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ASSESSMENT OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S SEPTEMBER REPORT ON THE STATUS OF U.S. POLITICAL AND MILITARY EFFORTS IN IRAQ

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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ASSESSMENT OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S SEPTEMBER REPORT ON THE STATUS OF U.S. POLITICAL AND MILITARY EFFORTS IN IRAQ

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2007

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:04 a.m. in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Tom Lantos (chairman of the committee) Presiding.

Chairman LANTOS. This meeting of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs will please come to order.

Our purpose here today is to assess the report we received on Friday from the Bush administration on the current status of United States political and military efforts in Iraq. To help us in that task, we have two very able and knowledgeable witnesses, United States Senator Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, and Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, who is one of America's most intelligent and experienced diplomats.

The administration's report, just like the President's latest speech and the testimony of General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker last week, has one basic underlying goal, and that, of course, is to persuade the Congress and the American people to stay the course in the religious civil war in Iraq. The President says that his policy in Iraq needs more time. But that is nothing new. Already this fiasco has lasted longer than World War II. This endless war has killed, injured, or displaced millions of Iraqi civilians—men, women, and children. It has taken the lives of more than 3,700 of our courageous men and women in uniform, and wounded at least 27,000 more.

Every month, said Major General John Batiste in recent testimony before our committee, I quote:

> "American formations continue to lose a battalion's worth of dead and wounded, with little to show for it."

In economic terms, the cost of this war is catastrophic. To date we have poured an estimated $455 billion into the war in Iraq, and that is just for starters. According to one of our most distinguished economists, Professor Joseph Stiglitz of Columbia University, who happens to be a Nobel Prize winner, and the former chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, the total actual real cost to our

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economy, taking future costs into account, could well exceed $2 trillion.

Senator Graham, when General Petraeus testified recently before the Senate Armed Services Committee, you asked him an excellent question. This is how you put it. I will quote you:

> "So you are saying to Congress that you know that at least 60 soldiers, airmen, and marines are likely to be killed every month from now until July, that we are going to spend $9 billion a month of American taxpayer dollars, and when all is said and done we will still have about 100,000 people there. Do you believe that it is worth it in terms of our national security interests to pay that price?"

Now that, Senator Graham, is the question, and I commend you for asking it. As we know, General Petraeus believes that the answer to that question is "yes," and so does the President. But a large and growing majority of Americans, myself very much included, do not agree. We answer that question loud and clear, and our answer is "no." The people of this country do not want to stay the course in Iraq. Instead, we want to change the course and to move in a new direction.

Back in January, the President announced that in order to buy time for the factions in Iraq to come together and to reach a political settlement, he was sending over tens of thousands of additional United States combat troops. Those troops have done what they were asked to do. They did buy time for Prime Minister Maliki and his associates. And what did the regime in Baghdad do with that time? Hardly anything. There was no real progress. Instead of acting as the architect of a new Iraq, Mr. Maliki behaved like what he has always been: The front man for the Shiite faction. Does anyone really think in 6 or 8 months from now this is really going to change?

Not long ago, Senator Graham, you gave to us a very good definition of what would constitute an American victory in Iraq, and I quote you:

> "Winning is a stable, functioning, representative government that can contain Iran, will reject Iranian domination."

With that definition I certainly will not argue. I would be very pleased indeed to witness the emergence of that kind of an Iraq. But how long will it take? And at what cost to our country and to the people of Iraq to get from here to there?

General Petraeus is quoted as saying that he anticipates that by June 2009, Iraq will reach what he calls sustainable security. Other military experts think that it will take quite a bit longer. Up to 5 years, says General John Abizaid, the former commander in Iraq. And how about a quote, "stable, functioning, representative government"? When asked when something like this might appear, Ambassador Crocker said last week that he would not even try to give a time line.

And I note, Senator Graham, that in David Broder's column in this past Sunday's *Washington Post* you are quoted as observing, and I am quoting you:

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> "If you don't see progress on two of the three big issues, oil revenues, de-Baathification, provincial elections in the next 90 days, Iraq could be a failed state."

From day one, the Bush administration has made mistake after mistake after costly, deadly mistake in Iraq. And all that we are being offered now is more of the same. The time has come for a dramatic change of course in Iraq. United States policy in Iraq needs to move in a new direction, and we need to do so now.

I now turn to my good friend and distinguished colleague, the ranking Republican on the committee, Ms. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, for any comments she might wish to make.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much as always, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, as all of us know, this past week, as you pointed out, our committee received testimony on the current situation in Iraq and the United States strategy in that country from General David Petraeus and Ambassador Ryan Crocker. Prior to their testimony, the Congress received the Jones report, stating that the Iraqi Security Forces are carrying out part of that burden, and that their ability to do so will increase in the coming month. Other findings of the Jones report include:

> "While severely deficient in combat support and combat service support capabilities, the new Iraqi armed forces, especially the Army, show clear evidence of developing the baseline infrastructures that lead to the successful formation of a national defense capability."

In continuing to quote from the Jones report:

> "The Iraqi police are improving at the local level, predominantly where the ethnic makeup of the population is relatively homogenous, and the police are recruited from the local area. Police forces are hampered by corruption and dysfunction within the Ministry of Interior."

Likewise, an examination of the September 15th benchmark assessment report requires careful analysis of the different ways in which groups of citizens, local and provincial governments have been able to address the requirements of the benchmark legislation.

This most recent report was based on data available as of September 1st, and reflects that the Iraqis have taken actions on nine benchmarks. The September 15th report also assessed seven benchmarks as not satisfactory, including the enactment and implementation legislation to ensure the equitable distribution of hydrocarbon revenue, increasing the number of Iraqi Security Force units capable of operating independently, ensuring that Iraq's political authorities are not undermining or making false accusations against members of the Iraqi Security Forces, eliminating militia control of local security, eliminating sectarian bias within the Iraqi police, eliminating political intervention by leaders throughout the chain of command, and establishing provincial council authorities and establishing a date for provincial elections. Four of these were assessed as showing forward momentum, however.

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Two others, including the implementation of a general amnesty and the militia disarmament program, were unable to be assessed, as the necessary preconditions have not been achieved.

So now that we have received reports and testimony from a variety of sources, and we will be adding the expertise of our distinguished witnesses this morning, we must refocus on how we can best accomplish our short- and long-term strategic objectives in Iraq. Primary among these is to prevent al-Qaeda from establishing a base in Iraq and preventing Iran from filling the vacuum, something that the Iranian regime has publicly stated that it is ready and willing to do.

As the August NIE, the National Intelligence Estimate, stated:

> "Assistance to armed groups, especially from Iran, exacerbates the violence inside Iraq. Over the next year, Tehran will continue to provide funding, weaponry, and training to Iraqi Shia militias. Iran has been intensifying aspects of its lethal support for select groups of Iraqi Shia militias, particularly the JAM, since at least the beginning of 2006."

The NIE also states:

> "The IC now assesses that Damascus is providing support for non-AQI's groups inside Iraq in a bid to increase Syrian presence there."

General Petraeus stated in his testimony that

> "Syria has allowed its soil to be transited by foreign fighters, who have come from a variety of source countries in the gulf area and north African countries, and Iran has carried out very, very harmful activities inside Iraq, funding, training, arming, and in some cases even directing the activities of the special groups."

Mr. Chairman, these pariah states view Iraq as the central front in their broader efforts. We must work together to counter the nefarious objectives of these rogue regimes in their realignment against the United States and our allies.

As illustrated by Israel's recent air strike in Syria, reportedly aimed at a nuclear facility, nuclear-related facility that North Korea was helping to equip, the state sponsors of terrorism are helping each other, enhancing their capabilities. That is why it is so disconcerting to see reports today that Syria, a country-of-proliferation concern for quite some time, has been elected deputy chair of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency. How absurd is that? Syria as deputy chair of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Mr. Chairman, in light of these and other developments pertaining to Syria and the ongoing United Nations failures, I ask that you respectfully bring up for markup two bills that I have introduced this session, one which I introduced with my good friend and distinguished colleague, Mr. Rangel, the Syrian Accountability and Liberation Act, and the other, the United Nations Transparency, Accountability and Reform Act, which includes provisions on the IAEA aimed at preventing situations such as the one that I just mentioned concerning Syria.

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What these events clearly illustrate is again the need to join forces to counter the enemies' united front. Deterrence remains a critical component of fighting the efforts of those rogue regimes, as well as the Islamic militants that they support.

Mr. Chairman, for those who would argue that Iraq is not in our national security interest, I would offer the comparison with Bosnia. In testimony before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, Export Financing and Related Programs on March 4th, 1998, former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright legitimized our continuing intervention in Bosnia by stating, and I quote:

> "If we turn our backs on Bosnia now, as some argue, the confidence we are building would erode. The result would be a return to genocide and war. Quitting is not the American way. In Bosnia, the mission should determine the timetable, not the other way around. We should continue to play an appropriate role in Bosnia as long as our help is needed. That is the right thing to do. And it is the smart thing, for it is the only way to ensure that when our troops do leave Bosnia they leave for good."

Compared to Iraq, Mr. Chairman, Bosnia was not a pillar of United States security strategy, nor did it contain strategic resources, bases, or regimes with nuclear ambitions capable of threatening the United States homeland, our interests or our closest ally in the region, Israel. We look forward, Mr. Chairman, to receiving our witness' recommendations as to how we can achieve success in Iraq and the implementations of our broader strategic regional efforts.

Thank you as always, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LANTOS. Thank you very much.

It is my intention to give those colleagues who wish to make a brief statement an opportunity to do so.

The gentleman from Georgia, Mr. Scott.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. And certainly welcome, Senator. It is good to have a fellow South Carolinian. Of course, we were born in the same State. I represent Georgia, of course. Welcome.

I guess my remarks would have to start off by sort of taking a backward look. My father always told me that you figure a way out of a problem by figuring how you got into it in the first place. And I think that is appropriate here, because we need to understand why this will go down in history, in my opinion, as the worst foreign policy blunder in the history of these United States.

First of all, we are attacking a country that didn't attack us. We spent billions of dollars in valuable, valuable resources on borrowed money from China and Japan for a war of choice. We chose to go in. The question to me has to be what is it about our American psychic that thinks that we can go into a country and in a few years try to settle a civil war that has been bubbling up and running on for thousands and thousands of years? This is the fundamental question.

Chairman LANTOS. The gentleman's time has expired. Mr. Wilson of South Carolina.

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Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And Senator Graham, thank you for being here today. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, fellow South Carolinian Congressman Scott, I want you to know that our association has been for a number of years. Senator Graham was the staff judge advocate of the Air National Guard; I was the staff judge advocate of the Army National Guard. So I appreciate his background.

As we consider, Senator, what we are dealing with today, I think we should keep in mind Osama bin Laden has said we are in the third world war at the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates, meaning Baghdad. Zawahiri, the al-Qaeda spokesman, has said Iraq and Afghanistan are the central front in the global war. We need to remember in 1998, Osama bin Laden declared war on America and its allies whenever and wherever we could be destroyed.

And again I want to thank you for your military background, your perception, and I look forward to your testimony. I yield the balance of my time.

Chairman LANTOS. Thank you.

Ambassador Watson of California.

Ms. WATSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Senator Graham for being here.

And just a very quick comment on Iraq's political leaders. And I hope that we will hear about what they are doing to advance success. They found it either impossible or distasteful to do whatever they need to do while we are present, which leads us to believe that our continued presence there is helping the situation.

We have been in Iraq, occupying that country for 4½ long years. And we keep asking the Iraqis to step up and reach a political compromise while our troops are present on their soil. They have not done so, yet we continue our occupation, and we make small tweaks to our tactics and expect radically different results.

So I hope you can shed some light this morning in your testimony on why we need to stay on that same course and why we do not need to change course, give them back their lands, give them the support they need, and ask us to reward success. That is bringing our troops home.

Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LANTOS. Thank you very much.

The gentleman from California, Mr. Rohrabacher.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you very much. And I would like to welcome Senator Graham. And I believe that it would be important for us to recognize that Senator Graham is one of the few Members of the United States Congress who has actually served in Iraq, activated as an Air Force Reserve, went to Iraq. And Lindsey, you have our admiration for that, even though we may disagree on immigration policy.

Now, with that said, we have heard today that we made mistake after mistake after mistake in Iraq. And there is no doubt about that. Whether or not mistakes that we have made justify the policies that would lead us to a retreat from Iraq, that remains to be seen. We are not just staying the course as usual. We are now engaged in a phased withdrawal, which I personally believe is a responsible withdrawal. Whether or not that withdrawal should be

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very rapid and be defined by the world as a retreat is something that we will have to determine.

And your guidance, Mr. Graham, and the courage and good will and good judgment of other Members of Congress are required now. And I appreciate the leadership of Mr. Lantos, who earlier supported this effort, and I think so in good faith, and now as the chairman he is also trying to do what he thinks is right for the country as well.

So I think that we all need to talk about this very seriously, what should be our policy, because we care about those men and women you left behind who are serving our country in Iraq and putting their lives at risk.

Thank you very much.

Chairman LANTOS. Thank you.

The gentleman from Colorado, Mr. Tancredo.

Mr. TANCREDO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have no opening comment.

Chairman LANTOS. I am delighted to turn to our first distinguished witness, Senator Lindsey Graham, who is a former colleague of ours here in the House of Representatives. Between his first election in 1994 through 2002, when he was elected to the Senate, he represented the Third District of South Carolina with great distinction. Between 1982 and 1988, Senator Graham served in the United States Air Force as a military prosecutor. Since then he has served in the South Carolina Air National Guard, currently holding the rank of colonel. In August of this year, he was deployed for 2 weeks in Iraq. Senator Graham received his undergraduate and law degrees from the University of South Carolina. We are delighted to have you, and the floor is yours.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE LINDSEY GRAHAM, A U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Mr. GRAHAM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When I got the invitation, I thought somebody in my office was pulling my leg. Why would any committee want to hear from me about anything? And I was really honored, I mean, and after sitting here, I am going to be much nicer to witnesses, because this is intimidating. And you all have been very nice to me. So I am going to remember the experience. But Ileana, thanks for having me over, and Congressman Lantos.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Actually, I thought it was Bob Graham.

Mr. GRAHAM. That explains it. I always wondered how this happened, and Bob would have made a good witness.

And Richard, I will be quick, because preceding Richard Holbrooke is kind of an honor, too.

So these things that you don't think ever happen to you, well, I get to testify before Congress about something important to people I know. And some of you I know much better than others, and I respect you all. And Tom, when we lost your support for the operation, that was a pretty big blow, because I do respect you, your background. And you know, you have seen evil up close and personal, unlike most of us.

Where to go and how to get there, and I will just be as brief as I can. About the war, why we did it. Most Members of Congress

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who voted for authorizing the potential use of military force spoke pretty strongly that Saddam Hussein was defying the U.N. Resolutions, that he was a threat, that he may be acquiring weapons of mass destruction. I don't now how many resolutions were passed trying to control his behavior, but he seemed to ignore them all. And the Oil for Food Program we now know was sort of a joke when it comes to reining in his personal ability to survive.

So as we look back in history and have the benefit of hindsight, some people who voted for the war say, If I knew then what I know now I would have changed my vote. All I can tell you is that if the United Nations is going to be relevant in the future when it comes to people like Saddam Hussein—and they are everywhere—I mean, he is not the only bad person that inhabited the planet. But when we focus on these people, when the U.N. Focuses like a laser that we want to know what you are doing with your weapons program, don't kick our inspectors out, when you have one resolution after another, the fear I have is if we don't learn from all of our mistakes we will repeat greater mistakes.

The United Nations is more relevant than ever and needed more than ever. So I hope we will understand that if you look back into the history of Iraq versus the U.N., that if nothing happened to him—now we can debate what that something should have been—it would have over time marginalized the U.N. The one thing I can assure you is that Saddam Hussein was not intent on the status quo. So let us look at history honestly and say, Should we have allowed the inspectors to go back in and stay longer? That is a debate that is off the table, but that would have been one way to handle the situation.

Most Members of Congress that I listened to were ready to go a different method because they passed a resolution that clearly would allow the Commander in Chief to go a course other than using a resolution. And I thought that was appropriate, given the history of Saddam versus the United Nations. Because the worst thing that could happen on this planet at this time is to take an international organization that stands for the good and make it irrelevant. So I think that is why we had to do what we had to do.

Now, the mistakes we made. The biggest mistake we made, I think, after the fall of Baghdad is we didn't have enough troops. One thing John McCain said that just struck me like a bolt of lightning when I was over in Baghdad with him on the first visit; he turned to Ambassador Bremer and said, "You got to start shooting these looters." I thought, Well, good way to start the meeting. But he wasn't joking. Right after the fall of Baghdad you could move around the city, went rug shopping. Things were very unstable. But you could see every trip that I took that things were progressively getting worse. Places that we could go before we couldn't go the next time. And you went over there with a very small security footprint. And on my fifth visit I was in a tank.

And I kept coming back as we have these hearings, and I was asking General Casey and Abizaid and others, "What's going on? Have we got enough troops?" Oh, we have enough troops. Everything is fine. A few dead enders. Remember that? We are in the last throes of the insurgency.

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Well, I am a military lawyer. My 2 weeks in Iraq are absolutely insignificant. I went over there to work on detainee issues, something I have some personal background regarding, and I wanted to make whatever small contribution I can. If you want to court-martial somebody, I can help you. But I had no idea about how to fight an insurgency or to plan an invasion of a country. So I do rely on generals.

But here is the one thing that I recommend to everybody in this body. When a general comes to testify, ask them hard questions. Don't assume because of the stars that they know it all. Use your common sense, and apply it to what you hear. And after six or seven visits, my common sense did not allow me to believe that we had the right strategy in place. If this was a few dead enders, they were the most resilient dead enders in the world. And I would ask, "How many insurgents are there?" The number would never get over 5,000. Just add up the number of people we killed, it was over 5,000. The math didn't work out.

It was clear to me that after the fall of Baghdad, Secretary Rumsfeld had decided on a small military footprint, that we were not going to get into this nation-building stuff, and the Iraqis would meet us and hug us and greet us, and it would all fall into place.

I stand before you as having been wrong myself. I thought it would have been much easier than it was. I never anticipated it getting so out of hand. But after about the second visit, you could see it was getting out of hand. So the biggest mistake we made early on is not appreciating the situation on the ground and allowing it to develop into a place where we now are having to deal with a chaotic situation.

So, change of course. Everybody wants to change the course. We have adopted a change of course. Much to my political detriment, when I would come home and say it is not the media's fault, you know, the Republican thing to do was go to Iraq and talk about all the beginning good things that no one tells you about, because the media just tells you about the bad things. Well, it was deeper than that. It was much deeper than that. The sergeants and the colonels and everybody else in between was telling us, "This thing is getting out of hand, sir."

A couple years ago I asked a guy, "Sergeant, how is it going?" He said, "Sir, I feel like I am riding around waiting to get shot." That was the old strategy. Not enough people, training the Iraqi forces, living behind walls, and the security situation is getting out of hand.

Now, MoveOn.Org ran an ad that made a lot of us mad. Well, there are things said about me every day that make me mad. That is democracy. It is hard in this environment to find the political middle ground because the voices are so loud and people are so passionate.

And God bless people that want to come here and have a say. It makes it harder to meet in the middle on anything controversial like immigration, like the war, like Social Security, like Medicare. We are afraid of getting political opponents and losing our jobs. Not an unhealthy thing in a democracy to listen to people and have some calculation for their interests. But listen closely, people,

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please. Whatever problems we have to solve, hard problems, imagine your family getting killed being part of the equation. You will never have a successful outcome in Iraq until there is better security. And to think otherwise just defies human nature.

We will solve immigration one day, Dana. I don't know how we are going to do it, but we will find a way, because America needs to solve that problem. We are going to find a solution to Social Security and Medicare. If you put benchmarks on this Congress and in the next year you had to solve Social Security, and Medicare, and immigration to be a successful operating body, maybe we would do it, but it would be hard for us.

The way forward. A million troops in Iraq will not affect the outcome long term. It is not about having a million American troops in there to bring about a democracy. Democracy will never come by a large military presence in Iraq forever. Thirty thousand troops may help bring about democracy. The difference between the old strategy and the new strategy is an additional 30,000 combat troops to be used in a different way.

The reason I am optimistic today versus any other time that I have been involved with this issue is that we found a general who, in my opinion, knows what he is doing and has produced results I have never seen before. Of all the deterioration I saw between the fall of Baghdad until Petraeus came along, I see a reversal of that deterioration, slowly but surely.

To go to Ramadi is a big deal. What do you find when you go to Ramadi? One, you don't get shot at. Two, you can go. Three, you got a town blown apart. So the Ramadi story is a hopeful story, but it is a reality check. Going to Ramadi to walk down the streets of Ramadi is a result of the surge.

And the Sunni Arabs who live in Anbar province made a decision that we cannot take credit for. It is not fair for us to take credit for Sunni Arabs turning on al-Qaeda. Al-Qaeda has to take credit for that.

Have you seen the story about the young man that was doused with gasoline? That was done in Anbar province. The al-Qaeda members suspected this family of collaborating with Americans. They brought the family out, they took the kid in front of the parents, poured gasoline all over him, set him on fire, and he survived. Well, he is horribly mangled, but he is here enjoying American health care with his family and a level of security he has never known before. That is why people in Anbar said no to al-Qaeda.

Now, the reason they were able to successfully say no to al-Qaeda is because we came along with a new strategy, a new tactic that empowered those decisions. The Marines, 4,000 marines who went to Anbar province empowered people who were ready to say no to al-Qaeda. And if they were not there, they could not have said no, in my opinion.

So combat power can affect choices. Combat power alone will never affect the choice until the people get ready to make it. They were ready to make it in Anbar by saying no to al-Qaeda.

Now, what does that mean? That Iraq is a democracy? Absolutely not. It means that tribal sheiks and those who lived under al-Qaeda had enough of it. That is all it means. Does it mean they are reconciling their nation with Shias in Baghdad and Kurds in

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the north? No. But here is why it is important. For a Sunni group anywhere in the world to look al-Qaeda in the eye and fight them is a good thing for this overall war. Don't misunderstand how important that is. That al-Qaeda plays off religious fears, al-Qaeda creates religious turmoil, they are a religious-based organization that has a view of religion that everybody in this room would get killed if it was up to them to kill us. Being a Jew, a moderate Muslim, or a Christian is a death sentence. But the people in Anbar, of the same Sunni sect of Islam, do not want to follow their lead. They do not want to follow the al-Qaeda agenda. We need to celebrate that. We need to reinforce it. And when you say no to al-Qaeda, they try to kill you. Look what happened last week.

So our goal is to maintain the successes that we have earned through a different strategy until the Iraqi people can do what they need to do to reconcile their country. History will judge us, Mr. Chairman, by not when we left but what we left behind.

Now, why did I say 90 days? Why did I say that if not—if there is no major reconciliation within 90 days this government may go into the land of a failed state? And let me, if I can, very quickly, talk about the difference between a dysfunctional government and a failed state. For anybody to go to Iraq and say that this government is not dysfunctional is just not looking. They are very dysfunctional, Bob, and you mentioned that many times. They have a hard time bringing anything to closure, unlike us. Or like us.

But here is why we will solve immigration one day: We will keep trying. A dysfunctional government is a group of people that have a hard time deciding big issues, but they don't quit. A failed state is when a group of people in a country go to their separate corners, they no longer try, and their goal is to dominate the other. If we get into a failed state, whatever problems we experience now in Iraq get exponentially worse. A failed state to me, Mr. Chairman, is a nightmare of unimaginable proportions. If the Shias break away from the rest of the country and align themselves with Iran in a loose alliance, then every Sunni Arab state in the region is going to feel pressure they do not feel today.

And I envision a conflict of a greater proportion with Iran, beginning with the actors in the region leading the way. If the Kurds believe they can separate from the rest of Iraq and live tranquilly in the north in an independent state status, they are fooling themselves and they are creating a major problem for us, because Turkey is not going to sit on the sideline and let that happen. That is what happens when you have a failed state. When the Kurds no longer engage the Sunnis and the Shias and they go their own way, they are running right into the teeth of Turkey. And when the Shias pick up their ball and go home and run to the south and try to get their big brother Iran to take care of them, the problems get worse exponentially.

And when this civil war that you described, Congressman, between Sunnis and Shias gets really hot, and really on every street corner undeniable, a full-blown Sunni civil war, Shia civil war in the heart of Baghdad, where you have got 4 million Shia and 2 million Sunnis, the Sunni Arabs are not going to sit on the sidelines and watch their Sunni brothers get slaughtered. When they stop

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trying, Mr. Chairman, is when this war gets bigger. And that is when we have more troops, not less.

Now, there is a way, in my opinion, to avoid that catastrophic result. That is to allow General Petraeus to continue the military operations with the troops he has requested, and at the same time this Congress and this international community have a surge of its own. Why do I think 90 days is so important? If we can avoid a date for withdrawal, a mandated withdrawal, if we can assure the Iraqi people and politicians that we are with them for the long haul militarily, politically, and economically, then the situation is right for people to come together and make the hard decisions they have yet had to make. I would argue the reason we haven't had reconciliation yet is a lawless country. And it is very hard to do a political deal if you don't know the United States is going to be there to back up that deal.

If I am a politician in Iraq, and I think America is going to be gone a year from now, I can promise you I am going to deal with people across the aisle differently. If I am a politician in Iraq and I know that I am going to have a valuable ally there helping me execute any deal to bring my country together, I am going to look at things anew.

General Petraeus believes we can bring troops home in April or before. And you know why? Because of the success in Anbar. Very quickly, Mr. Chairman, in all of 2006, 1,000 people joined the police force in Anbar. This year 12,000 people have joined the police in Anbar. That is a huge event, ladies and gentlemen. It means not only did they turn on al-Qaeda, they created infrastructure in Anbar that will allow them to maintain the gains they have made without a large troop presence on the U.S. side forever. So I am looking for more of that. I am looking not only for reconciliation at the local level to move up to the top, I am looking for the Army to get better.

And General Jones says the Army is getting better. The reason the Army is getting better is because we have been out from behind the walls, we are living in joint security stations day and night with these people, and we are training them in a different way by being out with them in the fight, living with them. That is the way to bring about results.

The Army is better because our Army is engaging differently. And if we will continue this course, their Army will mature quicker, and we will be able to go to a different mission sooner. If we get behind the walls and do the strategy that we were employing for 3½ years, we are going to get the same results.

Now, what does it mean to continue with what General Petraeus has recommended? Dying. What is the cost of this surge? Sixty to 90 combat deaths a month. Play it out to July. There are going to be hundreds of Americans killed as part of this surge between now and July, when it begins to ramp down. It is $9 billion a month for us to stay there. And when it is all said and done, there will be 100,000 American troops in Iraq this time next year.

Now, that is why I asked the question of General Petraeus. I want America to know that I am not some cheerleader for a policy that doesn't have consequence. The consequence of the surge to hundreds of Americans means that they will never grow old and

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raise a family. The consequence to the taxpayer is it is $9 billion a month that is not going to your community; it is going somewhere else to build up a community of people that you don't even know. And to the military, it means you better get used to being in the Mideast, because you are going to be there for a while.

The only reason I support this is because I have come to the conclusion that if we don't get it right, the price is going to be far greater. Mr. Chairman, if the Iranian Government had a nuclear weapon, I don't know what they would do with it. It is in all of our interests that they not acquire one. The President of Iran tells us in the most public of all forums——

[Disturbance in the hearing room.]

Chairman LANTOS. I ask members of the audience to be seated or leave.

Mr. GRAHAM. And I don't mean to play off her comment; I believe Iran is a threat. I believe that history teaches us one thing, Mr. Chairman; that if we had believed Adolf Hitler in the twenties we would have been better off.

Now, compare the writings of Hitler to the statements of the President of Iran and to bin Laden. I believe that this is not just about Iraq. If this were about who would run Iraq when we left, I would leave. This is not about who is going to run Iraq. This is about whether or not Iraq creates momentum for moderation or extremism.

Mr. Chairman, if we can leave Iraq one day where moderation prevails over extremism, the Sunnis, the Shias, and the Kurds finally understand they can live better together than they can apart, Iran is contained and al-Qaeda is rejected by Sunnis in Iraq, that is a very major victory in the war on terror.

If we leave Iraq where there is a vacuum to be filled by Iran, you know better than anybody else what follows. If we leave Iraq separated as a failed state, al-Qaeda is as likely to dominate and kill everybody who helped us for the last 6 months.

I want to come home as much as anybody. I want to leave with honor, as Senator McCain says. But more than anything else, I want to leave with America stronger, not weaker, and I don't want the next generation of Americans paying for mistakes that happened yet again on my watch.

I learned from the first mistake. We didn't have enough people. I hope we will all learn that the new strategy is not more of the same, it is fundamentally different, it is paying off, and given some time, it will work.

I will make a prediction and I am going to leave: In the next 90 days there will be political reconciliation at the central government level that you will hail as substantial. The reason I believe that is because the people of Iraq are war weary. They see a commitment by America that is sustainable. They are getting tired of the killing. They don't want to send their kids to school worrying if they will ever come back. Al-Qaeda has overplayed its hand. And local reconciliation is undeniable all over the country. It will not be long before the Sunnis and the Shias and the Kurds sit down in Iraq, in Baghdad, and begin to share the natural resources. The Sunnis have no oil. The Shias would be smart to give them some. The Sunnis need to understand that the Shias were oppressed during

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the Saddam era. They would be smart to create a government where that could never happen again. The Kurds would be really smart to make sure the Sunni-Shia conflict is contained, and that they would have a viable, longstanding future in Iraq without having to worry about Turkey.

In my opinion, it is in their interests to live together in a loose confederation, whatever you want to call it, better than breaking apart. If your goal as a Shia is to dominate Iraq through a religious theocracy, your goal will never be realized because Sunni Arab states won't allow it, and it is just never going to happen. If you are a Sunni, wanting the good old days of Saddam back when he ran the show, it ain't happening. It will never happen. And if you are a Kurdish member of Iraq and you think you can ignore what is going on in the south and you will be fine without ever having to worry about what happens below you, you are fooling yourself. That realization has been taken on at the local level, and it is going to move its way up to the central government level.

We can choose in the next week to change the Petraeus plan the way we would like to run the war, give a mission to our military that we think is best, or we can sustain what is going on and allow the general to move forward based on the decision he believes is best militarily, politically, and economically. Choose wisely. God bless.

Chairman LANTOS. I think I speak for all of my colleagues across the aisle in thanking you for your very thoughtful and serious comments. You are welcome before the House Foreign Affairs Committee at any time, Senator Graham. Thank you for your testimony.

[Disturbance in the hearing room.]

Chairman LANTOS. The committee will stand in recess until the Capitol Police restore order.

[Recess.]

Chairman LANTOS. The committee will resume. The gentleman from California.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Chairman, is it the intention of the chairman that those who would disrupt this hearing and disrupt the rights of others to hear and to listen and to discuss these issues, that those people who would disrupt would actually be prosecuted by—and actually have to pay for their crime, or is this just being escorted out so that anybody can disrupt and do things like this at their will?

Chairman LANTOS. Thank you for my friend's question. That decision is in the hands of the Capitol Police.

I am delighted to welcome Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, who is one of the most singularly gifted diplomats in our Nation's history. He is a man who served America in many different parts of the world: In Europe, in North Africa, and in East Asia. He served as Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs. And in that capacity, he played a pivotal role in normalizing relations between the United States and the People's Republic of China. Under President Clinton, Ambassador Holbrooke was assistant secretary of state for both Canadian and European Affairs. In 1995, he was the key negotiator of the Dayton Accords, which brought to an end the hostilities in Bosnia. In addition, he served

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with extraordinary distinction as United States Ambassador to Germany and as United States Ambassador to the United Nations.

Earlier this year, he shared with this committee his thinking on Iraq. And we welcome him back today. Ambassador Holbrooke currently serves as vice chairman of Perseus, a private equity firm. He is a graduate of Brown University, and is one of our Nation's most accomplished diplomats. Chairman Holbrooke, we are delighted to have you.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE RICHARD C. HOLBROOKE, VICE CHAIRMAN, PERSEUS LLC

Ambassador HOLBROOKE. Mr. Chairman, as always it is an incredible honor to appear before this committee of old friends and new. I can only begin by recalling the first time I ever testified before the Congress of the United States was before this committee, in the spring of 1977. And your role in this historic debate we are undertaking now is absolutely central.

I do not have a prepared statement because I have been on the road for 2 weeks and because the situation is moving too rapidly. And I would like to begin my remarks just by acknowledging Senator Graham's contribution to the debate, his effort to seek common ground, and say at the outset that while I agree with much of his analysis, I will take direct issue, as I just told him as he left, with his final conclusions and his rather optimistic assessment of what we are going to see in the next few months. Although I must add, I would prefer that he be right and I be wrong. I just don't think the odds favor that.

Now that General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker have left town after a brief but successful, and very brilliantly choreographed rollout of their positions, one which will probably buy the administration more time for its policies, the scene is shifting back to the arena that really matters, Iraq itself. And notwithstanding that skillful rollout, supporters and critics alike should be left with a very queasy feeling. And I think that was reflected in Senator Graham's opening part of his presentation, that so far very little of permanent value has been accomplished during the surge. And I stress the word "permanent."

I am not here to question the intelligence, the courage or the commitment of a fine general and a fine career diplomat. But I think we should examine carefully what they said, what they didn't say, and what it means for the future. Both men stressed the improvement in security that the surge had brought to certain areas. But they said that the war will only end with a political arrangement between the warring factions. Everyone here agrees with that, including Senator Graham. And then they conceded that there has been virtually no progress toward the underlying goal of the surge. This is, quite frankly, Mr. Chairman, a devastating admission of failure for the original rationale of the surge, as presented by President Bush on January 10th of this year, although it was presented to this distinguished committee in a way that obscured the fact that they were admitting that the reason for sending the troops had not been achieved.

I will move in a minute to the issue of the Sunnis in the west, because that is a critical aspect of this. So let us take a closer look

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at what the two men said. It makes the situation even more troubling to me personally. Current administration policy is at odds with itself. The policies currently being pursued are strengthening the regions, but the administration continues to say that their goal is a strong and effective central government.

In fact, the administration is in an untenable long-term position. They are simultaneously supporting the Sunnis in the west, the Kurds in the north, and the Shiite government of Prime Minister Maliki. That is not a government of Iraq. That is not even a government of the Shiites. That is a faction of a faction in limited control of very limited areas of the country, mainly the Green Zone.

Meanwhile, Iran has replaced the British, as they withdraw, as the dominant force in the south. And that includes a large portion of Iraq's non-Kurdish oil. Reports suggest they are siphoning off, illegally, perhaps 250,000 barrels a day—that would be more than 10 percent of Iraq's capacity to produce at full levels—illegally in the Gulf of Basra. Not hard to do. The Iranians, of course, are the long-term beneficiary of what has happened in Iraq since the invasion.

So let us look first, Mr. Chairman, at the much-heralded improvement in the situation in Anbar province, which Senator Lindsey so eloquently and I think accurately described. General Petraeus was entirely correct when he agreed to requests by the Sunni tribes for assistance when they turned—when they changed sides and came to the United States for weapons and money. But these short-term gains, which General Petraeus stressed and which Senator Graham stressed, are not on behalf of that central government that we are allegedly trying to strengthen. They are exactly the opposite.

"The enemy of my enemy is my friend," of course, a famous Arab saying. But for how long? The Sunni tribesmen now assisting are the same people who were fighting us and killing Americans until very recently. They know full well that when we overthrew Saddam Hussein we ended 400 years of Sunni role in Baghdad, going back to the Ottomans, the British and Saddam. They will never forget that. They hate the Shia leaders in Baghdad. They understand that eventually the United States will leave the region, and they will have to look to Saudi Arabia for the money and support to keep them autonomous from control of Baghdad and against the Iranians, who are going to be increasingly in evidence in supporting those Shiites.

After the Sunni tribes defeat al-Qaeda in Iraq—which I am sure they will do, because it is their territory and AQI is an interloper—then the Sunnis will turn again against the Shiites in Baghdad, their ancient rivals. And they will also run their own affairs in Anbar and the west with little or no regard for Baghdad's views.

Meanwhile—I will get to the oil in a minute, Mr. Chairman.

The story of the Kurdish north is well known. Many of you in this room have been there. I was there a few months ago. We all know that the Kurds are independent in all but name: Their own flag, their own money, their own language, the tightest internal border security.

The tightest border security in all of Iraq is to go from Baghdad to Irbil, not to get into the country. That is six layers of security

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checkpoints. They test you. I don't know how many of you have ever driven through that checkpoint, those checkpoints. But they stop the cars. They ask you in Kurdish who you are. If you don't speak Kurdish, they inspect your car. They say, "Where you are going? Give us a phone number." They call those people, and if the people in Kurdistan, Iraqi Kurdistan, don't know who you are, they won't let you in.

That is why Kurdistan, Iraqi Kurdistan, is the most peaceful part of the country and, I might stress, the most pro-American, but it is also explosive. War could break out at any time between Turkey and the Iraqi Kurds. The threat from PKK terrorist groups on the Turkish and Iranian borders could easily push our indispensable Turkish allies closer to the Iranians. There has been too much covert military discussion already between the Turkish general staff in Ankara and the Iranians.

I stress again, as I have said before your committee before, Mr. Chairman, that Turkey is the front-line state of America's foreign policy in the post-Cold War era. Turkey is to the United States today what the Berlin Wall and Checkpoint Charlie were in the Cold War. We cannot afford—to use a phrase freighted with misunderstandings—we cannot afford to lose Turkey.

The equilibrium in the Kurdish north is not stable. What would be the most difficult area of Iraq? The south, where the Shiites are warring against each other, and Iran is quickly asserting itself. We are expecting the Iraqi puzzle will give the United States greater problems, because any solution to the problems in this area will necessarily require Iranian participation.

Given the nature of that regime in Tehran and its activities against American interests in support of Hamas and Hezbollah, the supplying of high-tech explosives to insurgents who are killing Americans in Iraq, its defiant drive to become a nuclear power, and its very anti-Semitic positions, any dealings with Iran will be both politically sensitive here at home and extremely difficult to conduct.

But it will be difficult to deal with Iran's long-term challenge to America's interests as long as we are enmeshed in Iraq. You cannot do the Iran project, whatever it is, whether you favor a military strike or diplomacy. Whatever it is, you can't get there while they can turn on and off the spigot in Iraq at will and for their own purposes.

But there is a precedent for Iranian-American cooperation, the 2001 negotiations in Germany that set up the Karzai government. Why did Iran and the United States cooperate? Because we had a common interest: Getting rid of the Taliban and creating a stable Afghanistan.

It remains to be seen, Mr. Chairman, whether the same is true in Iraq. Many of the Iranian experts I talked to in preparation for this testimony today believe that, while Tehran intends to be a dominant player in eastern Iraq and southern Iraq, they don't want complete chaos or a protracted proxy war with Saudi Arabia, and that might follow an American withdrawal. If these untested assumptions were correct, there might be room for serious discussion with Tehran and one that could encompass other issues. But the handful of meetings that are publicly known to have taken place

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between Iran, Iranian officials and American officials in Baghdad are neither serious nor sufficiently high level.

Ironically, this messy, internally contradictory situation could offer the United States one last chance for a political arrangement but would avert full-scale civil war. That, Mr. Chairman, in my view—and I stress that I use the word "might" just now—it might be to avert a full-scale civil war. It would be to create a power-sharing Federal structure that gives more authority to the regions while keeping Iraq a single country within its current international boundaries.

After all, Mr. Chairman, that is what the facts on the ground are, in fact, producing. Facts that the administration is encouraging by supporting the Sunni uprising and by helping by keeping Kurdistan autonomous. That does not apply in the south where the U.S. has no influence.

You will notice that General Petraeus was in London yesterday, according to the newspapers; and I am sure this is true, given the nature of the trip. He was there asking the British to stay engaged, but that isn't going to happen.

This approach would require the sort of creative out-of-the-box thinking that Washington policymakers are always calling for and then always resisting. Washington would have to test the proposition that an Iraq controlled by a strong central government, which is what we are still calling for and what Senator Graham was advocating and, indeed, predicting—Washington would have to test the proposition that an Iraq controlled by a strong central government is not only no longer possible, unless it is under a brutal regime like Saddam's, but it is not even a desirable objective, since it inevitably would contain the seeds of constant uprisings against it by one or another of the regions.

Almost 4 years ago, Les Gelb proposed in a *New York Times* version of this approach, based loosely on the Dayton Peace Agreements that ended the war in Bosnia in 1995, a tripartite power-sharing arrangement. Other people endorsed it as time went along. I supported it from the beginning, indeed, worked with Les on his original article but did not co-sign it for various reasons. Even Henry Kissinger advocated something along these lines in his *Washington Post* column last Sunday.

But these ideas were rejected by the Baker-Hamilton Commission and by the Bush administration, perhaps on the basis of confusion between the Federal system and full partition of the country into three countries, which is not what Les Gelb or Henry Kissinger advocated.

A footnote, for the record, is that Peter Galbraith did advocate that. I have great respect for Peter. He worked for me in Croatia, and that—you have every reason to want to hear from Peter, too. But let us be clear that these are two different proposals; and to talk about Gelb, Biden, Galbraith on one hand is to mix up different proposals. What Les Gelb is talking about, what Kissinger seems to be endorsing is a loose Federal structure.

That is the reason the United States exists. We are a Federal system. It could never have been a unitary state. A loose Federal system is probably the only way to keep Iraq a single country and

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avoid almost continuous war and avoid Iraq becoming a kind of a Somalia, which is where it is headed right now.

That a regionalized Iraq, if any exists, is obvious for the most part on the ground. Yet the administration continues to resist encouraging that it be formalized in a way that allows people to stop killing each other and fighting a central government.

Let us be clear, in conclusion, Mr. Chairman, the high watermark of American involvement in Iraq has already passed, whether people realize it or not. It is not conceivable, at least not to me, that any administration will send more troops to Iraq in the future.

The administration is reducing the troops, and it should not miss its last window to try to negotiate something before, with the departure of the last surge troops next year, it loses its remaining leverage. President Bush has said what we have all known for a long time, that he will pass this war and Afghanistan, two wars, on to his successor. But he still has a chance to pass on something better than the mess he has so far created.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LANTOS. Thank you very much, Ambassador Holbrooke.

Let me begin by asking a fairly basic question that neither Senator Graham nor you addressed, and I would be grateful for your thoughts.

The United States is the one remaining superpower on the face of this planet. We will remain that for a long time to come, with global security responsibilities. How appropriate is it to have a field commander, however able, to define the resource allocation of the one remaining superpower when, in point of fact, his responsibility is exclusively one, albeit an important one, of the 192 countries on the face of this planet?

It seems to me—and I realize that old analogies are flawed—that if you were to deal with a global enterprise and you would ask what it will take to increase your percentage of sales in Holland when you are selling in 100 countries, the sales manager for Holland would provide a formula whereby your sales could increase five-fold.

Any field commander could do that, any regional sales manager could do that, but it is the responsibility of headquarters to make overall global allocations of resources, human and materiel. One of the unspoken aspects of the Petraeus-Crocker testimony, which I attempted to approach, is this fundamental issue. How appropriate is it for a field commander to determine what his needs are and to have the global response of the one remaining global superpower to accommodate itself to the needs as enunciated by the field commander?

Ambassador HOLBROOKE. Mr. Chairman, if, in fact, the theater that you presided over—and I say that with all due respect. You did a wonderful job. I am talking about the fact that it was presented in a very theatrical manner. If, in fact, the theater that took place before this committee and others was really a decision on behalf of the Nation, a field commander, it is without precedent.

Any historian of World War II knows very well that there was a tremendous battle over resources in the Pacific between General MacArthur and Fleet Admiral Nimitz. There was a tremendous ar-

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gument in Europe over a second front of when the invasion should take place. Should it be through Sicily, North Africa, Normandy, elsewhere? That is why you have a chain of command.

There were two wars. Now we have two wars, also, and we have potential emergencies, and we have things like Hurricane Katrina, which could require National Guard troops, which were not available. It is the Commander in Chief's responsibility, on advice of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to do that.

The decision to put a field commander and an ambassador in charge of that decision, if that is what really happened—I don't know. Maybe it was just theater, and maybe they really worked it out. Let's hope so. Because if the Joint Chiefs under Goldwater-Nichols abdicated their responsibility to give the President their own views—and the rumors are they didn't agree with Petraeus on every issue—that is a serious thing which deserves further investigation by your Committee on Armed Services.

It would defy belief that a field commander should have that authority, for the most obvious of reasons. This is not a criticism of General Petraeus. Petraeus' mission is to succeed in Iraq. If you tell them he has to do that, being a very distinguished soldier with a great track record, it is obvious what he is going to do. He is going to say, give me the resources, as General Westmoreland did 39 years ago at this time when he asked President Johnson for another 200,000 troops on top of the 500,000 he already had.

I was working in the White House for President Johnson when that happened. If we had said, "Hey, Westmoreland will make the decisions," we would have kept going up forever. That is not the job of the field commanders.

So I have two answers to your question. I hope that isn't what really happened. I hope what Petraeus presented was the President's view presented as his, because he had more political credibility, although I recall that he began his testimony before you by saying he hadn't even shown it to the White House.

I didn't understand that. Why would he boast to you that the Commander in Chief didn't know what he was going to recommend to you? It defied my understanding. It doesn't sound right, because there have been leaks beforehand. But you are raising a profound issue about the way a civilian controlled the military and the military's own chain of command are being done. You might also ask the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff sometime how the JCS could permit that, and do they endorse it or do they have a different view?

This goes beyond Iraq. This is a profound constitutional question.

Chairman LANTOS. As you well know, Mr. Ambassador, during the early portion of the Petraeus-Crocker hearings, this topic occupied a fair bit of attention. General Petraeus is a man of absolute integrity, and I have the highest personal regard for him, but he stated repeatedly that he never showed his testimony to the White House or to the Pentagon.

Ambassador HOLBROOKE. Which is strange.

Chairman LANTOS. Which are his views. I take him at his word, and I find it very disturbing that central headquarters transferred to a field commander fundamental resource allocation issues relating both to personnel and resources. But that is the testimony of

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General Petraeus. I take him at face value, and I am profoundly concerned by the abdication of its proper role and responsibility by the key people within the administration.

Ambassador HOLBROOKE. And particularly, Mr. Chairman, under Goldwater-Nichols, which was a historic reorganization. What about the Joint Chiefs of Staff who have a congressionally mandated obligation to give their views directly to the President of the United States and, if called upon, to your committees? You have raised a profound, deep point.

I can only hope that while he was giving you a literally factual statement, that they haven't seen the testimony, they at least knew and agreed with what was in it.

Chairman LANTOS. One would hope so.

Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen.

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

I say stick with one conspiracy. MoveOn.org says General Petraeus cooked the books for the White House, that it was Bush's report. Or this one, that it was General Petraeus' secret strategy to undermine the White House and President Bush was hands off about it.

Well, President Bush is Commander in Chief, listened to both the General and the Ambassador and their assessments and their recommendations. Then the President decided on how to proceed, address the Nation, report it to Congress. Whatever conspiracy suits one best, I suppose.

Thank you, Ambassador, for your service to our country and the different roles that you have performed so ably and so well. Thank you for appearing before us.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador HOLBROOKE. First of all, I appreciate your personal comments.

I want to clarify what I just said. I am not part of a conspiracy theory here. Chairman Lantos raised a different point, and I responded to it very precisely.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you.

Ambassador HOLBROOKE. That is a historic point. Anyone who is familiar with the battles between Lincoln and McClellan, or between MacArthur and Nimitz and the European theater and the Pacific theater in World War II, or the argument with MacArthur and then Ridgeway in Korea, or the arguments I lived through in Vietnam, understands that what Chairman Lantos is referred to is the fact that a field commander with a specified mission has to have a specific point of view, which we all respect and we all must listen to, but that the resource allocation, the decider, to use a famous phrase, must be the Commander in Chief on advice of the JCS. And your colleagues, in an earlier generation, strengthened that by the famous Goldwater-Nichols Act, which is a Bible of the Joint Chiefs.

What I believe Congressman Lantos was saying, and I could not agree more, has nothing to do with that sad ad, which should not have been published. It was demeaning to the most serious and solemn debate we are having in this building since 1968. It was about who should have been testifying on where our policy goes.

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The President announces the surge, and then presents the field commander as the policymaker. That has never happened before in our history. It is not a conspiracy theory, I assure you. It is an observation about something without precedent, which the chairman and I in different ways both are expressing concern about.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you for that clarification.

Mr. Ambassador, in an interview with the Council on Foreign Relations in April 2003 you stated, "We should prepare ourselves, the Nation and the Congress, which has to foot the bills, for a long, protracted and potentially difficult presence" in Iraq.

You added, "We are still in Bosnia 7 years later after the Dayton agreement." You added, "I don't think there is anything wrong with this. We're the world's greatest power, we are the leading power, and we have to be ready to accept these heavy responsibilities. The three most important cases in the last 55 years," continuing to quote you, "Germany, Japan and Korea, have succeeded, and these commitments, which are smaller and less costly, are legitimate extensions of American foreign policy."

Mr. Ambassador, your statements in 2003 seem to suggest that the United States should not be surprised to see itself in Iraq still in 2007, if not even later, and I have some questions related to that.

First, do you still believe that the Nation needs to steel itself to prepare itself for a continued presence in Iraq? Do you still believe that America's duty as the world's greatest power is to accept these responsibilities, including Iraq? Would you agree that, were the U.S. to fail, that it would be harmful to American security? Do you believe that Iraq, like Germany, Japan, Korea, is a legitimate extension of American foreign policy and that we can still succeed there, as we did in other cases?

In that same interview, Mr. Ambassador, you stated that the "American public and the Congress need to face up to a long-term commitment, which won't be cheap, and we have to be prepared to pay the bill."

Do you believe that the American public and this Congress can face up to its commitments in Iraq when so many call for a precipitous withdrawal?

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Ambassador HOLBROOKE. I can only tell you I can't say how deeply I regret the efficiency of your research.

I did say those things. It is important to stress the moment I said them. The invasion had taken place. We were in. The administration, led by people like the Secretary of Defense, the Vice President and the Deputy Secretary, and the acolytes and cheerleaders in the political spectrum and the press were proclaiming that it was a cakewalk, and we would be out very quickly. There were projections in the papers that we would be out in a year or 2. You all remember them. I am sure you held hearings about them.

My intent in that interview was to say that the administration had taken us into a war, was getting us something much deeper than they were telling the American public. I stand by that.

However, I made a serious error in projecting, prognostication or crystal-ball gazing. I did not see the guerilla war that was going to take place. I simply didn't see it.

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In this regard, I know that Senator Graham said to you that we sent too few troops. That is clearly true. But had we sent triple the amount of troops, we still would have encountered an insurgency.

Would we have done better against it? Yes. Would we have turned the tide? Not so clear. So we shouldn't sit here simply saying that was the only mistake that was made.

But I thank you for drawing your attention to these statements, but, in retrospect, I would have phrased with more hindsight.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Welcome to the club. Thank you so much, Mr. Ambassador.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LANTOS. Thank you.

The gentleman from Georgia, Mr. Scott.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you.

Let me ask you, if I may, the major concerns that I have is the strain on the military, our capacity in this endeavor, which I think trumps whatever we have to do. We don't have the troops. I would like to get your comments on the status of the military as you see it now, particularly with the fact that we have one-half of our military capacity engaged in Iraq. Military men and women, many are on their third and fourth tours of duty. We can't continue to move in the direction that we have, the hypocrisy of pretending we are having a drawdown of troops, when, in fact, we are just simply removing the surge numbers, and we are back where we are now in term of the tactics of this administration, but especially the cost of the wear and tear on our military, the lack of reserves necessary and, quite honestly, the perilous position we are placed in because of that.

When you look at Iran and China and Russia and other areas, and particularly others in the Middle East, we will not be ready to respond, if—even if we had to.

Ambassador HOLBROOKE. Congressman Scott, everybody is aware of the degraded Army. The only issue is, how degraded is it and how long will it take to recover and how much will it cost? I remember exactly the same discussion after Vietnam, with the fundamental difference that we still had a draft for much of that period.

I am not the right person to ask the detailed questions. It is not my field. It is of the highest importance, but I would defer to the experts in readiness. That it is a central problem, that is clear. It is one of the main reasons for Chairman Lantos' prior question, because the JCS has the global responsibility that he referred to.

General Petraeus has the local responsibility to succeed in Iraq. What he needs to succeed may be working against the global readiness issue, plus the subplot of Afghanistan. But I can't give you details.

Mr. SCOTT. May I follow that up, also, to get a more clear understanding of what you are saying about departmentalizing Iraq into a federation. Would you give us a clearer understanding of exactly what you are talking about and how would that differ from what Senator Biden is offering?

Ambassador HOLBROOKE. Congressman Scott, well, if you want to ask me what my differences are with what Les Gelb has proposed and others, and it gets very nuanced, but let me put it in the simplest terms. Broadly speaking, in oversimplified terms,

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there are two kinds of states. There are Federal states and unitary states. India and the United States are Federal states, and France and Japan are simply unitary states. Everything is run from Paris or Tokyo.

In the U.S—and this is the whole reason we were structured this way after the—why we didn't have a single central government, why the States had certain powers, the whole debate was over this issue. Whether it works well or not I leave to your judgment.

In Bosnia, there is no way that war would ever have ended if you had not had two regions. At the time, people said you are partitioning Bosnia. But we didn't partition Bosnia. We held it together by giving each of the regions some powers and some to the center. You can argue we didn't get the balance right. You can argue we didn't get the balance right in the United States, the whole States movement. The whole battle over civil rights was whether States could make decisions or the Federal Government. So we have a long history of this ourselves, and we fought a whole war over this issue.

But, back to Iraq, the administration has continually said they want a strong and effective national government. They use phrases like "government of national unity."

What I am submitting to you today, Mr. Scott, is not the details of the solution. Because I don't know them, you don't know them, only Iraqis can work it out for themselves.

What I am submitting is the idea that trying to strengthen the Maliki government won't ever happen. I am taking issue with my friend, Senator Graham, who said to you—I believe you were already here at the end of his very eloquent presentation. I believe I heard him say that in the next 6 months we are going to see Sunnis, Kurds and Shiites come together.

I wish it were true.

Chairman LANTOS. He said 90 days.

Ambassador HOLBROOKE. Ninety days. I am submitting to you as my core, underlying point—and it is useful to testify after Lindsey Graham, because we share a lot of the same judgments of what is happening in the ground, and then we come to completely different predictions.

I am assuming that the Sunni awakening in the west is going to create a Sunnistan in the west, like the Kurdistan of the north and the Shi'astan, which is in the process of being created with Iraq, as Iraq is the dominant now.

What do you do about that? Option A, try to create a strong central government along the lines Lindsay Graham thinks will happen. I am saying I don't think it will happen.

Option B, divide it into three different countries. Let it break up the way Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and Ethiopia, Eritrea broke up into three separate nations. Peter Galbraith has proposed that in his book, *The End of Iraq*.

Option C, what Les Gelb proposed, the Bosnia solution. One country, the same international border, the one seat in the U.N., one Foreign Minister. I was going to say one currency, but we have already passed that point. The Kurds have their own currency, their own flag. But one country, one national character, and a lot

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of autonomy and a loose central government. That why you don't have a tremendous—you don't have as much argument.

Now, it ain't that easy, and the biggest problem with it is oil revenue. Because the Sunnis don't have any oil-producing areas. There is oil in the ground. Senator Graham said there is no oil. That is not true. The Sunnis have oil, but it has never been explored and found, and nobody is going to do the drilling there under the current security circumstances. My guess is, eventually, the Chinese will come in, because they are willing to take the risks.

But those are the three options. Let's call them unitary state, one; three countries, two; and federalism, three.

Lindsey Graham is predicting one; Galbraith is proposing number two, three countries partition, a word I won't use; and I am advocating the Federal solution, which is where it is going anyway and which our support of the Sunnis in the west and the Kurds in the north is going anyway.

So what I am saying was a policy on the ground is at odds with our articulated goal, and this was simply crystal clear in your hearings. Really listen to the hearings, get past the theater, and that is what was going on in this room. They were presenting events on the ground, which were positive from their point of view, and then going right on to say, but we must have a strong central government.

I don't think it is going to happen, and I am not saying this to be a negativist, or I don't want us to lose in Iraq. I want us to salvage what we can from this mess.

I believe, Mr. Chairman, the Federal approach gives us one last chance. But we ought to do it before the troops are gone and we have lost all our leverage.

Chairman LANTOS. The gentleman from California, Mr. Rohrabacher.

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

First of all, let me note that we have heard that, too few troops being the worst mistake, and I totally disagree with that assessment.

Ambassador Holbrooke, how many troops did we have on the ground in Afghanistan when the Taliban and the al-Qaeda forces, which numbered in the tens of thousands of troops, were driven out of that country? How many troops did we have on the ground?

Ambassador HOLBROOKE. I don't know, because the actual number was classified, because it was in two groups.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Likely fewer than 100, likely fewer than 100.

Ambassador HOLBROOKE. No, sir, it was more. Are you talking about when the Taliban were driven out of Kabul and Kandahar?

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Correct. How many American troops participated in trying to drive the Taliban out of Kabul, for example? Almost none. The fact is that the fighting that was done in Afghanistan was done by the Afghan people themselves.

Ambassador HOLBROOKE. The Northern Alliance.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. That is correct, the Northern Alliance.

I think the central mistake that has been made in Iraq was the fact that, as you are intimating now, however, that there was a concept of a strong central government from the very beginning

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that did not lead us to make the compromises with the equivalent of the northern alliance in Iraq.

We turned down Ambassador Bremer. It is very famous. They turned down the tribal leaders. He turned down the others who would have liked to have participated earlier on because they wanted the strong central government.

Let me note that the State Department pushed that over and over again. In fact, they almost destroyed what we accomplished in Afghanistan by, again, not going forward with a Federal system as what you are advocating now in Iraq.

I take a little bit of homage here—I don't know what the word is—but I am upset a little bit about your use of the word "theater" in terms of General Petraeus' presentation and this what I consider to be nonsensical questioning of whether or not—why did he indicate the White House had not read these remarks?

Well, it is clear why he didn't. Because there are Members of Congress who are trying to cast aspersions on his testimony as if he was just mouthing the words because he was ordered to do so. That is very clear. There is nothing mysterious about that.

If there was fear involved in this, Mr. Ambassador, let us note that the General was required—this testimony was required by Congress for him to come up here. This was not done by the White House. This was not done by Petraeus. This was something we demanded. I say "we" as the United States Congress.

So I don't think that we should try to cast doubts about General Petraeus, claiming that this was all theater. This was not theater.

Now, do you believe—do you agree with Mr. Rumsfeld then that there is only one Commander in Chief, and that is the President and, thus, we cannot have generals come up here and be frank with us about what their opinions are?

Ambassador HOLBROOKE. I am not sure what comments you are referring to. We obviously have only one Commander in Chief, and generals should absolutely share their views. If the word "theater" you find offensive, when I meant it in an ironic sense, I would be willing to withdraw the remark. Because I am really here to help forge in a small way a bipartisan consensus on the most serious problem we have faced in at least 40 years.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. I accept that.

Ambassador HOLBROOKE. Thank you for that.

But I do want to underscore the profound importance of the issue that the chairman has raised about reporting. The fact that General Petraeus was required by the Congress to come up here is entirely appropriate. The fact that he kind of boasted that he hadn't shown the testimony at his own chain of command was puzzling. It wasn't necessary.

Finally, it was really about the decision-making process.

I really think, particularly if you're an historian, and I know your military history, I think if you are an historian of previous arguments over tactics and strategy in the military, you will know that there is a reason why we have a Joint Chiefs of Staff now, something that did not exist before the Roosevelt era.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Certainly. But let me just note that General Petraeus was here. There are people who are trying to suggest that he was not being frank with us. That is the reason why General

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Petraeus had to insist that he did not have approval of this. I found that—and I thank you for your understanding—but claiming that is theater is not——

My time is up. I have to make one point.

Ambassador HOLBROOKE. Yes, sir.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Number one, I think that your presentation today, I think, was very illuminating in terms of what you are saying about the various alternatives that we have; and I just want to put myself on the record as suggesting that I think that was—I appreciate you coming here and explaining that. I think that is enormously valuable. It is too bad—when we say that this administration has made mistakes, it is too bad that we didn't have that type of approach from the beginning and your advice earlier on. That probably would have been very beneficial to helping us prevent this malaise or morass that we are in right now.

Ambassador HOLBROOKE. I appreciate your comments.

With your permission, I just want to repeat one sentence that I said at the outset so you know we are starting on the same script. I began by saying, and I quote, let's not "question the intelligence, the courage or the commitment of" General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker, but let's "examine carefully what they said, what they didn't say, and what it means for the future."

Chairman LANTOS. If I may interrupt for a moment, we have three votes pending that members will need to respond to. When do you need to leave, Ambassador Holbrooke?

Ambassador HOLBROOKE. I have a speech to make at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce; and I need to be there by 12:30, 12:45. I need to leave here, really, in about 35 minutes, if that is all right.

Chairman LANTOS. Of course. We very much appreciate your presence. We are very grateful for your thoughtful and insightful testimony.

Under those circumstances, I will not have an opportunity to give other colleagues a chance to question, because we will be gone at least 35 minutes.

We are grateful to you, and this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:43 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

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APPENDIX

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING RECORD

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

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for convening today's important hearing to assess the Administration's report on Iraq. In this September Report, the Bush Administration describes the U.S. strategy in Iraq as "A New Way Forward;" however their current strategy is riddled with the same open-endedness and lack of competence as the previous strategy. I would also like to thank the Committee's Ranking Member, and to welcome our two distinguished witnesses: the Honorable Lindsey Graham, United States Senator, and the Honorable Richard C. Holbrooke, Vice Chairman, Perseus LLC.

Mr. Chairman, the administration has consistently placed far too great an emphasis on military objectives and solutions, and has consequently not allowed diplomacy the role it was intended to play in our global system. The administration stated, "In the coming months, the United States will continue to operate along four lines of operation—security, political, economic, and diplomatic—to advance our objectives." In our war on terror, diplomacy cannot be used as a last resort. A war on terrorism is, as the Bush Administration has stated, a war for the "hearts and minds," which simply cannot be won through military action.

Mr. Chairman, our troops in Iraq did everything we asked them to do. We sent them overseas to fight an army; they are now caught in the midst of an insurgent civil war and political upheaval. I have, for some time now, advocated for Congressional legislation declaring a military victory in Iraq, and recognizing the success of our military. Our brave troops have completed the task we set for them; it is time now to bring them home. Our next steps should not be a continuing escalation of military involvement, but instead a diplomatic surge.

As the former chairman and vice chairman of the 9/11 Commission, Thomas H. Kean and Lee H. Hamilton, recently stated, "Military power is essential to our security, but if the only tool is a hammer, pretty soon every problem looks like a nail. We must use all the tools of U.S. power—including foreign aid, educational assistance and vigorous public diplomacy that emphasizes scholarship, libraries and exchange programs—to shape a Middle East and a Muslim world that are less hostile to our interests and values. America's long-term security relies on being viewed not as a threat but as a source of opportunity and hope."

This is why I introduced H.R. 930, the "Military Success in Iraq and Diplomatic Surge for National and Political Reconciliation in Iraq Act of 2007." This legislation would make diplomacy and statecraft tools of the first, rather than the last, resort. We must seek constructive engagement with Iraq, its neighbors, and the rest of the international community, as we work to bring resolution to this calamitous conflict that has already gone on far too long. Even top military officials are beginning to explore withdrawal options. Recent reports have indicated that General Petraeus's superior, Admiral William J. Fallon, has reportedly begun developing plans to redefine the U.S. mission in Iraq, including a radical reduction in troop numbers; he is far from the only high ranking military official to question the President's strategy.

Despite the multitude of mistakes perpetrated by President Bush and former Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, our troops have achieved a military success in ousting Saddam Hussein and assisting the Iraqis in administering a democratic election and electing a democratic government. However, only the Iraqi government can secure a lasting peace. Time and time again, the Iraqi government has demonstrated an inability to deliver on the political benchmarks that they themselves agreed were essential to achieving national reconciliation. Continuing to put the lives of our soldiers and our national treasury in the hands of what by most informed accounts,

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even by members of the Bush Administration, is an ineffective central Iraqi government is irresponsible and contrary to the wishes of the overwhelming majority of the American people.

Two weeks ago, this Committee heard testimony on the recently released Government Accountability Office report on Iraqi progress toward the 18 legislative, economic, and security benchmarks. The Comptroller General of the GAO informed members that only 3 of these benchmarks have been met by the Maliki government. Despite the surge, despite increasing U.S. military involvement, the Iraqi government has not made substantial progress toward stabilizing their country. The over 3750 U.S. casualties and the $3,816 per second we are spending in Iraq have not bought peace or security.

We are not here today to debate whether there has been some decrease in violence in Baghdad. The United States military is a skilled and highly proficient organization, and where there are large numbers of U.S. troops, it is unsurprising that we see fewer incidents of violence. However, it is our responsibility to take a longer-term view. The United States will not and should not permanently prop up the Iraqi government and military. U.S. military involvement in Iraq will come to an end, and, when U.S. forces leave, the responsibility for securing their nation will fall to Iraqis themselves. And so far, we have not seen a demonstrated commitment by the Iraqi government.

Mr. Chairman, President Bush stated in June 2005, "Our strategy can be summed up this way: As the Iraqis stand up, we will stand down." Instead of concentrating on building local capacity and applying pressure to the Maliki government to force them to take responsibility for the destiny of their nation, the Administration has chosen to pursue policies, namely the Baghdad security plan, that focus on continued combat by U.S. forces, rather than transferring responsibilities to Iraqis. As a result, Iraqi security forces (ISF) remain entirely dependent upon U.S. troops; the August 2007 National Intelligence Estimate reports that the ISF "have not improved enough to conduct major combat operations independent of the Coalition" and "remain reliant on the Coalition for important aspects of logistics and combat support." With the New Way Forward strategy, American troops continue to shoulder the majority of the war effort.

How will we know when the American forces are no longer needed? General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker are scheduled to report to Congress, once again, in March of 2008. In testimony before a Joint Foreign Affairs-Armed Services Committees hearing last week, both Petraeus and Crocker painted an optimistic picture of the situation in Iraq, making frequent reference to the progress and success in the Anbar province. However, Iraqi Parliament member and leading Shi'a cleric, Jamal Al-Din, said in a Congressional Briefing the following day that he did not recognize the country they described as the Iraq he represents, an Iraq that continues to be riddles with factionalism, extremism, and domestic strife. Even the Administration's report projects a daunting list of challenges that face American troops on Iraq as well as Iraqis. These include: communal struggle for power between Shi'a majority and Sunni Kurd and other minorities; Al-Qaeda extremists in Iraq acting as accelerants for ethno-sectarian violence; Iranian lethal support to Shi'a militants; and foreign support to extremists in Iraq. And while General Petraeus and the Bush administration have been stressing the progress made in the region and the need for more time, they failed to note that sizeable increase in ethno-sectarian deaths in July and August and the fact that ethno-sectarian violence presents a substantial challenge to stability in the region, particularly in rural areas where security presence is light.

And while the situation in Iraq presents an open-ended military challenge to our forces abroad, our presence in the region may be hindering the security of our nation. Evidence suggests that not only is increased U.S. military presence in Iraq not making that nation more secure, it may also be threatening our national security by damaging our ability to respond to real threats to our own homeland. The recently released video by Osama bin Laden serves to illustrate that President Bush has not caught this international outlaw, nor brought him to justice. Instead, he has diverted us from the real war on terror to the war of his choice in Iraq.

Recently, the former chairman and vice chairman of the 9/11 commission, Thomas H. Kean and Lee H. Hamilton, published an op-ed in the Washington Post examining the question of whether our nation is safer today, six years after 9/11. Kean and Hamilton concluded, "We still lack a sense of urgency in the face of grave danger." The persistence of this threat is attributed to "a mixed record of reform, a lack of focus, and a resilient foe," and the authors note that our own actions have contributed to a rise of radicalization and rage in the Muslim world. Kean and Hamilton write that "no conflict drains more time, attention, blood, treasure, and support

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from our worldwide counterterrorism efforts than the war in Iraq. It has become a powerful recruiting and training tool for al-Qaeda."

Mr. Chairman, Iraq faces a severe crisis. With a factionalist government in which parties are based on religion, a qualification that is strictly forbidden within the Iraqi constitution, religious, tribal, and ethnic tensions remain high and mere subsistence has become a challenge to the average citizen. The UNHCR has recently said that more than two million Iraqi's have claimed refugee status abroad since the invasion, while an additional 60,000 people flee their homes each month. In a recent statement, Ambassador Crocker the admission of refugees was "bogged down by major bottlenecks." The administration has spent so much time and money on its military strategy that it is ill-equipped to handle the human rights atrocity that is occurring. And while the United States delays admission of refugees based on a myriad of bureaucratic "security checks," Ambassador Crocker states, "Refugees who have fled Iraq continue to be a vulnerable population while living in Jordan and Syria."

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I would like to draw attention to the lack of adequate oversight of the American war effort. Given the enormous amount of resources involved, coupled with the catastrophic costs in human lives, we would certainly expect adequate management of U.S. funds and military supplies. We would expect clear records of exactly where those $10 billion a month is going, and to whom it is being given. And yet, the GAO reports that the Pentagon has lost track of over 190,000 weapons, given to Iraqis, particularly in 2004 and 2005. The report's author stated that the U.S. military does not know what happened to 30 percent of the weapons the United States distributed to Iraqi forces from 2004 through early this year as part of an effort to train and equip the troops. These weapons could be used to kill our American troops.

In addition, only yesterday, the Iraqi government stated that it would review the status of all private security firms operating in the country. This announcement came after a controversial gunfight on Sunday, involving the U.S.-based firm Blackwater USA, left eight civilians dead. Mr. Chairman, reports indicate that there are currently at least 28 private security companies operating in Iraq, employing thousands of security guards. This incident suggests the need for superior oversight and accountability for contractors in Iraq.

Mr. Chairman, the real tragedy of this war has been the deaths of so many of our American sons and daughters. At current count, the Department of Defense had confirmed a total of 3783U.S. casualties. In addition, more than 27,660 have been wounded in the Iraq war since it began in March 2003. June, July, and August have marked the bloodiest months yet in the conflict, and U.S. casualties in Iraq are 62 percent higher this year than at this time in 2006. This misguided, mismanaged, and misrepresented war has claimed too many lives of our brave servicemen; its depth, breadth, and scope are without precedent in American history.

Mr. Chairman, perhaps no issue will more define this Congress than how we conclude this misguided conflict. I am proud to be a part of a Congress that is listening to the clearly expressed will of the American people, and I remain, as ever, committed to ending this truly tragic conflict.

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

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HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

SEPTEMBER 19, 2007

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COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

SEPTEMBER 19, 2007

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