding comfort with other Sunnis. And I blame that on the inaction of the politicians in the last year. There was no government for 4 months. You not only had the mosque in flames, blown up, but you didn't have any response to it. And so I am going to come back in my next round to say, I am going to ask you, what gives them the kickstart to make these tough decisions? I know only one solution, and that is to start to tell them that the police side of the security, the insurgency kind of effort, needs to be done by them, and we stay to do the logistics, the mobility issues and the heavy operations where we go in to a cluster of insurgents to do that kind of work. At this time, I'll recognize my colleague from Maryland.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thanks again, both the witnesses for their testimony. I plan to ask more questions about going into the future, but I was listening to the testimony

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and exchange you had with Mr. Kucinich, and I do think it is important just to go over a few things on the historical record.

And let me begin with weapons of mass destruction question. Yes, Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction. He used chemical weapons against his Kurdish population in the 1980's, and of course, we know he also used them in the Iran-Iraq war. Unfortunately, United States provided Hussein a lot of the targeting information during that war that allowed him to make effective use of those and other weapons. And we also know that the United States despite efforts from some Members of Congress back in the 1980's, decided not to impose economic sanctions against Iraq—any serious strict comprehensive economic sanctions—against Iraq as had been proposed originally in a piece of legislation in the Senate introduced by then-Senator Claiborne Pell of Rhode Island. In fact, the Reagan administration at the time opposed that piece of legislation.

So I am always a little bit puzzled now when people go back to those events as they claim justification for military action when they weren't even willing to impose economic sanctions at the time they were being used. It is just a little bit hypothetical. I know you didn't do that just now but others continue to raise that issue.

With respect to our assessment of the time, we know that the folks at the Department of Energy got it right with respect to aluminum tubes. We know the folks at INR and the State Department got it right, their assessments were buried in footnotes in some of these analyses. But there are a lot of the people in the Government that got it right. But unfortunately we sort of seem to have a sifting mechanism when it came to the information in the administration. Stuff that supported the argument that going to Iraq was accepted and the stuff that was conflicting was thrown out.

And we all know that Secretary Powell has said that unfortunately, one of the blots in his record will be testimony he gave on behalf of our country—all of us—at the United Nations, which proved to be false.

And so, I think it is important that we remember that there were people in the government who got it right with respect to weapons of mass destruction for whatever reasons, and I am not going to go into a debate on that right now. They were not listened to adequately.

Now, connections between Saddam Hussein and al Qaeda, and as I was listening, I just—have you had a chance to look at the Senate Intelligence Committee report that came out?

Ambassador EDELMAN. It was posted on the Web on Friday, Congressman Van Hollen and I have only had a chance to kind of glance at it. I haven't had a chance to sit down and read it.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Would you agree that Saddam was many bad things, but one thing he was not, would you agree, was an Islamic extremist.

Ambassador EDELMAN. I think if you look at, we are getting into we are getting a lot of history here.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Was Saddam an Islamic extremist?

Ambassador EDELMAN. If you look back after the first Gulf war, you do see an effort by Saddam to give a greater Islamic complexion to his regime. He added the words "ahu Akbar" to the flag, a

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number of conferences were held that were open to Islamists and, I would argue that some of the—it is correct that traditionally, Iraq had been a secular society, under the Baath regime, but I think in his last 10 years, he gave vent to a growth of Islamic thinking, both in his rhetoric and in his sponsorship of certain things that led to some of what we have seen as you said when we lifted the lid on the Pandora's box.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Ambassador, Pakistan is an Islamic state, is it not?

It is an Islamic state, is it not Mr. Ambassador?

Ambassador EDELMAN. It is a state in which Islam has a very important role.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Is General Musharraf an Islamic extremist?

Ambassador EDELMAN. I wouldn't characterize him that way at all. On the contrary he is being targeted for assassination efforts by Islamic extremists.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Let me read to you an assessment made by the CIA with respect to Saddam Hussein January 29, 2003, before the war, and I am quoting from the Iraqi support for terrorism CIA assessment report, "Saddam has viewed Islamic extremists operating inside Iraq as a threat, and his regime since its inception has arrested and executed members of both Shia and Sunni groups to disrupt their organizations and limit their influence."

I think it is clear if you read this report based on what many people have known for a long time, is that Saddam Hussein viewed groups like al Qaeda as a threat. He viewed them clearly as diametrically opposed to his view of the world. He was a brutal dictator. But he was certainly no Islamic extremist.

And I really find it difficult that—I mean we are having a hearing in here——

Ambassador EDELMAN. I didn't use the word Islamic extremist to describe him.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I asked you if you thought he was.

Ambassador EDELMAN. I don't think he would fit that rubric at all. I don't think that is anything contradictory between what I said in my answer and what you read out in the report which I have not had a chance to read.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Ambassador, but I think the issue is that there is this effort to portray this whole issue of the attacks of September 11th and Saddam Hussein as part of this United Islamic extremist effort, when, in fact, we well know that Saddam Hussein was not an Islamic extremist.

Let me ask you this: Do you think it is misleading and inappropriate for public officials of the United States to make statements suggesting that Saddam Hussein was part of September 11th?

Ambassador EDELMAN. I am not aware of any such statement, Congressman Van Hollen.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. If there were would you agree that it would be misleading and inappropriate?

Ambassador EDELMAN. I think I heard the vice-president say yesterday that we have no such evidence and I don't believe he or the President has ever said that.

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Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I believe that in many occasions in the past, they have put the two together. I am not referring to any remark made yesterday. Let me turn very quickly on the question of Iran.

From my perspective, I think in talking to a lot of people who follow the region closely, Iran has been the big winner of the war in Iraq. After all, here is a country they fought a long war with in the 1980's, that has now sort of fallen into a situation of chaos in many parts of the country. And the Iranians had been emboldened, as you said, in your testimony. They are causing trouble there.

Can you tell the committee a little bit about exactly what the Iranians are doing in Iraq, and how they are going about trying to exploit the situation there? We know that many of the members of the current Iraqi government were in exile in Iran during the brutal dictatorship of Saddam Hussein. They have these ties with Iran. If you could talk a little bit about the manner in which Iran is benefiting from the chaos in Iraq.

Ambassador EDELMAN. I think it would be a mistake to assume that because people may have been resident in Iran for some period of time in exile that necessarily means that they were subservient to Iran. I don't—would not make that——

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. And I didn't use those words.

Ambassador EDELMAN. I just would make that as an observation. I think that Iran and Iraq obviously are neighbors. They will have a relationship, they should have a correct and proper relationship as neighbors should have. Iran has been planning a very unhelpful role through a variety of mechanisms, both providing assistance to militias and providing some of the materials that have been used for IEDs. And we have said that and we have mentioned it in the 9010 report.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SHAYS. I thank the gentleman. Let me say so everybody knows, this is going to be our last round and then we will be done. So we are starting with Mr. Kucinich, and I just say to you, I was surprised, Mr. Ambassador, you didn't mention the $25,000 rewards for, to families involved in suicide bombings.

Ambassador EDELMAN. I did, in my comments.

Mr. SHAYS. Did you also mention Abu Nidal?

Ambassador EDELMAN. I did.

Mr. SHAYS. Boy, I am not paying attention.

Ambassador EDELMAN. I think the record will show I mentioned both of those things.

Mr. SHAYS. I am happy you did. OK, Mr. Kucinich.

Mr. KUCINICH. Thank you very much. Mr. Chairman, excuse me.

Mr. Ambassador, in your role as Under Secretary of Defense for policy, can you confirm recent published and broadcast reports that U.S. troops have already or are currently conducting operations inside of Iran?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Congressman Kucinich, I noticed that you mentioned that in your opening remarks, and that you made reference to the Seymour Hirsh article in The New Yorker, and I am glad to have an opportunity to respond. I am not aware of any such operations. And I am in a position, I think, to say that having read the Seymour Hirsch article, although not necessarily all the others that you cited, but that description of conversations that he has in

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the article bears no resemblance whatsoever to any conversation I have ever been in in the Department of Defense.

Mr. KUCINICH. Are U.S. military personnel, have U.S. military personnel or are U.S. military personnel deployed inside and around Iran?

Ambassador EDELMAN. We have military personnel deployed in Afghanistan and Iraq, which are bordering nations, but I am not aware of any operations inside Iran.

Mr. KUCINICH. Were there operations inside Iran in the last year?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Congressman Kucinich, I am not aware of any deployment of U.S. troops to Iran.

Mr. KUCINICH. U.S. military personnel?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Sir, I have already answered the question.

Mr. KUCINICH. Is that a no? So there is no U.S. military personnel of any way shape or form?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Not that I am aware of, sir.

Mr. KUCINICH. Either preparing a battlefield, gathering intelligence and recruiting local fighters?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Sir, we have in an effort to fighting the global war on terror, to determine information about terrorists around the world, and I don't think it is appropriate to get into a discussion of that in an open hearing.

Mr. KUCINICH. Is the U.S. planning and now recruiting members of MEK to conduct lethal operations and destabilizing operations inside Iran?

Ambassador EDELMAN. The only question having to do with the MEK that I am aware of that is we have a number of them, around 3,000 of them at Camp Ashraf, and we are working with the government of Iraq because Prime Minister Maliki has asked that they no longer be present to figure out how they can be either repatriated to other countries or, in some other way, no longer in detention in Iraq. That is the only issue that I am aware of or have been involved in with the MEK.

Mr. KUCINICH. Has the Department of Defense already commenced hostile actions against Iran as was the case prior to the Iraq war?

Ambassador EDELMAN. I'm not aware of any hostile actions that we have taken against Iran, sir.

Mr. KUCINICH. Has the administration already made the decision to attack Iran?

Ambassador EDELMAN. I am aware of no decision that has been taken by the President to attack Iran.

Mr. KUCINICH. Is this Congress and the American public now coming under the influence of an orchestrated campaign to take the country into a military conflict against Iran?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Sir, right now the U.S. Government is involved in a very serious diplomatic effort working with our colleagues among the EU three and the permanent five members of the United Nations Security Council to try and come to grips with the development of Iran's nuclear program, which we believe is a nuclear weapons program and that is the only activity that I am aware of.

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Mr. KUCINICH. Has the U.S. strategic command supported by the Air Force drawn up plans at the president's direction for a major bombing campaign in Iran?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Sir, we don't discuss contingency plans and I would not want my answer to be taken as either a representative of them saying yes or saying no. It is just not an issue we discuss in open public hearings.

Mr. KUCINICH. I am going to state that question again.

Has the U.S. strategic command——

Mr. SHAYS. Excuse me. Let me ask the gentleman, I would be very uncomfortable as the chairman of this committee to have someone be discussing the issue as the Ambassador answered. Are you looking for another question or are you just asking him to give the answer that he has already given?

Mr. KUCINICH. You know, Mr. Chairman, the Department of Defense refused to even attend a classified hearing on this specific issue. We saw the run-up to the war in Iraq. There is quite a similarity here in terms of the way the tracks were laid to go after Iraq and what they are setting up to go after Iran. Now, you know, I wouldn't even be raising this if this gentleman had shown this committee the courtesy of showing up in a classified meeting.

Ambassador EDELMAN. I was never asked to come to a classified meeting, Mr. Kucinich.

Mr. KUCINICH. Someone you work for who is above your pay grade was.

Mr. SHAYS. I understand my colleague's unhappiness with this. I would just want to say as chairman I would not want him to answer this question, because I would not want this committee to be into that area so——

Mr. KUCINICH. I am going to say, Mr. Chairman, because I don't want to bring this up, but since we are at this point, for years, I refused to sign a statement about classified, divulging classified information, because I had been to too many classified briefings when I first came to Congress that ended up on the front page in the newspaper, and then I was in a position to talk about it. But in order for me to hear from the Department of Defense in a classified meeting at the suggestion and coaxing of the Chair, I signed the statement only minutes later to learn that the Department of Defense wasn't showing up.

So look—and it was about this question. Has the U.S. strategic command supported by the Air Force drawn up plans at the President's direction for a major bombing campaign in Iran?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Congressman Kucinich, as I said earlier, and the Secretary has said, he would like to arrange an ops Intel briefing for the Members before they go out, and you know, people can ask questions at that time, but we just don't comment on contingency plans of one sort or another. And as I said earlier, I wouldn't want that to be taken as either a denial or a confirmation of the premise implicit in your question.

Mr. KUCINICH. Has the Department of Defense been warned by top ranking generals that the military's experience in Iraq where intelligence on weapons of mass destruction was deeply flawed, has affected its approach in Iran?

Ambassador EDELMAN. I am not aware of such statements, sir.

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Mr. KUCINICH. Do you concede that there are gaps in the intelligence with respect to this administration's understanding of the situation on the ground in Iran?

Ambassador EDELMAN. I think we have gaps in intelligence in many matters, including in regard to Iran.

Mr. KUCINICH. In your judgment—and I would like the Rear Admiral to answer this, as well—would attacking Iran heighten the risk to American forces inside Iraq?

Ambassador EDELMAN. I really think it is inappropriate to address a hypothetical question about an attack that I have already said there has been no decision by the President to make such an attack so, you know, I just think we are dealing with, in a realm completely——

Mr. KUCINICH. I want everybody to check this out because the fact of the matter is that all planning for any kind of conflict involves hypotheticals.

Now Admiral, you are a military man. I am asking you, would attacking Iran heighten risks to American and coalition forces inside Iraq?

Admiral SULLIVAN. It is very difficult to answer without knowing the circumstances, but I think on the face of it, it probably would.

Mr. KUCINICH. Thank you, Admiral.

Ambassador, has the White House been in contact, and that is, Mr. Bush and Mr. Cheney, been in contact with the Department of Defense relative to planning for a nuclear attack on Iran?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Sir, as I said, I am not aware of anything remotely like anything described in the Seymour Hirsch article in The New Yorker.

Mr. KUCINICH. At any time, did the White House insist that a plan for a bombing campaign against Iran include the possible use of a nuclear device to destroy Iran's uranium enrichment plant at Natanz?

Ambassador EDELMAN. I am not aware of any such thing.

Mr. KUCINICH. You are a Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. And have you been in any discussions regarding a bombing campaign with respect to Iran?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Congressman, I have been involved in a number of discussions about Iran, but most of them have focused on the diplomacy, because that is where the administration's focus is right now.

Mr. KUCINICH. In your current role as Under Secretary of Defense for Policy are you or anyone within the Department of Defense currently working on are have been working on selecting potential bombing targets in Iran?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Congressman Kucinich, you are essentially asking me the same question you did earlier with regard to contingency plans. And I am in the same position that I was in earlier, which is that I don't think it is appropriate to discuss contingency plans in an open hearing. We don't discuss them in general.

Mr. KUCINICH. We already know that in the days immediately following September 11th, Secretary of Defense was advocating a war against Iraq. Now during your time in the Vice President's office, did you or were you aware of anyone else when you were in the Vice President's office working on military options for Iran?

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Ambassador EDELMAN. I am not aware of anybody in the Vice President's office having worked on military options for Iran.

Mr. KUCINICH. During the time you were in that office?

Ambassador EDELMAN. During the time I was in that office.

Mr. KUCINICH. Did you see any intelligence relating to Iran during the time you were in that office?

Ambassador EDELMAN. As I said before I saw intelligence on any number of different subjects that were part of the normal intelligence briefing that I received every day.

Mr. KUCINICH. Was it your job to help select the intelligence that would help to make the case for a war against Iraq?

Ambassador EDELMAN. No, sir, it was not.

Mr. KUCINICH. Whose job was it?

Ambassador EDELMAN. I'm not sure anyone had such an assignment sir.

Mr. KUCINICH. Then how did we get to war against Iraq based on intelligence that you said that you reviewed?

Ambassador EDELMAN. It is the President's decision. Ultimately, it is a Presidential decision, sir.

Mr. KUCINICH. Does the Vice President have anything to do with that, based on your role working with the Vice President? Can you share with this committee any of your impressions as to whether the Vice President was involved in that decision?

Ambassador EDELMAN. The Vice President, in my experience, was very careful to provide his advice to the President in private and many times those of us on the staff were not aware of what that advice specifically was.

Mr. KUCINICH. Isn't it true that the President generally defers to the Vice President on issues that relate to attacks?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Sir, I think anyone who has actually seen the President and the Vice President interact would not say that the President defers to anybody. The President is the person who makes the decisions for this administration.

Mr. KUCINICH. Thank you. Do you believe the President must seek authorization from Congress before conducting military operations in Iran?

Ambassador EDELMAN. That is really a legal question sir. And I am not in a position to answer that.

Mr. KUCINICH. Well, you are the Under-Secretary of Defense for policy.

Ambassador EDELMAN. I think it depends very much on what the circumstances are.

Mr. KUCINICH. Do you receive authorization from Congress before conducting military operations in Iran?

Ambassador EDELMAN. It would depend on the circumstances.

Mr. KUCINICH. Under what circumstances should the President of the United States be able to order an attack on Iran without the permission of the Congress.

Ambassador EDELMAN. We are just dealing in such an area of hypotheticals, sir. I believe the President, before we went into combat in Iraq, came to the Congress. He will make the determination of what the relationship between his administration and Congress ought to be.

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Mr. KUCINICH. Does the U.S. withdrawal out of Iraq impact U.S. military options in Iran?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Again, we are dealing with some very hypothetical questions here. I don't—I don't want to, by answering the question, either appear to be confirming or denying the noticing that there is some kind of plan to attack Iran because as I have said, that is a discussion that Mr. Hirsh has had in The New Yorker that I don't believe bears any resemblance to the reality as I know it.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Chairman, I will wrap this up. Here is a summary.

Hypothetical, Iraq has weapons of mass destruction. Hypothetical, Iraq was tied to September 11th. Hypothetical, Saddam Hussein working with al Qaeda. Hypothetical, Iraq intended to attack the United States. Hypothetical, Iraq had the capacity of attacking the United States. This administration translated every one of those hypotheticals into a course of action that resulted in disastrous war.

Over 2,600 American troops dead, 100- to 200,000 Iraqis dead, the cost of $350 billion or more maybe $3 trillion, according to Joseph Stiglitz. We are borrowing money from China and Japan to fight a war all based on hypotheticals. So this gentleman has just laid out a course of response to my questions about Iran saying, well, that is all hypothetical.

Indeed, Mr. Ambassador, it is hypothetical. And we are trying to find out, in our responsibility as a committee, whether or not that very hypotheses that this administration works from are riddled with falsehoods. That is why I asked those questions. And I am disappointed with your answers. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador EDELMAN. Congressman Kucinich, the only thing that I am aware of that is riddled with falsehoods would be Mr. Hirsch's story in The New Yorker.

Mr. KUCINICH. When well when you raise your right hand and under penalty of perjury in an open committee where you answer questions without shielding your self behind the rubric of classified formation, then I will be ready to take your word for it.

Ambassador EDELMAN. Congressman, I have answered truthfully and candidly all the questions that have been put to me.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you. Ambassador, I think you have been very candid and where you haven't been willing to answer you have been candid about that. And I appreciate that. And I appreciate your responses as well, Rear Admiral.

I want to talk and conclude with going back to the primary purpose of this hearing, which is to talk about security numbers.

And we are now talking about police. And there are approximately 24,400 national police out of that total number of 188 police and Border Patrol, 188,000 police and Border Patrol. Of that 24,000, does the Department of Defense have estimates as to how many are competent and reliable?

Admiral SULLIVAN. I am checking my figures here, Congressman, make sure I give you a good answer. We do have the unit readiness ratings for those units. There are national police in the lead with coalition support, and I think the number is nine battalions of

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those police that are actually in the lead. And then another almost 40 that are working side by side with the coalition forces.

Yes, we do track those numbers.

Mr. SHAYS. Isn't it true that 20 percent, that you want to remove about 20 percent and that the Iraqi Government wants to see about 20 percent of that 12,000—24,000 reduced by 20 percent?

Admiral SULLIVAN. That is a rough figure.

Mr. SHAYS. Let's take it as a rough figure. Do we have a program to do that or do the Iraqis have a program to do that?

Admiral SULLIVAN. They do have a program to do that, yes, sir. And also retrain some battalions that have not performed up to par.

Mr. SHAYS. Is it correct, going back to the Army, that only 10 percent of the Iraqi army are Sunni Arabs, which equates to about 12,700?

Admiral SULLIVAN. I am not sure of that figure. I know we are not tracking the battalions by composition by religion, but I think the estimate is somewhere in that neighborhood.

Mr. SHAYS. So it is a relatively small number, is it not?

Admiral SULLIVAN. It is, yes, sir. It is close to their percentage in the population, which I think is around 20.

Mr. SHAYS. It would be about half of what it should be.

Admiral SULLIVAN. Yes, if that number is right, and I am not sure that it is, sir. It may be higher than that.

Ambassador EDELMAN. Congressman Shays, if I might, I think one of the things we are trying to do is to make sure that this national institution is seen as representing all Iraqis, and so we are trying to get consciously away from the ideas of people as they enter the armed forces, and the police thinking of themselves in ethnic or sectarian terms, but rather thinking of themselves as Iraqis first.

Mr. SHAYS. I realize that, but if you just have all Shias going into a Sunni area, they are going to know.

Ambassador EDELMAN. Point well taken.

Mr. SHAYS. You want an integrated military correct?

Ambassador EDELMAN. Yes, and the point is, as I think as we indicated in the 9010 report, we are moving more and more in a direction of a force that is getting pretty close to the actual percentages, but there is still some disproportions and so for instance in the officer corps you tend to see more Sunni officers than Shia because of past history and tradition.

Mr. SHAYS. What factors went into the decision that the Iraqi security force would total 325,000 particularly an Iraqi army of 138,000 or so?

Admiral SULLIVAN. Well, as I stated earlier, Congressman, there were a number of considerations. We took a look at the rough order of magnitude of what size force is needed for a country that size to do focus on counterinsurgency operations. We did not obviously want to duplicate the army that existed under Saddam, which is an aggressive and offensive-minded army.

So those are the numbers we came up with. And we also took a lot on the police forces at representative nations in the region, what we thought we knew about the Iraqi police before the war, what size they had at the time, and factor all of those things in

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to arrive at these numbers. And as I also mentioned, we wanted to make sure it was a force that could be sustained and maintained by the Iraqis once we had helped them build it.

Mr. SHAYS. When the Iraqi army and police have reached their maximum size of 325,000 trained and equipped personnel, will that allow Iraqi security forces to take over completely the job of street patrols and combat operations?

Admiral SULLIVAN. That combined with a certain level of experience and assessment by our forces as to their capabilities. So it is not a simple mathematical answer, Congressman. It is a lot of factors involved.

Mr. SHAYS. Let's say when they had a year's worth of experience so they are fully competent. I mean, a year's worth of on the ground, being-shot-at experience.

Admiral SULLIVAN. I am sorry I missed the question.

Mr. SHAYS. On the ground years worth of experience do they then become competent?

Admiral SULLIVAN. They should, yes, sir.

Mr. SHAYS. Well, if they aren't, then the number is a low number. I mean, candidly, once they become competent, and I mean——

Admiral SULLIVAN. Sir, I understand your question.

Mr. SHAYS. Because otherwise, the 138,000 or 137,500 or not enough.

Admiral SULLIVAN. Sir, even our own units move in and outside of competency based on where they are in their cycles.

Mr. SHAYS. I understand, but we are talking about margins. We are not talking about huge numbers. In other words they become more competent, maybe there was some significant injuries, key officers were killed, but, let me kind of just get to the end of this then. We have—basically, we have 3 provinces that we call stable, those are the three Kurdish areas. We have eight that are moderately stable. We have six that are serious. And we have one that is critical, Anbar.

And so, but of Iraq, how much of Iraq is under primarily Iraqi control with Iraqi governments and—but let's take the military first. How many are basically being patrolled by Iraqis, not coalition forces?

Admiral SULLIVAN. About 60 percent of the country, the Iraqi security forces are in the lead. Now they are supported by coalition forces but they are planning, conducting operations in about 60 percent of the country, in the lead.

Mr. SHAYS. But we have only transferred one of those provinces to the Iraqi prime minister.

Admiral SULLIVAN. Yes, yes, sir that is a slightly different calculus. That is a process that involves the provincial Governor, General Casey and his role as multinational forces in Iraq as well as the prime minister in assessing whether or not that government is capable of running their own security without having lead under the coalition so——

Mr. SHAYS. But there is one where I say it is totally independent we might invite Iraqi troops, I mean, American troops in, but I want to be clear. Let me ask the question, is this basically under Iraqi control, Iraqi troops, and they are in charge?

Admiral SULLIVAN. That is correct, yes, sir.

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Mr. SHAYS. In the other districts that are—60 percent of Iraq, that is, where Iraqis are taking the lead, they are still under U.S. control?

Admiral SULLIVAN. Yes, sir. We have transferred one Iraqi division to this Iraqi ground force command that is under the administration of the Ministry of Defense, and so they are not doing operations under multinational command Iraq control. So that is kind of a separate issue. But in quite a few areas, the Iraqis are in the lead conducting the operations. They are still reporting to the multinational command Iraq, excepting this province of al Muthanna and this 8th Iraqi army division.

Mr. SHAYS. I just want you to just be—we went from 40 percent primarily where the Iraqis are taking the lead, now it is 60 percent, but that 40 percent was an unstable number between 8 weeks ago. Did someone push that number down to 30 percent? I just need to have that 60 percent even better defined than you are defining it right now.

Admiral SULLIVAN. Yes, that 60 percent is a figure referencing territory.

Mr. SHAYS. So how about populationwise?

Admiral SULLIVAN. I think that represents about 65 percent of the population, but I can check that figure.

Mr. SHAYS. Does it represent specific provinces or is it a—are we dividing the province in half with primarily Iraqi control and——

Admiral SULLIVAN. In some cases, the province, it is divided in half. It is not strictly along provincial or province border lines.

Mr SHAYS. So what I wrestle with is given that 60 percent is primarily under Iraqi control and initiative, why we still have the same number of troops. And I only have two conclusions, one that we simply didn't have enough coalition forces so we have been using them to buildup. Or, that we have continually—continually underestimated what we would need and not recognize that Iraq was getting more violent.

Those are my only two conclusions. I want to know at what point we reach that base to which we then can withdraw our troops.

If we get to 100 percent or 80 percent in the lead, does that begin to say we can reduce our troops? When is that going to happen?

Admiral SULLIVAN. Sir, that is a very difficult question to answer, and the reason it is is that because the evolving security environment will determine when the commanders on the ground think that they can safely withdraw some of our troops.

Mr SHAYS. Let me respond to that by saying to you where I have trouble with is why I got so angry at my staff going once into Iraq years ago and being aware that we didn't have the body armor, and we didn't have the military equipment at its highest protection level, upgraded and then being told by the military it will be done in 3 months. And then I go back 3 months later we still have the problem.

And I come back and they say well we underestimated the number we needed and the violence and so—that happened three times. So my logic tells me why don't we just assume the worst, the very worst, and then work off that number because we have been wrong so many times.

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And I have another theory. My theory is this the American people don't think we have a plan because we don't share the plan that we have and because that plan has been wrong more often than right.

So we have one choice, share the plan that has been wrong and at least they know we have a plan, or not talk about the plan so people don't think we have a plan that we are just kind of, like, winging it. We are not winging it. We are just wrong. What this committee is going to pursue with you, and we are going to ask for these numbers, we want to know when the baseline is there on a worst-case-based scenario, and from that point, we are going to recommend that we are—we feel with some, I hope, conviction we can predict when our troops can come home under a worst-case scenario.

It bothered me that when we voted on a time line a few months ago. We then read we had a time line. We all knew we had a time line. The administration said it was condition based. Why not just assume the condition is going to be really bad, and give us a time line based on the really bad rather than thinking it is going to be better.

And I want to just say I have looked at the classified documents, and I believe that our plan is unrealistic. It suggests we are going to get troops out and that Iraqis are going to take over well before they are going to take over. And I think we all know that. So my plea with all of you is to have some realistic numbers that we can work off of, because I believe the American people, as well as the Iraqis, have a right to know when we are going to see some kind of reduction.

And then I am going to say to you, but it is only going to be the reduction on the police side of the equation, because we are still going there for operations. We are still going to be there for logistics. We are still going to be there for medical support. We are still going to be there for those things. And we are still going to be there to make sure that Iran, Syria, Turkey, Jordan, Saudi Arabia doesn't think this is a land they can have some opportunity to move into.

So what would you like to put on the record before we get to the next panel? There is anything you would like to put on the record? Ambassador.

Mr EDELMAN. Mr. Chairman, I would just like to maybe address a couple of points that you made just now and then go back maybe circle back to one you made in your opening statement, if I could.

While I think all of us would like to have some quantitative answer that would give us some confidence about when we can start withdrawing United States and other coalition forces, I think a lot of this ends up being a qualitative judgment that inevitably has some subjective element in it. You were asking a question about our units that have 1 year of experience, you know, doesn't that kind of get them there? I think a lot of it ends up a being a question of leadership at the unit level. And there, because we now have embedded trainers, we have a better mechanism for being able to look at that and when we have problems weed them out, but it also is, I think, undoubtedly true that some of what we are grappling with is a kind of particular culture that was bequeathed

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to the military by the preceding regime that is going to take a little bit of time to work through, getting people to take initiative getting people to see their responsibility as being a commander, as being for their troops and their well being as opposed to a means for greater patronage or benefit for the individual.

It is going to take a little bit of time to work through that. And I think the difficulty we have with fixing things quantitatively is that there is some important qualitative element, and that goes not only for senior commanders but more junior commanders and NCOs as well and we are beginning to address some of these problems.

You began the hearing by talking about, I think, quite eloquently the progress you saw during many of your preceding trips between the turnover of sovereignty in June and then the election in December, and you expressed some concern about the stagnation since then. And I think all of us share some of the impatience and concern that I think your comments reflect about the length of the process that took place.

And you rightly point out that we had some benchmarks which forced the pace, if you will, politically in Iraq. I would submit to you however that we are in a slightly different situation now because sovereignty was returned in June 2004, we are still deal with a series of limited governments whose duration was going to be limited.

And only with the installation of the current Maliki Government after the December elections do we have a fully sovereign, permanent government of Iraq that has now got to step up and take decisions.

And the earlier benchmarks were dictated by an arrangement agreed by Americans and Iraqis when the circumstances were a bit different.

I agree with you that we need to find some ways to force the pace of the process. I think the constitutional revision process may help that to some degree. And I think the necessity of having provincial elections which we have touched on from time to time in this hearing is yet another potential opportunity to set a benchmark that Iraqis have to build toward, both on the reconciliation side which my colleague, David Satterfield, will address in your hearing on Wednesday and other means and mechanisms for getting the Iraqis to shoulder more of the responsibility here so we can begin the process of bringing forces home eventually.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you, Ambassador. Admiral.

Admiral SULLIVAN. Congressman, I would just like the record to show that in response to your comment about a plan, we do have a plan and we have been executing that plan for quite some time and that is to buildup the Iraqi security forces. They have the ability to provide for their own security and that has been the plan for quite some time.

I share your frustration with the fact that the situation has evolved and that we have had to adjust plans over the course of the last several years several times. But in fact, I would not want the American people to leave with the impression that there was not a plan. And that plan was being executed.

Thank you.

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Mr. SHAYS. Thank you both very much. I very much appreciate your being here, appreciate your coming to this hearing and we will have a 5 minute break and then we will go to our next panel. Thank you both.

[Recess.]

Mr. SHAYS. The ranking member had asked that a report of the Select Committee on Intelligence on postwar findings about Iraq's WMD programs and links to terrorism and how they compared with prewar assessments together with additional views be submitted for the record. And without objection, so ordered.

Mr. KUCINICH. I thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you.

Let me introduce our witnesses and thank you for your patience. We have Mr. William Nash Major General retired, U.S. Army senior fellow for conflict prevention, and director of the center for prevention action council on foreign relations; Dr. Bruce Hoffman professor, Security Studies Program, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University; and Mr. Alan King, former commanding officer for 422nd civil affairs, Battalion operation, Iraqi Freedom, advisor for Tribal Affairs Coalition Provisional Authority.

Gentlemen, we really appreciate your being here. We appreciate your testimony. We appreciate your patience. And we are really looking forward to this panel so thank you.

As you know, we swear in our witnesses, and I would ask you to stand up and we will ask you to raise your right hands.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Mr. SHAYS. For the record, our three witnesses have responded in the affirmative. We are going to go in the order I called you. We will do the 5 minutes and then we will roll over another 5 minutes, and if you could finish within 10, that would be good. But my basic philosophy about the second panel is they were waiting, and so we cut them a little slack.

And frankly, we anticipate learning a lot from the three of you, so thank you.

I want to just remind you to turn your mics on before we start. Mr. Nash.

STATEMENTS OF WILLIAM NASH, MAJOR GENERAL RETIRED, U.S. ARMY, SENIOR FELLOW FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION, AND DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER FOR PREVENTION ACTION COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS; BRUCE HOFFMAN, PROFESSOR, SECURITY STUDIES PROGRAM, SCHOOL OF FOREIGN SERVICE, GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY; AND ALAN KING, FORMER COMMANDING OFFICER, 422ND CIVIL AFFAIRS BATTALION OPERATION, IRAQI FREEDOM, ADVISOR FOR TRIBAL AFFAIRS, COALITION PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY

STATEMENT OF WILLIAM NASH

General NASH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, it is a great opportunity for me to be here, and I hope my views will be useful to you. Having listened to the first panel, and particularly your explanations and questions gave me a much better feel for some of the things that you want to go after, so maybe I could help a little bit more beyond my prepared statement.

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I think one of the issues that I would like to, because it is part of my day job, if you will, today, is to talk a little about bit about how the U.S. Government is organized, equipped and trained to conduct post conflict operations, and I would like to draw attention to that. It is most important it not be considered just an armed forces problem, but a problem of the entire government. And I strongly recommend that this subcommittee and the committee in general become actively engaged in improving our capabilities in that arena.

I refer to you the Council on Foreign Relations Independent Task Force report entitled "In the Wake of War" which talks about ways the government in general and specifically the Department of State and the Department of Defense can better address post conflict challenges. And I provide you a copy of the report and would ask that its contents in its entirety be entered into the record, with note that Samuel Berger and Brent Scowcroft were the co chairs of this independent task force, and that was a very fine effort to try to identify some ways that we can improve things.

Mr. SHAYS. Without objection, it will be submitted and for the record, "Council on Foreign Relations, In the Wake of War: Improving U.S. Post-Conflict Capabilities."

[NOTE.—The report entitled, "In the Wake of War: Improving U.S. Post-Conflict Capabilities," may be found in subcommittee files.]

General NASH. Thank you. I realize you focus on Iran, it may seem somewhat overwhelming to try to talk about Government reform issues, but that is exactly what we need to do because we cannot afford to do things in the future like we have done them in the past.

Sir, any strategy on Iraq has to concern itself with ends ways and means. Simplistic statements about goals for democracy and free market economy will not be sufficient. Bumper stickers stay the course, cut and run are not the alternative actions concerned with Iraq. A timetable for troop withdrawals is also not a strategy. It is a measure—it is a way to disengage. And disengagement is not an option for us today.

Three years ago, we were in a senseless debate in this city about whether or not there is an insurgency in Iraq. Today we argue over whether or not there is a civil war.

The debate is really a domestic political issue, not really—using Iraq as a venue.

We dithered instead of taking strong and decisive action.

And the bottom line in Iraq today is that there is an insurgency, there is civil war, there is rampant crime and the Iraqi people have far less security today than they had before the American invasion, despite whatever advantage they may have gained in getting rid of Saddam Hussein.

I fear that a withdrawal now, in the current American forces in Iraq a significant withdrawal would add to the violence.

This is not only a function of the capacity of the Iraqi security forces, but also the maturation of the political institutions and a settlement—a final settlement if you will on power sharing arrangements.

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All this has to be done in the face of an al Qaeda-inspired insurgency against the Iraqi government, against the coalition forces, against Shiites and against moderate Sunnis. So this multi layered, multiple war is being fought on top of each other makes it very, very difficult and frankly, we need many more debates and hard questions answered that you asked rather than the bumper sticker debates that all too often take place on Sunday mornings in the various other campaign stops.

Two additional factors I would like to draw your attention to for your consideration. The first one is how long can we maintain this force that is there now? And I talk about this in terms of the men and women and their families and the Nation that is providing the service over there.

Their dedication is unmatched, and frankly I say it is our proudest accomplishment. But I don't know how long this can go on. And I would say that in a year and a half——

Mr. SHAYS. How long what can go on again?

General NASH. How long the Armed Forces of the United States can sustain the operations we have been conducting in the Iraq for the last 3-plus years. And I think another 2 years we will see significant impacts on recruiting, retention and possibly discipline in the force.

The other factor of course is that—and I think one of the problems that you are having in this regard, I am adding to my statement from what I heard—because of what I heard this morning, is that there has been a persistent shortage of forces in Iraq since day one.

And the fact of the matter is the reason they can't tell you when they can withdraw down from 150,000, sir, it is my belief is the assumption that is the proper number of baseline.

And without a good baseline that you are desperately searching for, it is impossible then for the commanders—and the commanders will not come out and disagree with their political bosses that they need more troops. They are equally hesitant to reduce the forces that they currently have, and that is a way of telling you they don't have enough, despite the progress made in training the Iraqi force.

The second factor I would add to the discussion which is implied in many of your questions is the enemy has a vote on how many forces are necessary.

So as the enemy strength and capacity and actions increase, then there is no concomitant reduction in the requirement for American forces. The enemy has a vote in this force level debate.

Given these two factors and the limited tolerance by the people of the United States for commit for much more commitment and casualties, I think we need to consider a short-term increase in coalition forces in the country.

Recent action in Baghdad has delayed the redeployment of a brigade adding to the strength of the security forces in Baghdad by just under 4,000 soldiers. We may want to consider expanding this delayed rotation process for the next 18 to 24 months and take the risk that by using more forces for a shorter period of time, we may be able to reduce our overall needs.

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This may be considered by some imprudent, it may be considered an all or nothing action. I would recommend we study it and we look at it as a possibility for achieving our way.

And finally, I would make three comments, sir, on the path ahead, the clarification of U.S. objectives is the end in the strategy that we need to establish. The interests of the United States and the interests of the Iraqi people are not necessarily the same. And we need to understand that our interests must prescribe our strategy.

There is suspicion in Iraq and in the region as a whole about the long-term intentions of the United States with respect to oil presence and the future relations with the Arab and Islamic world. Without refighting, the political debate over why the U.S. invaded Iraq, Congress has the ability, if not the responsibility, to clarify our intentions by describing the United States concrete goals in Iraq.

My view is that we should send a clear message that the U.S. military presence will not be permanent, and this means that we should stop those permanent military construction activities, the MCA projects that have been appropriated by Congress, throughout the country.

We should not stay the course, we must broaden the course. Without a dramatic change in the perception of the role of the United States in the Middle East, we will continue to see them rise in anger against us, resulting in more conflict and a further drain on our resources. We must understand that U.S. actions with respect to Israel and the Palestinians, Iran and Syria and Lebanon have a direct and too often negative impact on our ability to stabilize Iraq. Less conflict, not more, is what is needed.

And finally, we must emphasize the political and diplomatic and economic needs, time and time again our commanders have talked about the solution to Iraq is political and economic not military.

But these solutions require both a regional and international effort led by our country. We cannot afford any other approach politically or economically ourselves. Sounds like a tall order, I understand, but if we succeed in bargaining the course and clarifying our objectives, I think we can find much greater international support.

And as you talk about your frustration on deadlines and the maturation process of political institutions and responsibilities within Iraq, I would argue that a lever on force presence is not necessarily the most important lever that we could use to spur political action on the part of the Iraqis, and I will look at economic packages, political assistance issues that are more, and I would look for some economic carrots we can use in order to emphasize the need for political deadlines to be met.

And sir with that I will stop and I look forward to your questions.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you very much, Mr. Nash. We are going to have some good fun in our dialog here. I appreciate it. It gives us a lot to think about.

[The prepared statement of General Nash follows:]

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U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Government Reform
Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats, and International Relations

Iraq: Democracy or Civil War

September 11, 2006

William L. Nash
Major General, USA, (Ret.)
Gen. John W. Vessey Senior Fellow for Conflict Prevention
Director, Center for Preventive Action
Council on Foreign Relations

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Mr. Chairman: Thank you very much for the opportunity to appear before this subcommittee; I am honored and hope to provide my views in such a manner as to assist your very important deliberations. Our Nation faces severe challenges, and these challenges demand great wisdom and courage by our elected and appointed officials in all branches of our government.

There has been a lot of commentary on many aspects of how the United States and its Coalition partners have conducted operations in Iraq. While there is much to learn from successes and failures in all operations, I argue that today's conversation should focus on where we are today, and how we as a Nation should go forward. To understand what has happened to date, there are many excellent studies of the war in Iraq. To begin an examination, I recommend reading: The Assassin's Gate: America in Iraq by George Packer and Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq by Thomas Ricks. For a different view of post-war actions, Rory Stewart's memoir of his time in the British sector as a Coalition Provisional Authority official, The Prince of the Marshes is very useful. Of particular interest to this committee is a new book, Blood Money by T. Christian Miller, which addresses the role of contractors in Iraq.

One area of personal concern to me is how the United States is organized, equipped and trained to conduct post-war stabilization and reconstruction operations. Please note that I did not refer to just the Armed Forces in this context; the problem is in the whole government, and I strongly recommend this Committee become actively engaged in improving our capabilities.

In this context, there are four points that I would like to make that affect policy in Iraq today and U.S. foreign policy in the future. First, the importance of recognizing

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stabilization and reconstruction operations as critical national security priorities; second, the need for leadership within the U.S. government for building and coordinating U.S. post-conflict capabilities; third, the importance of fully funding our nation-building capacities; and fourth, the recommendations made by the Council on Foreign Relations' Independent Task Force report on ways the U.S. government in general and the departments of State and Defense in particular can better address post-conflict challenges. The report is entitled, *In the Wake of War*, and I ask that the report in its entirety be entered in the record. The report is also available on the Council on Foreign Relations' website at http://www.cfr.org/publication/8438/. The co-chairs of the independent task force were Brent Scowcroft and Sandy Berger.

Now, I realize that with the many issues facing the Nation in Iraq, it may seem that it is too much to take on new government reform tasks, but that is exactly what is needed, and this Committee would seem to me to be perfect for energizing the effort. We must have the wisdom now to act so that in the future we will be better prepared to meet the challenges that are sure to come. Most importantly, we must improve Congressional oversight of overseas endeavors.

* * * * *

Congressional oversight is a crucial element in any strategy designed to improve the interests of the United States with respect to Iraq. Simplistic statements about our goals for an Iraq at peace with itself and its neighbors, creating democracy, a free market economy, and respect for human rights alone is not a proper strategy. Equally un-helpful is the attempt by some to frame the alternatives in Iraq as either to "stay the course" or "cut and run." Such polemics do not provide the basis for an intelligent debate on a

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profound national security issue, and are a disservice to the American people. At the same time a withdrawal time-table is no strategy either. It is a myopic measure designed to disengage American forces; it is not an action to advance U.S. interests today and in the future.

* * * * *

In the summer of 2003, there was a senseless debate about whether or not a guerilla war or an insurgency was beginning in Iraq. Today, we argue over whether or not there is a civil war. In both cases the debate is really about domestic political advantage; Iraq is just the venue. And in both cases we dithered instead of taking decisive actions that would improve the changing circumstances. The bottom line is that today there is an insurgency, there is civil war, there is rampant crime, and the Iraqi people have far less security that before the U.S. invasion. Their confidence in the ability of Coalition forces to improve the situation is generally in the 5 to 10 percent range in the country as a whole with the highest ratings of less than 40% in Kurdish areas. Their confidence in the ability of Iraqi security forces (Army and Police) to provide security is directly related to ethnic identity. With Sunni Iraqis representing only ten percent of the Army, Sunnis are questioning whether the military is truly national and will prevent further sectarian fighting with the majority Shiite and Kurd populations. At the same time the presence of American forces does moderate out-right ethnic conflict. Unfortunately, I fear that in these circumstances a significant reduction of American forces in the next year to 18 months would trigger added violence. This is not only a function of improving the capacity of Iraqi security forces, but also of the maturing of the Iraqi political institutions and a settlement on a power sharing arrangements between the various actors

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in the country. All this must be accomplished in the face of an Al-Qaeda inspired insurgency against the Iraqi government, the Coalition forces, Shiites and moderate Sunnis specifically designed to disrupt the development we seek. The hard part in all of this is that there are multiple wars being fought; all superimposed on top of each other…a situation that is not conducive to "bumper sticker" debate.

* * * * *

There are two additional factors that are important to consider. The first question is how long the Armed Forces of the United States can maintain current force levels in Iraq. The unmatched dedication of the men and women who serve our Nation is our proudest accomplishment. However, the stress on units, soldiers and families is severe. Our reserve forces are hard pressed as well, maybe more that the active force. We must realize the realities of the limits of endurance of any force. I judge there is a period of 18 to 24 months that will be the limit on current commitments after which we will witness significant degradation in recruiting, retention and possibly discipline.

Second, we must recognize the impact of the persistent shortage of troops in Iraq. Recent evidence of this is demonstrated by the delay in the redeployment of an experienced brigade after being replaced in Mosul and its diversion to Baghdad in order to implement saturation operations to achieve acceptable levels of security in a portion of the city. Indications to date are that the additional troops in the capital have had a positive effect.

Given these two factors, and the limited tolerance by the people of the United States for much more commitment or casualties in Iraq, it may be wise to consider a relatively short term increase in troop strength by delaying redeployment of two to four

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brigades as their replacements arrive in country. The basic idea is that we press our capacities for the next 18 to 24 months, make progress in security and political maturation, and begin the process of redeployment from a posture of success. Some would say this is an "all or nothing" imprudent action, and I would certainly recommend much more study before implementation, but it is an idea worth considering because change is absolutely necessary.

* * * * *

To conclude, I recommend the following considerations for your use as you exercise your responsibilities as the elected representatives of the American people:

- Broaden the Course – Without a dramatic change in the perception of the role of the United States in the Middle East, we will continue to see a rise in anger against us, resulting in more conflict and a further drain on our resources. We must understand that U.S. actions with respect to Israel and the Palestinians, Iran, Syria and Lebanon have a direct and too often negative impact on our ability to stabilize Iraq. Less conflict – not more – is what is needed.
- Clarify U.S. objectives – We must recognize that U.S. interests and Iraqi interests are not identical. Further there is suspicion in Iraq and in the region about the long-term intentions of the United States with respect to control of oil, military presence and our future relations with the Arab and Islamic world. Without re-fighting the political debate over why the U.S. invaded Iraq, Congress has the ability if not responsibility to clarify our intentions by describing the United States' concrete goals in Iraq. My view

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is that we should send a clear message that the U.S. military presence there will not be permanent. This means we should stop permanent military construction activities throughout the country.

- Emphasize political, diplomatic and economic solutions – Time and time again our military commanders have made it clear that the solution to Iraq is political and economic, *not military*. But those solutions require a regional and international effort led by our country. We can not afford any other approach – politically or economically. While this may sound like a tall order, if we succeed in broadening the course and clarifying our objectives we will find much greater support from the international community.

Again, Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for the opportunity to appear today. I look forward to your questions.

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Mr. SHAYS. Dr. Hoffman.

STATEMENT OF BRUCE HOFFMAN

Dr. HOFFMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Representative Kucinich, for the opportunity to testify before the subcommittee on this important matter. That is America's involvement and role in Iraq has now become the most contentious issue of our time is a reflection of the complexity and frustrations of securing the security and instability of that country. It is compounded by a decidedly mixed picture of progress in some critical areas of Iraqi security, alongside continued stasis and serious reversals in others. Little clarity or consensus, moreover, emerges from conversations and e-mail exchanges with senior American and coalition diplomats, advisers and military officers in Iraq or from journalists assigned there, and other informed observers with immediate or recent direct knowledge of the situation in that country.

This much in terms of Iraq's security however is perhaps clear. The great progress made in training and improving the Iraqi army and associated military forces has not been matched by similar improvement with the Iraqi police, the essential main stay of law and order and the foundation about which the stability of any country must be based.

It is on this specific issue that I will focus most of this testimony before turning to issues such as the security of Baghdad and the prognosis of overall U.S. security policy and efforts in Iraq.

The central objective of U.S. security policy for Iraq is to train, equip and buildup the Iraqi security forces so that they can assume responsibility from American and coalition forces for the stability of their own country.

With respect to Iraq's military forces, advances in training and deployment have indeed been considerable, although as we heard earlier, it should still be noted that despite these improvements, the Iraqi army is still dependent on U.S. military forces for intelligence and logistical support.

The police however present an entirely different and more depressing picture. The situation regarding the Iraqi police is all the more lamentable, given that 2006 was supposed to be the "year of the police," when the resources and attention hitherto focused normally on building the Iraqi army were instead devoted to the national police.

The importance of police, both in civil society as well as in countering insurgency, cannot be overstated. In no area is this distinction more critical than an acquired intelligence. Clearly effective police work, be it against common criminals or terrorists and insurgents, depends on intelligence, and intelligence depends on public cooperation. Police typically have better access to human intelligence sources than the military. This information, whether freely provided by citizens to beat cops known to them or obtained by police from its informants snitches and other sources in and around the criminal underworld is essential to detect and apprehend terrorists or insurgents. It is essential also in undermining local support for terrorists and insurgents and in breaking their control over and influence in communities.

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Yet despite the critical role of police, more often than not, this has, from the start, largely been ignored by the American authorities responsible for building the security forces in Iraq. As one coalition adviser with long experience in Iraq dating from the summer of 2003 recently lamented, the coalition never got its arms around the police as they did with the Iraqi troops on the ground that we were training. Accordingly, a game of catch up has been in play almost from the start of our involvement in Iraq.

In May 2004, the CPA started to address the initial problems with police trainings by establishing CPATT, the coalition police assistance training teams. Although U.S. military supervision provided better management of the police training effort, many of the American personnel responsible for this oversight did not know much about civilian policing, police training, or police work.

Another more serious problem arose, however, when graduates of this training were subsequently incorporated into largely unsupervised police units commanded by persons who, in the words of another American adviser deeply familiar with the process, either "had either nefarious intentions, death squad activity or distinctly sectarian agendas, or who were themselves corrupt or inept."

In hopes of establishing more rigorous supervision of the police, in May 2006, the multinational Corps-Iraq assumed responsibility for mentoring the Iraqi police. While this has generally been a positive development, the number of mentors, whether American military police or more appropriate civilian police advisers serving as international police liaison officers, IPLOs, has proven woefully inadequate. And both their quality and skills has been remarkably uneven. Even the stopgap measure adopted by MNSTC-I in Baghdad of making up for the shortfall in civilian advisers by assigning MP military police companies to police stations is not an altogether perfect solution.

Military policing is significantly different from civilian policing. And many of the MPs themselves have no experience of police work outside of military bases and the military itself.

Further the deployment of MP companies notwithstanding as of June 2006, some 40 percent of police stations throughout Iraq were reported to have no coalition oversight or supervision whatsoever.

This dearth of supervision has also had enormous consequences on the professionalism of the Iraqi police forces, vitiating whatever successes had been achieved in training. For example, while the newly instructional regimen may have improved the technical competence of individual policemen in terms of investigative and forensic skills, it has done nothing to counteract the sectarianism and corruption permeating both the ministry of the interior MoI and police.

Indeed reports of the subversion of the MoI are the Badr Corps and SCIRI on the one hand and by followers of Moqtada al-Sadr belonging to the army Mahdi on the other seem to be endemic to any discussion about corruption in the ministry and the police. The dimension of sectarian infiltration of the police is so pervasive, one source claims, that the MoI's intelligence arm has now been completely subverted by the Badr corps while parts of the national police have been heavily seeded with Sadr loyalists.

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Let me now turn to the security plan for Baghdad and the prospects for success.

Arguably, until stability is established in Iraq's capital city, the public, neither in the United States nor especially in Iraq, will believe that a corner has really been turned in the struggle. Although implementation of the latest security plan for Baghdad has gone reasonably well, it is still too early to tell whether this attempt will be any more successful than any of its predecessors have been. The newest iteration involves a three-phase operation whereby Iraqi and American forces enter a specific neighborhood and secure it from insurgents and terrorist activity, as well as sectarian blood letting.

Once it is deemed cleared, the responsibility for the neighborhood security is turned over to Iraqi control as the military units move on to the next neighborhood. Although cautious optimism prevailed in most discussions and e-mail exchanges I had over the past 2 weeks with senior United States and coalition officials and former colleagues in Baghdad, some skepticism was expressed that there was sufficient American and Iraq—trained Iraqi security forces in the city to achieve a lasting positive impact. Moreover, according to one official visit, recent official visitor to Baghdad, "the patterns of attack once the main force moves on are that insurgent attacks then increase. In the last 2 weeks there have been a resurgence of attacks once U.S. forces clear out. Formed units of national police in Iraqi army are performing fine. Regular civilian police who have American and coalition mentors are good, and in several areas, police comportment has improved technically at checkpoints and so on, but there is yet no real sign that they all can hold the ground by themselves without American military forces present."

The inadequate numbers of both American military forces and trained, reliable Iraqi security forces was cited by another knowledgeable observer as a problem both with respect to the Baghdad operation in particular, and Iraq security in general, in fact, as we have heard through the morning. Given that Iraq has a population of about 25 million people, based on a 20-to–1 ratio of population to security forces, essentially what the British military had in Northern Ireland during the 1980's. You need roughly 500,000 troops and police to maintain order. However as we have also heard this morning, the envisioned total of Iraqi trained Iraqi security forces is only 325,000. Let me conclude now.

Two salient conclusions seem clear from the preceding discussion of training and deploying of the ISF.

Iraqi military forces will likely continue to build and be increasingly capable and will be able to assume the lead in more parts of Iraq. The Iraqi police, however, will continue to be both the problem and the Achilles heel of Iraqi security. In this respect, whatever advancements have been achieved in terms of the Iraqi army, the situation with the police counterparts remains as problematical as it is frustrating.

Corruption remains a problem in the MLI. It is also reportedly beginning to affect the MOD. The MLI, of course long involved with security issues in Iraq, is plagued by corruption, nepotism and kleptomaniacs. The MOD is not nearly as bad, but the same signs of corruption are appearing.

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The MOI, though, is certainly the biggest security problem here. If the MOI was fixed we would have pretty decent police intelligence and a decent police force. Reforming the MOI is the biggest problem we currently face. This is from the U.S. diplomat who has been in Baghdad since 2003.

Although the form of MOI is a question of Iraq's political will, it is in our power to improve police on-the-job training and performance through the provision of the CPAT IPL program and the priority accorded to the recruitment of more and appropriately qualified Coalition civilian police advisers. Until that can be achieved, the deployment of more U.S. police units is a second-best option, but nonetheless a helpful palliative.

As support and oversight of the Iraqi police from the start of the Coalition Provisional Authority has been a matter of too little too late and of numerous passed opportunities, this may be the last opportunity to address the existing shortcomings of the Iraqi police establishment.

Finally, it is difficult to predict for these reasons at one point if the ISF can take on additional security responsibilities with a reduced American presence. Realistically, in my opinion, 3 to 5 years at least are required for the Iraqi military and 7 to 10 years for the police. It would not be likely for another 7 years that the Iraqi security forces can completely replace all combat—all U.S. combat forces in Iraq. At the moment, therefore, it is not realistic to set a withdrawal timetable based on the current readiness of the ISF.

Mr. SHAYS. I thank the gentleman.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Hoffman follows:]

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IRAQ: DEMOCRACY OR CIVIL WAR?

Testimony Before the Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats, and International Relations,
Committee on Government Reform,
U.S. House of Representatives
11 September 2006

Professor Bruce Hoffman
Georgetown University,
Washington, D.C.

That America's involvement and role in Iraq has become the most contentious issue of our time is a reflection of the complexity and frustrations of ensuring the security and stability of that country. It is compounded by a decidedly mixed picture of progress in some critical areas of Iraqi security alongside continued stasis and serious reversals in others. Little clarity or consensus, moreover, emerges from conversation and e-mail exchanges with senior American and Coalition diplomats, advisers and military officers in Iraq, or from journalists assigned there and other informed observers with immediate or recent direct knowledge of the situation in that country. This much in terms of Iraq's security, however, is perhaps clear: the great progress made in training and improving the Iraqi Army and associated military forces has not been matched by similar improvement with the Iraqi police—the essential mainstay of law and order and the foundation upon which stability security in any country must ineluctably be based. It is on this specific issue that I will focus most of this testimony before turning to issues such as the security of Baghdad, a prognosis of overall U.S. security policy and efforts in Iraq, and potential dangers and consequences of a precipitous withdrawal from Iraq.

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THE IRAQI ARMY AND NATIONAL POLICE

The central objective of U.S. security policy for Iraq is to train, equip and build-up Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) so that they can assume responsibility from American and Coalition forces for the stability of their country. As President George W. Bush put it: "As they stand up, we'll stand down."[1] With respect to Iraq's military forces, advances in training and deployment has indeed been considerable (although it should be noted that despite these improvements with the Iraqi Army, they are still dependent on the U.S. for intelligence and logistical support). A survey of the monthly reports provided to Congress by the U.S. Department of Defense measuring this progress reveals remarkable success over the past eleven months. As of 7 August 2006, the number of Iraqi Army combat units who had assumed lead responsibility for security in their areas of operation amounted to five division headquarters, 25 brigade headquarters, and 85 battalions. This compares very favorably to the two division headquarters, 14 brigade Headquarters, and 52 battalions reported as of 30 March 2006 and even more so with the one division headquarters, four brigade headquarters, and 23 battalions that were in the lead on 30 October 2005.[2] Some two-thirds of Iraqi Army combat units, accordingly, have assumed lead responsibility for their assigned areas of operation and at least 106 combat battalions and eight Strategic Infantry Battalions (SIB) are reported to be "conducting operations at varying levels of assessed capability." The police, however, present an entirely different, and more depressing, picture.[3]

Indeed, the same DoD report for the period ending 7 August 2006 measuring progress in the training, equipping and deployment for the

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[1] White House, "President Discusses War on Terror, Progress in Iraq in West Virginia Capitol Music Hall Wheeling, West Virginia," March 22, 2006, accessed at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/03/20060322-3.html

[2] U.S. Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq, August 2006, Report to Congress In accordance with the Department of Defense Appropriations Act 2006* (Section 9010), p. 43. See also the monthly report for April 2006.

[3] Ibid.

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National Police[4] reveals zero division headquarters, zero brigade headquarters, and only two battalions having been able to assume lead responsibility for security in their areas of operation. These latest numbers, moreover, contrast unfavorably to the situation reported respectively for March 2006 and October 2005 when two brigade headquarters and six battalions each were deemed in the lead. Hence, even though some 27 National Police battalions "are now operational and active,"[5] their ability to function independently of U.S. or Coalition forces, remains severely impaired.

The situation regarding the Iraqi police is all the more lamentable given that 2006 was supposed to be the "year of the police"—when the resources and attention hitherto focused mainly on building the Iraqi Army were instead to be devoted to the National Police.[6] President Bush specifically cited the centrality of this goal to American ambitions with respect to strengthening the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) in a speech given in March 2006. "We got work, by the way, in '06," the President declared, "to make sure the police are trained as adequately as the military, the army."[7] Thus the lack of progress, and reversal of previous advances, regarding the Iraqi police are all the more disappointing and disheartening.

The importance of police both in civil society as well as in countering insurgency cannot be overstated. The fundamental tenet concerning public security in the modern, democratic nation-state is that the police, and not the military, should play the predominant role in upholding the law and maintaining order. The reasoning behind this

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[4] The Iraqi National Police are charged with maintaining law and order while an effective community police force is developed." The Iraqi Police Service's mission, by comparison, is to "enforce the law, safeguard the public, and provide internal security at the local level." Its main responsibilities include "patrol, traffic, station, and highway" duties throughout Iraq's 18 provinces. Ibid., pp. 44 & 46.

[5] Ibid., p. 43.

[6] Interview, General George Casey, Commander, Multi-National Force—Iraq, U.S. Embassy, Baghdad, Iraq, 18 April 2006.

[7] White House, "President Discusses War on Terror, Progress in Iraq in West Virginia Capitol Music Hall Wheeling, West Virginia," March 22, 2006.

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is quite obvious; policemen are trained to deal with the public and to meet a variety of exigencies with the minimum use of force. Soldiers, generally, are not. Soldiers are trained to kill and to fight. In no area is this distinction more critical than in acquiring intelligence and countering insurgency. Clearly, effective police work—be it against common criminals or terrorists—"depends on intelligence, and intelligence depends on public co-operation."[8] Policemen, for example, are specifically trained to interact with the public; again, soldiers generally are not. Not only does the average soldier's training mostly ignore this important aspect of public relations, but police typically have better access to human intelligence sources than the military. This information, whether freely provided by citizens to beat cops known to them or obtained by police from informants, snitches and other sources in and around the criminal underworld is essential to detect and apprehend terrorists or insurgents, identify safehouses, seize arms caches, and generally disrupt terrorist and insurgent communications, movement, logistics, and planning. It is also essential in undermining local support for terrorists and insurgents and breaking their control or influence over communities.

Yet, despite the critical role of police more often than not has from the start of our involvement in Iraq largely been ignored by the American authorities responsible for building the security forces in that country.[9] As one Coalition adviser, with long experience in Iraq dating from the summer of 2003 recently lamented, "The Coalition never got its arms around the police as they did with the [Iraqi] troops on the ground that we were training."[10] Similarly, a U.S. military

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[8] Richard Thackrah, "Army Police Co-operation: a General Assessment," in *Police and Society Research Centre Papers*, vol. 1, no. 7 (October 1982), p. 1.

[9] Author's personal experience while serving in Iraq with the Coalition Provisional Authority, March-April 2004; interviews with senior American, British, and Australian advisers to Iraq's Ministry of the Interior since 2004, August and September 2006; e-mail communication, senior U.S. military officer in Iraq, 20 August 2006.

[10] Telephone interview with senior Coalition adviser to the Iraqi Ministry of Interior, Baghdad, Iraq, 4 September 2006.

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intelligence officer currently in Iraq explained in an e-mail communication how,

> The Iraqi police across the country have been a thorny issue, more so than training the IA [Iraqi Army]. First of all, most of the resources had been sent to the IA to fight the insurgents; secondly, the [police] recruitment process was broken, allowing the bad guys to join. Some of those problems have been addressed but now the game of catch up is in play.[11]

This "game of catch up," however, has in fact been in play almost since the widespread looting and civil disorders that followed the U.S. invasion of Iraq in May 2003. The inadequacy of planning for post-invasion stability operations beyond the initial military assault on Iraq is already well documented.[12] Indeed, the failure to take this critical aspect of U.S. military operations and policy planning into account arguably breathed life into the insurgency that emerged in the spring of 2003 and gathered increasing momentum throughout the remainder of year and has continued ever since.[13] Thus a critical window of opportunity was lost to stabilize and secure the country because of the failure to anticipate the lawlessness and unrest that

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[11] E-mail communication, U.S. Navy intelligence officer, Baghdad, Iraq, 20 August 2006.

[12] See Anthony H. Cordesman, *Iraq: Too Uncertain To Call* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 14 November 2003; James Dobbins, et al., *American's Role In Nation-Building; from Germany To Iraq* (Santa Monica, CA: The RAND Corporation, MR-1753-RC, 2003), pp. 167-222; James Fallows, "Blind Into Baghdad," *The Atlantic Monthly*, vol. 293, no. 1 (January-February 2004), pp. 52-74; Joshua Hammer, "Tikrit Dispatch: Uncivil Military," *The New Republic*, 1 March 2004; Steven Metz, "Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Iraq," *The Washington Quarterly*, vol. 27, no. 1, Winter 2003-04; and David Rieff, "Blueprint for a Mess," *New York Times Magazine*, 2 November 2003. For Department of Defense's performance in this respect, and a refutation of the arguments about inadequate planning, see the Letter to the Editor from Joseph J. Collins, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, in response to Fallows, "Blind Into Baghdad," published in the April 2004 issue of *The Atlantic Monthly* at http://www.theatlantic.com/issues/2004/04/letters.htm. The argument that plans were commissioned and prepared, but not taken into account, however, was substantiated by the author in discussions with U.S. Department of Defense officials, April 2004.

[13] Cordesman, *Iraq: Too Uncertain To Call*, p. 2.

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followed the capture of Baghdad.[14] That opportunity has seemingly never been re-gained. Indeed, it was further compounded by the failure early on in the occupation to recruit and train a competent police. The Coalition Provisional Authority's (CPA) main approach to building a new Iraqi police, for example, was a three week training block conducted at an U.S.-run training facility in Amman, Jordan called the Jordan International Police Training Center and at the re-named Baghdad Police College. The training course was as ill conceived as it was inappropriate to conditions in Iraq. It was in essence a compressed version of a longer, more detailed program developed by U.S. security forces for Kosovo. It assumed erroneously that competent police officers could somehow be properly trained in so short a period of time. Moreover, its emphasis on teaching the techniques of the canonical community policing prevalent in the U.S.—that is, in an environment not wracked by terrorism, insurgency, sectarian bloodletting and rampant crime—was irrelevant to the realities of post-invasion Iraq.

The program, which was overseen by the Ministry of Interior and its American and Coalition advisers, was deemed so anemic and the recruits so inadequately trained, that in May 2004 the CPA established CPATT (Coalition Police Assistance Training Team) and moved the training effort under the aegis of the U.S. military as part of the Multi-National Security Transition Command (MNSTC-I).[15] Although U.S. military supervision provided better management of the police training effort—which now expanded to entail an eight week basic training curriculum—many of the American personnel responsible for this oversight did not know much (if anything at all) about civilian policing, police training or police work. Another, more serious

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[14] Fallows, "Blind Into Baghdad," pp. 73-74; and, Metz, "Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Iraq," p. 27.

[15] Its first commander was then Major (now Lieutenant) General David Petraeus, the previous commander of the 101st Airborne Division when it had been deployed to Mosul in 2003. There, Petraeus had successfully embraced precisely the types of innovative approaches with respect to the Iraqi civilian population and newly constituted Iraqi security forces at the heart of sound, effective counterinsurgency operations. See Hammer, "Tikrit Dispatch: Uncivil Military."

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problem arose, however, when graduates were subsequently incorporated into largely unsupervised police units commanded by persons who, in the words of one American adviser deeply familiar with the process, "either had nefarious intentions [e.g., death squad activity or distinctly sectarian agendas] or who were themselves corrupt or inept."[16]

Accordingly, in hopes of establishing more rigorous supervision of the police, in May 2006 the Multi-National Corps–Iraq, the Coalition's main tactical combat force, assumed responsibility for mentoring the Iraqi police. While this has generally been a positive development, the number of mentors—whether American military police or more appropriate civilian police advisers serving as International Police Liaison Officers (IPLOs)—has proven woefully inadequate[17]—and both their quality and skills have been remarkably uneven.[18] "Some parts of the mentoring program are quite good," one adviser to the Ministry of the Interior and police with long experience in Iraq noted, "but it is still not as effective as the mentoring given to the Iraqi Army, where military advisers were embedded. Police mentoring is jointly done by MPs and civil advisers: but there are not enough and the quality is variable."[19] And, even the stop-gap measure adopted by MNSTC-I in Baghdad of making up for the shortfall in civilian advisers by assigning MP companies to police stations is not a good solution. Military policing is significantly different from civilian policing and many of the MPs themselves have no experience of policing outside military bases and the military itself. "The required numbers [of mentors]," an American official at the American embassy in Baghdad explained, "means that most don't have police experience and even the MPs assigned to Iraqi police themselves aren't trained" or familiar with civilian policing much less counterinsurgency. Further, the deployment of MP companies notwithstanding, as of June 2006 some 40% of

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[16] Discussions with senior U.S. State Department official, Baghdad, Iraq, 18 April and 3 September 2006.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Telephone interview with senior Coalition adviser to the Iraqi Ministry of Interior, Baghdad, Iraq, 4 September 2006.

[19] Ibid.

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police stations throughout the country were reported to have no Coalition oversight or supervision whatsoever.[20]

This dearth of supervision has also had enormous consequences on the professionalism of the Iraqi police forces: vitiating whatever successes have been achieved in training. For example, while the new instructional regimen may have improved the technical competence of individual policemen in terms of investigative and forensic skills, it did nothing to counteract the sectarianism and corruption permeating the MoI and police. "There has been some progress in technical skills," a Coalition adviser to the Iraqi police noted, "but that does not address the political loyalties [e.g., the sectarian allegiances of the police]—especially in the countryside and provinces."[21] This now-entrenched corruption in both the police and Ministry of Interior ranges from ministers who "just wanted jobs for [their] constituents" to senior government officials and police officers using the power of their office or command to pursue sectarian agendas, settle old scores or simply generate income through the coercion, extortion and intimidation of ordinary citizens.[22] The crux of the matter, according to one immensely experienced American adviser in Iraq is that:

> The Ministry of the Interior has been taken over by Shi'a Islamists and that is a huge part of the [professionalism] problem. If you could fix that, you could fix other problems. It is do-able if uniform police can have American mentoring; but you need to fix the ministry first and hold accountable criminals in uniform. There is tons of court-useable information on people in charge in the MoI [Ministry of the Interior] and the National Police detailing death squads, detainee abuse, and corruption, but there is absolutely no political will to bring guys to trial. As long as police can act with impunity for sectarian and other reasons, this problem will remain. There is just no accountability and no political will to change this.[23]

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[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Discussion with senior U.S. State Department official, Baghdad, Iraq, 3 September 2006.

[23] Telephone interview with senior Coalition adviser to the Iraqi Ministry of Interior, Baghdad, Iraq, 4 September 2006.

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Indeed, reports of the subversion of the MoI by Badr Corps and SCIRI[24] *apparatchiks* on the one hand and by followers of Moqtada al Sadr, belonging to the Army of the Mahdi (AoM) on the other, seem to be endemic to any discussion about corruption in the ministry and police. When General (retired) Barry R. McCaffrey visited Iraq in April 2006, he was struck by the "corruption and lack of capability" of both the MoI as well as the Ministry of Defense (MoD): averring that, despite the "dramatic and rapid growth in capacity and competence" evident over the preceding year, the "police are heavily infiltrated by both the AIF [anti-Iraq forces] and the Shia militia." Consequently, he continued, "they are widely distrusted by the Sunni population. They are incapable of confronting local armed groups. They inherited a culture of inaction, passivity, human rights abuses, and deep corruption." Addressing this problem, General McCaffrey, concluded, "will require several years of patient coaching and officer education in values as well as the required competencies."[25] The dimension of sectarian infiltration of the police is so pervasive, one source claimed, that the MoI's intelligence arm has now been completely subverted by the Badr Corps while parts of the National Police have been heavily seeded with Sadr loyalists.[26] The dangers of this development have gone unrecognized. Indeed, the DoD's *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq* report for August 2006 specifically cited the "[u]nprofessional and, at times, criminal behavior [that] has been attributed to certain units in the National Police. This behavior and the decrease in public confidence in these forces has been the impetus for a National Police

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[24] Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, a Shi'a political party led by Abdul Azziz Hakin and closely associated with Iran. The Badr Corps is its militia.

[25] Memorandum for Colonel Mike Meese, Department Head, Department of Social Sciences, U.S. Military Academy and Colonel Cindy Jebb, Deputy , Department Head, Department of Social Sciences, U.S. Military Academy from General (retired) Barry R. McCaffrey, Subject; Academic Report—Trip to Iraq and Kuwait, Thursday 13 April through Thursday 20 April, 25 April 2006 [hereafter, "McCaffrey memorandum, 25 April 2006"], pp. 1 & 2 accessed at: http://img.slate.com/media/57/AAR%20General%20McCaffrey%20Visit%20to%20Iraq%20April%202006%20USMA.pdf#search=%22McCaffrey%20memo%20Meese%22.

[26] Telephone interview with senior Coalition adviser to the Iraqi Ministry of Interior, Baghdad, Iraq, 4 September 2006.

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reform program."[27] The special commando units operating in Baghdad were seen to be especially problematical in this respect, but reportedly are now being re-trained and vetted to address this problem.[28]

SECURITY PLAN FOR BAGHDAD AND PROSPECTS FOR SUCCESS

While it is true, as many less pessimistic commentators often claim, that violent instability directly plague and threaten only 4 of Iraq's 18 provinces, those four are the most populous and important ones. Until stability is established there, and especially in Baghdad, the public neither in the U.S. nor in Iraq will not believe that a corner has been turned in this struggle. Although implementation of the latest security plan for Baghdad has gone reasonably well, it is still too early to tell whether this attempt will be any more successful than any of its predecessors. The newest iteration involves a three-phase operation whereby Iraqi and American military forces enter a specific neighborhood and secure it from insurgent and terrorist activity as well as sectarian bloodletting. Once it is deemed cleared, responsibility for the neighborhood's security is turned over to Iraqi control as the military units move on to the next neighborhood. Although cautious optimism prevailed in most discussions and e-mail exchanges with senior U.S. and Coalition officials in Baghdad, some skepticism was expressed that there were sufficient American and trained Iraqi security forces in the city to achieve a positive lasting impact. There is "still not sufficient security in any of the areas that the U.S. has completely left," a recent official visitor to Baghdad noted.

> Often FOBs and patrols are left behind. But the patterns of attack, once main force moves on, are that insurgent attacks then increase. In the last two weeks there has been resurgence of attacks once U.S. forces clear out. Formed units of National Police and Iraqi Army are performing fine. Regular civilian police who have [American and Coalition] mentors are good and in several areas police comportment has improved technically at check points and so on, but there is

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[27] U.S. Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq, August 2006*, p. 46.

[28] Telephone interview with senior Coalition adviser to the Iraqi Ministry of Interior, Baghdad, Iraq, 4 September 2006.

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as yet no real sign that they all can hold ground by themselves [without American military forces present].[29]

The inadequate numbers of both American military forces and trained, reliable ISF was cited by another knowledgeable observer as a problem both with respect to the Baghdad operation in particular and Iraq's security in general. "Given that Iraq has a population of about 25 million people," he pointed out, "based on a 20:1 ratio of population to security forces, you need 500,000 troops and police. However the envisioned total is only 325,000 security personnel."[30]

CONCLUSION

Two salient conclusions seem obvious from the preceding discussion of training and deploying of ISF. Iraqi military forces will likely continue to grow increasingly capable and will be able to assume the lead in more parts of Iraq. The Iraqi police, however, will continue to be both a problem and the Achilles Heel of Iraqi security. In this respect, whatever advancements have been achieved in terms of the Iraqi Army, the situation with their police counterparts remains as problematical as it is frustrating. Corruption remains a problem in the MoI—and is widely reported to be growing within the police. It is also reportedly beginning to infect the MoD. "The MoI," a person long involved with security issues in Iraq lamented,

> is controlled by SCIRI/Badr Corps and plagued by corruption, nepotism and kleptomaniacs. The MoD is not nearly as bad, but the same signs of entrenched, endemic corruption are appearing. . . . The MoI though is certainly the biggest

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[29] Ibid.

[30] Discussion with senior U.S. State Department official, Baghdad, Iraq, 3 September 2006. Of the 325,00 figure about 144,000 are military, 148,000 police, 20,000 are border guards and 13,000 belong to various other Iraqi security forces. Significantly, to maintain stability and order in Northern Ireland, the ratio of British security forces maintained in Northern Ireland (military plus police from the Royal Ulster Constabulary) was at a ratio of 20 security force members per 1,000 inhabitants. See James T. Quinlivan, "Burden of Victory: The Painful Arithmetic of Stability Operations," *RAND Review*, vol. 27, no. 2 (Summer 2003), pp. 28-29. See also, idem., "Force Requirements in Stability Operations," *Parameters* (Winter 1995), pp. 59-69 available online at http://carlisle-www.army.mil/usawc/parameters/1995/quinliv/htm.

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security problem here. If the MoI was fixed, we would have pretty decent police intelligence and an effective police force. Reforming the MoI is the biggest problem we currently face.[31]

Although reform of the MoI is a question of Iraqi political will, it is within out power to improve police on-the-job training and performance through the provision of an expanded CPATT/IPLO program and the priority accorded to the recruitment of more and appropriately qualified civilian police advisers. Until that can be achieved the deployment of more U.S. Military Police units is a second best option, but nonetheless, helpful palliative. Our support and oversight of the Iraqi police from the start of the CPA has been a matter of too little, too late and of numerous passed opportunities. At this crucial juncture, renewed emphasis, focus and resources need to be devoted to this critical security effort. Sectarianism is rife and subversion is now the norm. Police will continue to be both a problem and the Achilles Heel of Iraqi security. This may be the last opportunity to address the existent shortcomings of the Iraqi police establishment.

Perhaps the greatest security threat now and in the future, however, is the danger of civil war. If U.S. forces were inadequately sized to counter widespread looting and civil disorders of May 2003, they would be overwhelmed by the outright and unmitigated emergence of civil war, and U.S. forces themselves likely to be targeted by multiple adversaries. The second greatest threat is that of a coup by one sectarian faction who is able to stave off challenges from rivals and consolidate power. Given that there have been 48 coups in the last 19 years in Iraq, this is by no means an idle threat. And, finally, there remains the threat of continued, protracted insurgency from multiple sources. The insurgent goal is not to win an outright or decisive victory against U.S. forces, but to prosecute a prolonged war of attrition designed to wear down American public support, Congressional resolve and the national will to remain in Iraq. Each of the above

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[31] Discussions with senior U.S. State Department official, Baghdad, Iraq, 18 April and 3 September 2006.

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will likely remain salient challenges for the immediate future at least.

At this stage, it is difficult to predict at what point the ISF can take on additional security responsibilities with a reduced U.S. presence. Realistically, three to five years at least are required for the Iraqi military and seven to ten years for the police. It would not likely be for another seven years that ISF could completely replace all combat U.S. forces in Iraq.[32] At the moment, therefore, it is not realistic to set a withdrawal timetable based on the current readiness of the ISF.

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[32] General McCaffrey has estimated similar durations in his assessment of ISF capabilities. With respect to the police, he believes "this will be a ten year project requiring patience, significant resources, and an international public face." With respect to the Iraqi Army, General McCaffrey opined that, "We should be able to draw down most of our combat forces in 3-5 years." See McCaffrey memorandum, 25 April 2006, pp. 4 & 7.

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Mr. SHAYS. Mr. King.

STATEMENT OF ALAN KING

Mr. KING. Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I would like to make five key points in summarizing my written statement.

First, there are three major challenges that must be overcome if Iraq is to assume full responsibility for its security. The first of them are militias. The activity of the militias are the single most divisive issue challenging the legitimacy of the central government. We are aware of Iran's multimillion-dollar budget to back the militia, and with Sadr's influence in the country growing, the Iraqi Government will be hard pressed to pursue its objectives.

We witness the results of what uncontrolled nonstate actors did in Lebanon. Sadr's Mahdi army is equivalent to Lebanon's Hezbollah, and while not considerably as heavily armed today, it poses the same potential threat as to Iraq's future. I believe that if the U.S. departed today, Sadr's militia are poised to lead Iraq to civil war and SCIRI's Badr Corps domination of the security forces has positioned this nonstate actor in a state-sponsored position to pursue its independent goals.

The second challenge is the lack of a legitimate and professional police force to deal with the unrestrained criminal force.

And the final challenge is the unreliability of the judicial system that makes tackling the police problem unrealistic and impractical.

Second, when I arrived in Baghdad on 8 April 2003, Major General Buford Blount of the 3rd Infantry directed me and the unit I served in as the commanding officer of the 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion in the mission of taking the first steps toward the immediate reconstruction of the city. Generally, men hugged us in their gratitude for liberation. We were 140 soldiers and we were trained, committed and hard working, and we understood what it meant to be the tip of the spear in the postliberation period.

We paid a price. One American soldier and an Iraqi translator killed, four soldiers wounded, including Major Damone Garner who sits behind us today. Our unit received five Purple Hearts, 21 awards for valor and the Presidential Unit of Citation.

In 3 short years, I have watched the resistance grow into a substantial insurgency. I believe this is in large part due to America's fundamental misunderstanding of our success. When the President declared an end to major combat operations on May 1, 2003, we had decisively defeated an armed force and the war in Iraq was over, but at that very moment the war for Iraq began. Our objective at that time was no longer to defeat an armed combatant, but to decisively engage the Iraqi people.

After May 1st, our conventional tactics, with an emphasis on kinetic solutions designed for decisive victory over a noncombatant, provided the insurgency a textbook ideological basis for receiving at least passive support, if not direct support, in conducting attacks against the Coalition and the Iraqi—Iraq's security infrastructure.

In the days following the liberation, a military strategy could have been more effectively collaborated with a political and economic policy designed to win the people, thus allowing the Iraqis to eliminate the insurgents themselves. Since April 2003, I have

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watched a transition from cautious concern for the Coalition's tactics to sympathy for insurgencies because of our tactics to complicity with the insurgents to fight our tactics.

We must fully address the motives and tactics of the insurgents. There are six elements: the militias, the nationalists, religious extremists and sectarians, foreign fighters, former regime loyalists and common criminals. The demographics of the insurgency are different in each province and each element has its own motives for fighting.

As we have seen, Baghdad has become the axis of the insurgency. This is where all six elements exercise their power and force a complicity of the people; because of the lack of security, people are compelled to use the competing groups for protection.

Fourth, in November 2003, because of my tribal engagement activities, I received a new assignment as deputy director of a small team of experts on Iraq and I was tasked to work with Iraq's tribal leaders. In my book, Twice Armed, I explain how I engaged thousands of tribal sheiks and clerics over the 16-month period I served in Iraq enabling me to capture some of the most-wanted personalities from the former regime, including two from the infamous deck of cards, along with the former chairman of atomic energy and Mohammed Saeed al-Sahhaf, a/k/a Baghdad Bob.

From the Iraqis I met, there was one constant theme that was espoused by all: We are Iraqis. This nationalistic identity transcends religious and ethnic identity, transcends religious and ethnic identification and provides a prospect for Iraq to become a unified nation. For this national identity to continue, it is necessary for the Iraqi leadership to table their personal objectives and come together on behalf of their country.

In closing, Americans must understand that in Iraq we will not have a decisive battle of victory, and in its absence, we should not leave. The process for victory in Iraq is not military, but instead political and economic, where the Iraqi Government, supported by the Coalition, wins the Iraqi people and they defeat the insurgency. Security and stability are processes, not identifiable events, and properly defining the end state of the process will allow us to determine when we should leave Iraq.

Again, thank you for this opportunity. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. King follows:]

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When Can Iraqis Assume Full Internal Security Responsibilities?

R. Alan King
President, Consequence Management, Inc. and author of Twice Armed: An American Soldier's Battle for Hearts and Minds in Iraq

Testimony presented before the House Government Reform Committee, subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations on September 11, 2006

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Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Subcommittee, it is an honor and privilege to be here today to speak to you on this fifth anniversary of the attack on our Country that drew a then united nation into war by the horrific events.

When I arrived in Baghdad on 8 April 2003, I was responsible for advising Major General Buford Blount from the 3d Infantry Division on the immediate reconstruction of the city. There were many heroes from those early days like Major Brent Gerald, a captain in the Greensboro, NC fire department, who was responsible for the creation of the current Baghdad Fire Department, and Major Vince Crabb, dubbed the "Sheriff of Baghdad," a former Texas Ranger who organized the initial re-creation of the Baghdad Police Department in the immediate aftermath of our liberation. A lot has changed since then. The Iraqi people expected immediate results in their services and improved quality of life. What was not clear to them, or to us, was the condition of the country because of the sanctions and policies of the former regime. Yet, even with the failing condition of the country's infrastructure, children ran to greet us and men hugged us with gratitude for their liberation.

Those are memories that have since passed and I have watched the resistance grow to a viable insurgency in three short years. I believe that this is in large part due to a fundamental misunderstanding of our success.

When the President declared an end to major combat operations on 1 May 2003, we had decisively defeated an armed force and the war in Iraq was over,

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but at that very moment, the war for Iraq began. Our objective at that time was no longer to defeat an armed combatant, but to decisively engage the Iraqi people. To properly engage the population, our military strategy could have been more effectively coordinated with a political and economic policy designed to win the people, thus allowing the Iraqis the desire to eliminate the insurgency on their own.

Our military did an outstanding job in the early days of beginning reconstruction efforts. Yet, we have been challenged by the use of our conventional tactics of force-on-force with an emphasis on a kinetic response that alienates and creates enemies of the people. Our tactics provide the insurgency a textbook ideological basis for receiving, at least passive support if not direct support, in conducting attacks against the Coalition and the Iraqi security infrastructure. Since April 2003, I have watched the population transition from cautious concern for the Coalition's actions, to sympathy for the insurgency because of our tactics, evolving into complicity with the insurgents to fight our tactics.

While in Iraq from March 2003 through July 2004, Corporal Mark Bibby and Omar, a translator working for the 422d Civil Affairs battalion, were killed and four American soldiers were wounded by Sunnis. Major Damone Garner, my operations officer was decorated for heroism survived the attack and is with us here today. My security team engaged a group of Syrians in a firefight. I was ambushed by members of Sadr's militia who killed Fallah, my bodyguard and

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translator. Four American soldiers were also wounded in that attack and I spent sixteen months in rehabilitation and surgery recovering from my injuries.

Finally, I have held in my hands the assassination lists of the Iranian-backed Badr Corps. In order for us to determine when the Iraqis may assume responsibility for their own security requires a situational analysis-based on a clearly defined end state *verses* a political choice. Foremost, as a Nation, we must fully understand the complexity and motives of the insurgency if we are to meet the current challenges in Iraq today. If we do this based on a political decision *verses* a situational analysis, we would be abandoning the Iraqis because we have not achieved our objective of stability and security.

In order for the United States to determine when Iraqi Security Forces can assume full responsibility for their internal security, we must first realize that the absence of such forces exists because we choose to disband them. Therefore, we must work with the current government to establish a clearly defined end state based on objectives, not timelines, that provides assurance for the newly-formed Iraqi government that it has the ability and desire to secure itself before we re-deploy our forces.

To assist in the assessment, we must address the six elements of the insurgency separately. Simply, we must know who they are and where they lay their claims. The demographics of the insurgency are different in each province.

As stated, there are six elements of the Iraqi insurgency. I define the six categories as nationalists, religious extremists and sectarians, foreign fighters,

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militias, former regime loyalists and common criminals. Each has its own motive for fighting, however, I believe that the most serious threats are the militias, the absence of a viable police force, the subversive activities within the Ministry of Interior and the absence of a viable judicial system. The activities of the militias are the single most divisive issue thwarting the legitimacy of the central government. As we have seen, Baghdad has become the axis of the insurgency. This is where all six elements of the Iraqi insurgency derive their power and have the most complicity of the people. Because of the absence of security in the city, the people are forced to use the competing groups for security so that almost every street has become its own security refuge.

Since October 2003, I have witnessed and was involved in the move towards reconciliation. However, since that time, the Sunnis continue to feel disenfranchised and the policies of the government and actions of the independent militias continue to promulgate the unrest towards those that see themselves as Iraqis -- the same way we would feel if a foreign power came to the United States and tried to change our way of life.

To ensure our success in Iraq, we should not consider our withdrawal in terms of a timeline. This would only give our enemy the advantage of sitting back and waiting. Rather, we should analyze the accomplishments of our objectives in determining when Iraq has achieved the ability to ensure its internal and external security before redeploying our forces. Our objectives should focus on stability and security, and Iraq's focus should be on gaining legitimacy for the

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government, ensuring the foundation of a sound judicial system, providing economic incentives, employment, disarming and disbanding the militias, creating a police force free of party influence and finally, continuing to build a competent military.

As the central Iraqi government works towards consolidating its authority, it will continue to face challenges because of the competing political objectives of the religious and ethnic groups, particularly those that have militias to pursue their own objectives. While some pundits choose to disagree, Iraq has formed its internal security along sectarian lines with the Shia-dominated Ministry of Interior and the existence of the militias imposing strict fundamentalist policies, including death squads operating what is circuitously being attributed to the government's inaction or complacency.

Looking at the challenges that would allow Iraq to assume full responsibility for its security is three-fold. First, I reiterate my opinion that the armed militias is the most significant obstacle challenging Iraq's ability to advance towards a legitimate nation state with the ability to provide internal security. We witnessed the results of what uncontrolled non-state actors did in Lebanon -- Sadr's Mahdi Army is equivalent to Lebanon's Hezbollah and although it is not as well armed today, it poses a similar threat to the Iraqi central government's authority in the future. The SCIRI's Badr Corps domination of the security forces has positioned a non-state actor in a state-sponsored position to pursue its objectives independent of the government's objectives. The second

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challenge is the lack of a legitimate and professional police force to deal with the unrestrained criminal elements operating within Iraq. This is due to infiltration of the police by both the Badr Corps and the Jaysh al-Madhi Army. The final challenge is the inconsistency of the judicial system that makes tackling the police problem unrealistic because of the lack of judicial enforcement.

Prime Minister al-Maliki and President Bush stated that they were forming a joint committee to review what is necessary for Iraq's security. This committee's primary focus should be on how to marginalize the militias, legitimize the police force, enforce judicial standards for the rule of law and finally, establish political and economic policies to evolve from a country with a government to a nation state.

As we evaluate what will lead Iraq to full civil war, the most serious factor is failing not to recognize the signs that the country is at civil war. Since we declared ourselves occupiers in May 2003, we have witnessed the growth of resistance into an insurgency; therefore, we must not play down the signs of a civil war. We declared that there was not an insurgency when we were clearly in the middle of one and we failed to fully engage the separate elements that were driving the insurgency, albeit from different ideological objectives. The continuously growing sectarian violence is a logical way to assess the state of affairs in Iraq and while they may not have tilted to full civil war, they are certainly at a point that any significant event could become the spark.

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While I was in Iraq, I met with thousands of tribal sheikhs and clerics and there was one constant theme that was repeated by all, *"We Are Iraqis."* I continue to hear this statement time and again. This nationalistic identity that transcends religious and ethnic identification provides a prospect for Iraq to become a unified nation. As the animosity between the groups evolve, we can only hope that they desire to maintain a unified national identity exists.

As the security situation in Baghdad worsens and the Coalition finds it necessary to move more troops into the city, if the Iraqis allow this to take place without a political and economic strategy, unilateral military action will only insure the insurgents' success. The military can establish the conditions for the implementation of a viable political plan to establish peace, however, it cannot create or sustain peace in the absence of plan.

As I mentioned earlier, Baghdad is the hub of all the insurgent groups and a flashpoint for civil war. Containing the violence in Baghdad will only be possible if we are able to secure the borders of the neighboring states that want to assure failure in Iraq. Opening the borders allows new recruits to come in and replace those that are killed. By securing only Baghdad, without a comprehensive security, political and economic plan for the rest of the country, we are in essence creating a recruiting capability for the insurgency.

In closing, I remain concerned that our political leaders believe that we must have a decisive battle to declare victory in Iraq. Unfortunately, our decisive battle is the process of remaining committed and engaged in defeating an enemy

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in an ideological war where the objective is winning the population and not about defeating the armed insurgents.

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Mr. SHAYS. I thank all three of you very, very much. And I am going to first ask, giving myself 10 minutes—we are going to stay with the 10 minutes and then just keep going back and forth—do any of you agree with anything that the others have said or anything that you would want to qualify?

Is there any statement, for instance, Dr. Hoffman, that Mr. Nash and Mr. King made that you might want to elaborate on?

Mr. King, is there any statement that Mr. Hoffman or Mr. Nash has made?

General NASH. I would largely agree, and I tip my hat to Alan King for his comments and, of course, his service there.

The one thing, his defining the six categories of the elements of the insurgency, I agree with the six; I don't agree that they are all under an insurgent category. Because an insurgency is directed normally, usually—almost always directed against a central body of some sort, and the internecine fighting that is taking place in Iraq is multiblurred, and everybody is fighting the United States. Not everybody is fighting the United States, but—almost everybody is fighting the United States, but within this mass of confusion, there are different fights taking place with various opponents combining and breaking up, given the circumstances.

So it is not one insurgency with six participants. It is several, some of which are insurgencies, some of which are civil conflict, and then there is crime that is part of all of it.

Mr. SHAYS. Any other comments?

Mr. KING. I would like to say, when I briefed Ambassador Khalizad before he went over to Iraq, I tried to define the different categories of what he would see the military and the Coalition forces facing. I agree that they all don't fall under the insurgency, but we try to have this one umbrella term to define all of the activities that are going on in Iraq. In the south, you have predominantly Mahdi's army; they actually have the same police cars, wear the same uniforms as the police.

One of the phases of insurgency is where you infiltrate the police, and SCIRI Badr Corps have done just that. In the west, in Anbar, you actually have cities where there are no police; Haditha and Baghdadi and others, there are no police present for various reasons.

I met, as I said, almost 3,300 sheikhs. All the top sheikhs of the entire country came to me and presented their ideas, and through them, I captured almost a dozen of the most-wanted criminals in Iraq. We captured Saddam Hussein's doctor, bodyguard, driver, Baghdad Bob, the chairman of atomic energy and others.

They understand their society, and I listened to them to be able to deal within their society. Al Anbar is going to be a challenge. The Dulaimis have historically been a problem. They were a problem for the Ottomans; they were a problem for the British, and they have proven to be a problem for us, but they have to be addressed in political terms and I don't think that we have—the Government of Iraq has addressed their concerns. It goes back to the case of not allowing some of their sons in the military.

I use the insurgency umbrella to be able to define one thing rather than have it on the outside. I do agree with General Nash; I un-

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derstand they are not part of an overall insurgency, but they are all fighting one another.

Mr. SHAYS. I am curious as to why all three of you suggest time lines can't work as it relates to the replacement of Iraqi troops—excuse me, replacing American troops when Iraqis become competent. And you are going to have to help me out here. If the French told us that they had 20,000 troops, Mr. Nash, would we replace their 20,000 with ours or would we say, Oh, we will just add 20,000?

I would like each of you to respond to that question.

General NASH. Again, sir, I would say that we should not work from the assumption that the current force levels there are proper. And so, intuitively, the commanders are hesitant, and I am hesitant to recommend a one-for-one swap if I don't feel that I——

Mr. SHAYS. Why don't we be honest and say that we need 50,000 more or 80,000 more or 20,000 more?

General NASH. I would like that question answered. I agree with you.

Mr. SHAYS. So the reason why you are uncomfortable with the time line is you believe that we do not have the proper amount of security in Iraq?

General NASH. Absolutely, sir.

Mr. SHAYS. OK. That doesn't mean a time line doesn't work at all. Let me make my point and then you respond to it. It just simply means that time line doesn't begin until we buildup to the base.

A time line doesn't mean that we reduce the number of troops from this point. When I suggested a time line as it relates to the replacement of Americans who are doing police work with Iraqis, I have suggested that we—the time line might even say, OK, you have to add another 50,000 more Iraqis.

But there is a certain point, and why can't we determine that?

General NASH. The major failure, in my view, in Iraq is the slow development of the political institutions, political and judicial institutions, that give a reason—a reasonable representative government that provides goods and services to the people of Iraq, and to include security. The time line—the deadlines for performance should be on the performance of the government and then we adapt to their improvements, not establish a withdrawal schedule.

Mr. SHAYS. Let me—I'll come back to you on this. But you have made your point, right?

General NASH. Yes, sir.

Mr. SHAYS. OK. I want to debate it later.

Dr. Hoffman.

Dr. HOFFMAN. Well, I'll have to say I am largely in agreement with General Nash. I think, firstly, we face two huge challenges in Iraq: One, not just the insurgencies, but the insurgencies that we have heard from Mr. King as well. But the second problem which has also been alluded to is, we have a failed state contending with lots of different struggles and without the power and the tools actually to control those struggles. So, therefore, you know right from the start those are two of the most enormous challenges, both fighting and building up the Iraqi Government.

In terms of the time line, I have to look—I am a historian by training, and I have to look at just the course of insurgencies in

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the last year. When I was advising the multinational force headquarters in Iraq we did a study on duration of insurgencies. The successful ones take between 9 and 12 years to win. The unsuccessful ones, which I suspect we have to classify Iraq in, take between 10 and 13 years. So my response is, we need a time line.

Mr. SHAYS. You are making an assumption that I would base a time line on whether or not they have dealt with the insurgency. I mean, Israel has been dealing with terrorists, Hezbollah, Hamas. There they are still a functioning government.

I am not suggesting that a time line would be based on when the violence would end. I am just suggesting a time line that is based on when Iraqis can take our place, and that is a difference. There is a huge difference.

So if you could open your mind up a little bit to that concept, what I think is, we will be out of Iraq and there will still be violence. There will still be fighting, but it will be their problem, not our problem.

Dr. HOFFMAN. Well, I think I go back to General Nash's point. We have to assume that we have the right to properly size force structure.

Mr. SHAYS. So we come back to that. We need to know what the baseline is. I mean, that is the message I am getting from all three of you: What the heck is that baseline? And what strikes me is that our government is not being candid with itself and with us, with the Iraqis, what that baseline number needs to be; and because they had a lower baseline before, there are some who frankly have a history. And probably that is the best argument for getting new people. They wouldn't have a history; they could think fresh.

Dr. HOFFMAN. Well, I think it also masks a huge problem. We have set the baseline in such a way I don't think 325,000 trained Iraqi forces are sufficient. If we want to get the 20-to–1 ratio that existed in a place like northern Ireland, which was far less complicated then Iraq, where there was an existing government and a functioning democracy, you have to have 500 security forces. So even with our troops there and the Iraqi forces brought up, you are still going to fall short of that.

Mr. SHAYS. That is the value of this discussion of a time line, because what it basically says is, the time line to reduce doesn't start until you get to 500. That is—yeah, OK. I hear you.

Mr. King, how long were you in Iraq?

Mr. KING. I was there for 16 months. I went over with the first group in March 2003, was wounded in February 2004, stayed until July 4, 2004, and then spent 16 months in the hospital.

Mr. SHAYS. Well, I want to thank you for your service. I want to thank you deeply and sincerely. This young man who is sitting behind me, who is he?

Mr. KING. That is my son.

Mr. SHAYS. What is his name?

Mr. KING. That is Wesley. He's the one that paid a larger price than any of us.

Mr. SHAYS. I think the woman behind you is your wife?

Mr. KING. Yes, sir.

Mr. SHAYS. And what is her name?

Mr. KING. It is Barbara.

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Mr. SHAYS. I want to say to you, Mrs. King, and to your son, Wesley, you should be very proud of your husband and your dad. And we are very proud of you, very, very proud.

Mr. KING. Thank you, sir.

Mr. SHAYS. And I want to say to you, Major General, how long were you in Iraq?

General NASH. I occupied Iraq, sir, before it was popular. I was—I occupied Iraq in 1991 in the first Gulf war for—several times, but—I have traveled to Baghdad after the current war, but I don't have near as much time as Mr. King does in Iraq.

Mr. SHAYS. Well, we appreciate your service, and I have been noting that I have been referring to you as "Mr." and I should be referring to you as "General."

And I would just like to thank Major Garner, who is sitting behind you, as well for your service in Iraq. Thank you so very much.

We are going to go with a 10-minute rule here. But it is generous.

And Mr. Kucinich. Thank you.

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

General Nash, today you are advocating for a 18 to 24-month increase in U.S. troops in Iraq, including delays and redeployment of U.S. troops as their replacements arrive. At the same time, you also stated about the stress to unit soldiers and family is severe.

Do you believe that had the U.S. withdrawn its forces earlier during the formation of the Iraqi Government, such as following the January 2005 national elections, that we would still be in the same situation today?

General NASH. At the time before—at the time I advocated a withdrawal of forces beginning with the political success of the elections, and made public statements that I had resigned from the "We Need More Forces in Iraq" club. Events subsequent to that have caused me to understand that the failure to provide security in key places, particularly Baghdad, in Iraq is largely a function of the lack of presence of forces.

We do need to tie troop withdrawals to political success, but at the present time, we do not have that success, and I think we need to put more emphasis on achieving security in those locations.

Mr. KUCINICH. So you are saying, you first have to have a military solution before you have a political solution?

General NASH. No. It is absolutely essential that the political solution is the key element in this, but the military has a role to play in that. Security has a role to play in that.

The problem is, we are neither fish nor fowl with respect to security. We have not provided sufficient presence of forces to allow people to go about their lives in a reasonably normal manner, and we need to decide whether or not we are going to do that.

Mr. KUCINICH. Let me ask you this. The deployment of forces, does it or does it not depend on the situation in Iraq with respect to how many insurgents there are in a given area?

General NASH. Yes, sir. I mean, it is directly related to the enemy action.

Mr. KUCINICH. Is it possible that as we deploy more forces, there are more insurgents?

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General NASH. That is—that is one of the arguments that has been—has been advanced. I would say to you, it is not the numbers of soldiers that are there that would grow the insurgency. It would be—the behavior of the soldiers present would have a larger controlling factor in whether or not the insurgency grew.

The deliverance of peaceable areas supported by political and economic action will reduce an insurgency over time, but it is over time, not a short frame.

Mr. KUCINICH. You talk about economic action. What is your assessment of the reconstruction of Iraq?

General NASH. I think the reconstruction of Iraq has been—has been mishandled. Programs that have emphasized development of local job production have been more successful than large projects.

In the words of one commander that served in Baghdad in the 2004–2005 timeframe, we need to understand that we need 100 shovels much more than we need one backhoe. And our failure to understand that in a nationwide environment has caused us to create large-scale projects whose fruition is long range and do not give relief to the people that need the work and the security.

Mr. KUCINICH. Do you think that the longer that U.S. troops are in Iraq, it serves to fuel or frustrate the insurgency?

General NASH. It serves to dampen the civil war. It has elements that can fuel the insurgency, and one of the important distinctions here is to understand the nature of what all the different conflicts are about. And as I said in my statement, there are multiple layers of conflicts taking place, some of which the presence of U.S. forces moderate and some of which the presence of U.S. forces aggravate.

That service, sir, is why this is so hard. But the bottom line is, in my judgment, that the provision of security in an environment where political institutions can mature, those economic opportunities can occur, will be of greater benefit overall than the possibility of causing some folks to continue to resent the American presence.

Mr. KUCINICH. Following your logic, General, the presence of the U.S. troops helps to moderate civil war, but fuels the insurgency. Would the reverse be true? Would the absence of U.S. troops lessen an insurgency and——

General NASH. I think it would increase the civil war, the civil war aspects of the confrontation. And I think that much of the insurgency would then be redirected to the government itself, because much of the insurgency is, in fact, foreign fighter jihadists, motivated—that is, as opposed to the Iraqi Government and to a large portion of the population as they are to the U.S. presence.

Mr. KUCINICH. Is a civil war likely to continue whether we are there or not?

General NASH. Certainly.

Mr. KUCINICH. So you could understand why some of us feel that withdrawal of U.S. troops would be beneficial not only to the United States, but to the people in Iraq, because there is going to be—there is a civil war going on right now that troops are kind of caught in this middle. And that is one of my concerns.

General NASH. And you have every right to feel that, and you are making me very uncomfortable in trying to defend what has taken place in Iraq.

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Mr. KUCINICH. I don't want to ask you to do that, General, because you have expressed a level of candor here which I think is admirable. And I guess what happens is that, you know, Congress inevitably makes these decisions as to whether or not we cutoff funds.

General NASH. Sir, I understand.

Mr. KUCINICH. That really is our decision. The administration can say, well, we are going to keep the troops there, but it is up to Congress. If Congress cuts out funds, those troops are coming home.

I appreciate your testimony in that regard.

Dr. Hoffman, you made the case in your testimony about a civil society, you have to have a police force to have a civil society. There is a difference between, you know, the democratizing influence of police and the presence of the military.

But when, you know, in the testimony where there is a huge absence of the kind of police that are needed—we had a hearing about this maybe a year ago—and at the same time where there are police, there may actually be some other military elements in the police uniforms, that could be a confusing factor in trying to get—you know, get democratic governance. Do you agree?

Dr. HOFFMAN. Well, I think, you know, this is a reflection of one of the problems we have always had with the police, which I alluded to in my testimony, is that we've never devoted the attention and resources to building them up. And without, I think, a working police force, we are building a security structure that is just on a foundation of sand. By no means am I suggesting if we buildup the police now, we are going to address the insurgency of the civil war problems, but we will have the prospects of a foundation for a future.

Mr. KUCINICH. I have to ask you what is the level of influence of Iran over this Shi'a militia forces. Are they funding these militias? Are they training them?

Dr. HOFFMAN. Well, at least from my experience, when I was with the CPA in the spring of 2004, even then we saw that Iran was involved backing a number of different sides, not just one horse. Of course, it's particularly close with SCIRI, the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq, because that was created in Iran and many of its leaders had sought and received sanctuary in Iran before our liberation of Iraq. Clearly, there is Iranian involvement with al-Sadr and his forces. But from my observations 2 years ago, I don't think that they have changed. Iran had a hand everywhere and was monitoring everyone to control the situation at least in hopes to influence the manner favorable to its own interests.

Mr. KUCINICH. Here we are on the 5th year anniversary of September 11th attacks, and on the day that the American people have learned that some of our military leaders in Iraq believe that hope is lost in the Anbar Province, for example, can you offer an opinion as to—or do you know where the prime minister of Iraq is going today, where the prime minister is going?

Dr. HOFFMAN. He's going to Tehran.

Mr. KUCINICH. He's having a 2-day meeting with President Ahmadinejad in Iran. What do you suppose that's about?

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What is the significance of that, someone who has filed this and stated that Iran is certainly involved in Iraq and stands to gain considerable influence whether the United States stays or leaves? What do you think?

Dr. HOFFMAN. Well, clearly, Iran has always had an active interest in Iraq because, especially during Saddam Hussein's time, it felt threatened by Iraq. So that accounts for long-standing interest, and I think a long-standing ambition that Iran has had going back to further revolution that brought the Ayatollah Khomeini to power to be the regional superpower, to be the hegemon, and indeed it is attempting, I think, to exercise that influence through Iraq.

Mr. KUCINICH. You heard the questions that were asked before, the Admiral, about what would be the impact on Iraq if the United States attacked Iran. Do you—do you note any point at which there is a an alliance of interest other than Muqtada al-Sadr between Iran and Iraq?

Dr. HOFFMAN. Well, I think the Iranians have often been extremely professional in their subversion of Iraqi society and even their subversion of Iraqi Shi'a groups, so I'm sure they have a strong influence.

I think I might respectfully disagree with the Admiral. I would imagine that if—that one of Iran's trump cards, if we were to launch any offensive operations against Iran, would be not only to mobilize Hezbollah and its worldwide assets, but also, I think, to make our existence in Iraq if not unbearable—then if not untenable then certainly unbearable.

Already one has read of reports in recent months of thousands of what seem the Iranian citizen militia who have been trained and sworn to carry out suicide attacks in Iraq to defend Iran, if so directed.

Mr. KUCINICH. One final question and this is directed to Mr. King. And I want to join in thanking you for the risks that you took; and we are glad that you are home safe.

You used your study of both the Christian Bible and the Koran as well as Iraqi tribal history in performing your civil affairs work; is that correct?

Mr. KING. Yes, sir.

Mr. KUCINICH. Did you find that the Iraqis that you dealt with were Islamic fascists?

Mr. KING. No, sir, but they had concerns particularly in Al Anbar both before the war and after that there was a movement by Wahhabis and others, particularly in Fallujah, Ar Ramadi, Al Qa'im, Haditha, to try to turn individuals in that area.

Mr. KUCINICH. What is the continuing appeal of clerics such as Muqtada al-Sadr to Iraqis or those who advocate violence such as al Qaeda?

Mr. KING. Al Qaeda is predominantly more—there—they are a different sect. Muqtada al-Sadr, in my opinion, he would want a Shi'a Islamic revolution within Iraq. I think he's positioned within the provincial elections to take control of a large portion of the south along with SCIRI in Karbala and Nasiryiyah. The Wahhabis have a whole different idea about life.

Mr. KUCINICH. But why do any of these people have appeal there?

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Mr. KING. I would say Malumba, that they have lost their appeal, they are trying to hold their ground, but that the tribes in particular no longer want them there. The insurgency, the Iraqi insurgency, the pure insurgency that wants to see the return of a Sunni secular government wants them gone and has gone out of their way, particularly since the end of last year, to try to rid the area of those particular extremists.

Mr. KUCINICH. Would you agree with the Washington Post story today that Anbar is—the implication from the story that Anbar is lost?

Mr. KING. No, sir. You know, Nassaad Naif, who is the sheikh out there for the Dulaimis of the Al-Jaza'iri house, Aniza, who is the sheikh general for the royal family out in the west, along with a number of others I can name to you, they are nationalists and they see themselves as Iraqis but again we go back to history, the Dulaimis, which is predominantly Dulaimi area, they have always been a problem for any government, even Saddam's.

Saddam had a problem in 1995; there was an uprising because he killed one of the members of the tribe. They are going to be a problem. They have to be dealt with in a very sensitive political way. The stronger tactics, you take the stronger, they'll fight back.

Mr. KUCINICH. Thank you, Mr. King. I want to thank you, thank the panel.

Mr. SHAYS. At this time the Chair would recognize Mr. Van Hollen.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank all of you for your testimony. Sorry I had to go out for a little while, but I've had a chance to review some of your written testimony. And thank all of you for your input.

And, Mr. King, thanks to you and your family for your sacrifices, all of you.

Let me start, if I could, with you, Mr. King, because I think you identify in your testimony one of the really central issues here, which is the question about whether or not the central Iraqi Government, as it's currently constituted, is going to continue to exercise the levers of power as a central government that represents all Iraqis, or whether some components of that government are simply using those levers of power to further the interests of a particular group.

And you specifically mentioned in your testimony, and I am quoting here, "Iraq has formed its internal security along sectarian lines with the Shi'a-dominated ministry of interior and the existence of the militias imposing strict fundamentalist policies, including death squads being circuitously attributed to the government's inaction or complacency."

My question, I guess, is very simple. If that is what is going on, in other words, if the ministry of interior, which is supposed to be the Iraqi ministry of interior, is essentially operating as a wing of certain Shi'a militia movements, how can we ever expect to end the civil unrest between the different communities in Iraq?

Mr. KING. I believe as long as it is organized in the way it is, it will continued to be challenged. I think the ministry of defense has done a more professional job of trying to do that even though they don't have the levels of representation of the Sunnis. But I

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think that the SCIRI's corps, the Badr Corps, which is the military arm of SCIRI, its infiltration into the ministry of their death squads and commando units and the Jaish, which is now seen as one of the faces of insurgency, their attempts to try to infiltrate the police is a challenge that we need to try to address; and that is going to be the most significant issue that is going to—that we are going to have to deal with in the near future.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. My—I guess my question is, what are we doing, what can we be doing? As you say later in your testimony the SCIRI's Badr Corps-dominated security forces has positioned a nonstate, acting or in a state-sponsored position, to pursue its objectives independent of the government's objectives.

But taking with your earlier testimony, with the ministry of interior, those have become—their government within that ministry, those are their objectives and given the fact that, you know, we have an insurgency which, according to the opinion report, remains potent.

But we obviously have an ongoing—you know, as the General points out, whatever you call it, the fact of the matter is, thousands of Iraqis are dying in sectarian violence; and the ministry of the interior, which is the ministry that has the responsibility for preventing that kind of sectarian violence is, according to your testimony, an arm of SCIRI's Badr Corps.

How are we going to deal with it? I would ask all of you that.

Mr. KING. I know that they have taken steps to try to remove the militias. I don't think that has been as aggressive as it should be.

Mr. SHAYS. Could I interrupt to make sure that we know who "they" is?

Mr. KING. I am sorry. The Iraqi Government has taken steps to remove individuals. They have gone back through lists of Baathists. But we will remain challenged in the future as long as the Badr Corps, who was a trained militia from Iran, and Jaish al-Mahdi exists and the only way that we can do that is to aggressively assist the Iraqi Government to remove those individuals as expeditiously as possible and rebuild the police to a base level, whatever we establish that base level to be or the government establishes that base level to be.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. But you mentioned the Iraqi Government. SCIRI is the largest—SCIRI is the largest political party.

Mr. KING. Yes, sir.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. And isn't——

Mr. KING. SCIRI stands for Supreme Counsel of Islamic Revolution.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I realize there is no easy answer to that, but it seems to me that we have heard nothing from the administration, frankly, as to how they are going to deal with these central issues other than just, "Trust us, it's going to get better."

And the fact of the matter is, the violence is getting worse and part of the reason it's getting worse is that there are certain movements within Iraq that, while they say they all want to be Iraqis, the fact of the matter is, they are using their positions of influence and power to further the interests of a particular group and they seem to have the upper hand.

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Do they not have the upper hand today?

Mr. KING. If I could make one point on that, today, in the earlier panel's testimony, the discussion about the slow movement of the government, I would say that, you know, Prime Minister Maliki is walking a very fine line, right down the center of the road. And he's got to try to keep the extremists on the far right, which is about 25 percent of the political parties that are in power, along with the moderate democrats and the—you know, the moderates within the Shi'a party, try to make them all move toward a unified nation.

And he—it is going to be a slow process. I don't think that we are going to see that in the very near future.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Any other predictions?

Dr. HOFFMAN. Well, it's late in the day to start with small steps, of course, but if we use small steps, we are never going to get anywhere.

I think, rather than tackling the militia issue head on, especially for a government that is dependent on a coalition, one way to begin to have a positive impact on the ministry of the interior would be actually to hold the individuals responsible in the ministry of whom evidence is being gathered, of whom charges are just waiting.

But there is no political will to bring charges, not for militia involvement or political affiliation, but rather for crimes that would be crimes in whatever statutes existed in Iraq; for corruption or nepotism, and certainly for death squad activities and human rights abuses. And where there is evidence, a demonstrable sign of holding people in the ministry accountable and ending this, there has to be a political step forward, the will, that is, to hold criminals responsible. That—in and of itself, whether that would ultimately tip the balance, I think it would be a realistic step forward; and without that, we are really doomed and the ministry itself is doomed.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I guess the question there is, who is going to do the arresting? You have the ministry of the interior who is responsible for this. Now you can have the army step in, and we know that there have been some clashes between some of the death squads and the army.

But I just—I just think if we don't get our hands on this particular issue, we're obviously in bigger trouble than we are today, than we are right now.

Dr. HOFFMAN. You are right, but I think that is critical, the unknown second step. The first step is for the prime minister of the government is to take a stand and to order it to be done, and then there is the practice of implementing it; but if he's not going to order it, then the challenges you underscored are that much greater.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, I asked the earlier panel about this ongoing discussion within Iraq about the passage of legislation to create the provinces in the south. And I understand the constitution allows for that, but I think the Sunnis believe that there would be some additional possible modifications to the constitution. They would address some of their concerns primarily—I guess

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the—some clear benefit from Iraqi oil that would be going to the Sunni.

Do you—what is your sense of the political situation right now? Have the different groups essentially made a decision to go their own way in Iraq in the sense that they have made a calculation that they are better off pursuing their own particular goals and that of their particular groups instead of the goal of a united Iraq?

Dr. HOFFMAN. At least among the established parties, I don't see that yet, even among the Kurds that have always been the most strident and outspoken about separatism. They are still staying with the central government.

Even someone like Muqtada al-Sadr, whose motives I wouldn't begin to divine and who is certainly a highly corrosive element, I think, of the entire mix but, unfortunately, is the kingmaker because he has the balance of representatives that puts whoever is in power there. I think at the moment he is still participating and holding on to at least a Federalized system.

But I think it is all reflection of—that in a weak government, in this power vacuum, everybody at the moment is hanging back, marshalling their resources, hoping their opponents are weakened so they'll be in a position in years to come to fill that vacuum.

So the fact, I think, that all of the representative political figures in Iraq have held back from civil war is entirely positive and commendable, but at the same time we have to be clear it is a reflection of their own power and the advantage or the opportunity they think at this particular moment they convene. I think what we have is a constellation of factions strong enough to assert their own will.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Van Hollen.

Gentlemen, I want you to tell me what you agreed and disagreed with in what the earlier panel said. In other words, the key point, what—is there anything that you just said, you have to be kidding me? Or you know, well, a lot of good that does us because you are so off.

I mean, you weren't sitting passively. Or was it just more of the same; or good luck, committee, you are never getting the numbers you want.

I mean, what were you thinking in reaction to the first panel? You all were here, correct?

General NASH. Yes, sir. I saw a lot more of the same, sir, from the administration and I've had severe reservations about this whole—this whole effort. The failure to come to grips with what is necessary—what is militarily necessary to accomplish in Iraq and to ask for the necessary resources to achieve that is a continuous—continuous weakness in the pursuit of our objectives there if you don't come to grips with it.

And it goes back to this issue of, you know, if you are going to—if you are going to be an occupier, at least be a good occupier and establish security and order and stability. And then build from there and transition from there if your intentions are to be good and promote democracy.

Mr. SHAYS. I would like to say that if you are going to be a good occupier, what?

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General NASH. If you are going to be a good occupier, be good at it. And then develop a plan to transition to a democratic free market, respect for civil rights and the like over time.

But we have never established that modicum of security that is necessary in Iraq to pursue our political and economic objectives and to give the Iraqi people a chance to grow. And that was because of all of the things that everybody has talked about.

And there is not a willingness to make fundamental changes in our objectives and be more clear about our objectives. There is a failure to establish a broader course that takes into account regional issues that are at the heart of the perception of the United States' intentions in the region.

And so it is a—so it is—I go back to the expression, we continue to be neither fish nor fowl in the pursuit of our objectives. One of the things, sir, that—and I am wrestling in my own mind about this time line issue that I know you are concerned with as you look for a way to positively influence the action. There is great concern about relinquishing the initiative to those who oppose us, and the time line as the measurement for progress or as the strategy for pursuing our objectives is, that is the greatest concern about it; it relinquishes initiatives.

Mr. SHAYS. It relinquishes initiatives to whom?

General NASH. To those who oppose us, to the enemy.

Mr. SHAYS. I don't get that logic one bit. I don't get it one bit.

General NASH. OK. Sir, if I know you have a plan, if you know your plan, OK; I am going to wait until it best suits my interest to act against it. And if you have a plan for transfer, and I know that I can defeat the replacement better than I can defeat you, I will delay any initiatives and I will build my case.

Mr. SHAYS. Do you have any doubt that the opponents of Iraq think we will be there indefinitely? Do you think they think we will be there forever? Even the Iraqis think we are going to leave too soon. So, I mean, you are not telling them anything they don't already know.

General NASH. Sir, I understand what you're saying. But to publish a schedule is to tell them something very specific. That is what's a concern. The concern also is the fact that I go back to—I go back to the action that if it becomes set in concrete, the enemy has a vote to disrupt this. This needs to be understood.

Mr. SHAYS. Unless you take the worst-case scenario.

General NASH. I understand.

Mr. SHAYS. Then if you take the worst-case scenario there's nothing the enemy can do to make it worse.

General NASH. There's not one person in this town, sir, who will take the best—worst-case scenario and present it to the American people for their plan for Iraq.

Mr. SHAYS. I have looked at classified documents that are basically the joint military—multinational force campaign plan. Have you looked at that?

General NASH. No, sir.

Mr. SHAYS. I will tell you it is about as unrealistic as you can imagine.

General NASH. I believe that.

Mr. SHAYS. I mean, the more I look at it, the more angry I get.

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General NASH. Yes, sir.

Mr. SHAYS. I'm not frustrated. I am angry. I am not frustrated. It is like I am almost coming to a conclusion—and this is why I love these hearings. I love getting people who are so—who focus all their lives about this, because in the process of your opposing the timeline, I realize why. It is based, first, on you think the numbers—the baseline number is really unrealistic. That's the start of it. And if I wasn't pushing it, I am not sure I would know that in the way that I know it.

And then the other point, which I think is an easy argument to refute ultimately is it tells our enemy. I mean, our enemy knows more than we would care for them to know right now. And they know this? They know the United States ultimately got out of Vietnam. They know that we took away the dollars of the Vietnamese to at least do it on their own. They know that every American life is so precious that there is a number, whatever that number is, when Americans will simply say, We're out of here. They know it.

And they listen to the debate that we have in this country with half of our constituency against it, and half of Congress, or close to it, against it. I mean—so it strikes me that the value of a timeline would be to maybe get Republicans and Democrats in the same room and say, You want to know that there's some limit here, and the Iraqis want to know we're not going to leave too soon. So why not do it on something very logical? When you are competent, you take our place, and if the fighting still continues, you are competent to fight them. And no different than what has existed in Israel for 60-plus years.

So in my logic, my logic says I speak to some Iraqis whose biggest fear is that we will leave them, but I say that we won't. I don't know what the election will be like for this new Congress. And the President can initiate an action but a President can't fund an action. So I am thinking as well, you know, we're critical of the Sunni, Shias and Kurds. They don't have their act together. Republicans and Democrats don't have their act together in terms of the fact we have men and women who are risking their lives every day, and we are not coming together as a country to find a common ground and a common message so that our troops don't wonder what the hell we're doing back home; because when I speak to most of our troops, they're pissed off, excuse me, at what they see on CNN and they're angry as hell that their government is divided. That's what I see.

So I don't think we have to tell the insurgents anything they don't know. Plus, the insurgents think that we're decadent. They think that we value life so much and they value the afterworld so much that they're going to beat us. And I have to tell you at the rate we're going, maybe they're right, you know, frankly. So maybe in a best-case scenario, timelines win. But I don't see a best-case scenario. I'd like you to react to the panel.

Dr. HOFFMAN. I think that what struck me, although I am not necessarily sure that a congressional hearing is the place that you would see this kind of self-reflection, but it seemed to be a confidence that we have the right—that we have the right strategy, which has in essence been the same strategy that we've had for the past 3 years, and yet what I think was coming out very clearly in

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the question and answer is that the situation in Iraq has certainly changed and constantly evolved over the past 3 years. The situation today I would argue is very different than it was even a year ago. Unfortunately it tends to get more complex and more violent. But nonetheless, I don't think that our strategy has kept pace with those changes and we've stuck with, in essence, the same plan; that we can very quickly and expeditiously, more so than is realistic, buildup the Iraqi Army and police so that we can get out of there without accepting, I think, that——

Mr. SHAYS. And the only thing that has changed, frankly, is the timeline of when all of that will happen. So in other words, it is a strategy that just keeps pushing back the dates.

Dr. HOFFMAN. Well, and seeks—and continues to seek improvement by doing in essence the same thing but just changing around sometimes the organizational boxes. I mean, I think this has been the case with the police, is that 3 years into this process, I mean, as we heard in the previous panel, the police are still untrained. Certainly they compare very unfavorably to the Iraqi Army, and not only are they untrained but they're subverted and infiltrated so their loyalty is even in doubt. But yet we keep investing in the same approaches and the same strategies.

Mr. SHAYS. Let me ask, is that fair in this case? Because they are reviewing the national police in particular and looking to that, who's competent or not. Is that not a sincere effort?

Dr. HOFFMAN. No. I think it is a sincere effort, certainly, with some of the commando units in Baghdad. I think they have been reformed and there has been a vetting, but what always worries me is that it's either too little too late or only piecemeal. And going back to Representative Van Hollen's question, I think without the political will to really rout out thoroughly the corruption, the sectarianism, the abuses in the Ministry of the Interior, that even reforming units are attempting to do this on an individual basis without that direct political leadership from the center and political—the center meaning the centralized government—again it's still going to be at the margins.

Mr. SHAYS. Any other point before I go to Mr. King?

Dr. HOFFMAN. Just one other thing is just that even in the case of the Washington Post story about Al-Anbar Province that Representative Kucinich talked about this morning, it only strikes me—and this I think also came out in the testimony this morning—that so much of our assumptions in in Iraq are just based on conjecture. It's what we think the insurgents want, what we think motivates the insurgents. I mean, Representative Kucinich feels strongly, or at least my understanding of what he was saying, it's the presence of American forces and in some cases the actions of the American forces that have motivated the insurgents and perhaps increased their numbers.

I would take a different view, and I would say that in part it's our inability to secure Iraq, to create a sense of stability where the situation, even where there have been improvements, has been worsened and which has dashed expectations on the part of the problem, has created a vacuum which has breathed life into lawlessness; because I think the message in Iraq is that lawlessness

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stays or at least you can get away with it. So that's on the one hand.

On the other hand, we still don't or have never had a clear idea of this enemy. We have never done a systematic intelligence collection and analysis of the morale and motivation of the organization, of the sources of dissents, and of the fault lines within the insurgent movement. Instead our intelligence operations——

Mr. SHAYS. Would you say insurgent movements or insurgent movement?

Dr. HOFFMAN. Movements. Movements. In other words, the thousands of detainees we have—and we've been doing this since 2003—we lean on them for high-value target information. We look to them, and I think quite rightly, to extract force protection and information, but we're just thinking of this in tactical terms and getting an immediate solution. We are not thinking of this strategically and understanding them, building up the detailed knowledge of why in fact—I think the question isn't that Al-Anbar Province—that the United States is failing in Al-Anbar Province, as the Washington Post suggested. The question I would have—what I missed here this morning is, why is it failing? And what is our analysis based on? It's usually based on us viewing the Iraqi problem through our own prism, but not really, and we've never really understood our adversary there.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you. I'm going to come to you as soon as I do Mr. King first.

Mr. KING. I think the most significant comment that was made was that we're focusing on a counterinsurgency. That's the process for the defense, building the defense forces. But we still have to look at what the external threats are if we were to leave. And if they can take care of themselves internally, if that's the instinct we want, and if we can clearly establish a timeline to get there, who's going to take care of the external influences, whether it's Iran or Syria or others, once we do leave, if they're just taking care of themselves?

You know, I was responsible on the day that the regime fell for reestablishing the police department, put in that individual named Vince Crabb. He was dubbed sheriff of Baghdad by the press. And the police were corrupt before we got there, and they're corrupt now. You know, the year of the police—I understand and I respect that particular operational endeavor, but I think that we need to take a deeper look at that.

Mr. SHAYS. Let me just inject myself, though. When we eliminated all the police, all the border patrol and all the Army and we stood up or started to stand up the police, the only time I really came close to weeping was when there were a whole group of Iraqi policemen who we gave no weapons to in Baghdad, and then a terrorist group went in and went from office to office and just obliterated them. I tell you, that to me was like one of the hardest moments I've had. And just think of the message that gave every Iraqi. You know, we're going to train you to be a policeman, we're not going to give you uniforms, we're not going to give you guns. We set them up, that they're in the office and they get obliterated.

Mr. KING. On that 13 days that I was responsible, we put 5,000 police officers back to work 1,400 firemen. The police officers were

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armed. We gave them—we actually took a cache every day of pistols and gave them pistols and AK–47s. When ORHOC came in, they disbanded the police and wanted to do assessments and start from scratch. That was where we lost ground. They already knew what was the problem: It was broke. We at least had a starting point and had some momentum.

The biggest thing that I—I believe that should be addressed is, again, we're focusing on internal security through counterinsurgency operations but we're not focusing on what it would take to be able to secure themselves externally against an external threat; i.e., Iran or Syria if they were to come across the border with heavy weapons.

Mr. SHAYS. Isn't that our easiest problem right now, though? In other words, that's the least of their problems right now, isn't it, because we can provide that protection.

Mr. KING. Yes, sir. But that's the issue. If we're talking about now a timeline, when can we withdraw——

Mr. SHAYS. But isn't there a difference between troops who are—our American troops are patrolling the streets of Baghdad and Basra and you name it, getting blown up and shot at and troops based—doing operations that are military operations. I mean, there's a huge difference between those.

Mr. KING. Yes, sir. I would give you an analogy. When I moved into the city, I took over the palace. I sent my troops around to knock on every door in a four-block area. And we said, We're here, and here's what we do, and what's your most significant concern? At that particular time, it was early in the liberation.

Mr. SHAYS. When was it?

Mr. KING. This was May-June timeframe of 2003.

Mr. SHAYS. Early spring, summer.

Mr. KING. Yes, sir. But when my soldier was killed, when he was killed by an IED, the same one that Major Gardner was injured in, they came to us that night and told us who did it. And we were able to capture him 5 weeks later; we caught the five guys who did it. When I was ambushed and my bodyguard was killed, that next morning they called and told me which tribe did it. I called the sheik of the tribe and a week later they told me who it was and it had been taken care of. That's the type——

Mr. SHAYS. Now, at that great moment when we're going—so what turned that around, in your judgment? I don't want to—this is about as important a question as I could ask you. Because I was there early on and I saw that kind of effort on the part of the military. So what, in your judgment, turned that around?

Mr. KING. You know I went up with the first troops. We fought our way up. By the end of April, every one of my teams had been in some direct action. Even though we were a support element, we were civil affairs, we weren't supposed to be fighting and we were supposed to be helping them. We weren't a direct action. I fought a group of Syrians on the 10th of April. But there are troops that followed who didn't realize that our point, as I made in my statement, we had won the war, we had defeated a—decisively defeated an armed enemy. At that moment, though, the war for Iraq began and the objective was the people. We were there to help the people.

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And kinetic responses, particularly in this society, aren't necessarily the only way when we don't have enough——

Mr. SHAYS. So it was replacement troops or—how long were you there? Do you understand the question I am asking? I mean, you are talking to a Peace Corps volunteer. I have no trouble understanding what you are telling me.

And I remember when we were in Iraq in April in, a guy Mohammed Abdul Hassan basically was telling us as we asked questions, What are we doing to make you uncomfortable? He said, You throw candy on the ground and our children pick it up like children—excuse me, like chickens. They're not chickens. And at one point he kind of grabbed me on the shoulder and he said, You don't know us, and we don't know you.

Now, when we went in August, we met certain military groups that were doing tremendous outreach just like you did. I want to know, in your judgment, what stopped that? Was that the next group that came in that didn't know it was their responsibility? Was that a decisive leadership change that said stop doing this and do something else? What was it?

Mr. KING. It was an understanding. I mean for me and my successor, we had a good handoff. And he took on my mission and continued it on. But his successor saw no value added with engaging the sheiks, and he just disbanded the entire operation. They had no one to turn to at that point.

For me, I wrote a paper in June 2003 that explained the Iraqi culture and the differences and the misperceptions we had about how Saddam dealt with them. Like the regular police couldn't go kick in the door. They had to go get the neighborhood Ba'athist to go and knock on the door. The secret police could. But that wasn't everybody. But when we kicked in—even when I caught——

Mr. SHAYS. When you say "could," who could?

Mr. KING. The secret police in Saddam's regime could kick in the door, but the regular police couldn't.

Mr. SHAYS. Why was that?

Mr. KING. That was the rules of engagement. Like for me, when I caught Saddam's doctor and bodyguard and driver, we thought Saddam was inside. And our reinforcements hadn't showed up, a large crowd had gathered. I just decided to knock on the door and ask, Is Saddam at home?

Mr. SHAYS. You decided to do what?

Mr. KING. I just knocked on the door and said, Is Saddam in here? I didn't kick in the door, I didn't run into the women's quarters. I didn't drag him out. I made that individual walk me door to door within that building to secure it. But we caught Saddam's doctor, bodyguard, and driver, along with a suitcase of clothes that we believe was for Saddam, without having to do, you know, a hostile raid. I only had to do that one time the entire time I was there, and caught, you know, number 23 off the deck of cards, number 55 off the deck of cards, caught—Baghdad Bob walked in my office and surrendered. The chairman of atomic energy walked in and surrendered, the former Ambassador to Russia walked in and surrendered. All these were former Ba'athist individuals. But it was because of a trust that I had built and with a relationship. I stayed. I didn't have the turnover. There was a lot of turnover in

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those days. They were there for 90 days, 6 months. There wasn't a long-term commitment. These people build everything on relationships. Who can they go to? And once the relationships changed and they don't have that same one, there's a level—there's a time period where trust has to be rebuilt. And in the early days in the transfer of battle space, some of that was lost.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you. The gentleman from Maryland has been very generous and patient. He has as much time as he wants.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank all of you again for your testimony.

Dr. Hoffman, I think you sort of summed up the situation very well when you said it's more complex and more violent today than it's been in the past. And in fact it is getting more complex and more violent. It is amazing that we have not done as a country the kind of in-depth analysis you talked about with regard to the different groups, their different motivations, and how that impacts our decisionmaking process here.

I want to go back to the issue of trying to get a political settlement in Iraq, because I think General Casey has said it many times, and others as well. If you don't get a political settlement among these different groups and address the different interests that are at play here, you're not going to be able to resolve the insurgency or the civil war situation. There's a lot of focus on training the Iraqi troops, and that's very important. We want the highest quality troops. But it doesn't do us any good if we teach someone to shoot better and be a better shot if they don't have loyalty to the central government and we're simply improving the lethality of the militia.

And so while, you know, it's important to go over these statistics about who's trained and who's not trained, until we get the political pieces right, we're not going to be able to resolve this issue.

Now, General Nash, I noticed you had served in a couple places. You were in Bosnia as well as Kosovo. And I guess if you could draw on that experience to look at what's happening in Iraq today. We're going to hear on one of our later panels, I think it's the third set—third set of hearings from Ambassador Peter Galbraith, who served as our U.S. Ambassador to Croatia, who has just written a book called The End of Iraq. And his analysis is petty simple. Iraq has fallen apart, and now we are spending a lot of time trying to put it back together. It's not that it's together and we're trying to keep it from falling apart, it's the opposite. And he essentially comes to the conclusion, not with any joy, but looking at the reality of the situation on the ground, that having a strong central government in Iraq isn't going to happen. Not because he doesn't want it to happen but because the constituent groups in Iraq have decided that it's not in their interest to make it happen.

If you could please just comment on that based on your experience in the Balkans.

General NASH. Well, thank you, sir. You know, the earlier panel, there were quite—you asked questions about analogies to the Balkans, or that issue came up. And of course there are many tactical lessons we have learned in the Balkans that could have helped us a great deal in Iraq.

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Decisive initial force. I mean, one of the things you talk about, force levels, when I give a talk about Bosnia, I always say we took too many folks to Bosnia but we didn't know it at the time. And we were able in a year to reduce a significant amount, and that's a better way of doing things than scrambling from the bottom up.

I think the political dynamics, though, of Iraq today, there's not going to be a strong Federal Government in Iraq for a long, long time. I just—the political circumstances are such that I don't think you can put it back together. And so there has to be a central—I think—I think it is to the United States' interest to promote a central body that has a degree of influence on international affairs and military action in the region. I think it's also to the Iraqi people's advantage to have an arrangement where the resources and riches of the country, not only oil but in agriculture, another potential of the country, is shared in a reasonable manner. But the fact—because of the neighborhood they live in, and because of a long number of historical issues that they face, we're not going to have this one-state model with 18 provinces that participate in it federally.

Whether we could have achieved that, if we had done things differently at the beginning, I don't know. I think we could have ameliorated some of these forces in a variety of ways, but we are where we are.

So one of the issues about time is trying to provide a sufficient umbrella to allow these political forces to work out. My recommendation is, is that we need extraordinary effort to try to—to try to allow that accommodation. And our ability to influence it is absolutely limited. But there is a need to try to let it occur, and there are a number of actions that I could go on and on about to try to promote it to some degree; but I do not have a great confidence that we're going to see a solution at any short-term period of time, and I don't think we're going to—and while I disagree with the op-ed that Peter Galbraith wrote several years ago now about the three-state solution, I am afraid his contemporary forecast is—may not be too likely to come about.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. If I could, I don't know if anyone else has a comment on that, but let me followup. Because I think we all agree that given the fact it is Dr. Hoffman who said it's more complicated and more violent than—and what we're doing now is clearly not working. It doesn't seem to be pushing forward a political settlement and political reconciliation in Iraq. And my view is that questions about U.S. force levels and decisions as with respect to time, you need to be tied to political decision points within Iraq, but if we're going to do that we've got to identify some. And the fact of the matter is, I haven't heard anything coming out of the administration with respect to what those political decision points would be.

We were supposed to have a renewed discussion on the Constitution at the end of August. I don't know when that's going to happen now. We have this legislation that's being considered, pushed by the Shias to develop the autonomous province in the south, which is clearly an indicator of where they're coming down in terms of these issues by pushing that forward before beginning the conversation on the Constitution. And I am just interested in what po-

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litical decision points they made, because otherwise more of the same is not a strategy. It's a strategy for failure because the situation is getting worse and we have a Pentagon report that says it—I mean Congress required they tell us this. It's one of the few things they've sort of been straightforward about. They have to do it. But it's clearly, you know—we've all heard that the definition of insanity is knocking your head against the wall, keep doing the same thing, and expect a different result. Well, we're not getting different results other than worse results. So what would those political decision points be?

And, you know, I think some hard questions are going to be asked. Why isn't, you know, what about—Senator Biden and, you know, we would not agree with every element of the plan but at least they're talking about some political solution here and whether—they've got some ideas out here. I haven't heard anything from the Bush administration in this regard. And we might not like sort of the prescription of Ambassador Galbraith, but what he says is he doesn't like it either.

It's just a reflection of reality on the ground. It's a reflection of these migrations taking place within Iraq today. It's a reflection of the fact that if you took a referendum in the Kurdish area, well over 90 percent of the Kurds say they want independence. I know the Sunni leaders in Baghdad say something different, but that's not necessarily a reflection of the will of the people there. So he comes to it more out of sort of sorrow than any joy here.

And you know, I agree with you, General Nash. From the U.S. perspective, the best solution would be an Iraq that stays together for a whole host of foreign policy reasons. Iran's on the border. Yeah, we've got all sorts of questions with Turkey and the Kurdish issue, but how much—if it's a question of putting it back together and what we're doing now is not working, and you know—I know you talked about resources, and you may or may not agree, but there's—there's no one—the administration's not talking about more troops in.

So really, what are the political decision points that we need to be looking at? I understand your testimony about timetables, set timetables for withdrawal, not putting them fixed in legislation. I happen to agree with you. But then we need a political—we need some key political decision points with respect to making these critical decisions. What are your recommendations?

Dr. HOFFMAN. Well, I'll jump in. It gives my colleagues time to think. Of course it's a difficult question. I mean, at the risk of perhaps putting it too simplistically, I think there's two big main choices that—or two main questions we have to ask ourselves. Are we determined to see this process through? Or at what point does it actually have a lay-down marker? Or do we just give up and say that if there are no advances then it's not going to succeed?

From my perspective, unlike my two colleagues that actually fought in counterinsurgencies or at least in environments like that, I have only studied them for brief periods, served in those environments in an advisory capacity. But in some respects this isn't that different from many of the issues that we debated in these rooms over Vietnam or El Salvador.

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Just take a more recent—the more recent conflict in El Salvador. I mean, this was an involvement that began during the Reagan administration, that originally had enormous bipartisan support, and we faced I think very similar challenges. First we went in there and we had to completely rebuild the Salvadorean armed forces. We had to retrain the military and the police. We initially tried to do it very quickly on the cheap. When General Warner went in there in 1981, for example, he came back and said that it would take 3 years and cost about $300 million, and he was laughed at for being overly pessimistic, I think a scenario we might have seen played out 3 years ago in Washington.

It ended up taking a decade and ended up costing over $6 billion. So it took tremendous investment. Even then you could still point to failures in El Salvador. We trained every Salvadorean officer in the United States. This wasn't a matter of a handful of advisors or a small portion given their military force training. Every officer was trained in the United States. We created their NCO core. We had multiple training missions. Not just—I mean, same problem we have with the police in Iraq. Not just make them technically better. We improved their technical capabilities, their fighting capabilities. They then went out and engaged in death squad activities. We had to go out and stop that.

Even in 1989, even in the last years just as the cold war was ending, the main insurgent group there had a last spasm of activity nationwide, urban uprising, and exactly that unit, one of the most elite units of the Salvadorean military, a unit that had just been trained by the U.S. special forces mobile training team, went to the university of San Salvador, as you may recall, killed 14 Jesuit priests who they believed were sympathizers. They had been trained repeatedly by us.

That's part of I think the challenge and the time that it took. But at the end of the day, even with the enormous setbacks in San Salvador it took a decade in an even less complex and a less violent society—although El Salvador is pretty violent—than Iraq. We still haven't built the foundations for democracy that exist today and that has to be one of our guiding principles.

Is what we're doing in Iraq worth it and do we have the stomach and the stamina to stay with it? As an insurgency analyst, as a terrorism analyst, from my point of view—and this is an apolitical statement—but just as a terrorism specialist, I worry very much that declaring victory and leaving precipitously, getting fed up and withdrawing and leaving Iraq to whatever fate awaits it is going to be a call to our enemies, and not necessarily to our enemies in the region, to al Qaeda and to associated Jihadists who will see this exactly as they did in the late 1980's, that they defeated then what was then one of the two superpowers, the Soviet Union, and then they decided to take on the United States.

This isn't just conjecture or myths or legends, that for the last year at least when I was at Rand, I spent time studying documents that our forces seized in Afghanistan to learn about al Qaeda's early history in the early 1980's, where it got its ideology strategy, and this is something that is undeniable, that they have hubris, that they were so full of themselves, having defeated the Soviet Union, they sought to turn on the United States. That's what I

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worry about, not having the determination committed to resolve Iraq.

Admittedly, we may have gotten involved far too hastily in our planning, especially in our phase 4 planning. It may have been ill-considered involvement in retrospect, but I think equally hasty and equally ill-considered withdrawal from Iraq will indeed affect us in very adverse ways in the future.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. If I could just—one last thing Mr. Chairman. Let me just—on the El Salvador analogy—and I think there's some very good points made there, and you said Iraq was even more complicated. And one of the major complicating factors is the sectarian violence between the Sunni and the Shia. We can have a discussion about to what extent that was latent before we went in and to what extent it has been aggravated, and obviously the bombing of the Golden Mosque was a major catalyst for that. But there was clearly concerns about that possibility before the bombing of the Golden Mosque.

Now, with respect to al Qaeda, I do think—and given that this hearing covers lots of many issues—but you would agree, would you not—and let's put aside the situation that exists today and what we should or should not do and how al Qaeda will or will not interpret it. You would agree, would you not, that until the United States went into Iraq, the likelihood of al Qaeda being able to use Iraq as some kind of base of operations was minimal; that in fact Saddam Hussein was not an ideological compatriot of al Qaeda; that he was in fact in many cases a secularist who used Islam in his—for political convenience; that he was in fact, as I said, the ideological opposite of Osama bin Laden. And in fact, whatever we decide to do going forward we have now created a mess with al Qaeda in Iraq that did not exist before we went in there.

Dr. HOFFMAN. Sir, I don't disagree with you at all. If you asked me that question in 2001, 2002, 2003, as I did say it then, I would have said the same thing.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. But you don't disagree?

Dr. HOFFMAN. I don't disagree.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the hearing.

Mr. SHAYS. We're going to close up very shortly. Wesley is getting hungry. I am getting hungry. He did want to know about our hearing on Wednesday and Thursday and said, is my dad going to get to testify? And I said, Wesley, I'm sorry to report you will have to be at school on Wednesday and Friday—rather, on Wednesday and Thursday. But he told me he's a good student so he was able to get away today. So that was good.

I don't believe we can fail in Iraq. I believe that failure—forget what it does to oil prices. It means that there will be an all-out civil war. It means that the Islamist terrorists will win and be emboldened, and it means that Iran will clearly be the dominant force. So it's not an option. It's just not an option.

The only issue that I am wrestling with is, one, what do we do to make sure we win? And I am left with the fact that—and I'll tell you someone else who didn't think—doesn't think we can afford to lose, and that's Thomas Friedman who, writing for the New York Times, has basically said, you know, he thinks we are now

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baby-sitting a civil war; and as he points out, he had one bullet left in his gun, and he fired it off to get people to wake up.

I believe that—the one thing that I am concluding in this hearing that I didn't think I would feel with the intensity I feel now, it is so clear that our baseline is too low, and that there is no way I can justify it being so low except for the fact there are people in the Department of Defense who have a history of justifying that low baseline, that maybe the only way that baseline—and we have an honest dialog about that baseline, is getting people in who have no connection to those decisions. And that raises the fact, then, you have new leadership and all the leadership changes that would take place in the Department of Defense. But I am convinced as strongly as I was, that the way we need to proceed, and it's contrary to your—all three of your advice, particularly two of you, is that we need to know logically what that baseline is. We then need to understand that as an Iraqi has been trained, been in office, been in position for a year in the line of fire, that they have capabilities that then justify our removing troops. We can predict to the day when that is because we know how long it takes to train. We know what their record is in staying. We know the competence of those who stayed after a year. We know how many are competent and how many aren't.

So I don't—I am not convinced by your reluctance to move forward with that, though I have to say, you obviously are all experts. I am convinced—one thing you haven't told me is what do we do to change it; what do we do to get people to wake up? And none of you have come forward with any suggestion of how we do that.

So maybe I'll end with that question. If you don't want a timeline, if you don't want that, if you tell me what gives the political will to the Iraqis to move forward with the same kind of an intensity they had in 2005—and you can't have it both ways, you can't be against some kind of timeline and then tell me you want changes without telling me what brings that change. So I put my best solution on the table. I would like you to end up with your best solution.

General NASH. Sir, I want to begin with a word of thanks. Thanks for a serious discussion and a commitment to try to do the Nation's deed. And for that I am very grateful, and I wish there were more of you in the room.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you for saying that.

General NASH. Sir, I begin with a positive statement about a timeline. It drives debate, and that's the debate we need to have. And so I would encourage—I would encourage all methods to cause an intelligent discussion. And I sat here, again, reflecting on panel one with great frustration for the lack of serious dialog and open dialog on the issues.

My biggest problem with a timeline as a strategy, sir, is that I don't know what I have when the timeline is finished. And we want to draw—to write a timeline on the replacement of military—security forces by other security forces, and I don't know if the number 325,000 is the right number, and I don't know if the 150,000 is the right number.

Mr. SHAYS. We do know this, we do know that the 325 is not the right number.

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General NASH. Yes, sir. I do know it's not.

Mr. SHAYS. We don't know what is the right number.

General NASH. Oh, sir, I don't know, but it's closer to 500,000 than it is 325,000. The current plan does not call for a sufficient security of the borders.

Mr. SHAYS. OK. No, I just wanted——

General NASH. It's somewhere in there, and the right number of 150 for 150 is somewhere between 200 and 250. OK, that's the same number I said in the summer of 02, by the way, 250,000. But in any case, that's not the crucial issue. The crucial issue is the political settlement. So, are you going to drive a political settlement that will sustain the country and achieve the U.S. objectives of a place that will not harbor terrorists, it will be peaceful with itself and with its neighbors? And so it's that transition, that development of a political institution power-sharing arrangement that is the driving factor on American success in the country.

Mr. SHAYS. Let me interrupt you there, because you and I totally agree with that. And I agree with you about the other part on the number of troops. The baseline is too low. Isn't it logical to assume that if the Iraqis know it's on their shoulder and not ours, that they are going to have a much better chance of success if they sit down, Shias and Kurds.

Now, the Iraqi—the Shias will tell me the Sunnis want too much. I agree. The Sunnis will tell me when I visit them, the Shias are not giving them enough. I agree. So it strikes me that if they know and they can plan for it and know that in a year we will reduce so many of our troops and 18 months so many more, that they have an incentive to do the very thing you said. And so you tell me what gives them the incentive that's better than that.

General NASH. Sir, the first thing I want to emphasize before I answer your specific question is that there are major forces at play that do not want to—that are working very hard to ensure a political accommodation is not achieved.

Mr. SHAYS. Right.

General NASH. And so as we talk about incentives for the Iraqi people, a non-unitary—you know, not a single object there but the players, the Iraqi players in all of this—even if there's a group of good-faith negotiators, Sunni, Shia, Kurd and they come within—they melt—they boil themselves down to just those three players in looking for accommodation, which is a large assumption, then there's still major forces that have every—that chaos is the objective.

Mr. SHAYS. We understand that. But it's not all. And the logic there is you isolate those. You bring some clerics on board, and you isolate the others, and then everybody goes after the others.

General NASH. Right. But again, that is not necessarily—that is the enemy who is least conducive to a timeline development.

Mr. SHAYS. I understand. I understand.

General NASH. All right. With respect to the development of the political institutions, I agree that the discussion—that a—that an event, a condition-based strategy, should have an associated timeline. That is always done. No matter what they say, you know, here when you do a condition, an event-driven matrix, you're looking at time limits for that.

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Mr. SHAYS. I would like you to tell me your best suggestion on how you get the political part of the equation to be more aggressive, and I haven't heard anything yet.

General NASH. I would combine economic incentives or the lack thereof as a major element. I would include an element of security assistance, OK, beyond that of six helicopters and five C–130's and a very small navy, so they have a chance to have a real military force and have influence in the area. They have no choice under the current military structure the United States is designing than to find ways to accommodate themselves with their neighbor to the east. They have to get along with Iran. They have no choice. We're designing the force in that manner. I would go to Tehran myself if I were the President of Iraq, because I can't afford any kind of conflict with them.

Mr. SHAYS. I agree with that. That's a very interesting point.

General NASH. So those are some of the incentives both on the security side and on the economic side that I would——

Mr. SHAYS. I'm biased, but I like my suggestion to motivate them better than yours.

General NASH. OK.

Mr. SHAYS. Dr. Hoffman.

Dr. HOFFMAN. Firstly, I never met with General Nash before, and I find myself agreeing with him on many things, but none more than on thanking you and Representative Van Hollen for these hearings and for this opportunity to really address you in a much longer time that I have ever had in any other congressional hearing. Thank you very much.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you for thanking us.

Dr. HOFFMAN. I will go back—I think it's fine to set a timeline, but I go back to when we first met, which was 7 years ago when you were conducting hearings long before September 11th on why we don't have a strategy for countering terrorism or why we don't have a strategy for our counterterrorism policies. And I think if we're going to set a timeline, we have to ask the same questions: How can we stick with the same strategy then? And that we have to realize that there's a military term, you don't reinforce failure, but it seems we haven't been succeeding in the past 3 years. Yet we keep investing in the same piecemeal basis and the same strategy that obviously isn't succeeding.

So I think it has to be a political will on our part firstly to make the commitment, if the Iraqis will make the commitment to see this through—and I will come to the Iraqi side of the dimension in a second—but also to have the commitment ourselves. If we're going to set a timeline then we have to be much more reflective on where we've gone wrong in the last 3 years and not just keep repeating the same mistake.

In terms of the Iraqis I think—and again, maybe it's my practical approach to this problem that may also be naive—but I think there are any number of small steps that can bring about a much longer stride and that we just haven't pushed the Iraqis hard enough. I think there's plenty of people, as you well know from your trips to Baghdad, in the embassy and in the military who know what needs to be done. It's just the problem of doing it. I think first and foremost, there should be a conscription on the part of the Iraqis. I'm

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still surprised, if I'm not mistaken, that there is no national conscription in Iraq. We're just soliciting volunteers, whether it's for the police or for the Iraqi Army. If this really is their fight——

Mr. SHAYS. Let me just ask you this, though, to interrupt to clarify. Are you aware that they're having a hard time getting volunteers? My understanding is that they don't. But has that changed?

Dr. HOFFMAN. No. I think they still are getting volunteers. It's part of the reflection of the economy as well, as well as everything else, but no. As a national commitment, though, I think that for conscription would be one step because I think that would require other things that the Iraqis have resisted that I believe are essential for counterinsurgency. You can't have a conscription if you don't know who your population is. So you have to have a detailed census and you also are going to have to issue national ID cards so you know who people are, and, when they turn the proper age, get them into office. We have been pushing the Iraqis, at least since I was with the CPA 2 years ago, to have some sort of census.

Mr. SHAYS. Let me ask if you had conscription—in other words, you would basically have a draft.

Dr. HOFFMAN. Exactly.

Mr. SHAYS. Then you are talking about potentially millions rather than 325,000.

Dr. HOFFMAN. Well, we could control the numbers.

Mr. SHAYS. So it's an interesting proposal because basically what you would do is you would basically be in a sense, you would have—some of these young folks you would be having literally in your military in bases under the supervision of somebody else, rather than on the streets doing battle.

Dr. HOFFMAN. Well, of course, it would only work if we had the same kind of commitment, perhaps a bigger troop commitment, to have the trainers to train this new army. But this may be, you know, completely half or even quarter baked. The only reason I thought of it was when you were discussing Israel earlier, I thought, what is one of the things that accounts for Israeli national cohesion is that there's universal service, and this is absolutely essential for Israelis for integrating the diversity of the people who are Israelis. So that's at the top of my head, trying to——

Mr. SHAYS. No, no. And I appreciate that a lot.

Dr. HOFFMAN. Going out. And then I also thought, well, the conscription issue demonstrates the Iraqi commitment. But also as I said, the kinds of accounting that you would have to have for it would push the Iraqis in other directions. You can't have an insurgence if you don't know where—who the people are and where they're going. And that's been one of the biggest problems. That's why the British succeeded in Northern Ireland is through license plates; they could find out if someone was out of place, and was traveling across Northern Ireland at a place they shouldn't be, and they could then ask the questions. We have no such ability in Iraq.

And then I would say as a fourth, go back to a point that I answered to Mr. Van Hollen's question is that also, if we're going to make this investment in training and true Iraqi national military, then also there has to be a purging of their discordant and corrupt sectarian elements from the MOI, wherever else; and this is the po-

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litical will that has to be demonstrated by the leadership in Iraq. Then we get to the problem.

This was the same problem we had in Vietnam and also in El Salvador. It's conditionality and trying to get our—you know, who the government we're mentoring to actually do these things.

But perhaps the firm timeline, I think setting the timeline on its own won't solve the problem. But setting the timeline, as you argue we need to do, with perhaps these very firm points that have to be done as part of a change in strategy and policy might provide the influence and the pressure for the Iraqis to change. I mean, it may be—and I am not saying this at all in a partisan way. But it may be that we just need a new perspective here. When the British—the first 3 years in Malaya, in the late 1940's and early 1950's, were failing dismally. In fact, a lot of the same problems we see in Iraq existed in Malaya. That's held up now as one of the—the leading ways to solve a counterinsurgency. Actually, it was the death of the high commissioner at the time and then a change of government that resulted in just a new approach.

Now, again, I am not saying this is partisan, that we should have a clean broom, but what I am saying is that if we're going to have a timeline, we need a new strategy and we need people who will have an honest discussion about what the new strategy should be.

Mr. SHAYS. I would just note for the record, that would be a change in the administration, not in Congress. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. King.

Mr. KING. I would also like to emphasize thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts with you today and provide testimony.

I was one of the primary cease-fire negotiators on Fallujah One, and the one thing that came across during our negotiations, Iraqis have never won a war but they've never lost a negotiation. And they're quite apt at that. So the political dialog would have to be pushed from our side for all the groups to come together.

The most recent move by Barzani to not fly the Iraqi flag, which sort of flies in the face toward the other Iraqis, that was one of those things that we need to address.

Mr. SHAYS. Explain the flag again.

Mr. KING. This past week, Mr. Barzani directed that in his areas they no longer fly the Iraqi flag but the Kurdish flag. So I mean, if we're trying to move toward a unified government, a unified country, I mean that flies in the face of it. To set a realistic baseline, obviously 325,000 individuals for a country the size of Iraq with 26—you know, 26 to 28 million people may be a little low. That will establish the end state. How long will it take us to get there? When will they be prepared to take over their own security? And that will allow us to design a timeline based on that end state, that process. And I agree with Dr. Hoffman that we're probably looking at 7 to 10 years for this to take place.

To help the judicial system, they only—they look at having 1,500 judges. I think they're at 720 today, less than half of what they need. This causes a problem for the rule of law, the implementation. So, to help the commission of the public integrity to sort out some of the issues within the Ministry of Interior and move those forward. Yes, sir, thank you again very much.

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Mr. SHAYS. Is there any last comment that any of you would like to make before we adjourn? If not, we are not adjourning. We are recessing, correct? Yeah. And that's all I need. We are recessing until Wednesday.

And, Wesley, recessing means that we will be back here on Wednesday but with new panels. Your dad has done his job extraordinarily well, as have you, Dr. Hoffman and you, General Nash. And it's been an honor and a real education to have you before the committee, and I thank you very much. So we stand in recess until 10 on Wednesday. Thank you all very much.

[Whereupon, at 2:57 p.m., the subcommittee recessed, to reconvene at 10 a.m. On Wednesday, September 13, 2006.]

[The prepared statement of Hon. Jon C. Porter and additional information submitted for the hearing record follow:]

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STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD
CONGRESSMAN JON C. PORTER (R-NV-3)
Iraq: Democracy or Civil War?
September 11, 2006

Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank you for holding this hearing today. And to the witnesses present, thank you for your time and I look forward to hearing your testimony on the ability of Iraqi forces to fully assume security authority.

Today stands as a symbol of remembrance. It is the five year anniversary of the tragic attack against America, her people and their way of life. Five years later, we still stand reflective over the attack that united our states against a common enemy—terror.

There are those who seek to destroy a democratic way of life and the justice and opportunity it presents. As a nation, we continue to uphold those values outlined by our founding fathers and encouraging those same values to grow in nations hungry for the same liberties we hold dear.

When the purple fingers of freedom were raised by the Iraqi people, the entire world celebrated. Today, we still celebrate the steps Iraq is taking to give equality and democracy to their people. The government of Iraq and its security forces are fighting for Iraq's independence and stability of that nation. It is a constant battle for them, wrought with the challenges of reform and change against an ideological system that has controlled every aspect of their society. We must continue to stand behind them as they establish their nation.

Mr. Chairman, again thank you for holding this hearing. I look forward to hearing testimony from the witnesses.

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United States Government Accountability Office

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Testimony

For the Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations; House Committee on Government Reform

For Release on Delivery
Expected at 10:00 a.m. EDT
Monday, September 11, 2006

STABILIZING IRAQ

An Assessment of the Security Situation

Statement for the Record by
David M. Walker
Comptroller General of the United States

GAO-06-1094T

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September 11, 2006

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Highlights

Highlights of GAO-06-1094T, a statement for the record to the Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations; Committee on Government Reform; House of Representatives

STABILIZING IRAQ

An Assessment of the Security Situation

Why GAO Did This Study

From fiscal years 2003 through 2006, U.S. government agencies have reported significant costs for U.S. stabilization and reconstruction efforts in Iraq. In addition, the United States currently has committed about 138,000 military personnel to the U.S.-led Multinational Force in Iraq (MNF-I). Over the past 3 years, worsening security conditions have made it difficult for the United States to achieve its goals in Iraq.

In this statement, we discuss (1) the trends in the security environment in Iraq, and (2) progress in developing Iraqi security forces, as reported by the Departments of Defense (DOD) and State. We also present key questions for congressional oversight, including:

- What political, economic, and security conditions must be achieved before the United States can draw down and withdraw?
- Why have security conditions continued to deteriorate even as Iraq has met political milestones, increased the number of trained and equipped forces, and increasingly assumed the lead for security?
- If existing U.S. political, economic, and security measures are not reducing violence in Iraq, what additional measures, if any, will the administration propose for stemming the violence?

www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-06-1094T.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact Joseph A. Christoff, (202) 512-8979, christoffj@gao.gov.

What GAO Found

Since June 2003, the overall security conditions in Iraq have deteriorated and grown more complex, as evidenced by increased numbers of attacks and Sunni/Shi'a sectarian strife, which has grown since the February 2006 bombing in Samarra. As shown in the figure below, attacks against the coalition and its Iraqi partners reached an all time high during July 2006. The deteriorating conditions threaten the progress of U.S. and international efforts to assist Iraq in the political and economic areas. In July 2006, the State Department reported that the recent upturn in violence has hindered efforts to engage with Iraqi partners and noted that a certain level of security was a prerequisite to accomplishing the political and economic conditions necessary for U.S. withdrawal. Moreover, the Sunni insurgency and Shi'a militias have contributed to growing sectarian strife that has resulted in increased numbers of Iraqi civilian deaths and displaced individuals.

DOD uses three factors to measure progress in developing capable Iraqi security forces and transferring security responsibilities to the Iraqi government: (1) the number of trained and equipped forces, (2) the number of Iraqi army units and provincial governments that have assumed responsibility for security in specific geographic areas, and (3) the capabilities of operational units, as reported in unit-level and aggregate Transition Readiness Assessments (TRA). Although the State Department reported that the number of trained and equipped Iraqi security forces has increased, these numbers do not address their capabilities. As of August 2006, 115 Iraqi army units had assumed the lead for counterinsurgency operations in specific areas, and one province had assumed control for security. Unit-level TRA reports provide insight into the Iraqi army units' training, equipment, and logistical capabilities. GAO is working with DOD to obtain the unit-level TRA reports. Such information would inform the Congress on the capabilities and needs of Iraq's security forces.

Enemy-Initiated Attacks Against the Coalition and Its Iraqi Partners, as of July 2006

Source: Multi-National Force-Iraq, July 2006

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September 11, 2006

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

We appreciate the opportunity to assist the Subcommittee in its oversight of U.S. efforts to improve the security situation in Iraq. The November 2005 U.S. strategy for Iraq states that victory in Iraq is a vital U.S. interest. Since May 2003, the United States has employed political, economic, and military measures to stabilize Iraq and help the country achieve the desired end-state: a constitutional, representative Iraqi government that respects civil rights and has security forces sufficient to maintain domestic order and keep Iraq from becoming a safe haven for terrorists. To support these goals, the United States initially led, and later assisted, Iraq's political transition from a dictatorship to a democratically elected government. The United States currently has committed about 138,000 military personnel to the U.S.-led Multinational Force in Iraq (MNF-I). The Department of Defense (DOD) has reported obligations of about $227 billion for U.S. military operations in Iraq for fiscal years 2003 through June 2006. U.S. assistance appropriated for Iraqi security forces and law enforcement has grown from $3.24 billion in January 2004 to about $13.7 billion in June 2006.[1] Over the past 3 years, worsening security conditions have made it difficult for the United States to achieve its goals in Iraq.

In this statement, we discuss (1) the trends in the security environment in Iraq, and (2) progress in developing Iraqi security forces, as reported by DOD and the State Department. We also present questions for congressional oversight. To examine trends in Iraq's security situation, we reviewed reports by DOD, State, the United Nations (UN), and nongovernmental organizations, as well as transcripts of MNF-I and U.S. embassy Baghdad press conferences and interviews. Although we reviewed classified documents during our completed and ongoing Iraq-related engagements, the information in this statement is based on unclassified documents only. We also obtained and assessed MNF-I data on enemy-initiated attacks against the coalition and its Iraqi partners from the

[1]This figure includes $5 billion from the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund II (IRRF) funds appropriated in the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense and for the Reconstruction of Iraq and Afghanistan, 2004, Pub. L. No. 108-106, $5.7 billion to support Iraqi security forces appropriated in the Emergency Supplemental Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror and Tsunami Relief 2005, Pub. L. No. 109-13, and $3 billion to support Iraqi security forces appropriated in the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Hurricane Recovery, 2006, Pub. L. No. 109-234.

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Defense Intelligence Agency. We determined that the data were sufficiently reliable for establishing general trends in the number of attacks. To assess progress in developing Iraqi security forces, we reviewed DOD and State reports, as well as MNF-I guidance on Iraqi readiness assessments. Because of the broad congressional interest in this issue, we performed this work under my authority as the Comptroller General of the United States to conduct reviews on my initiative. The work was performed in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

Summary

Since June 2003, the overall security conditions in Iraq have deteriorated and grown more complex, as evidenced by increased numbers of attacks and, more recently, the growing Sunni/Shi'a sectarian strife, which has grown since the February 2006 bombing of the Golden Mosque in Samarra. Enemy-initiated attacks generally have increased around major religious or political events, including Ramadan and elections. Attack levels also follow a seasonal pattern, increasing through the spring and summer and decreasing in the winter months. According to MNF-I data, attack levels in July 2006 were the highest to date. Despite coalition efforts and the efforts of the newly formed Iraqi government, insurgents continue to demonstrate the ability to recruit new fighters, supply themselves, and attack coalition and Iraqi security forces. The deteriorating conditions threaten continued progress in U.S. and other international efforts to assist Iraq in the political and economic areas. In July 2006, the State Department reported to Congress that the recent upturn in violence had hindered efforts to engage fully with Iraqi partners. State noted that a baseline of security was a prerequisite for moving forward on the political and economic tasks essential to achieving the conditions for withdrawing U.S. forces. Moreover, the Sunni insurgency and Shi'a militias have contributed to an increase in sectarian strife that has resulted in large numbers of Iraqi civilian deaths and displaced individuals.

DOD uses three key factors to measure progress in developing capable Iraqi security forces and transferring security responsibilities to them and the Iraqi government: (1) the number of trained and equipped forces, (2) the number of Iraqi army units and provincial governments that have assumed responsibility for security of specific geographic areas, and (3) the assessed capabilities of operational units, as reported in unit-level and aggregate Transition Readiness Assessment (TRA) reports. From July 2005 to August 2006, the State Department reported that the number of trained and equipped Iraqi security forces had increased from about 174,000 to 294,000. However, these numbers do not provide a complete picture of the

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units' capabilities because they do not give detailed information on the status of their equipment, personnel, training, and leadership. They may also overstate the number of forces on duty. As of August 2006, 115 Iraqi army units had assumed the lead for counterinsurgency operations in specific areas, and one province, Muthanna, had assumed control for security responsibilities. Information on the readiness levels for Iraqi security forces is classified. Unit-level readiness reports provide important insight into the status of Iraqi army units' personnel, training, equipment, leadership, and sustainment/logistical capabilities. DOD has provided GAO with classified, aggregate information on overall readiness levels and more detailed information on Iraqi units in the lead. GAO has been working with DOD to obtain the unit-level TRA reports. Such information would inform both GAO and the Congress on the capabilities and needs of Iraq's security forces.

We present key questions for congressional oversight, including:

- What political, economic and security conditions must be achieved before the United States can draw down and withdraw military forces from Iraq?
- Why have security conditions continued to worsen even as Iraq has met political milestones, increased the number of trained and equipped forces, and increasingly assumed the lead for security?
- If existing U.S. political, economic, and security measures are not reducing violence in Iraq, what additional measures, if any, will the administration propose for stemming the violence?

Background

In May 2003, the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA)[2] dissolved the military organizations of the former regime and began the process of reestablishing or creating new Iraqi security forces, including the police and a new Iraqi army. Over time, multinational force commanders assumed responsibility in their areas for recruiting and training some Iraqi defense and police forces. In October 2003, the multinational force outlined a

[2]The CPA, established in May 2003, was the U.N.-recognized coalition authority led by the United States and the United Kingdom that was responsible for the temporary governance of Iraq. Specifically, the CPA was responsible for overseeing, directing, and coordinating the reconstruction effort.

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multistep plan for transferring security missions to Iraqi security forces. The plan had the objective of gradually decreasing the number of coalition forces in conjunction with neutralizing Iraq's insurgency and developing Iraqi forces capable of securing their country.

Citing the growing capability of Iraqi security forces, coalition forces in Iraq began to shift responsibilities to Iraqi security forces in February 2004, earlier than planned. According to the President, senior DOD officials, and multinational force commanders, Iraqi forces were unprepared to assume security responsibilities and responded poorly to a series of anti-coalition attacks in April 2004. In western and central Iraq, insurgents attacked the multinational force in Fallujah, Baghdad, Ar Ramadi, Samarra, and Tikrit, while a radical Shi'a militia, the Mahdi Army, launched operations to dislodge multinational forces and occupy cities from Baghdad to Basra in the south. Although some Iraqi forces fought alongside coalition forces, other units abandoned their posts and responsibilities and, in some cases, assisted the insurgency. MNF-I identified a number of problems that contributed to the collapse of Iraqi security forces, including problems in training and equipping them.

In May 2004, the President issued a National Security Presidential Directive, which stated that, after the transition of power to the Iraqi government, DOD would be responsible for U.S. activities relating to security and military operations. The Presidential directive established that the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) would direct all U.S. government efforts to organize, equip, and train Iraqi security forces. In the summer of 2004, MNF-I developed and began implementing a comprehensive campaign plan, which elaborated and refined the original strategy for transferring security responsibilities to Iraqi forces. In April 2006, MNF-I revised the campaign plan and, in conjunction with the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, issued a new Joint Campaign Plan that contains the goal of transitioning security responsibility from MNF-I to the Iraqi security forces and government. Further details on the campaign plan are classified.[3] In late August 2006, the MNF-I Commanding General said that the United States is helping Iraq build a force to deal with its current security threats of international terrorism and insurgency. He noted, however, that the Iraqi

[3]GAO, *DOD Reports Should Link Economic, Governance, and Security Indicators to Conditions for Stabilizing Iraq*, GAO-06-152C (Washington, D.C.: Oct. 18, 2005) for classified information on MNF-I's original campaign plan, and *Plans for Stabilizing Iraq*, GAO-06-673C (Washington, D.C.: Jul. 27, 2006) for classified information on the new Joint MNF-I/U.S. Embassy Baghdad Campaign Plan.

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government is developing a long-term security plan to shape the type of armed forces that the country will need 5 to 10 years from now.

Trends in Security Conditions

Since June 2003, overall security conditions in Iraq have deteriorated and grown more complex, as evidenced by increased numbers of attacks and more recent Sunni/Shi'a sectarian strife after the February 2006 bombing of the Golden Mosque in Samarra.[4] The deteriorating conditions threaten continued progress in U.S. and other international efforts to assist Iraq in the political and economic areas. Moreover, the Sunni insurgency and Shi'a militias have contributed to an increase in sectarian strife and large numbers of Iraqi civilian deaths and displaced individuals.

Deteriorating Security Threatens U.S. and International Efforts to Assist Iraqi Political and Economic Development

Enemy-initiated attacks against the coalition and its Iraqi partners have continued to increase through July 2006 (see fig. 1). Since 2003, enemy-initiated attacks have increased around major religious or political events, including Ramadan[5] and elections. Attack levels also follow a seasonal pattern, increasing through the spring and summer and decreasing in the fall and winter months. Overall, attacks increased by 23 percent from 2004 to 2005. After declining in the fall of 2005, the number of attacks rose to the highest level ever in July 2006. Total attacks reported from January 2006 through July 2006 were about 57 percent higher than the total reported during the same period in 2005. These data show significant increases in attacks against coalition forces, who remain the primary targets, as well as civilians and Iraqi security forces. According to a June 2006 UN report,[6] an increasingly complex armed opposition continues to be capable of maintaining a consistently high level of violent activity across Iraq. Baghdad, Ninewa, Salahuddin, Anbar, and Diyala have been experiencing the worst of the violence. Other areas, particularly Basra and Kirkuk, have witnessed increased tension and a growing number of violent

[4]GAO-06-673C (Washington, D.C.: Jul. 27, 2006) contains a classified assessment of recent security trends.

[5]Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. Over the past 3 years, Ramadan began about October 27, 2003; October 16, 2004; and October 5, 2005. In 2006, Ramadan is expected to begin about September 24.

[6]UN Security Council, *Report of the Secretary General Pursuant to Paragraph 30 of Resolution 1546* (New York, N.Y.: Jun. 2006).

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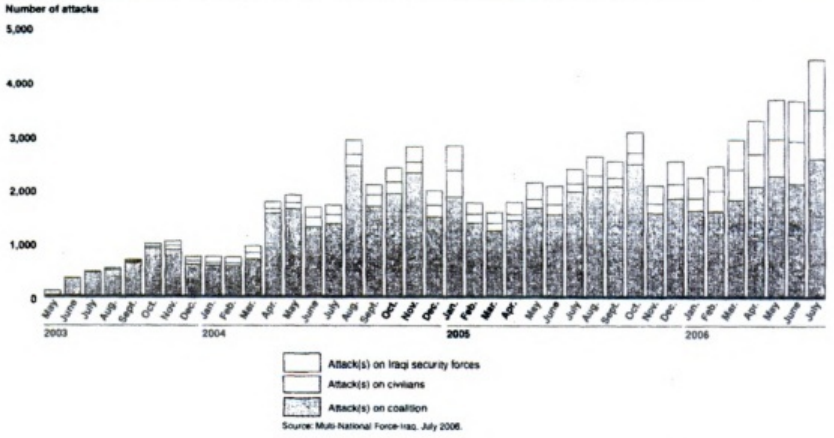
incidents. In August 2006,[7] DOD reported that breaking the cycle of violence is the most pressing immediate goal of coalition and Iraqi operations.

Figure 1: Enemy-Initiated Attacks Against the Coalition and Its Iraqi Partners, May 2003 through July 2006



Source: Multi-National Force-Iraq, July 2006.

The security situation has deteriorated even as Iraq has made progress in meeting key political milestones and in developing its security forces. Since the CPA transferred power to the Iraqi interim government in June 2004, Iraq has held an election for a transitional government in January 2005, a referendum on the constitution in October 2005, and an election for a Council of Representatives in December 2005 that led to the formation of a new government in May 2006 (see fig. 2). However, according to the Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), the December 2005

[7]DOD, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq* (Washington, D.C.: Aug. 2006).

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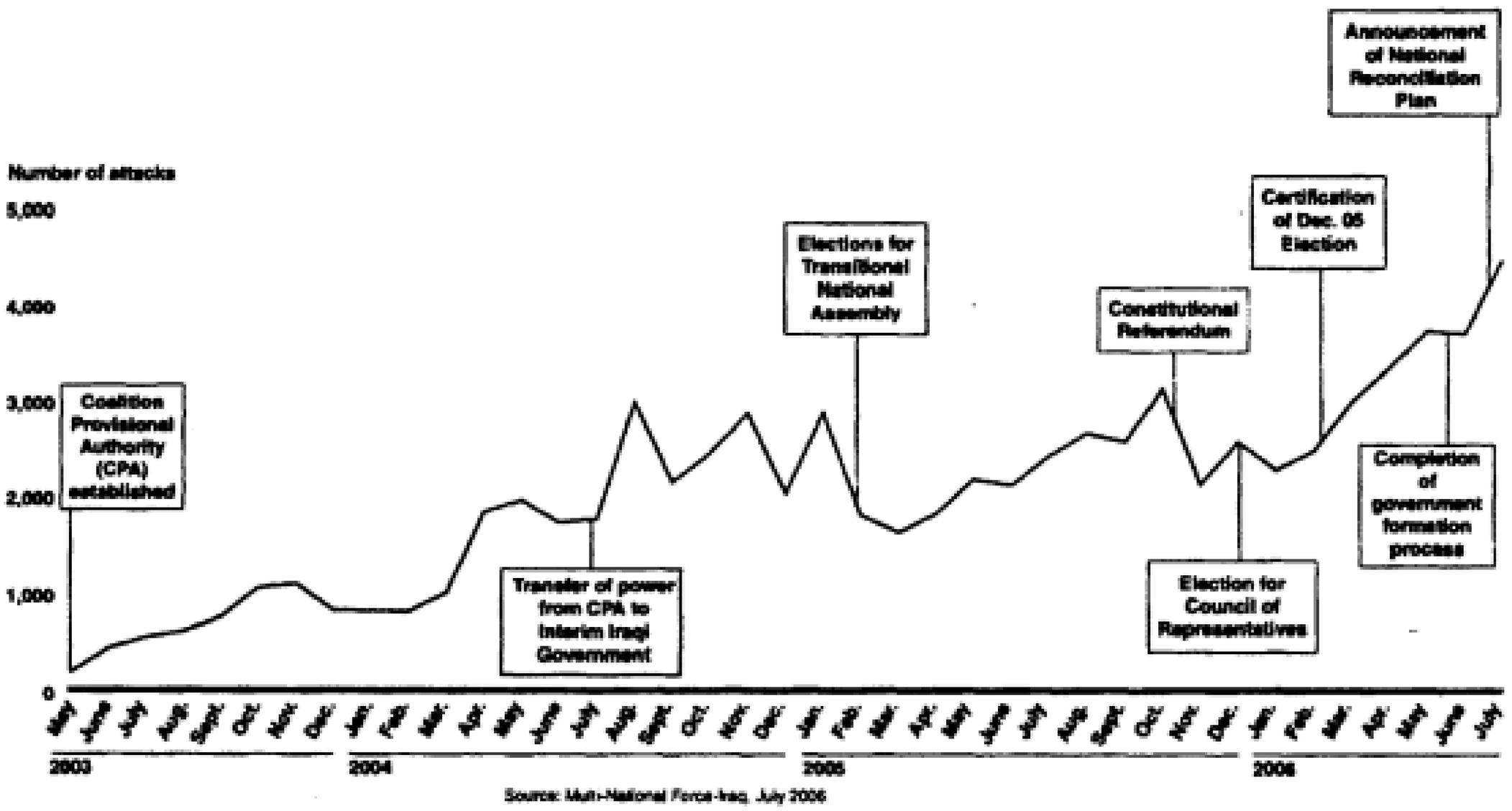
elections appeared to heighten sectarian tensions and polarize sectarian divides. According to a U.S. Institute of Peace report,[8] the focus on ethnic and sectarian identity has sharpened as a result of Iraq's political process, while nationalism and a sense of Iraqi identity have weakened.

Figure 2: Political Milestones in Iraq Compared with Enemy-Initiated Attacks Against the Coalition and Its Iraqi Partners, May 2003 through July 2006



Source: Multi-National Force-Iraq, July 2006

Moreover, according to the Director of National Intelligence's February 2006 report, Iraqi security forces are experiencing difficulty in managing ethnic and sectarian divisions among their units and personnel. In addition, the DIA Director reported that many elements of the Iraqi security forces are loyal to sectarian and party interests. According to DOD's August 2006

[8]Phebe Marr, U.S. Institute of Peace, *Who are Iraq's New Leaders? What Do They Want?* (Washington, D.C.: Mar. 2006).

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report, sectarian lines among Iraqi security forces are drawn along geographic lines, with Sunni, Shi'a, or Kurdish soldiers mostly serving in units located in geographic areas familiar to their group. Moreover, according to the report, commanders at the battalion level tend to command only soldiers of their own sectarian or regional background.

On August 7, 2006, MNF-I and Iraqi security forces began phase II of Operation Together Forward. The operation is an effort to reduce the level of murders, kidnappings, assassinations, terrorism, and sectarian violence in Baghdad and to reinforce the Iraqi government's control of the city. On August 30, 2006, the MNF-I Commanding General said that he was pleased with the operation's progress, but that there was a long way to go in bringing security to the neighborhoods of Baghdad. U.S. intelligence assessments of this operation's impact are classified.

The State Department reported in July 2006 that the recent upturn in violence has hindered the U.S. government's efforts to engage fully with its Iraqi partners and to move forward on political and economic fronts. State noted that a baseline of security was a prerequisite for moving forward on these fronts, which are essential to achieving the right conditions for withdrawing U.S. forces. For example, Iraqi government efforts to foster reconciliation have become more difficult with the increase in sectarian divisions and violence during the spring and summer of 2006. According to DOD's August 2006 report, security issues—such as the attempted kidnapping of a deputy minister and threats to personnel who work with embassy teams—have made some ministers reluctant to have U.S. personnel visit them. The report also noted that the security situation in some provinces has hampered interaction between U.S.-led Provincial Reconstruction Teams[9] and provincial leaders. Moreover, the UN reported that the lack of security has hampered reconstruction efforts. The UN reported that the diplomatic community remains under serious threat as embassy staff have been abducted and killed and facilities attacked. The UN noted that improved security is central to the normal ability of international agencies to provide assistance to the government and people of Iraq.

[9]Provincial Reconstruction Teams are intended to work with provincial governors and elected councils to improve execution of provincial government responsibilities and to increase citizen participation in governmental decision-making processes, according to DOD's report. As of August 2006, four U.S.–led Provincial Reconstruction Teams were fully operational in the provinces of Tamim (Kirkuk), Ninewa (Mosul), Babil (Hillah), and Baghdad.

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As we reported in July 2006, the poor security conditions have also hindered U.S. and Iraqi government efforts to revitalize Iraq's economy and restore essential services in the oil and electricity sectors. According to a State Department report,[10] during the week of August 16-22, 2006, Iraq was producing 2.17 million barrels of oil per day. This figure is below the Iraqi Oil Ministry's goal of 2.5 million barrels of oil per day and the pre-war level of 2.6 million barrels per day. Over the same time period, electricity availability averaged 5.9 hours per day in Baghdad and 10.7 hours nationwide. Electricity output for the week was about 9 percent above the same period in 2005. U.S. officials report that major oil pipelines continue to be sabotaged, shutting down oil exports and resulting in lost revenues. Current U.S. assistance is focused on strengthening the Strategic Infrastructure Battalions, which are Ministry of Defense forces that protect oil fields and pipelines. Major electrical transmission lines have also been repeatedly sabotaged, cutting power to parts of the country. Security conditions in Iraq have, in part, led to project delays and increased costs for security services. Although it is difficult to quantify the costs and delays resulting from poor security conditions, both agency and contractor officials acknowledged that security costs have diverted a considerable amount of reconstruction resources and have led to canceling or reducing the scope of some reconstruction projects.

Sunni Insurgency and Shi'a Militias Contribute to Increased Sectarian Violence

Although the Sunni insurgency has remained strong and resilient, the presence and influence of Shi'a militias have grown and led to increased sectarian violence. According to a July 2006 State Department report, the Sunni insurgency remains a pressing problem in Iraq. However, in recent months, Shi'a militia groups have grown more prominent and threaten Iraq's stability.[11] The increase in sectarian violence has led to an increasing number of Iraqis fleeing their homes. According to the U.S. Ambassador to Iraq, the demobilization of Shi'a militias requires a corresponding reduction in the Sunni insurgency.[12]

[10]Department of State, *Iraq Weekly Status Report* (Washington, D.C.: Aug. 23, 2006).

[11]The Kurdish Peshmerga serve as the primary security force for the Kurdish regional government in the northern region of Iraq. Although some Peshmerga forces have joined the Iraqi security forces, other units remain intact as the de facto security force for the Kurdish region. The presence of the Peshmerga is a source of contention with both Sunni and Shi'a leaders.

[12]Transcript: *Ambassador Khalilzad Outlines New Security Plan for Iraq*, Aug. 7, 2006.

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Sunni Insurgency Remains Strong and Resilient

Despite coalition efforts and the efforts of the newly formed Iraqi government, insurgents continue to demonstrate the ability to recruit new fighters, supply themselves, and attack coalition and Iraqi security forces. According to a July 2006 State Department report, the Sunni insurgency remains a pressing problem in Iraq, even after the death of Abu Musab al Zarqawi, the leader of al-Qaeda in Iraq, in early June 2006. As DOD recently reported, al-Qaeda in Iraq remains able to conduct operations due to its resilient, semi-autonomous cellular structure of command and control. The Sunni insurgency consists of former Baathists, whose goal is to return to power; terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda in Iraq, its affiliates in the Mujahadeen Shura Council, and Ansar al Sunna; and various other groups that rely on violence to achieve their objectives.

Sunni insurgents have no distinct leader but share the goal of destabilizing the Iraqi government to pursue their individual and, at times, conflicting goals. Although these groups have divergent goals, some collaborate at the tactical and operational levels. DOD has reported that the relationships among insurgents, terrorists, and criminal opportunists are blurred at times but that the ideological rifts between terrorists and other resistance groups remain. DOD also reports that many insurgent groups employ a dual-track political and military strategy to subvert emerging institutions and to infiltrate and co-opt security and political organizations. These groups attempt to leverage the political process to address their core concerns and demands while attacking coalition and Iraqi security forces.

Presence and Influence of Shi'a Militias Have Grown

The presence and influence of Shi'a militia groups have grown in recent months, as they have become more prominent and acted in ways that threaten Iraq's stability. According to the CENTCOM Commander, as of early August 2006, these militias are the largest contributors to sectarian violence in Iraq. As DOD reported in August 2006, the threat posed by Shi'a militias is growing and represents a significant challenge for the Iraqi government. The Shi'a militias that are affecting the security situation the most are the Mahdi Army and the Badr Organization.

- **Mahdi Army**: Led by radical Shi'a cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, this group was responsible for attacks against the coalition and two uprisings in April 2004 and August 2004. The militia committed abuses against Sunni civilians, which have exacerbated sectarian tensions, and were implicated in unrest following the February bombing in Samarra. Evidence exists that the Mahdi Army are supplied by sources outside Iraq, most notably Iran. As of June 2006, Sadr followers headed four of Iraq's 40 ministries—the ministries of health, transportation, agriculture,

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and tourism and antiquities. As DOD recently reported, this militia has popular support in Baghdad and Iraq's southern provinces and is tolerated by elements in the Iraqi government.

- **Badr Organization:** This Shi'a militia group is the paramilitary wing of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, a prominent political party in the new government. The party was founded in Iran during the Iran-Iraq war and retains strong ties to Iran. According to DOD, the Badr Organization received financial and material support from Iran, and individuals from Badr have been implicated in death squads. The Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq is one of the two largest Shi'a parties in parliament. One of Iraq's two deputy presidents and the Minister of Finance are party members.

According to the CENTCOM Commander, Shi'a militias must be controlled because they are nonstate actors that have the attributes of the state, yet bear no responsibility for their actions. In many cases, according to DOD, militias provide protection for people and religious sites, sometimes operating in conjunction with the Iraqi police in areas where the Iraqi police are perceived to provide inadequate support. According to a May 2006 DOD report,[13] Shi'a militias seek to place members into army and police units as a way to serve their interests. This is particularly evident in the Shi'a dominated south where militia members have hindered the implementation of law enforcement. Militia leaders also influence the political process through intimidation and hope to gain influence with the Iraqi people through politically based social welfare programs. In areas where they provide social services and contribute to local security, they operate openly and with popular support.

According to the Director of National Intelligence, Iran provides guidance and training to select Iraqi Shi'a political groups and provides weapons and training to Shi'a militant groups to enable anticoalition attacks. Iran also has contributed to the increasing lethality and effectiveness of anticoalition attacks by enabling Shi'a militants to build improvised explosive devices with explosively formed projectiles, similar to those developed by Lebanese Hezbollah. Iranian support for Shi'a militias reinforces Sunni fears of Iranian domination, further elevating sectarian violence.

[13]DOD, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq* (Washington, D.C.: May 2006).

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According to the August 2006 DOD report, Sunni Arabs do not have formally organized militias. Instead, they rely on neighborhood watches, Sunni insurgents, and increasingly, al-Qaeda in Iraq. The rise of sectarian attacks is driving some Sunni and Shi'a civilians in Baghdad and in ethnically mixed provinces to support militias. Such support is likely to continue, according to DOD's report, in areas where the population perceives Iraqi institutions and forces as unable to provide essential services or meet security requirements.

Growing Sectarian Violence Has Led to Increased Civilian Deaths and Displacement

According to DOD's August 2006 report, rising sectarian strife defines the emerging nature of violence in mid-2006, with the core conflict in Iraq now a struggle between Sunni and Shi'a extremists seeking to control key areas in Baghdad, create or protect sectarian enclaves, divert economic resources, and impose their own respective political and religious agendas. The UN reported in March 2006 that the deteriorating security situation is evidenced by increased levels of sectarian strife and the sectarian nature of the violence, particularly in ethnically mixed areas. Figure 3 shows the ethnic distribution of the population in Iraq. Baghdad, Kirkuk, Mosul, and southwest of Basra are key ethnically mixed areas.

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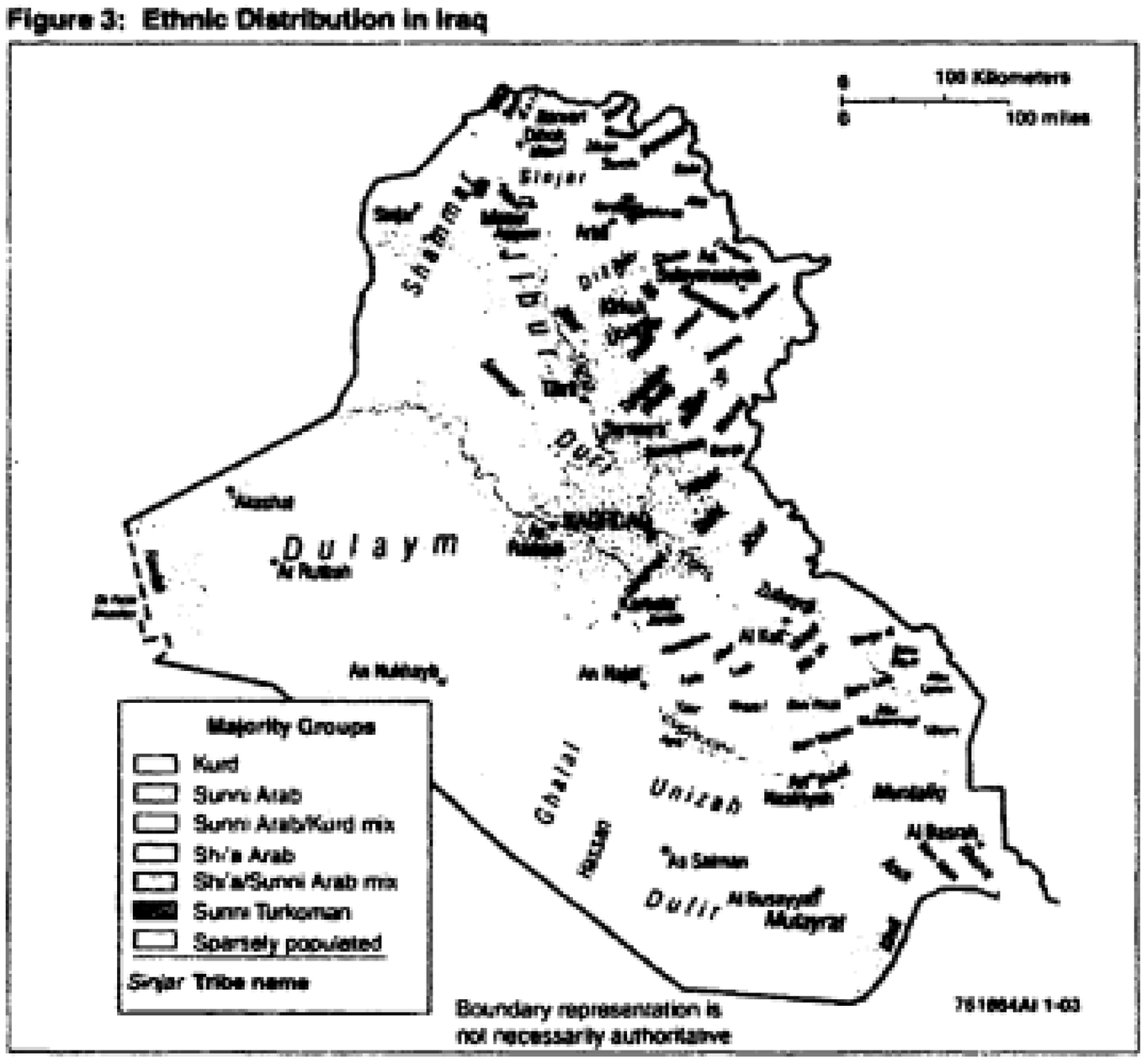
Figure 3: Ethnic Distribution in Iraq



Source: CIA map available on the University of Texas Libraries' Web site, The University of Texas at Austin.

In June 2006, the UN reported that much of the sectarian violence has been committed by both sides of the Sunni-Shi'a sectarian divide and has resulted in increased civilian deaths. The UN reported that the number of Iraqi civilian casualties continues to increase, with a total of about 14,300 civilians killed in Iraq from January to June 2006. The overwhelming majority of casualties were reported in Baghdad, according to the report. Specifically targeted groups included prominent Sunni and Shi'a Iraqis, government workers and their families, members of the middle class (such as merchants and academics), people working for or associated with MNF-I, and Christians. According to the UN, daily reports of intercommunal intimidation and murder include regular incidents of bodies of Sunni and Shi'a men found to be tortured and summarily executed in Baghdad and its surrounding areas. Violence against Kurds and Arabs has also been

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reported in Kirkuk, while the abduction and intimidation of ordinary Iraqis is a growing problem. According to the report, repeated bombings against civilians, mosques, and more recently against churches are creating fear, animosity, and feelings of revenge within Iraq's sectarian communities.

Moreover, according to a July 2006 UN report,[14] the increase in sectarian violence has resulted in a growing number of Iraqis fleeing their homes. The UN estimated that about 150,000 individuals had been displaced as of June 30, 2006. The UN reported that people left their community of origin primarily because of direct or indirect threats against them or attacks on family members and their community. According to the report, displaced persons are vulnerable, lack many basic rights, and compete for limited services. This in turn can increase intercommunal animosities and can generate further displacement.

Shi'a Militia Demobilization Depends on Reduction in Sunni Insurgency

Although U.S. and UN officials recognize the importance of demobilizing the militias, the U.S. Ambassador to Iraq has stated that the demobilization of the Shi'a militias depends on a reduction in the Sunni insurgency. According to the Ambassador, a comprehensive plan for demobilizing all the militias and reintegrating them into Iraqi society is needed to ensure Iraq's stability and success. However, the Sunni insurgent groups now see themselves as protectors of the Sunni community, and the Shi'a militias see themselves as protectors of the Shi'a community. As DOD reported in August 2006, Sunni and Shi'a extremists are locked in mutually reinforcing cycles of sectarian strife, with each portraying themselves as the defenders of their respective sectarian groups.

DOD and State Progress Reports Provide Limited Information on the Development of Iraqi Security Forces

DOD and State report progress in developing capable Iraqi security forces and transferring security responsibilities to them and the Iraqi government in three key areas: (1) the number of trained and equipped forces, (2) the number of Iraqi army units and provincial governments that have assumed responsibility for security of specific geographic areas, and (3) the assessed capabilities of operational units, as reported in aggregate Transition Readiness Assessment (TRA) reports. While all three provide some information on the development of Iraqi security forces, they do not provide detailed information on specific capabilities that affect individual units' readiness levels. Unit-level TRA reports provide that information. We

[14]UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), *Human Rights Report*, May 1- June 30, 2006.

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are currently working with DOD to obtain these reports because they would more fully inform both GAO and the Congress on the capabilities and needs of Iraq's security forces.

Increases in Training and Equipping Iraqi Security Forces and Transferring Security Responsibilities to Them and the Iraqi Government

DOD and State have reported progress toward the current goal of training and equipping about 325,000 Iraqi security forces by December 2006. As shown in table 1, the State Department reports that the number of trained army and police forces has increased from about 174,000 in July 2005 to about 294,000 as of August 2006. According to State, the Ministries of Defense and Interior are on track to complete the initial training and equipping of all their authorized end-strength forces by the end of 2006. The authorized end-strength is 137,000 military personnel in the Ministry of Defense and about 188,000 in Ministry of Interior police and other forces. However, as we previously reported,[15] the number of trained and equipped security forces does not provide a complete picture of their capabilities and may overstate the number of forces on duty. For example, Ministry of Interior data include police who are absent without leave. Ministry of Defense data exclude absent military personnel.

[15]GAO, *Rebuilding Iraq: Preliminary Observations on Challenges in Transferring Security Responsibilities to Iraqi Military and Police*, GAO-05-431T, (Washington, D.C.: Mar. 14, 2005).

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Table 1: Reported Number of Trained and Equipped Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior Forces, July 2005, January 2006, and August 2006

Ministry and Component		July 2005	January 2006	August 2006
Ministry of Defense Forces	Army	78,200	105,600	127,200[a]
	Air Force	200	500	700
	Navy	700	800	1,100
	Subtotal[b]	**79,100**	**106,900**	**129,000**
Ministry of Interior Forces	Police	64,100	82,400	115,500
	Other forces	30,700	38,000	49,600
	Subtotal[c]	**94,800**	**120,400**	**165,100**
	Total	**173,900**	**227,300**	**294,100**

Source: State Department Iraq Weekly Status Reports

Note: Ministry of Defense forces are defined as operational. Ministry of Interior Forces are defined as trained and equipped.

[a]Army number includes Special Operations Forces and Support Forces.

[b]Unauthorized absence personnel are not included in these numbers.

[c]Unauthorized absence personnel are included in these numbers.

In spring 2005, MNF-I recognized that the number of trained and equipped forces did not reflect their capability to assume responsibility for security. MNF-I began to develop and refine the TRA system as a means of assessing the capabilities of Iraqi security forces.[16] It also started a program to place transition teams with Iraqi army and special police units.

DOD also assesses progress in the number of Iraqi army units and provincial governments that have assumed responsibility for the security of specific geographic areas in Iraq. The joint MNF-I/U.S. Embassy Campaign Plan calls for the Iraqi army to assume the lead for counterinsurgency operations in specific geographic areas and Iraqi civil authorities to assume security responsibility for their provinces. The transition of security responsibilities concludes when the Iraq government assumes responsibility for security throughout Iraq.[17]

[16]The basic format for the TRA is used for the Iraqi army, National Police, Department of Border Enforcement, and the Strategic Infrastructure Battalions, although minor differences in their reports may exist. Multinational Corps-Iraq (MNC-I) is in the process of finalizing the TRA for Iraqi police.

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As shown in table 2, DOD reports that an increasing number of Iraqi army units are capable of leading counterinsurgency operations in specific geographic areas. DOD reports more detailed information on this transition in a classified format. However, when an Iraqi army unit assumes the lead, it does not mean that the unit is capable of conducting independent operations since it may need to develop additional capabilities and may require the support of coalition forces. According to DOD's May 2006 report, it will take time before a substantial number of Iraqi units are assessed as fully independent and requiring no assistance considering the need for further development of Iraqi logistical elements, ministry capacity and capability, intelligence structures, and command and control.

Table 2: Reported Progress in Transferring Security Responsibilities to Iraqi Army Combat Units and Provincial Governments, January 2006 and August 2006

Type of Security Transition		January 2006	August 2006	Goal
Iraqi army units leading counterinsurgency operations in specific areas	Divisions	2	5	10
	Brigades	8	25	36
	Battalions	37	85	114*
Number of provinces that have assumed security responsibilities		0	1	18

Sources: DOD and State Department reports.

*Includes Iraqi army and special operations battalions.

Table 2 also shows that one provincial government—Muthanna—had assumed responsibility for security operations, as of August 2006. According to a July 2006 State Department report, when a provincial government can assume security responsibilities depends on the (1) threat level in the province, (2) capabilities of the Iraqi security forces, (3) capabilities of the provincial government, and (4) posture of MNF-I forces, that is, MNF-I's ability to respond to major threats, if needed. Once the provincial government assumes security responsibilities, the provincial governor and police are in charge of domestic security. According to an MNF-I official, MNF-I forces will then move out of all urban areas and assume a supporting role. In August 2006, DOD reported that security

[17]GAO-06-673C (Washington, D.C.: Jul. 27, 2006) provides classified information on the April 2006 joint campaign plan.

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responsibility for as-many as nine of Iraq's provinces could transition to Iraqi government authority by the end of 2006.

Unit-level TRA Reports Provide More Insight into Iraqi Capabilities and Development Needs Than Do Aggregate Data on Overall TRA Ratings

DOD has provided GAO with aggregate information on the overall TRA levels for Iraqi security forces and the number of Iraqi units in the lead for counterinsurgency operations. DOD's aggregate data on the capabilities and readiness of Iraqi security forces do not provide information on shortfalls in personnel, command and control, equipment, and leadership. Unit-level TRA reports provide more insight into Iraqi army capabilities and development needs in personnel, leadership, and logistics than do the overall TRA levels that DOD reports in classified format.[18] The TRA rating for individual Iraqi army units is a key factor in determining the ability of the unit to conduct and assume the lead for counterinsurgency operations.

According to Multinational Corps-Iraq (MNC-I) guidance,[19] the TRA is intended to provide commanders with a method to consistently evaluate Iraqi units, as well as to identify factors hindering progress, determine resource issues, make resource allocation decisions, and determine when Iraqi army units are prepared to assume the lead for security responsibilities. The TRA is prepared jointly on a monthly basis by the unit's military transition team chief and Iraqi security forces commander.

In completing TRA reports, commanders assess the unit's capabilities in six subcategories—personnel, command and control, training, sustainment/logistics, equipment, and leadership (see app. 1). After considering the unit's subcategory ratings, commanders then give each Iraqi army unit an overall TRA rating that describes the unit's overall readiness to assume the lead for counterinsurgency operations. The overall ratings go from TRA level 1 through TRA level 4. To be able to assume the lead for counterinsurgency operations, Iraqi army units are required to obtain an overall rating of TRA level 2 as assessed by their commanders. Commanders also provide a narrative assessment that describes key shortfalls and impediments to the unit's ability to assume the lead for counterinsurgency operations and estimate the number of months needed

[18]The Iraqi army readiness assessment system has similarities with the U.S. Army's readiness assessment system. Both systems measure some of the same categories but use different criteria for achieving each readiness level.

[19]MNC-I, *MNC-I Transition Readiness Assessment (TRA) Report Implementing Instructions Update* (Mar. 22, 2006).

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for the unit to assume the lead. The purpose of the narrative is to clarify and provide additional support for the overall TRA rating. The aggregate data on overall TRA ratings for Iraqi security forces are classified.

DOD has provided us with classified data on the aggregate number of Iraqi units at each TRA level and more detailed information on which Iraqi army units have assumed the lead for counterinsurgency operations. We are currently working with DOD to obtain the unit-level TRA reports. These unit-level reports would provide GAO and Congress with more complete information on the status of developing effective Iraqi security forces. Specifically, unit-level TRA reports would allow us to (1) determine if the TRA reports are useful and if changes are needed; (2) verify if aggregate data on overall TRA ratings reflect unit-level TRA reports; and (3) determine if shortfalls exist in key areas, such as personnel, equipment, logistics, training, and leadership.

Questions for Congressional Oversight

1. What are the key political, economic, and security conditions that must be achieved before U.S. forces can draw down and ultimately withdraw from Iraq? What target dates, if any, has the administration established for drawing down U.S. forces?

2. The continued deterioration of security conditions in Iraq has hindered U.S. political and economic efforts in Iraq. According to the State Department, a baseline of security is a prerequisite for moving forward on the political and economic tasks essential to achieving the right conditions for withdrawing U.S. forces.

- Why have security conditions continued to deteriorate in Iraq even as the country has met political milestones, increased the number of trained and equipped security forces, and increasingly assumed the lead for security?

- What is the baseline of security that is required for moving forward on political and economic tasks? What progress, if any, can be made in the political and economic areas without a significant improvement in current security conditions?

- If existing U.S. political, economic, and security measures are not reducing violence in Iraq, what additional measures, if any, will the administration propose for stemming the violence?

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3. In February 2006, the Director of National Intelligence reported that Iraqi security forces were experiencing difficulty in managing ethnic and sectarian divisions among their units and personnel. The DIA Director reported that many elements of the Iraqi security forces are loyal to sectarian and party interests.

- How does the U.S. government assess the extent to which personnel in the Iraqi security forces are loyal to groups other than the Iraqi government or are operating along sectarian lines, rather than as unified national forces? What do these assessments show?

- How would DOD modify its program to train and equip Iraqi security forces if evidence emerges that Iraqi military and police are supporting sectarian rather than national interests?

4. MNF-I established the TRA system to assess the capabilities and readiness of Iraqi security forces.

- How does DOD assess the reliability of TRAs and ensure that they present an accurate picture of Iraq security forces' capabilities and readiness?

- At what TRA rating level would Iraqi army units not require any U.S. military support? What U.S. military support would Iraqi units still require at TRA levels 1 and 2?

- How does DOD use unit-level TRAs to assess shortfalls in Iraqi capabilities? What do DOD assessments show about the developmental needs of Iraqi security forces?

5. In late August 2006, the MNF-I Commanding General said that the United States is helping Iraq build a force to deal with its current security threats of international terrorism and insurgency. However, he noted that the Iraqi government is developing a long-term security plan to shape the type of armed forces the country will need 5 to 10 years from now.

- What are the current resource requirements for developing Iraqi security forces capable of dealing with international terrorism and insurgency? What have been the U.S. and Iraqi financial contributions to this effort thus far? What U.S. and Iraqi contributions will be needed over the next several years?

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- What are the projected resource requirements for the future Iraqi force? What are the projected U.S. and Iraqi financial contributions for this effort?

Contact and Staff Acknowledgments

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Appendix I

Transition Readiness Assessment (TRA) Report

This appendix provides information on the TRA reports used to assess the capabilities of Iraqi army units. Commanders provide ratings in each of 6 subcategories (see fig. 4). For each subcategory, a green rating corresponds to TRA level 1, yellow to TRA level 2, orange to TRA level 3, and red to TRA level 4. The commanders consider the subcategory ratings in deciding the overall TRA rating for each unit.

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Appendix I
Transition Readiness Assessment (TRA) Report

Figure 4: Transition Readiness Assessment Form for Iraqi Army Combat Units

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TRANSITION READINESS ASSESSMENT

Unit: _____ Location: _____ Report Date: _____

1. Personnel — OVERALL ASSESSMENT ○

	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
Overall Manning (assigned-On Hand)	< 50% of auth manning	50-69% of auth manning	70-84% of auth manning	≥ 85% of auth manning
Staff Manning	< 50% of Staff manned	50-69% of Staff manned	70-84% of Staff manned	≥ 85% of Staff manned
Officer/NCO Manning	< 50% of auth manning	50-69% of auth manning	70-84% of auth manning	≥ 85% of auth manning
Pay	Unable to pay troops	Pay System Established	Personnel paid according to pay grade	Personnel consistently paid for 3 months

2. Command & Control — OVERALL ASSESSMENT ○

	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
Intelligence	No Intelligence capability	BN/BDE able to process, analyze, disseminate info	Participates in decision-making develops enemy COAs	BN/BDE able to implement R& S Plan; conduct intel based ops
Operations	No operational capability	BN/BDE able to establish TOC; Maintains situational awareness	BN/BDE able to send and receive reports/orders from higher/lower echelons	BN/BDE Staff able to conduct Troop Leading Procedures
Communications	No ability to communicate	BN/BDE able to establish/maintain internal communications	BN/BDE able to maintain external communications with higher	+BN/BDE able to sustain ext comms for 7 days +Has capable and sustained ALT comms

3. Training — OVERALL ASSESSMENT ○

	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
METL	Achieves proficiency in <50% of all METL tasks	Achieves proficiency in 50%-69% of all METL tasks	Achieves proficiency in 70-84% of all METL tasks	Achieves proficiency in ≥ 85% of all METL tasks

4. Sustainment/Logistics — OVERALL ASSESSMENT ○

	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
Supply (I, III, V, IX)	Secure/Store supplies	Account/Issue items	Forecast/Requisition supplies	Maintain Stockage level (UBL)
Infrastructure	Temporary Billeting	Statement of Work/Construction has begun	Minimal billeting, administrative and perimeter security infrastructure	Adequate billeting, administrative, mess, motor pool and perimeter security infrastructure
Maintenance	No Maint. conducted	+Conducts PMCS +Reports equipment status	+Conducts 1st echelon repair. +Requests repair parts. +80% maintenance personnel MOS qualified	+Establish maintenance program and reporting procedures. +90% maintenance personnel MOS qualified

5. Equipment — OVERALL ASSESSMENT ○

EQUIPMENT ON HAND	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
Weapons	< 50% of authorization	50-69% of authorization	70-84% of authorization	< 50% of authorization
Vehicles	< 50% of authorization	50-69% of authorization	70-84% of authorization	< 50% of authorization
Comms	< 50% of authorization	50-69% of authorization	70-84% of authorization	< 50% of authorization
OPERATIONAL READINESS	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
Weapons	< 50% OR	50-69% of OR	70-84% OR	≥ 85% OR
Vehicles	< 50% OR	50-69% of OR	70-84% OR	≥ 85% OR
Comms	< 50% OR	50-69% of OR	70-84% OR	> 85% OR

6. Leadership — OVERALL ASSESSMENT ○

	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
Leaders are rated as "capable" by supervisor	< 50% of leaders	50-69% of leaders	70-84% of leaders	≥ 85% of leaders

7. Subjective Assessment:

Annotate total number of pages attached to this report. See supplemental instructions for required categories.

Pages attached

Transition Readiness Assessment

- ■ A Level 1 unit is capable of planning, executing, and sustaining counterinsurgency operations.
- ■ A Level 2 unit is capable of planning, executing, and sustaining counterinsurgency operations with ISF or coalition support.
- ■ A Level 3 unit is partially capable of conducting counterinsurgency operations in conjunction with coalition units.
- ■ A Level 4 unit is forming and/or incapable of conducting counterinsurgency operations.

This Unit is Currently Assessed at Level and will be ready to assume IAL in _____ months.

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Source: MNC-I FORM DATED 15 MAR 06.

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