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THE WAY FORWARD IN IRAQ

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS
FIRST SESSION

HEARING HELD
JANUARY 11, 2007

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THE WAY FORWARD IN IRAQ

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC, Thursday, January 11, 2007.

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 1 p.m., in room 2118, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Ike Skelton (chairman of the committee) presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. IKE SKELTON, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM MISSOURI, CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The CHAIRMAN. Ladies and gentlemen, the hearing will come to order.

This is the opening hearing for the Committee on Armed Services in the 110th Congress. It is a pleasure to see all of my returning colleagues, as well as the new faces, and I will have to admit that it is a pleasure to have the gavel. And I especially appreciate the gentleman from California who gave the gavel to me at our organizational gathering just a couple of days ago, and I will do my best to use it as thoroughly as I possibly can.

I appreciate your doing so. So, welcome.

The purpose of this hearing is to discuss the President's proposal for the way forward in Iraq. Testifying on that proposal and ready to answer questions, of course we have our newly appointed Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Peter Pace. Secretary Gates has had a long and distinguished government career, culminating in his years as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency from 1991 to 1993. And we are blessed to have you, Mr. Secretary, and thank you for making this your very first hearing in the Congress of the United States.

General Pace, of course, is an old pro in this room, as he is in the United States Marine Corps and is the leader of our joint forces. As always, General Pace, we count on your candor and your good judgment in performing our constitutional responsibility for oversight, as well as your duty under the Goldwater-Nichols Act, which was passed in 1986, which we would like to thank you for. I understand, General Pace, you do not have prepared testimony as per we had discussed earlier.

I notice, if I may, on page five, Mr. Secretary, of your written testimony, you are going to turn to General Pace to provide the summary of the military installments of the President's plan. That, of course, is a critical piece of what the President laid out last evening, and our committee is given the responsibility for oversight of that. I understand the arrangement with you and General Pace

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was that the only formal testimony to be presented would be by you, Mr. Secretary, and the General would be available for questions during our time of interrogation.

We, of course, had to waive committee rule XIII, by virtue of the fact of the President's speech last night, which requires witnesses to submit their testimony not less than 48 hours before the hearing and, further, the part that you will turn to General Pace for was not included in your statement or a proposed statement by him. I am sure it was a matter of miscommunication, but I did wish to bring that to the members' attention because I undoubtedly will receive inquiry on that.

But so we know, General Pace, when the Secretary does turn to you, we will accept your testimony as you have planned despite the fact that it is not laid out.

Hopefully, you, Mr. Secretary, could provide us a summary at the end of the hearing so we can extend your remarks formally.

Secretary GATES. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Now, I suspect this hearing may be marked by a bit of pessimism and a number of hard questions, so let me, Mr. Secretary, start on a positive note.

I was enormously pleased to hear the President embrace a substantial and permanent increase in the size of our ground forces—the Army and Marines. This committee began receiving testimony to that effect in 1995 when, then, our military general, Lieutenant General Ted Stroup, testified we needed 40,000 more troops. Sometimes I feel and my colleagues may feel like a broken record ever since. Every time I had a chance to say I needed more Army, more Marines, I was delighted to have the President and you, Mr. Secretary, chiming in on the chorus. Our soldiers, in particular, are worn out. This increase is a smart policy, and I am more than pleased to say, "Better late than never."

A history lesson: in 1942, the War Department began planning for the administration of what would become the occupied areas of Europe. These plans progressed to the point where, by 1943, General George Marshall selected Major General John Hilldring to prepare plans for the civil affairs administrators and military governors in those occupied areas of Europe. General Marshall told him that the Army did not want the job, but they were going to do it properly, and they did it.

Compare that to our situation today. After a remarkable drive into Baghdad in April of 2003, our troops found themselves asking each other, "Well, what now?" It was a good question. There was no plan issued to them. Such plans existed, however. General Zinni had one when he was the Central Command (CENTCOM) commander. The State Department had their "Future of Iraq Project." We were told that some commanders subordinate to General Franks began planning on their own accord, but those plans never made it into the hands of our troops.

Now, while I could run you through the efforts of retired Lieutenant General Jay Garner and the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance, his successor, Ambassador Paul Bremer, and the Coalition Provisional Authority and what has happened since the transition of sovereignty to the Iraqi people, I will spare you the litany of errors. There are detailed histories available for

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that in Tom Ricks' book, *Fiasco*, as well as in the book entitled *Cobra II*.

In any case, the proof, as they say, is in the pudding, and we have got a mess on our hands in Iraq. The time for a so-called "surge" in troop numbers was back in 2003 with, as General Eric Shinseki said, several hundred thousand troops and with a coordinated political and economic plan for the postwar reconstruction. Sadly, we are three and a half years too late and several hundred thousand troops short.

Time has passed, and time has not been kind to the situation on the ground. Attacks and casualties are at an all-time high, and while there is a democratically-elected government, it is not at all clear to me that Prime Minister Maliki has the ability or the will to control the violence or broker compromise among the competing sectarian and religious groups.

There is no silver bullet, but I remain convinced that we must send a signal to the Iraqis that they must take a much greater responsibility for their own security. We must do this while we rebuild the strength of our forces, which has been sapped by repeated deployments and decimated equipment. Four percent—Mr. Secretary, you know this—four percent of all of the Army equipment seems to be in Iraq or in Afghanistan, and so much of it is not here on the listed training for the future.

I continue to listen to all proposals. The gradual and responsible redeployment of some number of troops achieves both goals. Will this temporary increase in troops have a well-defined mission? Will it quickly get us to the point of responsible redeployment? We have increased our troop levels in Baghdad before, four times as I understand it, and the violence has only increased.

So, with those thoughts in mind, I visited the President earlier this week, and I listened to the speech last night, and despite the President's statement where he said, "It is clear that we need to change our strategy in Iraq," he did not present a new strategy. It is only a change in tactics.

A new strategy would have redefined the end state to something different and then laid out the ways and means to accomplish it. Instead, the President has offered some adjustments, but these adjustments do not represent a radical departure from what we are doing today.

The military side of the plan might do some good in the short term if it is executed by capable commanders and if the Iraqi forces in the field step up to the challenges presented them, but there are issues of sustainability, and I hope you both will address how long this effort will be designed to be sustaining.

But the pivotal element of this entire plan does not lie with the military plan; it is with the political will and commitment of the Iraqi leadership and of the Iraqi people. They must be ready to seize the moment to go after the militias, to purge sectarianism from the ministries' and the military's ranks and to allow the Iraqi security forces to go after the targets they must to bring security. The President says he has confidence in the Prime Minister, but we need to understand how the United States will hold the Iraqis accountable by measuring their progress and what will be done if the Iraqi government fails to deliver on its promises.

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Of all of my questions, Mr. Secretary, I worry the most about our strategic risk. Part of the committee's job is making sure the military can meet its future missions as well as today's operational requirements. This requires an examination of how much strategic risk we are taking as a result of being in Iraq on a sustained basis with the troop levels we have there, but when we look at these issues, we are trying to make sure that, in the worst case, our military could deter or fight a potential adversary who threatens America's interests. It is only by looking at our current operational demands and plans to increase those demands and determine whether those demands increase our strategic risk for meeting future challenges. If they do, it is our obligation to take steps to reduce that risk because we must ensure that we can protect the American people and its interests today as well as in the future.

This committee must take a very serious look at these questions. Today is the first of several hearings on this subject.

Again, I thank you for making this your very first hearing. There will be future hearings to pursue these issues in depth for their views, with the Army Chief of Staff, with the Commandant of the Marine Corps, to discuss strategic risk and both the readiness and personnel implications of it. Our first step is to hear from you gentlemen, and I look forward to your testimony.

One administrative note to my members. I intend to adhere to the five-minute rule at this and at the other hearings. Of course, the gentleman from California whom, by the way, I owe an apology to. I introduced him previously as being from San Francisco—he is from San Diego—and he and I, of course, by rule, are exempt from that, but we will do our best to be as brief as humanly possible.

Before I yield to my friend from California, you may have been wondering where Solomon Ortiz was for a couple of days. Congressman Ortiz, our friend from Texas, was attending the ceremony of his son. He is being sworn into the state legislature of the State of Texas, and we are so proud for you as well as for him, Solomon. I am told that he graduated from Texas A&M that, Mr. Secretary, you are a graduate of.

Let me yield to the gentleman who has been my friend and my partner through the years, and we thank him for his courtesy, again publicly, for making the transition work and work smoothly, my friend and ranking member, Duncan Hunter, from California.

STATEMENT OF HON. DUNCAN HUNTER, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM CALIFORNIA, RANKING MEMBER, COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Chairman, thank you, and thanks to our guests for being with us this morning.

And, Mr. Secretary and General Pace, let me start off by joining with the chairman on his strong affirmation that we do need to increase the size of the U.S. Marine Corps and the U.S. Army. This committee has actually led the increase that has taken place. We have moved the end strength from the Marine Corps up from 175,000 to 180,000, and we have moved the Army from 482,000 to 512,000. Your recommendation that is manifested in your statement, I believe, would take the Army up to 547,000 and take the Marine Corps up to 202,000.

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We will make available to you our analysis of the Quadrennial Defense Review in the wake of the QDR in which we recommended an increase of eight Marine battalions, nine Marine battalions, and eight Army brigades, so I commend that to you. I will take a look at it and see if some of the analysis does not track with the current analysis going on in the Pentagon, but it looks to me like the numbers are not far apart in your recommendation and this recommendation that we did.

Gentlemen, you have already served this country effectively, and we appreciate you. We appreciate your commitment. And, Dr. Gates, thanks for taking on this extraordinarily difficult challenge.

Now, last night, the President outlined a new strategy for Iraq, and he told us that in this plan, as part of the plan, he is going to be calling up reinforcements to carry out the plan. Let me just state that I intend to support him strongly. Four thousand of those reinforcements are going to be going to Anbar province. I have talked to the Marine leadership; they have requested of those persons that increase in Marine strength. Seventeen thousand five hundred are going to be utilized in other provinces, primarily Baghdad and primarily to carry out what I refer to as the "Baghdad plan." And I think the Baghdad plan offers a bolder use of Iraqi military forces and an innovative use of American forces.

I want to go especially to the point that I understand that the plan involves a commitment by the Iraqi government to deploy 9 additional Iraqi battalions into the heart and battle within that city. Those battalions coming from the north and south of Iraq are coming from some of the peaceful areas that we have noted are the provinces in which some 27 Iraqi battalions have been stationed, and those 9 battalions will be joining in Operation Baghdad.

I recommend going further and working with the Iraqi government to ensure that all Iraqi battalions participate at some point in what I would call "combat tours" of these hotspot or contention areas. As our witnesses know, I strongly believe that such redeployment will battle hard in the Iraqi units. It will also reinforce civilian control of the military; that is, when that battalion commander gets a call from the Ministry of Defense to move out and he does not saddle up and move out, that he is then replaced with a commander who will move out. It will also help develop the military chain of command and minimize what we are seeing now in localized militaries that have what I would call a "community bias" in your area of operations.

Today I wrote a letter to the President recognizing the positive aspects of this new strategy and, in particular, what I call the Baghdad 3-to-1 plan; and please tell me during your testimony if it is other than as I understand it through the briefings that we have had. The 3-to-1 plan uses a combination of three Iraqi battalions and one U.S. battalion in a backup role in each of nine security sectors in that city. I have recommended to the President that that, in fact, is the case, and if it works in Baghdad, that we use this plan as a blueprint for handing off security responsibilities throughout Iraq.

As I told the President, this plan leverages the Iraqi military's unique ability to operate in the urban environment that does not require high-tech. It is obviously important that they have the cul-

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tural understanding and language capability to do that, which Americans do not have, and it allows the Americans to support the operations by moving to what I would call our "leverage positions" of special operations, intelligence, firepower, precision strike, and logistics capabilities.

The Iraqis that are in Baghdad will gain combat experience. This will improve their military capabilities. They will increase operational confidence through these combined U.S.-Iraqi operations. And I would see—if this works in Baghdad, Mr. Secretary, I would see the opportunity to employ it throughout the country, but particularly those contention areas where you have three Iraqi maneuver battalions with one American backup battalion.

And after the Iraqi forces hit their stride and are operating efficiently, the American battalion can then turn over to an Iraqi battalion, leaving essentially the security apparatus in the hands of the Iraqis.

I think this can serve as a template, and I would hope that you would look at it and talk to the battalion commanders in theater and see if we cannot utilize it throughout the country, understanding, of course, that we have used this partnership, this combined arms and combined forces, in a number of operations. So let me just offer that to you, and we will give you some backup data on this recommendation.

Let me just conclude by saying this: I think that this operation in Iraq is following the basic blueprint that we have followed in this country for 60 years in bringing freedom to other nations. Whether you are talking about Japan or the Philippines or El Salvador or dozens of other nations, that is to stand up a free government. Number two, you stand up a military capable of protecting that free government. Number three, the Americans leave, and right now we are involved in the most difficult challenge, which is standing up that military which is capable of protecting a free government.

The President has a plan. He has vetted it with his military leadership. He has requested reinforcements to Anbar and to Baghdad to make this plan work, and I think it is incumbent upon us in light of the fact that we are engaged in combat right now, that reinforcements have been requested, that they are needed; and this 21,500-person increase takes us essentially to the same level that we were last year at this time.

I recommend strongly to my colleagues that we support the military leadership, that we support the commander in chief and, Mr. Chairman, that we support the call for reinforcements.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank my friend from San Diego. Did I get it right?

Mr. HUNTER. Very good.

The CHAIRMAN. I got it right. Thank you so much.

Mr. Secretary, the floor is yours.

STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT M. GATES, SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Secretary GATES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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Congressman Hunter, members of the committee, let me say at the outset that it is a pleasure to appear before this committee for the first time as Secretary of Defense and, I might add, on the anniversary of the conclusion on my third week on the job.

The House Armed Services Committee has long been a steadfast friend and ally of our men and women in uniform and a source of support in meeting our Nation's defense goals. I thank you for that, and I look forward to working with you.

Let me begin by advising you of two announcements that I made this morning. First, the President announced last night that he would strengthen our military for the long war and its terrorism by authorizing an increase in the overall strength of the Army and the Marine Corps. I am recommending to him a total increase in the two services of 92,000 soldiers and Marines over the next 5 years, 65,000 soldiers and 27,000 Marines. The emphasis will be on increasing combat capability. This increase will be accomplished in two ways.

First, we will propose to make permanent the temporary increase of 30,000 for the Army and 5,000 for the Marine Corps. Then we propose to build up from that basis over a 5-year period annual increments of 7,000 troops per year for the Army for a total of, as Mr. Hunter said, 547,000; and 5,000 a year for 5 years for the Marine Corps until they reach 202,000.

I am aware that this committee has been leading the national debate over the proper size of the military and, accordingly, I hope that you will join us in supporting this important initiative. It will take some time for these new troops to become available for deployment, but it is important that our men and women in uniform know that additional manpower and resources are on the way.

Second, for several months, the Department has been assessing whether we have the right policies to govern how we manage and deploy members of the reserves, the national guard and active component units. Based on this assessment and the recommendations of our military leadership, I am prepared to make the following changes to Department of Defense policy.

First, mobilization of ground force, ground reserve forces, will be managed on a unit basis instead of on an individual basis. This change will allow us to achieve greater unit cohesion and predictability in how reserve units train and deploy.

Second, from this point forward, members of the reserves will be involuntarily mobilized for a maximum of 1 year at any one time in contrast to the current practice of 16 to 24 months.

Third, the planning objective for the guard and reserve units will remain one year of being mobilized followed by five years demobilized. However, today's global demands will require a number of selected guard and reserve units to be remobilized sooner than this standard. Our intention is that such exceptions will be temporary. The goal for the active force rotation cycle remains one year deployed for every two years at home station. Today, however, most active units are receiving one year at home before deploying again. Mobilizing select guard and reserve units before their five-year period is complete will allow us to move closer to relieving the stress on the total force.

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Fourth, I am directing the establishment of a new program to compensate individuals in both the active and reserve components who are required to mobilize or deploy early or to extend beyond the established rotation policy goals.

Fifth and finally, I am directing that all commands and units review how they administer the hardship waiver program to ensure that they are properly taking into account exceptional circumstances facing our military families of deployed service members.

It is important to note that these policy changes have been under discussion for some time within the Department of Defense and would be needed regardless of the President's announcement on Iraq last night.

Finally, I am pleased to report that all of the active branches of the United States military exceeded their recruiting goals for the month of December with particularly strong showings by the Army and the Marine Corps. Our Nation is truly blessed that so many talented and patriotic young people have stepped forward to defend our Nation and that so many servicemen and women have chosen to continue to serve.

A few words on the new Iraq strategy: last night, the President described a new way forward in Iraq, a new approach to overcoming the steep challenges facing us in that country and in that part of the world. I know many of you have concerns about the new strategy in Iraq and, in particular, are skeptical of the Iraqi government's will and ability to act decisively against sectarian violence and are skeptical, as well, about a commitment of additional American troops. The President and his national security team have had the same concerns as we have debated and examined our options in Iraq going forward, and yet our commanders on the ground and the President's intended nominee as the new commander in Baghdad believe this is a sound plan, in no small part because General Casey and other senior military officers have worked closely with the Iraqi government in developing it.

Further, the President, Ambassador Khalilizad and General Casey have had prolonged and extremely candid conversations not just with Prime Minister Maliki but with other senior leaders of the Iraqi government, and have come away persuaded that they have the will to act against all instigators of the violence in Baghdad. This is, I think, the pivot point in Iraq as the Iraqi government insists on assuming the mantle of leadership in the effort to regain control of its own capital.

I want you to know that the timetable for the introduction of additional U.S. forces will provide ample opportunity early on and before many of the additional U.S. troops arrive in Iraq to evaluate the progress of this endeavor and whether the Iraqis are fulfilling their commitments to us.

With apologies for the miscommunication, Mr. Chairman, at the end of my remarks, General Pace will summarize the military aspects of the plan, but let me make just two points.

First, this strategy entails a strengthening across all aspects of the war effort, military and non-military, including the economic, governance, and political areas. Overcoming the challenges in Iraq cannot be achieved simply by military means, no matter how large

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or sustained, without progress by the Iraqis in addressing the underlying issues dividing the country.

Second, we must keep in mind the consequences of an American failure in Iraq. Multiple administrations of both political parties have concluded that what happens in Southwest Asia, the Gulf Region, and the Middle East is of vital interest to the security and prosperity of the American people. As I said in my confirmation hearing, developments in Iraq over the next year or two will shape the future of the Middle East and impact global geopolitics for a long time to come.

Whatever one's views of the original decision to go to war and the decisions that have brought us to this point, there seems to be broad agreement that failure in Iraq would be a calamity for our Nation of lasting historical consequence. The violence in Iraq, if unchecked, could spread outside its borders and draw other states into a regional conflagration. In addition, one would see an emboldened and strengthened Iran, a safe haven and base of operations for jihadist networks in the heart of the Middle East, a humiliating defeat in the overall campaign against violent extremism worldwide, and an undermining of the credibility of the United States.

The actors in this region, both friends and adversaries, are watching closely what we do in Iraq, and will draw conclusions about our resolve and the reliability of our commitments; and should we withdraw prematurely, we could well leave chaos and the disintegration of Iraq behind us. Further, governments in the region already are asking themselves, "If Americans withdraw in defeat from Iraq, just how much farther and from where else" might we withdraw?

I would not have taken this position if I did not believe that the outcome in Iraq will have a profound and long-lived impact on our national interest.

Mistakes have certainly been made by the United States in Iraq just like in virtually every war in human history. That is the nature of war, but however we got to this moment, the stakes now are incalculable.

Your senior professional military officers in Iraq and in Washington believe in the efficacy of the strategy outlined by the President last night. They believe it is a sound plan that can work if the Iraqi government follows through on its commitments and if the non-military aspects of the strategy are implemented and sustained.

Our senior military officers have worked closely with the Iraqis to develop this plan. The impetus to add U.S. forces came initially from our commanders there. It would be a sublime, yet historic, irony if those who believe the views of the military professionals were neglected at the onset of the war were now to dismiss the views of the military as irrelevant or wrong.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my opening statement, and with your permission, I will ask General Pace to say a few words about the military plan itself.

[The prepared statement of Secretary Gates can be found in the Appendix on page 79.]

The CHAIRMAN. You bet.

General.

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STATEMENT OF GEN. PETER PACE, CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF, U.S. MARINE CORPS

General PACE. Mr. Chairman, Mr. Hunter, members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to be with you.

I would like to echo the secretary's thanks to all of you for your very strong, consistent, bipartisan support of all of us in the military. Thanks to many of you who have traveled to see the troops and many of you have gone to see our troops in the hospitals. Your attention to that, your concern, makes a difference to all of us in uniform, and we thank you for that.

I would also like to thank the incredible young men and women who serve in our Armed Forces. It is my honor to sit before you as their representative as they continue to amaze us all with the way that they strap on the duty that they have sworn to uphold and the way that they do it. And especially to their families—every decision to deploy forces impacts families, and this one will as well. Our military families serve this country as well as anyone who has ever worn a uniform, and I will say that publicly.

The military plan that has been developed has been developed jointly by General Casey and his U.S. commanders and his counterpart in the Iraq army and his commanders, and we have worked it through in great deal in support of Prime Minister Maliki's initiative, and the number one, most important difference between this plan and other plans is the political environment in which it will be executed.

But to the plan itself, it calls for the deployment of an Iraqi commander of all of Baghdad; that has begun, the assignment of two Iraqi commanders, one east of the river and one west. The selection of those commanders was done jointly by the Iraqi ground forces commander and by General Casey to have Baghdad divided into nine districts. Each of those districts will have an Iraqi brigade in it.

Those brigades and their leaders were also jointly selected by the Iraqi and American leadership. In support of each of those Iraqi brigades will be a U.S. battalion so that in each sector, as Mr. Hunter has said, it will be several Iraqi battalions plus a U.S. battalion, and in each sector, there will be three or four police stations that will serve as the hub of operations from which the forces that are located there—which will be a minister of the Iraqi army, the Iraqi national police, the Iraqi local police, and U.S. and coalition forces—from which they will do their daily patrolling, the door-to-door work to let the population know that they are there to take census-type information and to provide the street awareness and presence that allows the security to come to the fore. From those stations will be conducted the raids that may be necessary, and from those stations will come the quick reaction forces for some of the Iraqi forces that get into trouble.

In analyzing what we call "troop to task," meaning what do we need to do and how many folks do you need to do it, in analyzing that, General Casey and his Iraqi counterparts have determined that there are more forces needed—more Iraqi forces, for sure—and the Prime Minister and his government have promised that they will allocate three more Iraqi brigades into Baghdad—the first of those is already moving; the next two are scheduled within the

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month—that the commander will have the freedom of operations to do what he must do to impose the rule of law on all, that there will be no political interference with those troops on the ground who are carrying out the mission that they have been given, and that the rule of law and the rules of engagement will apply to all criminals regardless of which community they come from, that mixed communities and Sunni communities and Shi'a communities will all be treated the same.

To do this, we are going to need additional U.S. forces. General Casey and General Abizaid have asked for those additional forces, as have the commanders below them. The additional forces will do what I have mentioned, which is to be able to have a battalion of our forces available with each Iraqi brigade, and that will also strengthen the size of the embedded teams that we have on each Iraqi brigade, battalion, and company so that when the Iraqi units get into trouble or need fire support, we are able to provide it to them quickly and efficiently.

In addition, for success in Al Anbar province, the Marine commander out there has asked for and General Casey and General Abizaid have asked for an increase of about 4,000 troops out there. The Sunni sheiks in that region have led the way in fighting al Qaeda. They have recruited their own sons in the thousands to join their local police forces. In fact, about 1,000 Sunni youngsters right now from Al Anbar are in Jordan at the police academy, and these additional U.S. forces at Al Anbar will allow those sheiks and the Iraqi armed forces that are out there to provide continued security to take advantage of this window of opportunity as represented by the leaders out there. So, collectively, the military commanders, both U.S. and Iraqi, have asked for this interest, and those of us in advisory positions agree with their request.

Mr. Chairman, I will save any further comment about how I got to my own convictions about this to the Q&A piece, but I do want to state for the record that I am of the conviction that this military plan, properly part of the new political emphasis and the new economic plus-up, can provide the success we are looking for.

Thank you, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. General, thank you very much.

We all know the conflict. This is not going to be won on the battlefield. We know it is going to be a matter of will with leaders of the Iraqi force as well as the Iraqi people; and we spoke—both of you spoke about commitments by the Iraqi government and Prime Minister Maliki.

Mr. Secretary, are there any additional commitments made by the Iraqi prime minister or the Iraqi government other than the ones General Pace just outlined for us?

Secretary GATES. Mr. Chairman, I think that those are the principal ones. Clearly, the ones that have been most important to our forces are that the Iraqi military will be in the lead in these operations.

Another is that no parts of the city will be immune, that there will be no more calls from government offices to Iraqi or U.S. forces who have detained someone who is politically connected, demanding that they be released. That will not—we are assured that will not happen.

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We have been assured of additional Iraqi forces that will be brought into the capital.

I think those are the principal commitments.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

I noticed in your remarks, Mr. Secretary, you used the phrase "if the Iraqi government follows through on its commitments," and General Pace and you have just told us of the Iraqi commitment that they made. And we all, of course, know the importance of governance, as well as individuals living up to commitments.

Mr. Secretary, what if the Iraqi government does not live up to those commitments? What is the punishment or the outcome of such violation of their commitments? I think this committee should know should that come to pass.

Secretary GATES. First of all, I think it is important to note that the commitment is not just a commitment that has been made by Prime Minister Maliki. The President, the Ambassador and others have talked to President Talabani, to Sunni representatives in the government, to other Shi'a representatives, such as Mr. Hakim, and made it quite clear that this is not just a burden on the prime minister but on the entire Iraqi government.

As I indicated in my testimony, I think that we will see fairly early whether the Iraqi government is prepared to complete its—to carry out its commitments, and there was another one that I should have mentioned, and that is that they have committed to spend up to $10 billion of their own money on economic development as part of this effort.

Because we will know that fairly early and before very many American additional troops have been sent to Iraq, we will be in a position, obviously, to go back to them and point out their failure to live up to their commitments if we see that in a tactical situation in one place or another, or if we hear that there has been a call from a government office. I think the thing to remember about this is, it is going to unfold over time, and so you are likely to see perhaps a small violation of these commitments, perhaps somewhere along the road, and that is the point at which we quickly go back to the Iraqi government and make sure that they enforce discipline in their own house.

Beyond that, the President has made very clear both in his speech last night and in his talks with the Iraqi government that American patience is limited, and obviously if the Iraqis fail to maintain their commitments, we will have to revisit our strategy.

But I would say this—and it is an important difference this time—it is the Iraqis who have come to us with this plan. It is the Iraqis who are insisting on leading this undertaking. It is the Iraqis who are insisting that they have to get control of their own capital and that they need some help from us to do that. So I think this is really—when I refer to my remarks to a "pivot point," it is the apparent willingness of the Iraqis finally to step up to their responsibilities in this arena that we think is a change. The willingness to make these commitments, in itself, is a change, and we all will be watching very closely to ensure that they adhere to the commitments that they have made.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Secretary, the bottom-line answer to my question is, we would revisit our strategy; is that it, sir?

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Secretary GATES. If the Iraqis fail to keep their commitments, I think we would have to do that.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Mr. Hunter.

Mr. HUNTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Just a couple of questions—and, General, perhaps we need to talk in one of the following briefings, talk in a classified setting—but I think it is going to be crucial in these sectors in the city, in these urban areas, to ensure, one, that the American forces are used efficiently in the way that the agreement proposes with Iraqi forces in the lead, Americans in backup; and second, that there be a lot of attention to detail with respect to force protection of American forces in this situation.

And I would just ask you, have you scrubbed—have you looked at the details of the plan as it exists now with respect to those two factors?

General PACE. Sir, I have, and I am very confident in what is laid out.

First of all, very importantly, all U.S. forces will remain at all times under U.S. command.

Second, as we embed U.S. forces down to lower levels, down to the battalion and company levels, they will be of large enough size to protect themselves as they go about doing the advisory work that they are doing.

Third, as an example of the way this would work, on the last couple of days of operations in Baghdad that have been on TV, you see Iraqi units in the lead being supported by U.S. firepower and U.S. advisors in a way that is an example of how this will unfold as we go forward.

Mr. HUNTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Spratt.

Mr. SPRATT. Thank you both for your testimony.

I understand that, on a smaller scale, these tactics—"clear," "build" and "hold"—have been tried before and in specific, in Baghdad itself.

On 24 August, the mission failed for several reasons. One was, the battalions to be provided by the Iraqis did not show up. Two of the—four of the six that were promised never showed up. Second, the police showed up, but they also showed their sectarian colors and were prone to take the side of the forces that were part of the problem.

Number one, how do we overcome these problems this time, and number two, is there some way that we could test this on a smaller scale before we drive five brigades into it to see if these problems are still going to plague the operation?

I will put the question to both of you or to either of you.

Secretary GATES. Mr. Spratt, let me begin and then turn to General Pace.

As I understand it, the problem with "clear," "build," and "hold" last year was that the "clear" part of the operation went fairly well and fairly smoothly.

The problem is that there were insufficient forces, both Iraqi and American, for the "hold" phase of the operation, and so one of the lessons learned that the President referred to last night is the need

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for additional forces to hold these areas and keep the violence at bay long enough for some of these immediate and then near-term economic development opportunities to begin to kick in, whether it is making the quality of life better quickly by getting some electric power in there or connecting the sewers or picking up the trash, on down to job creation and so on. So the "clear" part was well done.

As to the "hold" part, there were insufficient forces. And the analogy that I have used is "the tide came in and the tide went out," and there was no—at the end, you could not tell there was a difference. The difference is, this time, to try and get some time under the "hold" phase for the "build" actually to take place.

One of the things that is different this time is the additional forces. Another thing that is different this time is that there is considerably more focus on the "build" phase in terms of our own efforts, but also in terms of the Iraqi understanding of the need for them to show up and with their money begin to take some action on the economic front.

So I think that, very quickly, is my assessment, looking back on it, as I have understood it since arriving. But let me ask General Pace to add.

General PACE. Mr. Spratt, your concerns are well-founded. You are correct that the Iraqi armed forces did not show up as was promised last time. This time, the first brigade of Iraqis is already en route to their capital, and some of them are there. Our first brigade, as we speak, is moving forward into Iraq. The second and the third Iraqi brigades are due to arrive in Baghdad before our second brigade arrives in Baghdad, so as this force flow is laid out——

Mr. SPRATT. We reserve the right to abort, and the expectation is we may abort the whole operation if their forces do not show up?

General PACE. Sir, we expect this to work, and we are focused on making this successful, but we do expect the Iraqi government to provide the resources that they say they will provide, and we have alternatives available to us, as the secretary said, to relook at the strategy if the premises on which this plan is based turn out to be inaccurate.

However, all of what the Iraqi leadership is saying is different and all of what has happened to date has been positive with regard to the things they said they would do and what has happened. Everything they said they would do by now they have done.

Mr. SPRATT. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you so much.

Mr. Saxton, please.

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Secretary, welcome. Thank you for what you are doing.

General, good to see you again. Thank you for what you are doing.

I am interested to know how the activities—how the presence and activities of al Qaeda were taken into consideration in developing this plan. I would like to just frame the question if I may. It seems to me to be a very, very serious part of our problem and our efforts that are geared toward solving the problem.

I have here a letter that was written from al Zawahiri, of course, the second in command of al Qaeda, to Zarqawi. The letter is dated

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July 9, 2005, and it was declassified by the Director of National Intelligence on October 11, 2005, and I just want to read some very brief parts of it.

After the perfunctory opening, it says, "It has always been my belief"—this is, of course, al Zawahiri talking, writing. "It has always been my belief that a victory of Islam will never take place until a Muslim state is established in Lavant and Egypt and in the neighboring states of the peninsula and in Iraq."

And then he goes on in another part of the letter to talk about "our long-term strategy." He says it has four stages. The first stage is to expel the Americans from Iraq. The second stage is to establish an Islamic authority and then to develop it into the level of a caliphate. The third stage is to extend the jihad wave to the secular countries neighboring Iraq, and the fourth stage is to clash with Israel.

I have another document here that comes out of West Point from the Combating Terrorism Center. It is a writing by Brian Fishman of that organization, and it says that, on October 15, 2006, al Qaeda in Iraq announced that it had seceded from Iraq and declared an independent state in the country's Sunni-dominated western regions. This new political entity is called the "Islamic state of Iraq."

I wanted to bring this question to you in that context because I believe that this is an extremely serious part of the problem that we face and is, in fact, at the root of much of the sectarian violence that is currently going on in Iraq.

Would you comment on that for us, Mr. Secretary?

Secretary GATES. Yes. It clearly has a major impact on the explosion of sectarian violence. There were the al Qaeda and the insurgents, but especially al Qaeda had been working for some time to try and stoke sectarian warfare in Iraq, and they finally succeeded last February with the bombing of the Samarra mosque. So the notion that this was a spontaneous outbreak is, I think, mistaken. The fact is that there have been a number of provocative acts by al Qaeda trying to provoke sectarian warfare, and they finally succeeded.

One of the areas where we actually see some positive signs already is in Anbar province, which is the province that you were referring to in the correspondence that you read. As General Pace indicated, the local sheiks have decided to try and contest al Qaeda's ambitions in Anbar. They have aligned themselves and aligned with us, and we are seeing some signs of success and weakening in al Qaeda in that area. In fact, it was during General Pace's and my visit to Baghdad a couple of weeks ago that General Odierno talked to us about these successes and indicated that he thought he could reinforce this success with the addition of some additional forces, some additional Marines in Anbar province; and that was really the origin, I think, of the request for the additional forces for Anbar province.

So it is clear that Anbar is critical to the ambitions of al Qaeda in Iraq, and I think we have made some headway.

General, would you like to add anything?

Mr. SAXTON. A great summary sir, thank you. Thank you very much.

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General PACE. Thank you.

Mr. SAXTON. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Ortiz.

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Secretary, congratulations on your new position. General Pace, good to have you with us.

Today I ask my question on behalf of the 3,000 soldiers who have been killed and the 20,000 wounded in the last 4 years in this war. Four years ago General Shinseki told the Administration and this Congress that our mission in Iraq would require several hundred thousand troops. We went into this with significantly less. Since then, Congress has heard from soldiers on the ground that they need more troops to accomplish their mission, yet senior commanders consistently testify that no additional troops are necessary. At this time the armed forces' equipment stock has been damaged and is in a constant state of disrepair, putting our troops at risk.

Now with the new way forward, we are escalating the number of troops in Iraq. This means deployment will be extended, units will deploy earlier in the theater, with less time to train and equip.

And here are my questions: why now, and what is different from three and a half years ago when they said that we needed 250–300,000 troops? What is different from then to now, and where is the equipment coming from? And how, since most of, or a lot of the reserve units and national guard units are going to be activated, where are our first responders going to be? Most of the policemen and firemen and doctors belong to a unit. They serve in the national guard.

I have had 25 young men killed in my district since the war started in Afghanistan. I go and I talk with the families and these are the types of questions they ask me: why now? Why didn't they put the 250,000 they wanted or were recommended by General Shinseki and Secretary White?

I think we need to answer these questions so that our public knows why not in the beginning. Thank you.

General PACE. I will start, Mr. Ortiz, if I may. First of all, General Shinseki's comments about X-hundred thousand of troops were the answer to testimonial questions he was being asked in the Senate Armed Services Committee. He demurred several times, but when asked a third time about how many troops would it take, he said he thought several hundred thousand. That was the answer he made to the senator at the time.

In the deliberations before that time and after that time, as a member of the joint chiefs, and I was a vice chairman at the time, General Shinseki was not advocating for that number as an answer; he gave it as a guesstimate of what it might be. So I just want to put it in that historical context.

Second, what is significantly different now is that the Iraqi government is taking the lead and they are prepared to set the proper stage for success. I have been one who has said frequently, do not send extra troops just to do what the troops there now are already doing, but if there is a defined military mission and if it is supported and supporting political initiatives and economic initiatives, then it would be useful. In that context, this plan meets those criteria and that is what is different now for me, sir, than what it was just a couple of months ago.

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Mr. ORTIZ. My time is up. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. Mr. McHugh.

Mr. MCHUGH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Secretary, let me add my words of congratulations and appreciation to you. General Pace, always a pleasure and honor to see you. Thank you both for your service.

Let me say that I am encouraged somewhat by the words I hear as to the intention of the Iraqi government. I share the words of Mr. Spratt, my colleague, that I just have my doubts the Iraqis will show up. The track record isn't there. And words are fine but actions are what count here.

So let me rephrase a question that has been asked a couple of different times. Let's concede they will show up. What do we do if they don't act?

We have talked about benchmarks; the President talked about benchmarks. I think those have been sorely missing. I think they are critical. Where in the benchmark time frame does the disarmament—disarming the militias occur, and what if they don't meet that benchmark?

Secretary GATES. I think that, again, what we will see is this unfolding over time, and I think that the operation that we saw just in the last couple of days indicates their willingness to fight, as I understand it. And I will invite General Pace to add on, the operations will begin in mixed neighborhoods, both Shi'a and Sunni. That will provide an early indicator.

I think the notion that the Iraqis are sitting on their hands while we are doing all the fighting is a mistaken notion. I was informed by one of our military folks a couple of days ago that now more than half of the casualties coming into our military hospitals in Iraq are Iraqi army.

Mr. MCHUGH. Mr. Secretary, I don't want to be impolite, sir, but the Chairman is going to be very strict on his clock. I have been to Iraq six times and I never suggested or meant to suggest the Iraqi army is not stepping forward and taking heavy casualties. I was at Forward Operating Base Speicher when they brought in three helicopter loads to the hospital there. Couldn't agree more. I want to be clear so you can direct your comments.

The politicians, the prime minister, what if they order us again, as they did just a number of weeks ago, to remove the barriers we had placed in Sadr City to control traffic and flow of air? What do we do and at what point? That is what I am concerned about. Because I view this at best as a last opportunity and a lost hope, and I am just wondering if I am being too dramatic about that.

Secretary GATES. As I indicated in my response to the chairman, I think the first reaction, if we discovered that they were not fulfilling their commitments, would be to go back at them hard in terms of the commitments that they had made to us. And in terms of the entire leadership of Iraq, if at the end of the day they don't keep the commitments that they have made to us, as I indicated before, we would clearly have to relook at the strategy.

Mr. MCHUGH. Let me rephrase it, if I may. What is the time frame of the surge? A year, 18 months, 6 months, and where do the benchmarks fit in that surge time frame?

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Secretary GATES. I don't think anybody has a definite idea about how long the surge would last. I think for most of us in our minds we are thinking of it as a matter of months, not 18 months or 2 years. We clearly will know, as I indicated, I think within a couple of months or so, whether this strategy is in fact beginning to bear fruit.

It is going to take a while. We are at the mercy of anyone willing to strap on a bomb and blow themselves up in terms of more bloodshed and more violence. But we will obviously be monitoring it, just as I know you all will be monitoring it as this situation unfolds.

I think one of the benefits, if you will, of the way we will be sending our forces, the way the Iraqis will be sending their forces in, is that we will have a pretty good indication whether they are keeping their commitments and we can assess at the time what we need to do.

General PACE. Sir, if I may, two key benchmarks: one, command of Iraqi forces. Nine of the 10 Iraqi divisions are going to be under direct Iraqi command by the end of the March, the tenth by the end of the June. And then of security in the 18 provinces, all 18 provinces are due to be under the direct control of the provisional governors no later than November of this year.

Mr. MCHUGH. Thank you. Let me just say in closing, as someone who has supported the President and who believes in what he is trying to achieve here, the frustration I think some of us feel is certainly not with our military. God love them for the challenges they face and the sacrifices they have made. But the civilian leadership in Iraq, I am afraid, still raise questions about their commitment. But I hope this is a step in the right direction. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank the gentleman. Mr. Taylor.

Mr. TAYLOR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Secretary Gates, and General Pace, for being here. Thank you both for agreeing to serve our country.

A poll published by the Brookings Institute just last month shows that really an appalling 92 percent of the Sunnis approve of attacks on U.S.-led forces; 62 percent of all the Shiites leads to a total throughout the country of 61 percent of Iraqis approve of attacks on U.S. forces.

Now, Mr. Secretary, you have only been here a few weeks, but I will remind you that early on, taxpayer-funded polls of Iraq showed that we had about an 80 percent approval rating. Within about a year and a half that number had flip-flopped to about 80 percent disapproval of U.S. presence. When the numbers went sour, our State Department quit furnishing those numbers to Congress on a regular basis. So if your numbers are contrary to this, I would like to hear them. But if your numbers are anywhere close to this, what I would like to know is how the addition of 21,000 troops changes a situation where 61 percent of Iraqis approve attacking American forces. How do you turn that around?

Secretary GATES. Well, sir, I think that first of all, those are the first poll numbers like that I have heard, and I haven't seen any that are independent. I have no reason——

Mr. TAYLOR. If I may, it was done, to the best of my knowledge, by an oufit called Zogby, paid for by American taxpayer dollars

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through the State Department. I would encourage you to take a look at them, sir.

Secretary GATES. I will do that. I have no reason to question what you reported. The only thing I can imagine, and I confess I am no expert on Iraq, but if the Iraqis are unhappy with our presence and they are willing to attack us, my view would be that it is because the overall situation in Iraq has become so unsatisfactory, particularly in places like Anbar and Baghdad, in particular Diyala, north of Baghdad, and probably the fact that many of those Iraqis blame the United States for the mistakes that were made after the original ouster of Saddam Hussein that contributed to making life in Iraq much more difficult for many of them, even though they have been liberated from their oppressor. It seems to me, though, that it is very uneven in the sense of the reception that our troops receive in different parts of the country, the way that the Iraqi military has partnered with us, the relationships between many of these units that have developed.

I think that the key is right now to turning around the attitude of Iraqis, is increasingly the turning over of the governance of their country to their own elected government, which is something new in the last year, and trying to establish the security situation in which life can begin to get better for the large number of Iraqis in the three or four provinces that are the most violent right now.

So it seems to me that the Iraqi leadership of this campaign, Iraqi investment in their own economic development, Iraqi control of their own military forces, and over time a diminution of American presence, are all key to the long-term relationship that the United States will have with Iraq. I have some confidence that if we can—we don't want permanent bases in Iraq.

Mr. TAYLOR. Mr. Secretary, how hard would it be for the President of the United States to say that publicly? Because I have been waiting for three years for the President of the United States to say that publicly. Have you encouraged him to do so?

Secretary GATES. No, sir, I have not.

Mr. TAYLOR. Would you?

Secretary GATES. I think that the President was very forthright last night in acknowledging the mistakes——

Mr. TAYLOR. I don't recall him saying that last night, and I think this is a key factor in the eyes of a lot of these people who are approving of attacks on Americans. I think that can turn some of them around. It is not a hard thing to do. But I am one of 435, he is the President of the United States.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Hayes of North Carolina.

Mr. HAYES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Gentlemen, welcome. Secretary Gates and General Pace, thank you for the men and women that you represent.

Again, going back to the same theme, we have got some dates certain where the Iraqis ought to show up in Baghdad to implement the new plan. Are you both confident that they are going to show up in the prescribed numbers?

General PACE. Sir, I am confident that the plan we have is a good plan when they do show up. There are no guarantees and I cannot guarantee what the Iraqi government is going to do. I can

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simply tell you what they have said they are going to do. If they do what they say they are going to do, then this will succeed.

So far on appointing the commanders, on collaborating between U.S. commanders and the Iraqi commanders, on selecting the units to move to other places to Baghdad and on moving those troops, on the things they should have done by now, they have done it.

Mr. HAYES. I appreciate that. It is very important, I think going forward, for people to understand it is a new plan, it is a new team. It does have support of this committee and the Congress because, as we speak, a brigade combat team of Airborne folks from Fort Bragg, the 82nd, are in Baghdad, as are other units from other locations. They, and their families particularly, and the folks back home need to know that we are supporting them, which we are. We are not supporting the idea of withdrawing funds for folks in the field.

Having said all that, to follow up on what Ranking Member Hunter said, we have been asking that the Iraqis take possession and control of their fight. Now he said three to one. My math—and I think we make a mistake in explaining to the American people when we talk battalions and brigades instead of numbers—my math gives us a four to one Iraqi match to every new U.S. military commitment in Iraq.

Can you be a little more specific or can you kind of narrow that down three to one, four to one, somewhere in between? If that is true, it indicates the Iraqis are taking the fight, that that is important. Can you help clarify that a little bit?

General PACE. Sir, I can. Let me just use Baghdad as an example. Today when you add together the Iraqi Army, Iraqi National Police and Iraqi local police, there are some 42,000 Iraqi security forces allocated to Baghdad. Today we have about 24,000 U.S. troops allocated to the Baghdad region and then their three brigades and our two brigades will be added to that mix.

Mr. HAYES. When you get through adding, with the surge what do you get? For 20,000 U.S. troops—make it 15 because part are going to Anbar—15 into Baghdad where the majority of the violence is, how many Iraqi new troops from safe areas, trained and equipped by U.S. forces, how many new ones are coming in?

General PACE. Sir, the 42,000 Iraqis in Baghdad right now will be augmented by about 8,000 more Iraqis, taking that to 50,000. The 24,000 U.S. in Baghdad right now will be augmented initially by two brigades, a total of 7,000, taking it up to 31,000. In the pipeline will be another three brigades of U.S.—another 10,500 that can go to Baghdad, al Anbar, or not go at all depending upon the situation on the ground.

Mr. HAYES. The math is still unclear but again I am trying to determine and reinforce my notion and Mr. Hunter's notion that to the American people this is becoming much more of an Iraqi right. We are going to occupy territory with Iraqis, not with Americans, so that we can hold it once we win it, which our military has done before. Any clarification that you can give there would be again very helpful.

General PACE. Sir, it is about two to one right now is as about as clear as I can make it.

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Mr. HAYES. Two to one. On the record, that is understandable. Again, we have got clear benchmarks. I thank you for being here, particularly thank you for the men and women that serve. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you so much. The gentleman from Hawaii, Mr Abercrombie.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. General Pace, thank you for giving us the opportunity to actually see how this thing is supposed to work at the gut level.

Now, speaking as a former probation officer and as someone who had jurisdiction as a city councilman over a police department, I want to know—and I had to try and get this because we didn't have anything written in front of us—did you say that this plan that you are talking about in the local communities came from the Iraqis or did it come from Americans?

General PACE. The initial plan was put forth by Prime Minister Maliki to our President when they met.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. They should have had at least one police chief from somewhere to give them some guidance. This is the craziest, dumbest plan I have ever seen or heard of in my life. You are proposing a mixture, your word, a mixture of national police, local police, national army and U.S. military to operate out of local police stations to go into neighborhoods to apprehend criminals to begin to clear and build on that basis, and you haven't the slightest idea of how many days, weeks, or months it is going to take. What on earth leads you or the President or the prime minister or anybody in the joint chiefs to think such a plan will work anywhere in the world? There is not a police chief in this country or any other country in the world that would sustain such a plan with mixed control. There is no way for anybody under such circumstances to be able to indicate who is in charge or who has authority of whatever action they are supposed to take. How is it supposed to work?

General PACE. I understand your concern, sir. Once the prime minister and the President agreed that the prime minister's plan was a good plan to facilitate, the U.S. commanders and the Iraqi commanders sat down together. Iraqi police, Iraqi army, and U.S. and coalition commanders, they together—General Casey and his subordinates and the Iraqi leaders and their subordinates met and worked through the details of this plan. There is one commander per district. There is an overall commander whose name is Lieutenant General Abud.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. For Baghdad?

General PACE. For Baghdad. He is a general in the Iraqi army. He was appointed yesterday or the day before by the prime minister as the overall commander.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. So American troops will be taking orders from an Iraqi general in Baghdad.

General PACE. No, sir, they will not.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Then how is it going to work?

General PACE. Thank you, sir. Underneath the Iraqi commander are two Iraqi division commanders, one east of the river and one west of the river. Under those two generals, still Iraqi, are the Iraqi brigade commanders who are responsible for everything in their nine separate districts in the region. Those Iraqi brigade com-

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manders are partnered with our U.S. battalions and they will operate in those areas just like they are operating in the streets of Baghdad right now with the Iraqis doing the, patrolling, Iraqis doing the sweeping. And when they need the kinds of skills and capacity they don't have, like air power, we will do it like we have been doing the past couple of days in Baghdad, provide it to them. But the U.S. will stay under U.S. command, and the Iraqis will be under the Iraqi command, and General Casey and his counterpart, Iraqi partner, will work together on the command and control of that.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. How is that any different than what has been done since November of 2005?

General PACE. The main difference is the political atmosphere in which they are allowed to operate. There is no number, there is no number of additional U.S. troops that will make a difference, absent—long-term difference—absent the political will of Iraqi leadership and the religious leadership.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Thank you, General. Secretary Gates, I suggest it won't take you 18 months to figure that out. It will take you 6 months to figure that out. I don't think there is going to be any change, I am sorry to say, that is likely to take place in the next 6 days, let alone the next 6 months or 18 months.

Finally, Secretary Gates, if there is time for it, in all of the discussions so far—let's suppose General Pace's description of this plan works, for conversation's sake. What is the exit strategy?

Secretary GATES. The exit strategy is that as the level of violence goes down and as the Iraqis gain control of—restore control in Baghdad, that the presence of the United States would diminish.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. If that doesn't occur, is there an exit strategy?

The CHAIRMAN. Answer the question, then we go to Ms. Davis.

Secretary GATES. I think at the outset of the strategy, it is a mistake to talk about an exit strategy.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Ms. Davis from Virginia.

Thank the gentleman from Hawaii.

Mrs. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Secretary, welcome and look forward to working with you over the next couple of years. General Pace, it is always great to see you.

I want to focus on a specific impact of the surge of forces into Baghdad and now Anbar province, and that is the risk to our readiness associated not only with increasing troops but also their equipment. I want to know if you can give me a risk assessment of the proposed surge on the strategic posture of our forces. In other words, would this increase of troop levels in 2007 prevent or degrade the military's ability to respond in other parts of the world if we are called upon? And I think most of us on this committee understand that resetting the force is going to take years and a large amount of funding, but I want to make sure that we are not backing ourselves into some sort of corner, given the situation that we have got in other parts of the world besides just in Iraq.

From the information that has been provided today, I understand brigades are being extended. Some units are deploying early and others will be mobilized in the coming months. I am very glad to hear that DOD is doing what we on this committee has asked, and that is to increase the end strength of the Army and Marine Corps.

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I just wish it would have been done a lot sooner. I believe that we are asking our military to do much more now than we have ever asked of them, and for that reason I think that the growing force is very necessary.

My second question is, when would be the earliest impact of the proposed phased increase in the end strength and would it be funded in the fiscal year 2008 budget?

General PACE. Yes, ma'am. If I may give you two levels of answer to your risk question. One has to do with maintaining the size of the force we have now in Iraq and plussing up, and the other has to do with other contingencies around the world. We have today 82 brigades in our active force and in our reserve and guard, which at the conclusion of this will have 20 temporarily in Baghdad—in Iraq, excuse me.

The risk in Iraq to the active force is that right now we have our troops one year over, one year back, one year over. So as you go to increase the size of the current force in Iraq and you use the active force to do the increase because they are the ones who are most ready to go, then you are taking people who are in this train to be deployed over the next year and moving them forward. So you shorten the time they have at home, and you are beginning to use up their time that they would have spent in Iraq next year, using up this year.

So when you do this, you already know that if we need to have this size commitment next year, 15 brigades, 20 brigades, whatever it is going to be, if you are going to need that, then you know you are going to need to backfill this time next year with guard and reserve forces to do that. It is doable but you have to understand what you are spending today and what you may have to spend tomorrow to do it. That is very different from an attack somewhere else in the world where we still have the enormous might of our Navy and our Air Force and we can mobilize all of our reserves at one time and go do what the Nation needs us to do.

We will be slower to cross the line of departure than we would like to be to respond to that second event. We will probably have to be more blunt in the use of our military power, meaning less precise, because some of the things you use to guide precision weapons will be used in Iraq. But there is zero doubt that any intentional competitor on the horizon would meet defeat at the hands of the U.S. military, given 20 brigades plussed up into Iraq and some other threat someplace else. That does not mean it will be easy, it does not mean it will be pretty, but it can get done.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentlelady.

The gentleman from Massachusetts, Mr. Meehan.

Mr. MEEHAN. Thank you, Mr. Secretary, and thank you Mr. Secretary, and General, for appearing before the committee.

I don't see anything that makes me, or I don't hear anything that makes me feel any confidence that an increase in troops is the right thing to do. I want to point out I heard the secretary say a few months, we are going to try this for a few months. The Vice President said this entire war was going to last a few months.

Every general that I have met with in Iraq or in Washington has been saying that more troops were not necessary. For the longest period of time—I think General Abizaid was before the Senate

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Armed Services Committee two months ago saying that more troops wouldn't help the situation. So I really don't have much confidence in this but I am interested in a couple of things.

Mr. Secretary, you have said if the Iraqis don't follow through, and God knows they haven't followed through on very much here over a period of time, but if they don't follow through on this plan, you are going to go back at them hard. What does that mean?

Secretary GATES. The first approach would clearly be in Baghdad in terms of reminding them of their commitments and causing them—telling them they had to meet the commitments that they had made to us. The first response is going to be a diplomatic and political one.

Mr. MEEHAN. But that has been going on for a long period of time now. What happens if they are unable to meet their commitments? I don't understand at what point do we say that we are going to back off here. If you can't live up to your commitment, if the Iraqis can't live up to their commitments, at what point do we say enough is enough, we are going to start not bringing more troops in, we are going to reduce the upfront presence of American troops.

The statistics that Mr. Taylor gave have been consistent over a period of years. We are an occupying force there. I heard the General talk about this force. It is important to point out the force is an occupying force; it is not a training force. And, Mr. Secretary, you were part of the bipartisan Iraq Study Group that had gotten together, and I realize you weren't there at the end of the recommendations, but you certainly were part of the process for the majority of the time.

Recommendation number 43, which I thought everyone agreed, military priorities in Iraq must change, with the highest priority given to the training, equipping, advising and support mission to counterterrorism operations. I don't see how this is consistent with that priority of training our troops. I think the primary mission of the American forces in Iraq, we have all agreed, has been to stand up a viable security force, Iraqi security force, and I don't see how this is going to help us with that. Seems to me the President is clinging to this hope that the war can be won militarily, and I don't know anyone that thinks a war can be won militarily. It can be won politically. But we can't get the Iraqis to step up to the plate on very much, and I hear you saying we are going to go back hard at them. It hasn't worked for a period of time. At some point there comes a judgment day when we are going to have to make a decision. And I am just wondering what it is, when it is, after four years.

Would you agree that this isn't—would you agree with the military priorities as being the highest regard to training as the Iraq Study Group had said, and how is this consistent?

Secretary GATES. I think that that has been the highest priority. The problem that we have faced is that due to the actions of al Qaeda and others in stoking the sectarian violence, the violence in Baghdad has reached a point where it was difficult for the political process in Baghdad to go any further.

Mr. MEEHAN. But that is also the problem with reconstruction and economic development. We have spent billions of dollars in

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Iraq with little or nothing to show for it, because the contractors have been hired to be put in. It is too violent. They can't have contractors go in because they get killed. Why is it going to be any different now that we are going to take a billion dollars more? I just don't see any light at the end of the tunnel here.

Secretary GATES. Mr. Skelton and I talked about this last evening. The question is, are you optimistic or pessimistic? It is pretty—my own view is that the one source of optimism is that for the first time in this process you have the Iraqis insisting on taking the lead, insisting on being out in front, and insisting on beginning this attempt to get control of their own capital, with us only in a support role. As I indicated at the beginning, we will know fairly quickly, I think, whether they are prepared to follow through on these commitments.

I think one of the things we sometimes lose sight of is that there was an election, for the first time in Iraqi history, just a year ago, a little over a year ago. This government wasn't stood up until last spring. These are people who have never run anything in their lives. They have been in opposition. Frankly, the challenges that have faced them in trying to deal with the problems they have I think have been pretty extraordinary, and the fact that it has taken them some period of time to get themselves in the position where they are ready to take the lead and charge of this thing is not surprising.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman. We are supposed to have three votes and I was in hopes we could continue the hearing while we switched off to do the votes, but with three it is going to be impossible. We will try to go as long as we can and make the recesses as short as we can. But with your indulgence and, General, with your indulgence, please stay when we do make the necessary trip over for those three votes. We appreciate it.

Mr. Forbes.

Mr. FORBES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Mr. Secretary, General, for being here and for your input today. I want to try to follow up on what my friend Congressman Hayes was asking a little bit ago about some of the math that is involved. We see people come in and testify; they are writing articles. One person says we need more troops; another person says we need less troops. We are oftentimes just kind of caught in-between saying, "What do you base that on?"

What I want to try to do in the few minutes I have got is to get my hands on what you are basing the 20 plus-up upon. Let me go back, General, to your numbers. As I understand them, and perhaps I did the math wrong, but you indicated on total Iraqi security personnel today in Baghdad we have about 42,000; that after the full implementation of the plan we would have about 50,000 total. For our troops we have about 24,000 today. We would be adding another 7,000, which brings us up to 31,000. And then another 10,500 we can put wherever we could. Let's assume we put them all there. That would give 41,500 U.S. troops. That is a total of 91,500 troops.

And as I look at—the only way that I can get my hands around numbers that makes sense is to look at previous conflicts and where we were. If you look across the United States for just police

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personnel that we have, we have about 2.3 sworn police officers per thousand. If we look at the situation that the British had in Northern Ireland and the Malaysian counterinsurgency in the mid-20th century, if you look at Bosnia and Kosovo, we had stability forces, whenever you were warranting outside intervention, that were closer to about 20 per 1,000, which would—if we took those numbers we would be at about 140,000 troops we would need in Baghdad to do the job.

Can you explain to me the difference between the situation we have on the ground today in Baghdad and Northern Ireland, Bosnia, Kosovo, even the Malaysian situation—because it looks to me like that situation is as bad or worse than those—and what we base this 20,000 figure on, some citation I can go to that you can tell me that is the formula, that is what we came up with to get this number?

General PACE. I will try, sir. Understand that every place is different.

Mr. FORBES. But the only thing I would point out is at least we have a pattern and we have to some way base some of what we do on facts and objectivity. And we looked at those four situations; all seem to be about the same numerical basis. What makes us think we can do it with less numbers, or is my math just off?

General PACE. Sir, I wouldn't say your math is off at all. I would also point out El Salvador was a very successful transition to democracy with 55 U.S. advisors, so the math isn't always good for the situation. But specifically for Baghdad, what General Casey and his commanders and Iraqis did was take a look, district by district, what do they need to do, how many patrols do they need to have, how many patrolmen out on the street did they need to have, how much door-to-door knocking would they need to do, how much reinforcing of forces would they need, quick reaction forces and the like, and take each of the tasks that they would have to do every day, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and just do the pure math. It tells you how many folks you need.

When they did that, they came up with a need for three more Iraqi brigades and two more U.S. brigades. Al Anbar, the math added one more U.S. brigade, for a total of six. What we then did in response to that request from the commanders in the field was look at it, understand how about if in addition to that we provide you additional forces available to you so that when the enemy takes whatever action he takes, when opportunities present themselves for reinforcement of success, you have forces available to you. So the 20,000 is a combination of what the commanders on the ground specifically asked for based on their math, plus an additional factor for the unknown.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman. The gentleman from Texas, Mr. Reyes.

Mr. REYES. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. Mr. Secretary, welcome to our committee and, General, good to see you before our committee.

Mr. Secretary, you are from Texas so I know you are familiar with the term "being snookered." I hope we are not being snookered again by Prime Minister Maliki here, and I say that because he has had a track record of saying one thing to us and saying other things for consumption to his political base there in Iraq.

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What concerns me about what I believe the Administration and you think is a strength, and that is that this is an Iraqi plan and that they are insisting on taking the lead, is that we may be on the way to being snookered one more time. That is why I am as frustrated as my colleagues here when we don't have some substantial consequences if they fail to perform.

Nobody here or anywhere else wants to see this fail, either this plan or our presence in Iraq, because personally I don't want Iraq to become the next Afghanistan under the former Taliban government.

But one question that I have, and you said, Mr. Secretary, that very early on we will be able to tell or to evaluate whether or not they are holding up their end of the bargain. What are the consequences, or have we come up with consequences that have been articulated to the Maliki government? And by that I mean okay, if you fail to do this, if these brigades or battalions don't show up on the part of the Iraqis, then we will stop the flow of U.S. troops, or then we will start redeployment, or exactly what are the real consequences, something besides we are going to go back at them hard, we are going to hold them accountable? What are some of the consequences tangibly that you can tell them?

Secretary GATES. Mr. Reyes, I think it is pretty—I think it is quite clear to the Iraqis what our expectations are and the President's growing impatience and his statements to them that our patience has its limits. The reality in fact, in answer to several of the other members' questions, and that is, first of all, we have to determine if there are instances where the commitments are not being fulfilled, whether it is a local official who is not doing it, whether there is a pattern to these failures, or whether it becomes clear that it is the government itself that is at fault. And if it becomes clear that the government is at fault and that the government of Iraq is not going to fulfill its commitments, then as I indicated earlier, the United States Government would have to revisit this strategy. And I think that the Iraqis know that full well.

Mr. REYES. What does that mean, what exactly does that mean? Does it mean we stop the flow of troops, we take a step back and initiate redeployment? Exactly what does that mean?

Secretary GATES. I think that is a decision we would have to make at the time. That would be our decision.

Mr. REYES. But you have given it some thought. It is okay if you can't publicly say what the consequences are. That is well and good, because then maybe we could have a closed hearing and we could get some assurance that in fact there have been some consequences articulated privately, or that we have thought about these are the kinds of things we are going to do if they don't perform.

Secretary GATES. Sir, our focus at this point has been trying to make the strategy that has been agreed with the Iraqis work. I think we are going to expend our energies on that and deal with failure or deal with their deficiencies if those deficiencies come to pass. All the signs that we are seeing so far is that in the commitments they have made in terms of this strategy so far, they have fulfilled everything that they said they would do.

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Mr. REYES. But, Mr. Secretary, again we have to look at the potential for success of this commitment based upon the historical record that the Maliki government has had, and frankly it hasn't been a very stellar track record. That is why we can't afford to get snookered again, because we are putting another 21–22,000 of our troops in harm's way, and there have to be real consequences.

I see that my time is up. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. I am going to ask one more member to ask questions and then we will break. Mr. Wilson.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Mr. Secretary, and thank you, General, for being here today and thank you for your service to our country.

I was very pleased that Congressman Hayes and Congressman Forbes were able to establish that in Baghdad that there would be substantially more Iraqi forces than American forces. This is indeed a joint operation.

I, Mr. Secretary, heard you say that the Iraqi forces will be taking the lead. I am a parent of four sons in the military. I will be meeting with other parents. Could you and the General please explain to family members what it means that the Iraqi forces are in the lead, and how would this work practically as our forces are facing the enemy in the streets of Baghdad?

General PACE. Sir, "in the lead" means that they are the ones who are doing the day-to-day patrolling. They are the ones who are doing the knocking on the doors, do the census work and tell the inhabitants of that home that the Iraqi armed forces are there for their protection. They are the ones who will be the responders to any kind of phone calls, tips and the like. But we will be the ones that will give them the additional capacity that they don't have.

And I will repeat what I said today about what is happening in the hydra street the last couple of days. The Iraqis were sweeping through that area. The Iraqi army was—they got into a firefight. They needed additional fire support. They got that from our helicopters and our fixed wing.

That does not mean that U.S. forces will not be patrolling. It does not mean that U.S. forces will not be doing the things we need to do for our own self-protection and for the stability of the areas around which we are living; but it does mean that most of that work will be done by Iraqis with our backing.

Mr. WILSON. And this is substantially different from what is being done now?

General PACE. What is substantially different, sir, is the armed forces of both countries will be able to do it throughout Baghdad. Up until now, each time we have tried this, when we were operating in Sunni neighborhoods, that was okay; when we got into mixed neighborhoods, that got a little dicey; and when we tried to go into Shi'a neighborhoods, often the Iraqis were told to stop or recapture somebody and we were asked to give them back. What is substantially different is the intent to apply the rule of law across Baghdad without regard to which neighborhood the criminal lives.

Mr. WILSON. And then I was happy to hear the President indicate, and you have just indicated too, in terms of rules of engagement, that there will be changes in terms of catch and release. I

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have had troops express concern to me about safe houses. They secure terrorists and they leave the home, and the next week it is restored again as a safe house for terrorism. And the experience in many countries is those homes are demolished. What would be—how can I answer that?

General PACE. Part of the problem in the past, sir, is we have not had, because in part the Iraqi units did not show up, we did not have enough units after we did the clearing to be able to do the hold. So there were not enough Iraqi troops to do the hold, and we left. Then the people came back to that house.

With this plan there are sufficient troops to do be able to do the clear and the hold and, most importantly, to do the build, primarily with Iraqi money, so that the citizens start seeing progress and decide because of that progress to become part of the community as opposed to trying to kill each other.

Mr. WILSON. Again, thank you very much. I visited Iraq six times. Mr. Chairman, I go to inspire the troops; they inspire me. Thank you for all of their service. God bless you.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman. There are three votes on the floor. We will be in recess, and again I appreciate the indulgence of our witnesses. We will be back as soon as possible.

[Recess.]

The CHAIRMAN. As soon as the witnesses get here, we will call on Dr. Snyder.

The witnesses are back at the witness table. Before I call on Dr. Snyder, please note the charts that are being placed on the wall. There are copies in front of each member. I think you will find them of interest. They are as up to date as possible. All of the information was not available, in some instances, past October, but the staff did the best that they could.

Dr. Snyder.

Dr. SNYDER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, thank you for being here.

General Pace, it is good to see you.

I also want to acknowledge the presence of Mr. Rangel here today, our former Staff Director, and for some of the members here, Mr. Rangel got a start on this committee as a staff member on the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigation, so I do not want you to think that this is somehow—we have not had it for ten years. It is a good subcommittee, and it is something that Mr. Rangel believes in. I look forward to working with you on that subcommittee on issues.

Mr. Secretary, you know the old line about, "Good managers do not make their money when things go well; they make their money when things are struggling"; and you are going to have a lot of opportunity to earn your money in this job, and the troops are counting on you. The American people are counting on you. One of the chores that you have is coming before these committees, and frankly, we have had difficulties, in my opinion, with the kind of forthrightness that I think the American people and this Congress deserve, and I know that, at times, sometimes as members of Congress we say dumb things, stupid things, wrong things, partisan things, angry things, but when all of this comes out in the wash, our process is better because of the kinds of questions and the vari-

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ety of questions that come out of these hearings and the interactions that we have with you, so I encourage you in, I guess, the spirit of a college president, to have that kind of relationship with us of forthrightness because—I will give you an example.

It was months before we could get anyone to acknowledge at this table a couple of years ago that there was actually an insurgency going on. Finally, the words "guerilla war" were used, but the whole world knew there was a problem. That is the kind of problem that we have had, so we look forward to this relationship with you.

In your written statement on page five, Mr. Secretary, you say, "Above all, I want you to know that the timetable for the introduction of additional U.S. forces will provide ample opportunity early on—and before many of the additional U.S. troops arrive in Iraq—to evaluate the progress of this endeavor and whether the Iraqis are fulfilling their commitments to us." And then a while ago, you said you thought that, in a couple of months, we would be able to evaluate how things were going.

Are you saying here today that we may not get that 21,500 additional troops—in your words here, you will have ample opportunity before many of the troops arrive in Iraq—that you may conclude that we should not put additional troops in?

Secretary GATES. First of all, let me say that, while the President has committed these additional brigades for Baghdad, the initial deployments into Baghdad requested by the commanders are two brigades in Baghdad and one brigade in Anbar, and it will be, I think—and I will defer to General Pace on this—but I think it will be the decision of the commanders on the ground whether to move the additional brigades on into Iraq, whether they are needed and what their role and their mission would be, but we have committed—the President has committed them. Part of that evaluation, presumably, will be whether the Iraqis are keeping their commitments, but it will also, frankly, be, I think, the success of the operation.

Dr. SNYDER. But I assume when you talk about evaluating the progress of this endeavor, you are not just talking about the military progress, but you are talking about the whole package, which I assume would be made at—a decision would be made at the Presidential level, I would assume.

Secretary GATES. I think that, as to the progress that we will see on the military side and whether the Iraqis have kept their commitments in terms of being able to go after all lawbreakers, in terms of the brigades that they have promised showing up, in terms of going into all neighborhoods, we will see fairly early on in that couple-of-months' period whether they are keeping those. I think that the "hold" and "build" parts, so the clear part—we will know pretty quickly, within a couple of months, whether the Iraqis are fulfilling their commitments.

The "hold" and "build" parts are naturally going to take a little longer just in terms of creating jobs, of getting economic assistance in there and so on, so I am not saying that we will have a good picture within a couple of months on the "build" side of it, but I think that we will begin—we will have a pretty clear—a pretty good idea on the "clear" part of the strategy. I think we will have

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some important early indications on the "hold" part of the strategy. I think that is probably a little early on the "build" side.

Dr. SNYDER. General Pace, you had mentioned earlier on that General Abizaid was part of the group that supported and requested additional troops. How does that jive with his testimony of November 15th before the Senate in which he stated, "I do not believe that more American troops right now is the solution to the problem"? Has General Abizaid changed his mind? Has he been convinced to change his mind? What kind of interaction has there been with General Abizaid, who, as you know, is very well respected by this committee?

General PACE. Sir, I have had many conversations with General Abizaid on the phone, and the secretary and I were with him and General Casey in Baghdad when they both asked us for these additional troops.

As with all of us in uniform who had been saying, "Do not just add troops to do more of what the troops have been doing," if there is a difference, if there is a definable mission, if there is a new political environment, if there is going to be economic activity, then it makes sense. So, with the commitment of the political side, with the commitment of the economic side, it does make sense to provide additional troops for this military piece of that three-pronged attack.

Dr. SNYDER. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Cole.

Mr. COLE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank both of you for being here and your service.

We have had a lot of talk this afternoon about the importance of Iraqi performance and how you measure it, and you each have made the point in separate contexts the Sunni Sheiks' cooperating with us in Al Anbar. That is a welcome development of a Shi'a government in Baghdad that seems to be stepping up a little bit more than we have seen.

How many instances do you see of the Sunnis and the Shi'a cooperating with one another, because that is really the gist of our problem here. We were said to have had a much better year in many ways than occurred until the sectarian violence, you know. So are you seeing signs that that is subsiding within the government?

Secretary GATES. I think that—I will ask General Pace to talk about the military side because there is, perhaps, a greater mix there.

What we have seen is the minister of defense, if I remember correctly, is a Sunni. Certainly, one of the vice presidents is a Sunni, Mr. Hashimi, and as I said earlier, the President and others have not just talked to Prime Minister Maliki about the commitment of the government, but to Hashimi and Hakim and the others, so they certainly all seem to be on board with the commitments that we have been given. Below that level, I think the picture is still very mixed, but general.

General PACE. Sir, in the military and the Iraqi army, the Iraqi government has gone to great lengths to recruit and build mixed units, and the Iraqi army has proven itself to be loyal to the cen-

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tral government and, for the most part, doing the central government's bidding.

In the police, it is a little less well-defined. It is different in the police. There are still some units that are more sectarian than nonpolitical. As those units are identified, they are taken off the line, and they are disassembled. Those who are loyal are kept. Those who are not are replaced. That unit then goes through a retraining and is put back into the mix.

So the military, itself, the army, is leading the way, I would say, with regard to cooperation in the ranks amongst different Shi'a, Sunni, and Kurd, and the police are behind them.

Mr. COLE. So, as far as you can tell, this operation on the Iraqi side will have largely mixed units carrying out their end of the security operations?

General PACE. Sir, I am not 100-percent sure of that.

I do know that the commanders have selected their units based on their capacities, on their mix, but I will have to find out for sure, of all of the units that are there, how many are one kind and how many are another. I just do not know.

Mr. COLE. Okay. If I could, I would like to go back to pick up Mr. Forbes' and Mr. Hayes' questions about the math.

In just looking at the numbers, at the end of the day, if I understand the calculations, there are around 50-some-odd thousand Iraqi security personnel of all sorts, not just military-engaged, and just over 40,000 American troops potentially engaged assuming your ten-five were all deployed in Baghdad. That is a five-to-four ratio and, frankly, a much bigger kick-up on our side in terms of personnel involved in this operation than on theirs.

Why is it two-to-one or three-to-one? Do they not have the forces or why aren't those forces being committed in addition to simply 8,000 additional people on top of 42?

General PACE. Yes, sir.

When the troop-to-task analysis was done, the determination of the commanders on the ground was that they needed about 8,000 more Iraqis and about 7,000 more U.S. If the commanders get—when the commanders get what they have asked for, there will be 50,000 Iraqis and about 31,000 U.S. What we have done on the U.S. pipeline, because it takes us a month to get the gear shipped over, et cetera, is to put the additional three brigades into the pipeline so they can arrive and be available to the commanders on the ground.

At the same time, we are doing that, not yet asked for by the commanders, but it is available to them, the Iraqis are looking at the other units around the country to see what they might add as well. So we put our insurance policy into our plan because it takes us a while to get there.

Mr. COLE. Okay. Let me just close with a quick point.

I appreciate very much what you have to say and particularly your emphasis on the importance of the Iraqi participation there and, frankly, not just military but political. If we do not see things like a reasonable distribution of the oil money, if we do not see provincial elections, if we do not see a revisiting of the extent of the de-Baathification program, then I do not think that your efforts—

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that are as good as I know they will be—and those of our people will succeed.

I would just ask you—and I do not even remember if this committee feels this way. I agree, Mr. Gates, Secretary Gates, with your assessment of what is at stake here. I think you hit it spot on, but I also think this is the last effort. So I would just ask you to be frank with us if the other side is not keeping their commitments and do that quickly.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Adam Smith.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Secretary Gates, General Pace, for being here. First of all, I concur with Mr. Snyder. You do have a very difficult job, and you took it at a very difficult time, and we thank you for stepping up and doing that.

I share my colleagues' skepticism about this plan for a number of reasons. I mean the two biggest ones are that, when you do a classic counterinsurgency strategy of "clear, hold and build," you have to have the hearts and minds of the populace. I mean that is sort of at the top of it, and as Mr. Taylor pointed out, we have lost that, and I have no confidence whatsoever that we will be able to get it back, and I think that undermines a lot of what we do, and second, you know, because of the points Mr. Forbes raised about the numbers, we do not have the numbers or the long-term sustainability to really implement that strategy at this point. I think you have addressed those concerns. I will not say they have been alleviated.

But my bigger concern is, even if we succeed in what we are doing here, it is sort of "Then what?" And what exactly does success look like? It is virtually impossible for me to imagine, and I would imagine you would agree, that in six months, eight months time, there is not still violence in Baghdad. It is impossible to imagine that Mr. Sadr is simply going to blow up and disappear or that his forces are. We may be able to sort of simmer it down for a little while, but I do not think there is any real prospect of a long-term reduction in the causes of the violence in Baghdad.

So we are doing all of this to sort of wind up in a similar place because the causes of the violence, by and large, will still be there. One of them will be exacerbated, and that is our presence. As has been pointed out and I do not think emphasized enough, you know, a lot of the insurgents, the terrorists, are motivated by driving us out, and our unwillingness to even say that we are leaving at some point adds fuel to that, and certainly adding more troops and launching a military campaign in Baghdad is not going to reduce that. So that will still be there.

We will still have the problem with Syria and Iran, which I want to ask about in just a minute, and it is also reasonable to assume that we will still have, you know, conflicts between Shi'a and Sunni and even within the two groups. So I do not see us really making a lot of progress, and there is an enormous cost to us in terms of American lives at risk and the further strain on a military that is very strained as you both know. So I am just not sure that, at the end of this, we will wind up in a much better place, and that is what I am very concerned about, and I also want to make a point.

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You know, it was referenced about, you know, we can not afford to fail. One of the things that always concerns me in launching a plan is when we start spinning out nightmare scenarios if we do not do this. Whenever that is sort of at the top of your list for arguments as to why you are doing something, that is a warning sign to me to basically say, well, we cannot really get behind our plan, but we can tell you, if we do not, all of these horrible things are going to happen, and I am not saying that they are not possible, but they are not as guaranteed as the President said last night, as you, yourself, have said.

I mean, one of the scenarios that I have heard is that, well, Iran will effectively take over Iraq, and at the same time, al Qaeda will operate as a safe haven in Iraq. You know, to have a Shi'a extremist group in a country with a Sunni extremist group having a safe haven is pretty hard to imagine, and yet, that is what we are arguing will happen if we do not do this. So I would urge us to sort of tone that rhetoric down just a little bit to understand the true consequences of going forward or not going forward.

The political solutions are not easy either—no doubt about that—but they are a lot less costly than continuing to rely on the military at a time when it does not seem like they can bring security for many of the reasons that have been raised.

Two quick questions. Syria and Iran, they are a major problem—porous borders either allowing them to pass back and through or actively sending them. This plan does not address that at all, and I am curious how you think we stop that and your feeling about how critical it is, and last, where do you see Sadr and his forces at the end of this?

Secretary GATES. First, with respect to Iran, as you will have noticed over the last couple of weeks, we are beginning to move aggressively to try and identify and root out the networks that are involved in helping to bring Iranian-supplied improvised explosive devices (IEDs) into Iraq and making it clear that those who are involved in activities that cost the lives of American soldiers are going to be subject to actions on the part of the United States inside Iraq. Our view is that we need to deal—that we can and will deal with this problem inside Iraq.

With respect to the Syrians, clearly, a lot is going on on the border of Syria in terms of trying to control what the Syrians are sending in. Quite frankly, the Syrians and the Iranians are playing a very destabilizing role in Iraq.

The CHAIRMAN. You have to wrap the answer up, please. Did you finish answering?

Secretary GATES. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. All right. Mr. Turner.

Mr. TURNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary and General, thank you for being here.

The chairman in his opening questions had stated that, if Iraq fails to deliver, what do we do to hold them accountable, and that has been a consistent theme throughout each of the questions that you have been asked and is in the concerns that members have expressed. It is also an issue that is expressed in the Iraq Study Group report as a limit on our success as we go forward.

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With this recommendation of increasing troops, if you look at the assessment from the Iraq Study Group, they say, "Sustained increases in U.S. troop levels will not solve the fundamental cause of violence in Iraq, which is the absence of national reconciliation. A senior American general told us that adding U.S. troops might temporarily help limit violence in a highly localized area. However, past experience indicates that the violence would simply rekindle as soon as U.S. forces are moved to another area."

Now, it seems to me, as you have been answering these questions, that you have been contrasting this recommendation from what you are actually proposing; although, they sound as if they are in conflict.

Could you please respond to what the Iraq Study Group said about adding more troops and the plan for this proposed surge? And then also I would be interested in the additional recommendations of the Iraq Study Group. I know that a significant amount of intellectual capital went into this, and I would certainly hope that the remaining recommendations are continuing to be reviewed by the Administration.

Mr. Secretary.

Secretary GATES. First of all, a number of the Iraq Study Group's recommendations have been incorporated into the President's strategy, and we can talk a little bit about that if you all want to.

I would say that, in the recommendation that you mentioned, I do not know anybody in the Administration who disagrees with the notion that military force alone can not win this thing and that, no matter how many American forces you put into Iraq, if there is not a political reconciliation and a willingness to work together on the part of the Iraqis, there will not be a solution to the problem that we face there, and the premise of the strategy is fundamentally that the Iraqis have come to us and have said that the different parts of their government have decided to come together, work together to do these acts of reconciliation that are apart from the military campaign—provincial elections, oil revenues and so on. So I think that there is very little disagreement with the premise of the study group that military action alone can not solve this thing.

Mr. TURNER. General, do you have a comment?

General PACE. Sir, I agree completely with his statement that adding any number of U.S. forces will simply have a temporary effect absent political reconciliation and economic progress, and that is why we have been so concerned and attentive to the other two parts of this three-legged stool, because military action, by itself, will not have a long-term effect, and it is the Maliki government's commitment to the other two legs of that stool and our own government's commitment to the other two legs of that stool that give me confidence in our capacity to make this military plan, as part of the overall plan, succeed.

Secretary GATES. Let me just add that, although I was a member of the study group until I ended up being nominated for this position, I think it is important to remember that they were writing their report at the time that the last effort to clear, hold and build was going on in Baghdad, and it was failing. The clear—the "hold" and "build" part of it was not there, and so I think that the conclu-

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sion that they drew was based on that failure, and frankly, I think the President has drawn the same conclusion.

General PACE. And as to the other parts that you asked about with regard to other recommendations, clearly the recommendation about increasing the size of the embedded trained teams is a great recommendation and is part of this process. We are going to double and triple the size of the embedded teams. Equally important from the State Department's standpoint, they are going to double the number of provincial reconstruction teams, and that is very important. So there has been a lot of the Baker-Hamilton report that has been cross-walked with these recommendations, and there are very few things that have not been accommodated one way or another.

Mr. TURNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady from California, Ms. Sanchez.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Gentlemen, for being here with us today.

As one of my colleagues mentioned, the Iraq Study Group really said, you know, troops are not the answer to this. On November 15th, General Abizaid said, "I believe that more American forces prevent the Iraqis from doing more and taking more responsibility for their own future." I have met with every divisional commander—General Casey; the Corps commander, General Dempsey. We all talked together, and I said, "In your professional opinion, if we were to bring in more American troops now, will it add considerably to our ability to achieve success in Iraq?" And they all said, "No."

On November 30th, Prime Minister Maliki and Bush met in Jordan, and from all accounts, it came out in the newspaper at least he did not ask for any more troops, American troops. Last summer, Operation Together Forward, we surged the size of the U.S. forces in Baghdad from 7,500 to 15,000. We doubled the force, and yet, the operation failed to stabilize the city and to reduce the level of sectarian violence, and General Odierno said that the operation failed for three reasons: we could not hold the areas we cleared; the Iraqi army failed to perform; and no effort by the Iraqi government to rein in the Shi'a militias, especially the Mahdi army, which is the al Sadr folks.

So, now you all are telling me there is a political change going on with the government in Iraq, and they are going to do more. I mean it is hard for me to imagine that the prime minister sits around and says, you know, "I want to be the guy that is holding onto the power in a failed country." So, I think he has been trying to do as much as he can.

So I am looking at that, and I am thinking he has got five ministers that are al Sadr people. Thirty percent—a third of his parliament are al Sadr positions. They are his power base in a lot of ways.

So my question is, "What now?" What change in tactics or conditions would lead you to believe that our operations can succeed when they have failed so recently? Someone once said that the definition of "insanity" is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result each time. Why do you believe a surge will work this time? What specific assurances, measures, have you gotten from Maliki that would show us that he is going

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to gain control over these militias who are going out at night, decapitating people and scaring the rest of the population? What measures are going to—how is he going to change that if he has not done it yet given that Odierno said the Iraqi army failed to perform?

Secretary GATES. You go ahead and then I will add.

General PACE. Ma'am, I certainly understand your concerns, and the quotes that you have quoted, to my knowledge, are exactly accurate. In the middle of November, General Abizaid did say those words. He is also on record as having said that as part of a political and economic surge, that more troops would be useful.

After he spoke in November, the prime minister and our President met. The prime minister proposed the new way ahead in Baghdad and throughout Al Anbar. Our commanders then, along with the Iraqi commanders, were given the responsibility to come up with the plan on the ground to make that work. They came up with a way to succeed and had very specific stipulations to include, A, the Prime Minister needed to be the one going out in the country and saying, "This is what I am going to do." He has done that.

The prime minister needed to pick an overall commander who would have the authority to operate over all of Baghdad and to have subordinate commanders who were going to work for him, and that has been done, that the Iraqi forces that failed to perform because they were told to stop by their political leaders, that those Iraqi forces would not be stopped, that they would be allowed to apply the rule of law across all of Baghdad in Sunni, mixed and Shi'a neighborhoods.

So, given the change in leadership and political atmosphere and the commitment of $10 billion of Iraqi money for reconstruction, this military plan was developed as a part of that. There are no guarantees. We are going to pursue this on the assumptions that the promises that have been made will be delivered. So far, the promises made that should have been delivered by now have been.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman. John Kline.

Mr. KLINE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, gentlemen, for being here.

The question has been asked and answered now many times: "what is different?" So, I will not ask that question. It will probably be asked again beyond saying this: one of the things that, it seems to me, has changed in this strategy—and whether it is a strategy or a tactic I do not think matters; it is a new way of doing business—is the increased presence of U.S. forces embedded in and partnered with Iraqi army soldiers. We know that they fight better when we are with them. So that alone, I think, is going to make a change in how the Iraqi army performs, but let me move to another side of this, and that is the impact on our soldiers and Marines and families back here.

When you extend tour lengths, you create hardship, plain and simple, for the soldiers, Marines, and their families. As it happens, the Minnesota National Guard has got a fairly sizable presence in Iraq, and their tour lengths are going to be extended, and I can feel the pain, even where I am sitting here, to those families.

Mr. Secretary, you talked about doing some things to enhance benefits or pay or compensation for these extensions. Did I mishear

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that? Could you talk about that? What is it that you are doing to lessen those either early deployments or worse? The worst of all is when you are there, and you have been anticipating coming home. You have got your—the reception is already planned, and now you find you are going to be there for an additional one, two, three months. What do you think that addition is going to be, and what are you doing about it, either one or both of you?

Secretary GATES. Mr. Kline, we are very sensitive to the impact, particularly in this transition time from going from individual volunteers and to a unit call-up. We believe that the change to the unit call-up plus limiting the mobilization time for those mobilized involuntarily to a year instead of 18 months to 2 years will, in fact, make service more attractive because it will be more predictable. Once this transitions from the way things have been done for the last several years to the unit call-ups, we will be able to give people six, nine months or more advance notice before they are going to deploy, and with the increase in the end strength of both the Marines and the Army, we will try to get back as quickly as possible to the ratio of one year deployed/five years—or one year mobilized/five years demobilized for the guard and reserves and one year deployed/two years at home base, or home post, for the Army.

With respect to units like the brigade that is headquartered in Minnesota, we are very sensitive to the human impact of these decisions. We know that soldiers are worried about graduation dates for their children. We know that some of them had cruises planned; they had vacations planned and things, and we, as of today, have said that that brigade, although headquartered in Minnesota, actually draws on soldiers from, I think, about seven or eight different states, and we are sending people from the Army to every one of those states and to every one of those places to sit down with those folks, a family at a time, and figure out how we can help them—and we have some financial resources to help them—to try and mitigate the consequences of this call-up because we know that it leads to a lot of hardship, a lot of personal hardship and disappointment when these tours are extended like this, but we have to go through this transitional period to get to a more rational use of our guard and reserve forces.

General, I do not know if you want to add.

General PACE. Sir, it is not about money for sure but certainly, for the families, to alleviate some of the hardship. For those units that are being extended beyond the tour length that they were sent on, for each month or part thereof, they will get $1,000 more per month in their pay, so it is a way to recognize that there is additional hardship.

On top of that, as we look at how to resource this for the next couple of months, we are paying very close attention to how to balance properly between those units that are home right now and bringing them up sooner and at least—giving them at least a year home before we take them back into theater, and those units that are in theater right now had the experience on the ground but would have to be extended to stay, so the Minnesota unit is the first one.

Mr. KLINE. My son's unit is the second, so I appreciate your consideration.

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Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. McIntyre.

Mr. MCINTYRE. Thank you, gentlemen, for your testimony today. I have two questions that I want to ask pretty directly, one regarding security and one regarding economic reconstruction.

First, General Pace, you had said earlier today that the Iraqis are staged for success. In his testimony before this committee last month in December, General Abizaid said that, and I quote, "it was disappointing," when I directly asked him about the training of the Iraqi police. In fact, he mentioned that, actually, we had lost some ground with regard to the quality of training and what the Iraqi police were supposed to be doing. I know that part of the big concern is that local governance and local control are going to be dependent upon those local police doing their job.

Can you tell us what are the specific benchmarks that you will be gauging to see if we are having success with the training of the Iraqi police in these local communities?

General PACE. Sir, my comments about success were primarily, and I think I differentiated, between the Iraqi army, the Iraqi national police and the Iraqi local police, and as you would expect, the local police are taken from the local community and, therefore, normally are from one community or another. As you get higher up the chain, the national police and the national army, you have a better opportunity to mix forces.

We have with our embed teams not only the training that we give them, but the oversight of how they perform, and as units do not perform well, they are taken off the line by the Iraqi government. Those who have performed not like police but like sectarian individuals are fired. New people are hired, embedded and the unit is retrained. It is a long process, and it is currently more successful with the army than it is with the police, but both our embedded trainers and especially the Iraqi government are attuned to that problem and are working on it. It is a slow process, though, sir.

Mr. MCINTYRE. The second question I wanted to ask is on economic reconstruction.

Mr. Secretary, the President has proposed $400 million in quick response funds for local reconstruction and rebuilding projects. However, a recent report by the special inspector general said that the violence coupled with a lack of security was preventing reconstruction because of the danger to the lives of construction workers and also to the contractors.

What will be done specifically to change this scenario, and also, are you in favor of keeping the Special Inspector General for reconstruction?

Secretary GATES. To answer the second part of your question first, as I told the other house during my confirmation hearings, I do support that. When I was on the Iraq Study Group, the Special Inspector General briefed us, and it seemed to me then that he was making a very valuable contribution in helping the Department of Defense identify where there were weaknesses in the efforts that were being undertaken.

With respect to the Commander's Emergency Reconstruction Program (CERP), I think we all believe that that is a critical element of the "hold" and "build" process. It is the immediate money that

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can be made available for putting people to work whether it is reconnecting sewer lines or picking up trash or beginning some modest projects, but what is clear is that it is of greatest value immediately after the military has complete—after the clearing operations have left because it does not really create jobs for the most part. It gives people—it puts people to work in cleanup and things like that in some projects, but it is not long-term economic development or reconstruction, and so a big part of the $10 billion that the Iraqis are talking about and a big part of what these provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs) are going to be doing is focusing on what I call the "near term" part of it, of the economic reconstruction, and that is actually beginning to start some longer-term projects and activities that actually provide real jobs for people, but the CERP money is very important in coming right after the "clear" operations.

The comment that you cannot do reconstruction if the security is not there is very important. That is why the "hold" part of this operation is so important, and as we have discussed, that is the part that clearly did not work last year.

Mr. MCINTYRE. So what is the difference in the scenario—that is what I was asking—in regard to how you are going to protect those workers?

Secretary GATES. The most important part is maintaining the troop presence in the "hold" part where you are able to keep control of the security situation while the reconstruction begins.

The CHAIRMAN. Mrs. Miller.

Mrs. MILLER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and Secretary Gates and General Pace. We certainly appreciate you gentlemen coming today and certainly thank you so very much for your service to our Nation.

I have a number of questions about time frames and benchmarks which have been asked and asked and asked, so I think I will follow up with my time here on what my colleague just asked about the reconstruction and about the "build" and "hold" portions of this new strategy, and let me preface this by telling you I come from Michigan, and very quickly, during the Civil War, actually, Abraham Lincoln was looking out of the White House, and looked down Pennsylvania Avenue, and watched the Michigan militia marching up Pennsylvania Avenue, and he said, "Thank God for Michigan," and during World War II, our state was known as the arsenal democracy because we literally had the manufacturing capability to build the armaments that led the world to peace. My county has the largest veteran chapter in the entire Nation. We will always support our troops in every way that we can, but I must tell you, because of a transitional economy that we are now living through with the worst unemployment in the Nation, the lowest personal income growth in the Nation, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera, I have a question that I would like you to flesh out a bit of this "build" and "hold" if you can.

When we look at Iraq that has natural resources like oil, we do not really have that in Michigan, and my people are wondering how we can continue to support monetarily the reconstruction of Iraq when you are building new schools and transitioning grid

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lines, et cetera, et cetera in the $10 billion that you spoke of of Iraqi money.

Is it truly Iraqi money or was that money that we had given them that they just have not expended yet, if you could?

Secretary GATES. It is Iraqi oil money. It is $10 billion of Iraq's own money from the sale of their oil.

General PACE. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. MILLER. Okay. Let me quickly ask one other question then. Everything that we are talking about here is predicated on the ability for us—and I will switch gears here—to train the Iraqis to stand up, to embrace their own freedom, and the Iraq Study Group as well has indicated that that is a priority, and I am just wondering, if you could enlighten me a bit, about what the training that we are doing to the Iraqis actually entails when you look at our Army and Marine troops and how long it takes them to get through boot camp—9 weeks, 11 weeks, 13 weeks—and at what point they are ready to be combat-ready. How long is it taking us to train the Iraqi people, troops, to be able to be combat-ready to embrace their own freedom?

General PACE. Ma'am, we start with raw recruits. There are about 30 different locations throughout Iraq, different academies for non-commissioned (NCO) training, different brigade-level headquarters where they do the actual training, but we start with the basic troops, and we basically help build a cadre of Iraqi trainers who do what we do in boot camp, with our assistance, which is to bring in PFC. Mohammad and train him up to the standard of being able to protect himself on the battlefield, and then take them to the field and learn to work in teams of 4, then teams of 12 or 13, then teams of about 30 or 40, then teams of about 150, et cetera.

Once they get up to about the battalion level, which is about 500 or 600 troops, then they are put into the Iraqi army available forces, and that is where the embedded U.S. teams stay with them and do on-the-job training, basically, as they go on, starting with lesser intense missions like patrolling and the like and learn through doing and learn through coming home and saying, "Okay. What went right? What did not go right?" just like we do with our own people.

The leaders then go to some of the leadership academies, and we are assisted in this with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) training teams that are there helping with some of the leadership training, and countries like Jordan have schools to which we send people.

So it is very much modeled on our U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps boot camp through the fielding of units. The timeline—I need to double-check this figure. I think their boot camp period is about ten weeks, but I would need to check that, and let me get back to you.

Mrs. MILLER. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Let me also mention that I appreciate everybody staying within the five-minute rule. It is very, very helpful.

Mrs. Tauscher.

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Ms. TAUSCHER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, General Pace, it is good to see you.

On Tuesday, I was with you and with about a dozen Democratic members at the White House, and at the time, I spoke, I think, pretty passionately about my deep concern about being able to support any kind of escalation and increasing troops going into Iraq, and I am increasingly agitated and upset about what I consider to be a lack of clarity as to exactly what this is all about. I listened very intently to the President's speech last night, and Mr. Secretary, I have read your remarks quite a few times, and I am struck by the third paragraph from the end of your speech where you say, "Significant mistakes have been made by the U.S. and Iraq just like in virtually every war in human history. This is the nature of war, but however we got into this moment, the stakes are now incalculable," and I have to tell you that I have deep respect for you and your service, but it is about the most trite statement, stunningly trite statement, that I have ever heard in my entire life. We did not get into this war in any kind of conventional way, and we certainly are not at this moment because this is where we intended to be, and I find it just absolutely ridiculous after the colossal and catastrophic failures of your predecessor—which, by the way, the reason you are sitting here is because Secretary Rumsfeld is no longer with us—and the complete obfuscation of the Administration as to what is going on in Iraq that we are thinking that a solution could possibly be—when we have had failure on "clear," "hold" and "build," that it should be bait and switch, and the truth of the matter is why should we consider to do anything that puts one more American at risk until the Iraqis step up and do the things that we know they have to do?

The idea that we should add more military force to enable a political solution that they cannot articulate and, frankly, we do not believe that they really intend to do is just folly. So I am sitting here, trying to understand how I can look anybody in the eye and say anything other than I can not support this. I am going to help lead an effort to make sure that we do not do this, and what are we going to do to be straight with each other? I appreciate that you are new on the scene, it is three weeks, and I appreciate the fact, Mr. Secretary, that you have taken a very tough job. You did not do this. This is something that you are doing for public service, but we have got to be straight with people. Adding more troops now to a failed policy is not going to bring our troops home sooner. This Congress insisted in the 2000 defense bill that we would bring our troops home and that we would begin to do that in 2007.

That can not happen by adding more troops, and until we have guarantees that Iraq is going to stand up and fly right and stop being feckless and fight for their country as well as we are fighting for them, then we should not be doing this, and I actually do not have any questions, Mr. Secretary, but I really hope that the American people will begin to speak out very soundly about this or we are going to find ourselves here over and over and over again with maybe new messengers but with, unfortunately, the same message. I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

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Mr. Rogers from Alabama. Wait. No. It is Mister—we have Mr. Rogers.

Mr. ROGERS. I thank the chairman.

First, I want to thank both of you for your service and sacrifice for our country and for being here.

I was very pleased to hear your opening comments about the end strength. One of the things I have seen in my years on this committee is both Democrat and Republican members have been pushing your predecessor, Mr. Secretary, and General Schoomaker, to dramatically grow the end strength, and I am hoping that we start seeing that now your comments are indicative of that, and I am also interested to see in a later hearing some discussion from you and either General Schoomaker or his successor on the reserve component and what, if any, modifications you intend to implement that would affect the restructuring of that to be more utilitarian, but what I want to talk about in addition to manpower is equipment and specifically the MM13A3 family of vehicles.

In 2007, this Congress put the money in the budget because the Army said they needed that family of vehicles to accelerate the modularity of the heavy brigade combat teams and to support the 1,500 vehicles that are currently in Iraq, but I understand now that in the upcoming supplemental that funding is zeroed out, and it will be in 2008.

So my question is, "What changed, and what is your position on the future of that family of vehicles and its conversion plan? Thank you.

General PACE. Sir, I do not have the details in my head, and I am going to have to take that for the record. I do not know the Army's plan for that particular vehicle, and I will find out.

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is all I have got.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

The gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. Andrews.

Mr. ANDREWS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, General Pace, thank you for the sacrifices that you have made and are making for our country.

General Pace, in your professional opinion, what is the optimal number of troops to have to secure and pacify Baghdad?

General PACE. Sir, I have looked at this plan. I have looked at the analysis that the commanders have done. They are saying that the combination of about 50,000 Iraqi and about 31,000 U.S. is sufficient given the right political and economic climate to do the job. I agree with that assessment, but I also believe we need to have an insurance policy so that, when we commit to doing this, we ensure a better probability of success, which is what the additional troops beyond what the commanders on the ground have asked for is all about. I cannot guarantee you——

Mr. ANDREWS. I understand. Excuse me, General.

Mr. Secretary, assuming then that 81,000 troops or so is the optimal or good number as the chairman just stated, according to the earlier testimony, there are 24,000 U.S. troops deployed in Baghdad presently. Why don't we just put 57,000 more Iraqi troops in to make it 81,000? Why do we need any more American troops on

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top of that? Why aren't there 57,000 Iraqi troops ready to do this job?

Secretary GATES. Well, sir, Air Force First Lieutenant Robert Gates is no expert on military matters, and frankly, that is the judgment. The numbers on both the Iraqi side and on the American side are the result of conversations between the commanders in the field who are on the ground and familiar with the situation. I have to take their recommendation.

Mr. ANDREWS. How much have we spent training Iraqi security forces in the last four years? Do you know?

General PACE. Sir, I do not know the answer to that. We have trained 325,000. We are going to train 37,000 more. I do not know the exact number. It is available. I just do not have it in my head.

Mr. ANDREWS. The department data from your department indicates that the defense forces of the Iraqis is now 137,500 give or take as distinguished from the interior forces. I understand the difference in quality. You have 66,000 in now, so you need to ramp up 15,000.

Aren't there 15,000 trained and competent Iraqi defense forces that could be shifted into Baghdad instead of these additional Americans, and if not, why not?

General PACE. Sir, there are well-trained Iraqi forces. There are 15 relatively stable provinces right now. We have learned in the past that when you take forces—whether they are Coalition or Iraqi—from one place to another, unless you continue to cover the spot that was stable, that it becomes instable, number one. Number two, you need to take a look at the mixture of the forces you have versus where they are going to be deployed. It does not make good sense to take a mostly Shi'a organization and put it into action in a mostly Sunni neighborhood; for example.

Next, we have capacities in the U.S. military that the Iraqis do not yet have. So the combination of where they are in their current capacities and our ability to reinforce them is how we came up with these numbers of 7,000 additional U.S. in Baghdad to help the 50,000 Iraqis.

Mr. ANDREWS. General, again, if I may, that explains some of our skepticism. You just said, I think, accurately that putting Shi'a forces in a Sunni neighborhood is a problem. Well then, how is the plan ever going to succeed? If we are eventually going to turn this over to a military force supposedly loyal to this government, aren't we eventually going to have to put Shi'a forces in Sunni neighborhoods and vice versa?

General PACE. Absolutely, sir, and we are going to have to do that over time and build the confidence. I do not understand the kind of hatred that festers for centuries, much less for minutes—but centuries—and we are going to have to build the kind of confidence where there are first mixed Iraqi units working in mixed neighborhoods and Shi'a units working in Shi'a neighborhoods and Sunni units working in Sunni neighborhoods, and taking care of criminals builds the confidence of the Iraqi people in their own armed forces, and that is going to take time because of the way that they think about each other, and we are just going to have to have some patience.

Mr. ANDREWS. Thank you, Gentlemen.

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Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Mrs. Drake.

Mrs. DRAKE. Mr. Chairman, I would like to yield my time to Dr. Gingrey.

The CHAIRMAN. Doctor.

Dr. GINGREY. Mr. Chairman, thank you, and I thank Mrs. Drake.

I have two questions, one major and one relatively minor, but before that, I am going to give a short speech and do all that within the time limits of five minutes.

You know, we heard a lot about the President's speech last night immediately after he spoke for 20 minutes. All of the pundits—political and media types on both sides of the issue—were giving him a grade on whether or not he delivered a good message and all of the that, but in the final analysis, of course, this is not about him. This is not about how he delivered the message. It is not about Secretary Gates. It is not about General Pace. It is not really about the combatant commanders. It is about the plan, and I think it is a good plan, and certainly, if the plan does not work, then there will be heck to pay in four to six months, because what this is really about is the Iraqi people, the people of the United States and the people of the world and the whole Middle East, so that sort of leads to my major question. I heard you say earlier in response to someone else's question, I think maybe subcommittee chairman Neil Abercrombie, that this was an Iraqi plan.

Mr. Secretary, that scares me because what they have done so far has really looked like the Keystone Cops, and I would like to think, when the President met—I think it was in Amman, Jordan with Prime Minister Maliki—that that plan was the Secretary of Defense's plan, the President's plan, our combatant commanders' plan, General Abizaid's plan, and maybe, to some extent, Prime Minister Maliki's plan. Comfort me a little bit so that I can be a little more assured that this is a good plan, and it has a chance for success.

Then the minor question is in regard to the Commander's Emergency Response Program. I do not say that it is not a good plan, but I want to know if there has been some accounting and if there will continue to be accounting and how this money is spent so that we will know what works and what does not work.

Secretary GATES. Well, sir, I would tell you, first of all, I was not in the government yet when the Amman meeting took place, and so I do not know exactly what the prime minister presented to the President, whether it was a set of ideas, whether it was a concept.

What I do know is that that plan has been extensively examined by our own commanders on the ground under the leadership of General Casey and General Odierno. We have had a significant effect on how it is to be done, how best to implement it. We have had influence, as General Pace indicated, at the outset in the selection of the Iraqi commanders that are going to be involved in this, so I think that whatever set of concepts or ideas or rudimentary plan that the prime minister may have presented, in fact, that whatever he presented, has undergone enormous scrutiny by American commanders both on the ground and here in Washington.

With respect to the CERP, I would have to defer to General Pace.

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General PACE. Sir, it has been effective. It does have accounting rules. We do keep track of what works and what does not work; cleaning up the streets, hiring Iraqi youth to clean up the streets and do those kind of small construction projects might work extremely well. What is really telling, and the Congress has been very helpful in this, and we thank you for it because we would give one of our troops a $90,000 weapon and tell them to fire it when he needs to, and then we wouldn't give him $5 to go hire an Iraqi youth to go police something up if it would take that young youth off the street. You have fixed that by giving us this ability to do that. There is accounting. It is used primarily for short-term employment to be able to have impact like building schools, building hospitals, cleaning up the streets and the like.

Dr. GINGREY. Thank you, General.

Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Mr. Chairman, I want to make sure that I yield my time back now back to Mrs. Drake, and I appreciate her yielding.

The CHAIRMAN. I think she probably has ten seconds left.

Let me say that I did not learn until a few moments ago, Mr. Secretary, that you had to leave before everyone had the opportunity to ask questions, and then you are kind enough to extend your time for a short period of time. I was in hopes that you could stay for the entire, because those down in the front row have as much right as we do on the top row to ask questions, and I have to comment that everybody is doing their best to stay within the five-minute time limit. But let's sail on as far as we can, Mr. Secretary.

Mrs. Davis.

Ms. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Secretary Gates. Before following up on a few of my colleagues' questions, I wanted to get sort of a simple response, if I may, Mr. Secretary.

There is some question about the reserve mobilization policies and whether or not that would be a cumulative service for 24 months or consecutive 24 months of mobilization. We have some anxious families out there that I think are concerned about that. Can you clarify that for us?

Secretary GATES. For that reason it is important you get an accurate answer, and so let me turn to General Pace.

General PACE. Ma'am, from this day forward, based on what the secretary decided, when a reservist or a guard member is called to active duty, it will be for no more than 24 months from the time they mobilize at home station until the time they are demobilized at home station, irrespective of any previous service; 12 months maximum from the time of mobilization to the time of demobilization from today forward.

Ms. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Would you say for those—you are not extending the length of time then for any reservists that are mobilized in an involuntary fashion?

General PACE. There are——

Ms. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. That exist today.

General PACE. There are reservists currently serving on active duty, specifically the guard members from the Minnesota Guard who are currently in Iraq whose duty will be extended, but for

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those who are going to be called to duty from today forward, their total time maximum will be 12 months on that call to duty, and then the policy is they should have 5 years before they were to come back into the bin to be potentially called back to active duty.

Ms. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Thank you very much.

If I could go on and just mention a few other issues. I think that your clarification of the makeup of the Iraqi forces did cause some of us some concern, particularly because you noted the police forces that would be combined with the Iraqi forces, partly because we know that there has been an amount of corruption within the police forces, and that they weren't well trained as some of my colleagues have mentioned. What concerns me is that there is a key operational shift in the rules of engagement from being more restrictive to more permissive. Does that cause you any concern given the fact that those police forces may not be necessarily as well trained, and does that increase what might be beyond an acceptable risk of friendly fire?

General PACE. Ma'am, the rules of engagement term really applies to what we allow PFC Pace to do or not do, and with regard to his or her ability to engage the enemy or protect themselves, that is not changing at all. What is changing is inside the Iraq government and the authority that they are going to allow their forces and our forces to do what we must do to impose the rule of law regardless of what neighborhood we are in. So if we confuse the issue by using rules of engagement, which has a very precise military meaning, with what we are really talking about, which is freedom of action inside of the communities——

Ms. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. So we are talking about where they go and——

General PACE. Yes, ma'am.

Ms. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. That is helpful. I wanted to clarify that.

There hasn't been much focus in the discussion today about the training camps and what we might do to disrupt the operations there. There was activity in about mid-November in Turkey by the Diyala province where there was an assessment made that, in fact, the Sunni insurgents there were more disciplined, better trained than they had anticipated. Can you respond to what in addition we will be doing to disrupt those training camps, and are we rediscovering that those troops are far better disciplined and able to engage in more traditional firepower than initially was anticipated?

General PACE. I will try and answer you, ma'am, and if I misunderstood your question, please give me another shot. We do, and still have, have had and will continue to have a good chunk of our resources apply to the al Qaeda problem. We are working that every day and every night, and we will continue to work against the al Qaeda elements and foreign elements in Iraq without respect to the plus-up that is going to happen in Baghdad. So we will continue to pursue them.

Ms. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Hawaii for an inquiry.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. General Pace, so that we are absolutely clear with regard to Mrs. Davis's question, because this thing has gone

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out over television now to the whole country, you said in clear terms, at least the way I understood it, that the guard and reserve units will remain one year of being mobilized, followed by five years demobilized. However, the secretary's testimony then states: "however, today's global demands will require a number of selected guard and reserve units to be remobilized sooner than this standard. Our intention is that such exceptions be made temporary."

So, Mr. Secretary, can you—that is a contradiction of what General Pace just said. Is the mobilization for one year, period, followed by five years of demobilization, period, or will there be certain select guard units that will be remobilized?

Secretary GATES. Let me let General Pace clarify his remarks.

General PACE. Thank you, sir.

Sir, the policy is——

The CHAIRMAN. As quickly as possible, please, General.

General PACE. One year mobilized followed by five years is the policy that the Secretary articulated this morning. That will be for those units that are mobilized in the coming period. Some of the units that will be mobilized in the coming period will not have had five years since their last mobilization. That is, I think, where the discrepancy is. There will be some units that have four years, perhaps as little as three years, between the time that they were last demobilized and this mobilization. But——

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. I don't have all the time, General.

Mr. Gates, I think you have got to clearly delineate after this hearing is over precisely what the policy is.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank the gentleman.

Mr. Conaway.

Mr. CONAWAY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Gentlemen, thank you for being here today. I will try not to be any more redundant than everybody else has been. Prime Minister Maliki is getting immense pressure from us and others. Can you comment briefly on pressure from within, groundswells of pressure from within his country?

Also, decisions that we make have consequences, and in despite of what was previously said by one of my colleagues, I think it is very important that we understand the consequences of failure in Iraq. When the chairman and I were in Iraq late last month, we asked the State Department, we asked the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and others what they thought the doomsday scenarios were like. None of them were acceptable, and I think it is important for the American people to understand what those consequences can be and in all likelihood could be. So if you could flesh out your comments there.

And then finally, as we look at Al Anbar, we were told that the sheiks ought to kick al Qaeda and Iraq out of their own province. It is just an acknowledgment that we understand the risks of creating additional Sunni militias in a province that at one point in time could become our enemy, and that we at least understand the consequences of that.

Any comments on those three areas?

Secretary GATES. First of all, we think there are pressures on Prime Minister Maliki from inside; that there are a number of elements of the government and political factions that are dissatisfied

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with the violence, dissatisfied with the failure of the government to perform in a number of different areas, and, one might speculate, saying I could do a better job than he can. So I think he is feeling internal pressure to try to perform.

With respect to the consequences of failure, first of all, I want to be clear the consequences of failure that I described were not necessarily those of the failure of this plan, but a failure by leaving Iraq in chaos and a disintegrating state. Those are where you get the more dire descriptions of the kinds of things that can happen, and that includes not necessarily Iraq being a subordinate state to Iran, but clearly Iran having enormous influence in southern Iran and probably in Baghdad. You would have neighbors trying to interfere, not only the Iranians, but potentially the Turks, the Syrians, the various other Sunni states feeding money, so you could have a significant ethnic cleansing problem, and you would then have questions on the part of countries that have been supportive of the United States in terms of our commitment to them in the Gulf area. So those are some of the consequences that we could talk about.

I will let General Pace answer the last questions.

General PACE. Sir, you are right about we do not want more militias to either disband or integrate. We want the elected governments to have the monopoly on the use and availability of power. What is encouraging in the Sunni area out in al Anbar are the police forces are the ones being recruited by the sheiks to be able to provide security for their own people, and they are going to places like Jordan for training so they can come back better trained to do the job.

Mr. CONAWAY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Langevin.

Let me mention the next five people I hope we can get to before you leave: Langevin, Franks, Larsen, and Drake, because there was a mistake in the listing a few moment ago, and Mr. Cooper.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Secretary, thank you for being here. Welcome before the committee.

General, thank you for being back.

I think the most people, the average person, would see what is happening in Iraq and say that our military is in the middle of a civil war, and that we are babysitting the civil war, and it would appear that in many ways our military is acting more as a police force than the warfighters that they are. Is the President using our military as a police force in Iraq?

The second part of my question is, Secretary Gates, in your testimony you called for a significant expansion of our Army and Marine Corps to adapt to existing and emerging missions. This committee has strongly supported an increase in end strength, and I want to thank you for your willingness to pursue that approach.

One question I have is how the new troops would be trained. Our troops in Iraq have been conducting a combination, as I said, of both policing and insurgency missions as opposed to traditional combat missions. So, Secretary Gates and General Pace, what would you envision as the primary purpose of the new Army and Marine Corps forces, as combat troops or as counterinsurgency forces, or for policing missions? And also do you think that our ex-

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isting training is sufficient to meet our military-specific mission requirements in Iraq?

Secretary GATES. Let me answer your first question and ask General Pace to address your second question.

With respect to whether the United States military is being used as a police force in Iraq in a civil war, I would make two observations. The first is I think in many respects there are four wars going on in Iraq at the same time. The first is Shi'a-on-Shi'a violence in the south, the second is sectarian violence in Baghdad and in its environments, the third is an insurgency, and the fourth is al Qaeda.

Whatever was the case in 2003, the reality is that all the bad actors in the region are now active in Iraq; Hezbollah trainers, Iran, Syria and so on. So I think that to call it a civil war frankly oversimplifies the complexity of the problems in Iraq today, and I think that the U.S. forces are not being used as a police force, but are, in fact, being used in an effort to try and first of all, and over the past couple of years, train and bring up an Iraqi military force able to exercise the writ of the government around the country and now, under this, to support an Iraqi effort to try and get control of the sectarian violence in Baghdad.

General PACE. Sir, the additional troops are for combat and to strengthen our combat units, the numbers. What you have right now is sufficient force to have one year in combat in Iraq, home for a year, and back over. What happens in that year that you are home is after you take leave and have the people who are going to get out get out, and the people join join, you have enough time left in that year to train your unit to be well trained for the kind of operations they are going to be doing in Iraq, but you don't do the kinds of combined arms training that you may need elsewhere in the world.

By adding to the strength of the Army and strength of the Marine Corps, you will be able to have more time between deployments for units and then be able to train them not only for missions like they are doing in Iraq, but also for the kinds of capacities and capabilities that we need to be able to defeat other challenges in the world like the troops were trained before they went into Iraq in the first place.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you. I will yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

I hope we can get, Mr. Secretary, through the next four members, Franks, Larsen, Drake, Cooper, and we get Mrs. Drake because of a mistake made on the list. And you will be back with us in three weeks, as I understand it. With the concurrence of the gentleman from California, Mr. Hunter, priority will be given to those who do not have the opportunity today to ask you questions. I would hope, General Pace, will you be able to stay after these next four members?

General PACE. I will stay.

The CHAIRMAN. Could you, please?

All right. Call Mr. Franks. Five minutes.

Mr. FRANKS. I thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you Mr. Secretary, General.

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You know, sometimes I think that those of you who carry the shield of freedom for the rest of us do so often in such a noble and effective way that it is easy for us to forget the challenges and logistics you face in a war situation, and I am absolutely convinced that that is the case in this circumstance, that you face a changing, dedicated, committed enemy that is perhaps the most dangerous ideology and fighting force that we have ever really dealt with in terms of ideological commitment. They change so quickly that you have had to change your strategy as you go, and it has been my observation you have done that. And yet somehow the American people to a large degree seem unable to understand some of those doomsday scenarios that everybody points out.

It occurs to me that failure in Iraq will ultimately lead to terrorists gaining control of that area, that oil-rich province, and possibly even the entire human family. If this ideology is germinated into the greater populations of Islamic countries throughout the world, I don't think any of us can overstate the danger of that happening.

With that said, I am convinced that the greatest challenge those of you in the military and those of us here at home face is the potential loss of will among the American people, and it occurs to me that that is something that has to be addressed, and it is a nonmilitary approach. It is something to help not only our people understand just how serious and dangerous this enemy is and how serious the challenges that you face are, but to somehow also suppress the fallacy and propaganda that the other side puts forth through al Jazeera and other places.

So my question really is basically twofold: how can we help the world and even our own citizens understand the danger and the potential of the enemy that we face and the challenge that you face more clearly so that we are all on the same page, and how can we suppress the false propaganda that seeks to recruit additional terrorists to this growing danger to the world?

Secretary GATES. First of all, I think that one of the ways to help educate the American people, quite honestly, are through hearings like this and through the hearings that this committee and its counterpart on the Senate side and other committees will hold on this matter and this kind of dialog.

I have not had the opportunity to respond to a couple of things that have been said, but let me assure this committee one of the things that I am proudest of is the relationship that I established with our congressional overseers in the intelligence business when I became acting director in 1986. There was never a single additional scandal or conflict or major conflict between CIA and the Intelligence Committees after I became acting director of Central Intelligence until I retired in 1993. And one of the things I was proudest of was the relationship I established with Mr. Boren's father when he was chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee. And I worked very closely with Mr. Hamilton when he was chair of the House Intelligence Committee.

This committee will not get spin from me. It will not get canned—it will get straight answers, and I am not afraid to tell you what I think. I didn't take this job, as I told the Senate, to be a bump on a log, and I didn't take it to compromise my reputation for being a straight talker. So that is what you will get from me.

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So I think the first answer to your question is that hearings like this, speeches like the President's, the more dialogue we can have, the more questions that you all can ask that get at what is on the minds of the American people I think contributes to public education.

One of the sad things that we did after the end of the Cold War, in answer to your second question, the second part of your question, was dismantle the entire apparatus in the American government for communicating the message about what this country is about and what goes on in this country, and we are trying to reconstitute that now. But right now until very recently, we have had very limited capability. The old capabilities we had through Voice of America and Radio Free Liberty and those things have largely disappeared, and we are trying to rebuild those, but we have to have that kind of a capability to get our message out.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Larsen.

Mr. LARSEN. Mr. Chairman, thank you, and, Mr. Secretary and General Pace, thanks for being with us today.

Mr. Secretary, you were born in Kansas, came from Texas A&M, but you are one—we are all proud of you in Big Lake, Washington, so we are looking forward to your return in a couple of years.

Secretary GATES. Mr. Larsen is my representative now.

Mr. LARSEN. So I have to be very careful. Some days the view of Mount Constitution seems farther away than 3,000 miles, and I know today is one of those days for you and for me. But I have a couple of questions for the both of you. First, actually, for General Pace. And I want to plant a quick image here, and it is the image of the "can you hear me now" Verizon Wireless guy, because he is just a guy holding the phone, and there is this huge network behind him. That is the image Verizon is trying to portray.

Like that image, the Iraqis are supposed to take the lead, but I think for many of us they are like the guy holding the phone, and the U.S. military is the network behind the guy, making everything work and taking all the risks, and I think that is part of the frustration that we have, certainly on this side of the aisle, certainly from my colleagues on the other side of the aisle as well.

So I want to ask you about this deployment in Iraq, or in Baghdad. You mentioned earlier that right now the Iraqis have 42,000 security folks, variety of security folks, allocated to Baghdad. Does that mean that they are there, or there are 42,000 Iraqis that are supposed to be there but it is actually a lesser number, or is it 42,000 of a higher base that didn't show up, first.

Second, we expect three Iraqi brigades additionally equaling 8,000 personnel. What is the current unauthorized absence rate or absent without leave (AWOL) rate for Iraqi military personnel, and how many of those 8,000 do we actually expect to show up? And will we stop send being brigades if the Iraqis do not show up?

General PACE. Sir, thank you.

Your analogy I appreciate. I would tell you that right now the guy holding the phone has a crowd behind him that is mixed Iraqi and U.S., and what they need is a guy to put the advertisement on the television from their politicians to say, "Pay attention to these folks, they are here to help you." That is what we need, sir.

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Forty-two thousand present for duty in Baghdad. Of the 325,000 total that we have trained of the Iraqi forces, about 89 percent are still on active duty, given the attrition rates, and I don't know the absent without leave number. I will have to get that for you, sir. But there is a percentage of that, and I don't want to guess what that percentage is, but that is already factored into the 42,000 on the ground.

Mr. LARSEN. Of the 8,000 Iraqi personnel that are going to be put into Baghdad, do we have an expectation that 8,000 will show up, or do we have an expectation that it will be fewer than that based on what we know about AWOL rates and attrition rates?

General PACE. Their table of organization calls for 2,500 per brigade, so my math rounded up from 7,500 to 8,000. If they perform to normal standard and they have some of their folks go on leave, probably 2,000 per 2,500 will be on duty, so probably about 6,000.

Mr. LARSEN. What do you mean by saying 500 per brigade being on leave? Does that mean they are not showing up? If they are going to be ordered to Baghdad, we want them in Baghdad; we don't want them on leave.

General PACE. Fair. I misspoke, and I appreciate the opportunity to fix that. In fact, I should point out another thing, and that is for the units that are moving to Baghdad, that the Iraqi government is going to pay them a stipend of $150 deployment money per month, which is big bucks. They are going to get the first month before they leave to give to their families, and they will get the multiple of $150 per month for the deployment time when they get back. So there is no leave; I misspoke.

Mr. LARSEN. Before the red light goes on, I need to know the answer to this. Will we stop sending brigades if the Iraqis don't show up? That was the last question. If the Iraqis don't fulfill their commitment, what is the standard we are going to use to say we are not sending our folks? If they are taking the lead, they should be taking the lead.

General PACE. Sir, they should be taking the lead. I expect them to take the lead. I am going to plan for success. I am also going to understand that there is potential for lots of things to change. If the situation changes, we will reassess, but I can only reiterate that each of the commitments that they have made to date have been met, to include the beginning of the movement of their first brigade to Baghdad.

Mr. LARSEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

If I may, Mr. Secretary, the burgers at Big Lake Bar & Grill are on me next time you are in the district.

The CHAIRMAN. Had I known that there was a time problem, Mr. Secretary, and that you had a presidential commitment, I would have been able to announce that earlier, but to rectify that, we will call—when you appear three weeks from now, we will call upon those who did not get the opportunity to have preference.

We will call on Mrs. Drake to correct the mistake of the listing, and Mr. Cooper, and he will be the last questioner of you.

We, of course—if you could, General, if you would stay, we would appreciate that, after the Secretary leaves. I hope that meets with your ability to meet your presidential commitment.

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Secretary GATES. Yes, sir. I don't want to mislead; it is a commitment with the Secretary of State.

The CHAIRMAN. You will be a couple minutes late, but we appreciate it.

Mrs. Drake.

Mrs. DRAKE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, thank you for being here. I would like to welcome you to our committee and certainly to thank both of you for being here, especially in such a timely manner when we are discussing such a new strategy. So thank you for that.

Truly I believe that it is painful for everyone to have American troops serving in harm's way, and especially to be here talking about increasing the number that would be currently serving there. But I would argue that we don't talk enough about the threat to America and the threat to the world if the terrorists are successful in their goal of taking over Iraq and controlling those very vast oil resources.

General Pace, I would like to take a moment and thank you and every man and woman that has served in Iraq or Afghanistan for your determination that this fight with this enemy will take place on their soil and not on our soil. And I thank God every day that you have been successful in keeping our enemy busy, in taking out their leaders and shutting down their money, and that we have not had another attack here.

Now, one of the problems with being at the end of the list is most of the questions have been asked, so I have been sitting here thinking that there is something even more I want to ask you, and that is one of the things we talk about often in here, is: what is the greatest threat to America? We identified in one of our gap panels what we think is the greatest threat; that is, the American people grow weary of this war and demand of their leaders that we leave before the Iraqi people can accomplish what you are working on right now.

And I wonder, do you think the intent of our enemy is as intense right now to attack us again, or are they waiting until they accomplish the thing we are most concerned of, and that is wearing the American people down, knowing that they would grow tired? Everyone is familiar with the quote that said when Americans cut and run like they did in Vietnam, they leave their agents behind.

So is that another reason that we haven't had an attack on this soil is they know they would awaken the resolve of the American people and that we would understand the threat, or do you think we have just been successful with the things that we are doing and the work of our very brave military men and women?

General PACE. Ma'am, I do not know what I don't know about what they have tried. I do know that thanks to the good Lord and a lot of hard work, and probably a good bit of luck, that since 9/11 we have not had another attack here. It is clear to me based on the things we do know about, like those who tried to put explosives on multiple planes leaving Europe several months ago and other intelligence that we have, that our adversaries continue to look for ways to attack us now while they try to set themselves up to destroy our way of life long term.

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So this fight is worth it, and if we leave, we are fighting them now, they will follow us home. So those of us in uniform, although we do not like to fight, are proud of the contribution we are making right now to the safety of this Nation. Thank you.

Mrs. DRAKE. We are very grateful for that. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Cooper, wrap it up, at least with the Secretary.

Mr. COOPER. Thank you, Chairman, and thanks to each of you gentlemen for your patriotic service to America, particularly to Mr. Gates. We appreciate your candor and humility. Thank you.

Secretary Gates, the bottom line of page four in your testimony, you say the President, Ambassador Khalilzad, and General Casey are persuaded that Prime Minister Maliki has the will to act against all instigators of violence in Baghdad. Now, as a Shi'a-supported leader Prime Minister Maliki has been reluctant to take on the Mahdi Army. Can you tell me that now our troops or coalition forces with the Iraqis will be able to go into Sadr City and start disbanding the Mahdi Army?

Secretary GATES. The assurances that he has—that Prime Minister Maliki has given to the President and to General Casey and to others is that the coalition forces and the Iraqi forces will be permitted to go into all parts of the city to go after all lawbreakers regardless of their sectarian allegiance.

Mr. COOPER. There seems to be a disconnect here, because David Brooks in today's *New York Times* has a pretty tough column saying basically the plan put forward by the President last night is the opposite of the plan that Prime Minister Maliki was proposing. He suggested we exit all U.S. troops from Baghdad. And so David Brooks, who is usually pretty friendly with the Administration, says that the impression the Administration is trying to give is, quote, "the opposite of the truth." And in his final paragraph, Mr. Brooks goes on to say: "the enemy in Iraq is not some discrete group of killers, it's the maelstrom of violence and hatred that infects every institution including the government and the military. Instead of facing up to this core reality, the Bush Administration has papered it over with salesmanship and spin."

Is Mr. Brooks wrong?

Secretary GATES. Well, I don't know what—as I indicated earlier, I don't know exactly what Prime Minister Maliki gave to the President, but my recollection is that within the last few days he has said publicly to the Iraqi people that he welcomes the additional U.S. help.

Mr. COOPER. General Pace, it is my understanding that the regular training regimen for Iraqi forces is three weeks of training—then, they get one week off to take their pay back to their families, and we really don't know where they go—and that there is no punishment for AWOL Iraqi soldiers. So we don't really know as a practical matter whether all this training—if we trained, as you said, 325,000 Iraqis, we don't really know whether we have really just trained a lot of militia members. If we don't know where they are one week a month, and there is no punishment for being AWOL, how is that effective training?

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General PACE. Sir, there is punishment for being AWOL, which is dismissal from the service. They do take their paychecks home once a month because they don't have a functioning banking system, and if we want to help increase the size of the Iraqi army by 25 percent, it would be good to help them build a banking system inside their country so we don't have to have all their troops carry their money home.

Your comparison, for our folks we have four weekends a month normally when we are home. They are on duty 21-plus days, and then they are off 7 days. So the best answer I can give you, sir, is that 89 percent of those who have been trained are still in the armed forces; the rest have either completed their time or have been dismissed for, as you mentioned, being AWOL.

Mr. COOPER. General, with the limited language capacity of our troops, do we even know who is Sunni or Shi'a or which tribe individual Iraqis belong to?

General PACE. Sir, I can't imagine that all of our troops know what tribe each of their fellow Iraqi soldiers come from. I can't imagine they do know that.

Mr. COOPER. I see that my time has expired. I thank the chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. Mr. Secretary, we really appreciate you giving us your maiden voyage. We look forward to seeing you in three weeks, and we wish you all the best. It is a tremendous challenge that you have for our country, and we look forward to seeing you and visiting with you three weeks from now, if not before.

Let me say, General Pace, we appreciate your staying.

For the record, we are keeping the notes, staff is keeping notes, as to who did not have the opportunity to ask questions of the Secretary today. We will lead off with those three weeks from now.

General Pace is going to stay, and let me tell our new members this: General Pace is the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Under a law that we passed that has origination in this committee, by the way, called Goldwater-Nichols, his job is to advise the Secretary of Defense and the President, and he may—underline the word "may" because I looked it up the other day, General—he may advise us as well. He is not a policymaker, he is the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, and consequently if a policy question is put to him, he would be in his rights to say, "Ask the Secretary."

So with that, Mr. Secretary, we really appreciate it. If there is a time constraint next time, I wish at least I will know about it so we can make the announcement. We appreciate your indulgence, and I am sorry we had the votes in the middle of everything also. I think we would have gotten through.

Secretary GATES. Mr. Chairman, it is a pleasure to be with you here today and to embark on my maiden voyage here. If I may, because of the importance of this subject, if I could take 30 seconds to clarify on an issue that Mr. Abercrombie raised on the guard and reserve. General Pace properly described our reserve mobilization process; one year mobilized, five years demobilized is our policy goal. However, there will be this transition period during which some units will be mobilized sooner than the five-year demobilization period.

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Our intention, particularly through the growth of the services and so on, is to get to the one to five rotation, get back to the one to five rotation cycle as soon as possible, but the important point is that even though they may be mobilized, remobilized sooner than the five years, involuntary mobilizations will not exceed one year, where they have been from anywhere from 18 to 24 months.

Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Secretary, look forward to seeing you very shortly. Thank you again.

Mr. Marshall, do you wish to ask questions of the general?

Mr. MARSHALL. I would be delighted to. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Pace, I appreciate your service to the country. I am over here.

General PACE. Thank you, sir.

Mr. MARSHALL. I especially appreciate the service of all the men and women who have gone over there in the lower ranks, actually out there doing patrols and worrying about IEDs and snipers and things like that every single day.

The CHAIRMAN. Would the gentleman yield? Excuse me. The Republicans are meeting at 5:00 to choose subcommittees. Mr. Gingrey is staying, as I understand, to represent them, and I wanted the rest of the committee to know where they are as of this moment.

Go ahead and start again. I am sorry.

Mr. MARSHALL. I am starting all over again? Thank you, sir.

Mr. Cooper raised this issue, and others have spoken about it also, the commitment of Iraqis to this effort, and that is terribly important. I think we both agree on that. In fact, it would be very nice if we could say that this is an Iraqi idea entirely; Iraqis are taking the lead. We are retaining our discretion to say no, we are following their lead and assisting them with their effort to regain control of their capital. We have talked about a number of preconditions that are being set by us, and there have been a lot of references to Prime Minister Maliki having agreed, and yet it is clear he initially proposed a different plan. He did welcome additional U.S. forces, but those forces were to surround Baghdad, not be inside. His units were going to take care of what was going on inside Baghdad, and that was just going to be Shi'a and Kurd units, principally focused on Sunnis.

So it is a different plan altogether, and it would be very helpful to all members of this committee if you could provide us with translations of video of Prime Minister Maliki actually saying to the Iraqi people that the plan being described by the President is the plan that he supports; that he does contemplate mixed units of Iraqis working with Americans in Shi'a neighborhoods in Sadr City without restraints, the sorts of things that we have heard. That is terribly important to building our confidence that this plan can work. And so is it possible for you to maybe provide that to members of the committee?

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 89.]

General PACE. I can help search the record. I know he gave a speech on 6 January, which is his Armed Forces Day, wherein he

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stipulated many of the points you just made. I think he gave a speech again yesterday or the day before where he did the same again.

It is important to point out, I think, sir, that the initiative, this is an Iraqi initiative, and that the plan to implement that initiative has been developed jointly between our U.S. officers and his. So as we have worked together, we have changed some of our thoughts about what was possible, they have changed some of the thoughts about what is possible, but both our leaders, our President and their prime minister, have agreed that this is the proper way forward.

Mr. MARSHALL. America needs to understand the Iraqi government and Iraqis generally have not proposed anything as significant as this. It is a real indication of the progress that is being made in the development of their security forces, their confidence in themselves and their commitment to secure their own country, and they are the ones that have to do it. We all know that. You can help all of us if you could give us more ammunition. I just don't have it. If it was done in the armed services address that he made on January 6th or the last couple of days, it would be very useful for all of us as we talk about this plan to have the evidence that supports his commitment, as opposed to simply statements by us that he does commit, coming from his mouth. That would be helpful.

The PRTs, are you familiar with this dispute concerning funding between Defense and State? Are you familiar with it?

General PACE. Sir, I am vaguely familiar with it. As I understand it, it has to do with our laws of our land which make it very difficult for U.S. Armed Forces to provide any kind of living accommodations, food support and the like for other members of our own government. So when the PRTs, for example, want to live upon one of our bases that we have, for them to go to our mess halls, for them to be living in our areas, for whatever reason, the laws of our own land make it difficult for us to support them.

Mr. MARSHALL. I am familiar with the problem here; I am more interested in whether or not it has been solved. The President references to the fact that, when double—the PRTs—that only goes from four to eight. So, that is not really an impressive total if we are going from four to eight. But the four we have right now suffer from that problem. At least, last time I was there, over Christmas, it was described to me, and I would like some assurances that problem has been resolved.

General PACE. Going from 9 to 18, sir, and I am told by our legal folks that the legal folks have found a way between those at State and those in DOD to make this happen. It is not the lack of wanting to. It is that we don't want to break the laws of the land.

Mr. MARSHALL. Finally, this is going to be very fluid, the development of exactly how this mission is accomplished; can't be predicted in advance with precision, and I assume that the understandings that you enter into with the government will contemplate that things can change, that a benchmark has to be modified, a plan has to be changed, that sort of thing, as you proceed.

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General PACE. Sir, that is why I think benchmarks are good when they are within a time frame as opposed to a specific date, because there is room then to modify and to adjust as needed.

Mr. MARSHALL. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Udall. Is he there?

Mr. Ellsworth then.

Mr. ELLSWORTH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, General. I appreciate your being here. I want you to know that the reason I asked to be placed on this committee was so that I could be closer with you and for all our men and women that wear our uniform, as well as my constituency.

I heard a lot today about that this needs to be solved politically, not militarily sometimes, and I guess that would bode that there would be those that would lobby that we send 21,000 politicians to Iraq as opposed to our military. That might make some people very happy.

When I was asked in my district about Iraq, my comments were that I wanted to talk to the military leaders, not to the politicians, and so you being of that nature, I would like you to look me in the eye as I mull over this plan and tell me that this plan in the near future will produce less violence, fewer roadside bombs; that Iraq will be closer to freedom, because I think the President said his goal was freedom and democracy, so that it be closer to democracy; and probably most important that this plan will bring America closer to a time when we are at peace. If you can touch on that, I would appreciate it.

General PACE. Sir, first, no guarantees, because the enemy gets a vote, and the Iraqi government has to perform.

Second; with regard to violence, because there will be increased presence of troops in Baghdad, there will be most likely an increase in violence, not a decrease in violence for the short term.

Having said that then, as they clear and hold, you can expect the violence to go down. The goal of a free Baghdad that supports its people will be closer, and our ability to bring our troops home will be closer. But I need to look you in the eye and tell you at least short term there is as much probability that there will be more violence because there will be more troops as there is that there will be less violence.

Mr. ELLSWORTH. Thank you, General.

Mr. Chairman, I yield.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady from Kansas, Mrs. Boyda.

Mrs. BOYDA. Thank you, Chairman Skelton. It is an honor for me to serve with you on this committee, and I look forward to working under your stewardship to support our working men and women and their families.

I congratulate President Bush last night for saying that our troops in Iraq have fought bravely, and they have done everything that we have asked them to do. General Pace, Kansas is rightly proud of their service and their sacrifice, and it is with the welfare of their family first and foremost on my mind that I address you today.

I would like to go back to my colleague Mrs. Davis's question a little earlier about the guard and reserve and try to make my question as clear as I possibly can here. And I would like to tell you

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what I thought I heard, and if you would respond whether I did or did not hear that correctly.

Right now our guard and reserve have been told that they will be called up for no more than 24 months cumulative over the course of the current operations. We are going to change that to be one in every five years for people who are recruited from this point on. Did I hear you say that—let me just preface, too, that I am very pleased to have been on the personnel subcommittee this morning, so I ask the question as a member of the personnel committee, but quite honestly as someone who gets so many questions back in the district from families about their family members that are currently serving.

Of the guard and reserve that are currently serving in Iraq, will we extend them for more than 24 months cumulative during this operation? And I would appreciate a yes or no on that.

General PACE. No, ma'am, we will not. However, the unit that is there right now, 1st through the 34th, if it is extended, it will be extended for four months. If it stays that entire time and comes home and demobilizes, it will have been mobilized for a total of 23 months from the time it started until the time it finishes, and that is not good, which is why the commitment to those who are going to be mobilized now is to be no more than one year from the time they leave their front door until the time they walk back through their front door.

Mrs. BOYDA. So when we are making the transition from one to five, and we are going with units now and not personnel individuals, you don't see a time when they are going to be overlapping when someone's unit might be deployed when, in fact, they have already gotten their 24 months of service in? Will they be exempt from that unit?

General PACE. This is the problem. We started out in Afghanistan with volunteers, which was wonderful. Then we went to Iraq. So the unit that had to go to Iraq already had people that volunteered in Afghanistan. We took them out and released them with two or three units' worth of people to fill this unit up. That geometric progression now, we are literally taking 10, 15, 20 units to build 1 unit to go to Iraq, that has to stop for the safety of our troops because unit integrity is important.

Mrs. BOYDA. Cohesion.

General PACE. So you stop that. Now we say unit one, you are going to go. Inside of that unit you may very well have an individual who has already been mobilized.

Mrs. BOYDA. That is my question: will any one of those individuals be asked to serve more than 24 months cumulatively?

General PACE. It is possible. When you do the math, yes, ma'am, it is possible.

Mrs. BOYDA. It would seem that it would be. I didn't know whether you were going to be making exceptions. Again, I feel quite certain I am going to get this question not only as on the personnel subcommittee, but as so many of the guard and reserve.

Let me just clarify, too, the people of Kansas as well as, I am sure, the rest of this Nation want to serve this country admirably, faithfully, bravely, but they just need to understand what their futures are and how we plan to roll this out. When you look at the

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plan, it is difficult to understand how some individual might unfortunately be caught up in your brigade is going, your unit is going, and we are going to ask you to go, too.

So, could I ask again, do we think that there is going to be any individual that will be in a guard and reserve unit that will be asked to serve more than 24 months cumulative on this operation?

General PACE. It is possible, ma'am. The numbers will be small, and that is why the secretary also made it very clear that there is going to be hardship decisions. So if there is a hardship to that family, that will be taken into consideration.

Mrs. BOYDA. I certainly hope the Army rules that out in plenty of time.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Murphy.

Mr. MURPHY. Thank you.

General, thank you for being here today and for serving our country so well. I just actually got back from active duty a few years ago. I am actually an Iraq war veteran.

General PACE. I thank you for your service.

Mr. MURPHY. Hopefully I did a good job. I landed myself here. Sir, I was a captain with the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Airborne Division in Baghdad from 2003 to January of 2004. Nineteen men in my unit and my brigade gave the ultimate sacrifice. I am deeply troubled by the President's announcement last night about the escalation of force, sir.

My sector was one of the nine districts in Baghdad. Mine was south central Baghdad, the al Rashid section. About 1.5 million Iraqis. That is the same size as my hometown of Philadelphia. My father served in uniform as a police officer in Philadelphia for 22 years. He served with the same size population, 1.5 million Philadelphians, the same size as in that sector of Baghdad. He served with 7,000 Philadelphia police officers, yet there was only one brigade of us, 3,500 of us. And I heard you say today, sir, that the plan was—as implemented, that there was only going to be one battalion of American soldiers and one brigade of Iraqi soldiers commingled, and I just wanted to make sure, was that clear? Am I understanding that?

General PACE. Sir, it is almost right, and if it is not, it is because of my way of saying it, not your way of hearing it. There are nine districts, each of which will be commanded by a brigade commander. In those 9 districts there will be a total of 18 Iraqi army and police brigades. The math is not exactly two per district, but over the scale that is what it turns out to be. So you will have the manpower of even, again, not every district being the same, but you will have the manpower of one Iraqi brigade, army; one Iraqi army brigade, police, and one U.S. battalion in support of them, plus our own brigades that are already there.

Mr. MURPHY. Is there an intent to brief Congress, the American public on the success of these individual nine districts so it is very clear to the American people what should be in store, and is that plan going to be monthly, every other month, quarterly, sir? Do you know if there is a plan in either DOD, sir?

General PACE. I think it is a good idea to show how we are doing, and I will take a note and see if we can't come up with a way that makes sense, that doesn't confuse people.

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Mr. MURPHY. Thanks, sir.

I have a couple other questions real quick. When I was there, I saw firsthand, and I know I have pictures that are up on this wall, sir, those two pictures, the color photos over there, we trained 600 Iraqi Civil Defense Corps members, now Iraqi National Army. What you will notice in that picture, sir, is that this is in late 2003 when I was there. They didn't even have uniforms, and we took the initiatives as good troopers do to buy Chicago White Sox hats so they could be recognized that they were a uniform.

I heard your testimony today, sir, to say there is a ten-week basic training. We only trained them for two weeks. Actually, we trained them one week, and we took the initiative to train them an additional week. I know you said there is basically 30 places where they do basic training. Is there any thought of training them outside so it is not necessarily nine to five, where they go home; training them outside either in Iraq or remote Iraq where there is one commingled place?

I remember when I went to Ft. Knox, Kentucky, over a decade ago, sir, I wasn't going to the Jersey shore in a weekend; I was going to basic training, because it is a profession, something you have to take very seriously. You can't be worrying about your family back at home or your imam back at home, whatever it is. So is there a thought on changing the way we train these soldiers so they can commingle and they understand how to take orders for one Iraq and not for one certain imam?

General PACE. I will take the note and check on that. I like the idea. To give you a little bit of comfort, now we are, in fact, giving each soldier helmet, flak jacket, uniform, rifle, machine guns, Humvees, communications gear, and the like so that when they go into the field, they have the protection that you would expect them to have to be able to fight as soldiers, feel like soldiers, act like soldiers, fight like soldiers.

I take your point on the training, sir. Thank you.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix beginning on page 100.]

Mr. MURPHY. Since I have very quick time as a freshman, is the AK–47 still the biggest weapon they will get, or anything higher than that? Do they train higher than an AK–47?

General PACE. Machine gun; yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Georgia, Mr. Johnson. Let me interrupt if I may.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE [presiding]. General, and those from the Secretary's staff who are with you, could I urge you—on those questions that are taken for the record, would you urge them as well as the staff who is with you to get them back to us in a timely manner? Sometimes we have gotten them back so late it did not make that much difference, so I would appreciate that.

General PACE. I will do so.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. So carry that message back.

General PACE. I will, sir.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. The gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Pace, it is an honor for me to speak with you today, and I want to thank you for serving your country as well as all of the

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other military personnel throughout the globe that have served this country, and I am speaking to you today, which is the same day that President Bush is in my home State of Georgia, speaking to the very troops which will be subject to this escalation, or "surge," as some call it.

It is the second and third brigades of the 3rd Infantry Division based respectively in Fort Stewart and Fort Benning, Georgia, and both of those brigades would be deployed to Iraq a little sooner than originally planned. They would make up approximately one half of the proposed troop surge, and it has been our strategy in Iraq, at least since, I would say, probably 2004, to clear, hold and build. Isn't that a fact?

General PACE. Yes, sir. Excuse me. Yes, sir, it is.

Mr. JOHNSON. And we seem to have no problem when it comes down to clearing, and we can clear for a certain period of time before we get, you know, new impact from the insurgency coming right in once we depart, but we can hold but to—excuse me. We can clear, but to actually hold and then to build at the same time is a problem that has not been solved over the last 4 years since we have been in Iraq, and now we are being asked to dedicate another 22,000 troops to hold in Baghdad for 12 to 18 months. We should have cleared the whole area, and are able now for the Iraqis or then for the Iraqis to hold the police indefinitely, while at the same time we will have sunk money in to build the place up, to build Baghdad anyway, in the hope, I guess, that the situation in Fallujah would not deteriorate any further as well as other parts of Iraq.

So how much is it going to cost us—you may not be able to answer this question. How much will that hold and build part cost in dollars, given the fact that I think folks say that about $9.5 billion is missing in Iraq right now, missing in action in Iraq? How much are we talking about for the hold and build part, and how much is it going to take for this surge of troops for the next—we are talking about 12 to 18 months, but even through November, how much is that going to cost the American taxpayers?

General PACE. Sir, clear, hold and build has worked in places. It has worked in Fallujah. It has worked in Mosul. It has worked in Ramadi, the difference there being that there were enough Iraqi troops who were allowed to do their job, and they would have been successful had they been allowed to perform their mission.

Mr. JOHNSON. As to those same troops, by the way, we do not know whether or not they go home at night and take off their military uniform and put on their insurgent uniform, correct?

General PACE. Sir, the vast majority of the Iraqi troops are very loyal to their government and are doing what we expect them to do in the Iraqi army. The Iraqi government is going to spend $10 billion of their money in Baghdad, so that amount is about all I can project for you there.

Mr. JOHNSON. That will be for "hold" and "build," and I heard the term $1 billion is what we are being asked to—or you are not asking this committee, but you are asking the American people.

General PACE. Sorry. I do not know what the U.S. might kick into that pile, sir. That is State Department business, but I do know that Iraq is going to put in $10 billion, and I can tell you that

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the cost of this operation—if all 20,000 troops end up going and if they were to stay through 30 September of this year, then the additional cost to the U.S. is $5.6 billion.

Mr. JOHNSON. All right. Thank you.

General PACE. Sir.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Are you finished, Mr. Johnson? Are you finished? Then the next would be Mr. Courtney.

Mr. COURTNEY. Thank you, Mr. Abercrombie, and Mr. Chairman, I guess, temporarily.

General Pace, like everyone else, I want to thank you for your service and for your endurance here today. I come from Eastern Connecticut, which on December 27th, we actually had a funeral at St. Patrick's Cathedral in Norwich because we lost a guardsman in Afghanistan, another brave example of human excellence, which I think saddened the whole state, but it also reminded us—it was a very harsh reminder—that there is still a pretty nasty situation still going on in Afghanistan, and my question to you, really, is about the impact of the President's plan on our troop levels in Afghanistan. There was a press report in *The Baltimore Sun* earlier this week which quoted, I believe it is, General Tata, who is commander over there, Anthony J. Tata, Army Brigadier General Anthony J. Tata. Hopefully, I am pronouncing his name right, but he indicated that a U.S. Army infantry battalion fighting in a critical area of Eastern Afghanistan is due to be withdrawn within weeks to deploy to Iraq where President Bush is expected to announce the dispatch of thousands of additional troops as a stopgap measure, and the General also went on to state that, this spring, the Taliban is expected to unleash a major campaign to cut a vital road between Kabul and Kandahar and that the Taliban intended to seize Kandahar, the second largest city of Afghanistan and where the group was organized in the 1990's.

I guess my question is, number one, is that correct that we are actually taking troops out of Afghanistan and deploying them to Iraq as part of this plan? And frankly, the second question is, is that very wise, given the fact that it is a pretty tenuous situation? A NATO commander says that we actually do not have sufficient troop levels there, and the number of attacks by the Taliban has tripled in the last two years, and I think a lot of people would have a great concern about whether we are not only risking a lot in Iraq in terms of if there is a failure there, but we may be actually putting at risk a very tenuous situation in Afghanistan as well.

General PACE. Sir, it is not correct. It would not be wise. We have 22,500 troops in Afghanistan today. About half of those are in the NATO command. About the other half are in the U.S. command doing the training and equipping. That number is not going to change. I do not know where that rumor came from about a unit that is currently in Afghanistan being moved over to Iraq. That is not going to happen, and I am aware of the troop plans for replacements in Afghanistan. We are going to maintain our current strength in Afghanistan. So, sir, it is just not true.

Mr. COURTNEY. Well, hopefully, someone will correct *The Baltimore Sun* because, actually, I got calls in my office because this seemed like, again, robbing Peter to pay Paul in terms of the situation.

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General PACE. It would not be a wise thing to do.

Mr. COURTNEY. I have one quick question—I do not know if I have enough time—regarding the rules of engagement with our troops in Iraq. I, again, have constituents, a gentleman whose son served at the Abu Ghraib Prison who was one of these troops who was very frustrated about the fact that we were rounding up members of the militia and then, in many cases, releasing them for what appeared, at least to this gentleman's son, to be for political reasons—which was about as demoralizing and as frustrating for his father, who was a veteran, a former Judge Advocate General (JAG) officer who actually supported my opponent in the last election, but a good friend nonetheless—and whether or not those rules of engagement are going to change as part of this new operation.

General PACE. Sir, we do have a problem with the capacity of the Iraqi penal system to maintain the population that they should maintain in captivity and then to prosecute them. To my knowledge, it has not been because of politics, but because of the system unable to handle the load that, unfortunately, some of the folks who were captured on the battlefield—after about two to three weeks, if there is not enough evidence against them to prosecute them in the Iraqi system, they are set free. That is extremely frustrating to our troops, and we are working as fast as we can with our State Department and with their government, with the Iraqi government, to be able to have enough capacity in their system, both judicial and in their prison system, to handle the load of these folks.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN [presiding]. Thank you very much.

Before I allow Mrs. Gillibrand to ask questions, let me introduce two friends of mine from Kansas City who have been very patient and who have sat through this hearing. It is a very special hearing because the gentleman helped me get elected my very, very, very first time to Congress, and I just wanted to recognize his being here, Doctor and Mrs. Gary Everett from Kansas City, Missouri. I appreciate your being here, and I appreciate your helping me be here very much.

Mrs. Gillibrand.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Thank you, Chairman. It is an honor to speak today.

I begin my remarks with just an expression of gratitude to the men and women in the armed forces who have served so ably and given so much sacrifice to our Nation, and I am very grateful to you for your sacrifice, General, and thank you for being here to answer the questions of the committee.

General PACE. Thank you, ma'am.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. My first question is, throughout this testimony, both you and Secretary Gates have said statements such as, with the commitment of a political and an economic side, a troop surge makes sense. Adding any number of U.S. forces will not succeed absent political reconciliation and progress given the right economic and political climate to do the job, and in the President's speech last night, he talked about giving every Iraqi citizen a stake in the country's economy by encouraging Iraq to pass legislation to share oil revenues amongst all Iraqis and then show commitment

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to deliver a better life by spending $10 billion on reconstruction infrastructure projects for jobs.

This may not be your area of expertise, but to the extent you have been briefed on these issues, with regard to the Iraq oil revenues, who currently controls them, and when will this process take place of transferring the control to the Iraqis?

General PACE. The Iraqi money belongs to the Iraqi people and is controlled currently by the Iraqi government. I believe that the money is held for the Iraqi government in banks in New York City, I believe, but they control the expenditure of those funds. I also was told that during the time of the recess of their assembly, that their parties worked through the wording of the law that they are working on right now in their assembly, that would allocate the resources of their oil revenue to Iraqi families, so that families actually got X amount of money per month from the oil proceeds. That is about as far as I know.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. So you are saying that the U.S. currently does not control the Iraqi oil or the oil revenue?

General PACE. Fundamentally, that is correct. We do have their money in our banks that they draw down as they see fit, and I am way out of my lane right now, but there are some kind of international controls about which I know nothing that apply to that.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. And with regard to the reconstruction contracts, presently, the public understands the majority of those contracts are being managed by U.S. companies. Is there a plan or does part of this economic development change for those contracts to be transferred to Iraqis so that their 20-year-olds have the jobs to rebuild the roads and the schools and the hospitals?

General PACE. Ma'am, I do not know. That is State Department business, but that makes sense to me.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Okay. Let me talk about strategic issues. That may be more in your area. Is there a plan B? There was some discussion in *The New York Times* today that the Administration staff have intimated there is a plan B that may include some measure of redeployment or containment or a breakup of the country.

Have you been briefed on that or on part of those discussions?

General PACE. Ma'am, you are asking a Marine who is focused on winning whether or not he has a plan in case he does not win. So my answer to you is we are going to focus on winning——

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Okay.

General PACE [continuing]. And we are allocating enough resources to be able to handle the unexpected.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Sure.

Under the first Bush Administration, the President had a strategy that there always had to be an exit strategy.

Is that something that has been discussed under this Administration as part of your normal policy for military operations?

General PACE. The term "exit strategy," to me, is pejorative.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Okay.

General PACE. It sounds like you are leaving no matter what. That is not the plan. The plan is to be successful and then to be able to come home because the Iraqis are able to take care of themselves.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Okay. My last question.

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With regard to this current deployment of 20,000 troops, is there an estimation of how long they will be deployed? During the testimony today, we have heard a few months, several months; we will reconsider after six months.

Do you have a sense of what your timing is for that need for escalation?

General PACE. I do have a sense of that. I would be happy to talk to you off-line about that. I would not want to tell our enemies how long they have to worry about this.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Thank you.

I give back the rest of my time.

General PACE. Thank you, ma'am.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

General, along that line, it was in a previous hearing that I raised the issue with the—my recollection is it was with the former secretary about one of your predecessors that General Colin Powell had four requirements before going into battle, and number four was an exit strategy. I will just point that out to you, and I am sure my recollection is correct. You may wish to go back and refresh your recollection at your convenience.

Mr. KLINE. He was not a Marine, was he, Mr. Chairman?

The CHAIRMAN. He was not a Marine. You are right. The gentleman—Mr. Kline, you are not recognized.

Mr. KLINE. Thank you.

General PACE. Sir, I do recognize the term "exit strategy." I just think it has become a pejorative, get-out-of-town word, which is why I prefer not to use it. When General Powell used it, it did not have the meaning it has today.

The CHAIRMAN. I understand. You know, I will take it back. It was General Abizaid that I made the comment to.

Mr. Sestak.

Mr. SESTAK. General, thanks for staying late this evening.

General PACE. Sir.

Mr. SESTAK. I understand that the prime minister came to us with this idea or this plan. What would we have done if he had not in view of the President's saying this situation was intolerable to him?

General PACE. Sir, that is a fair question.

We collectively have been working here in Washington as joint chiefs—I'm sorry. I have got to back up.

It was around June or July of this year that it became apparent that the Samarra bombing, in fact, had had an effect on the population that we had not predicted, and it was at about that time that we realized that instead of being able to do what we thought we would do this year, which is cut back our troops significantly, that we were not going to be able to do that. Clearly then, around July or August of this year, we were saying we are not where we thought we wanted to be by now. Our goal is over here. What do we need to change to attain our goal?

We then began in Washington, the joint chiefs, working separately, Central Command working separately, and the guys in Baghdad working separately to take a look at the various options. We worked that for a couple of months. We called in—we chiefs called in outside experts. We called in guys and gals who had just

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recently been in combat, and we came up with what we thought were some good ideas. We shared those both down and up the chain of command. General Abizaid was doing the same thing. General Casey was doing the same thing. In doing that, we were sharing information between General Casey and his Iraqi counterparts. So the fact that the prime minister came forward was not done in a vacuum.

We had been thinking about how we might be able to do this better, what might the next steps be. A primary principal step to that was Iraqi leadership, Iraqis taking charge, and we shared that information with our Iraqi counterparts, so we were very pleased when the prime minister came forward at his initiative and then asked us to help him plan how to do that.

Mr. SESTAK. General, you had touched upon the readiness of forces, in view of Iraq, to be able to handle the rest of our global security environment.

Particularly since you have, over the past years, been fairly instrumental in the series of efforts to try to have our war plans changed to where time meant something more than it ever did before, in view of that—we are heel to toe in deployments, particularly our Army and Marine Corps in Iraq—have we had an impact of significance upon our readiness, not just in the regional contingencies we planned for, but on the global war of terror.

General PACE. Let me try to answer your question. If I do not get it accurate, please come back at me, sir. We can handle any additional challenge that comes our way. We have 2.4 million Americans in uniform—active, guard, and reserve. We have got about 200,000-plus of those currently in the Gulf. We have our reserves who are fantastic. Where the time factor comes in is when you have a chunk of your force employed and a good part of your precision, both intelligence precision and application of force precision, engaged. If you are called upon to respond to another active aggression, then you are going to go with less precise weaponry.

There will be—potentially, more bombs have to be dropped to do the same target. There potentially will be more casualties on both sides because it does take you longer to mobilize over and do the job. So it is not the risk of being successful. It is the timeline that you would prefer to do it on and the precision with which you prefer to do it.

Mr. SESTAK. Sir, would you, in view of what you just said, absent Iraq, have asked for an increase in the size of the Army and the Marine Corps then? We can handle the situation. It is a bit more blunt and a little more difficult, but absent Iraq, if it had not happened, in view of what you said how we can handle it now, not too badly, would we have had to ask for an increase in the Army and in the Marine Corps?

The CHAIRMAN. Would the gentleman yield? That may be in the category—ask me that question. That may be in the category of a policy, political question.

For the gentleman, I have been trying to get 40,000 more Army soldiers since 1995, and we have struck pay dirt. They are going to do better than that in recommending it, and I think this committee will do that.

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If you feel you can answer that—I hate to interrupt you, Mr. Sestak, but——

Mr. SESTAK. I was over my time. I'm sorry.

The CHAIRMAN. No. No. We will make up for that. I am eating it up for you, but for the gentleman, if you can answer it, please do.

General PACE. Sir, as best I can. I will try my best.

Mr. SESTAK. I withdraw the question then.

The CHAIRMAN. No. No. No. Go ahead and ask it.

General PACE. Sir, I will try to give you my best answer. I will give you my best answer, and you can see if it answers your question.

It is a supposition that, really, I would not want to try to apply to the future, but I can tell you this. You have—we have problems. The world has problems in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Somalia, Chad, Sudan, and keep on coming around the globe. So, as you look at it, whether or not—no matter what you think about Iraq, there is going to be a need for U.S. strength for the foreseeable future, and based on that, with or without Iraq, then, yes, I would want a larger Army and a Marine Corps. The fact is, the necessity of having to plus-up in Iraq has caused me to get to that conclusion sooner than I might otherwise have come without the stimulus.

Mr. SESTAK. General, thanks for your answer just because my major concern about Iraq is not Iraq in isolation. It is Iraq and what it is doing to the rest of our security around the world, not just the regional contingencies you plan for, but Chad, other places where we are not able to engage or be able to respond to a smaller contingency, and that is my major worry about putting more troops in Iraq. In my belief, we are in a tragic misadventure, and I am concerned about the security interest in the rest of the world. Thanks for your time, sir.

General PACE. Thank you, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Thanks so much.

Ms. Giffords, and then we will go to a second round, if any. I do know Mr. Hunter has a question, but Ms. Giffords, go.

Ms. GIFFORDS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, General. I appreciate the honor to be here today. You can imagine this is my first hearing in the House Armed Services Committee, and let me assure you that it will be a memorable one.

I would like to start by asking you a couple of questions that pertain to my district. I now represent the 8th Congressional District of Arizona, and in my district is Fort Huachuca, an Army intelligence post, but it also does training beyond the Army, of course. I would imagine that, in order for any plan to work in Iraq, reliable and timely intelligence would be essential. Would this new plan include proportional requirements for intelligence services?

General PACE. The units that deploy will need the embedded part of their own units that are dedicated to intelligence, but we will not need more intelligence about what is going on—I said that wrong. We will not need more assets on the U.S. side to have more intelligence about what is going on in Baghdad.

What we need is more citizens of Baghdad to come forward with human intelligence to tell us what we need to know and what the

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Iraqis need to know to be able to do our job more efficiently, but we should not need more intelligence of the kind that Fort Huachuca provides.

Ms. GIFFORDS. Mr. Chairman. General, my concern is that we have, perhaps, lost the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people. What can we do to incentivize the Iraqis to come forward with that information?

General PACE. I think the right thing for us to do is to provide security for them so that they can have the comfort knowing that if they come forward today that we are not leaving two days from now, and somebody is not going to come into their house and kill them for giving us the information.

Interestingly, the hotlines that we have—you call on a cell phone and just leave information—those get about 4,000 tips per month, but we need more individuals to come in and tell us about the person in that house or of the activity down the block so we understand where the bombs are being made, who the guys are who are doing it. I mean, people know in their neighborhoods what is going on, but they are fearful of coming forward, and if we can provide security that they can depend on, then they will drop some of their fear.

Ms. GIFFORDS. Thank you, General. Davis-Monthan Air Force base is also in my district and is actively involved in many aspects of the war on terrorism. In particular, it is home of only one of five combined air operation centers. I am curious to what extent will Navy and Air Force personnel be used in lieu of Army and Marine Corps personnel primarily in ground combat support transportation units.

General PACE. The Navy and Air Force have been very proactive in seeking ways that they can help. God bless the sailors and airmen out there. They are wonderful and doing a great job, and they have been—to the tune of about 5,000 to 8,000 soldiers and Marines have been replaced by sailors and airmen so that the soldiers and Marines could do other things, everything from driving trucks to very complex things like electronic warfare officers. We have Navy officers who normally fly electronic warfare aircraft, who are with our ground troops on the ground who are helping them de conflict all the spectrum that is out there, all the jammers and the radios and all of the other things that make the battlefield so complex electronically.

So we have found that the Air Force and the Navy have unique skills that are being applied in a new way that is actually helping our force protection on the ground.

Ms. GIFFORDS. General, do you have a concern for future recruitment, for example, of the Air Force for a young man or woman who signs up with the Air Force and then who find themselves doing some sort of ground transportation or something they really did not sign up for initially?

General PACE. I think as long as we are up front and honest with people about what they are volunteering for that we will get the right amount of recruits.

Example, the Air Force and the Army used to be primarily European centric. They would go to Europe, and they would spend a three-year tour, and if they did not, they would go on to the next

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duty station. I don't mean to be pejorative about that. That was very important to do. Since that time, the Army and the Air Force have changed dramatically, and they are deploying all over the world all of the time. Folks who join the Army now understand that. So, as long as we ensure that we properly advertise what job we are asking them to do, we will be okay.

More significantly and to the point, yes, I do worry about recruiting because we are asking our young men and women to go in harm's way, and we need to make sure that the missions we ask them to do are worthy of their sacrifice, and that is where we need to continually pay attention so that, when we ask them to serve, we ask them to serve for a reason that is vital to this country.

Ms. GIFFORDS. Thank you, General.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. That completes the round.

As far as I know, Mr. Hunter and Mrs. Davis are the only ones who wish to ask an additional question. General Pace, you are a real trooper for sticking it out with us. We appreciate it.

Mr. Hunter.

Mr. HUNTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Pace, how are you doing?

General PACE. I am doing great. Thank you.

Mr. HUNTER. Can you hang in there a little bit longer?

General PACE. You bet.

Mr. HUNTER. Just for the record, this committee raised the end strength of the Army from 482,000 to 512,000, and we raised the end strength of the Marine Corps from 175 to 180, and this review that we did, this committee defense review that we did last year for the new gentleman from Pennsylvania, concluded that we needed nine more Marine battalions and eight more Army brigades, and depending on how you mix that in the Army, particularly with reserve and active, that is not too far from what the Administration is requesting according to the secretary's statements to us today.

With respect to precision munitions, this committee has led the effort, and we have more than doubled the stockpile of precision munitions. The exact number of every type of munition is classified, but I can assure the gentleman from Pennsylvania that we have more than twice the precision munitions right now, in fact, far more than twice than we had in the year 2000.

General, I have got a question, and I think it goes more to what you can do for us later than what you can do for us now. There is a lot of complexity to this combined arms operation with the Iraqi forces in Baghdad, and we have had—you have met necessarily with a big committee, and you have made the statements following the President. You have given briefings to the press, and you have given us a good statement on this. We are going to need to have more detail on the operation. I think that the operation in general is a good concept to the idea of the Iraqi brigade, and again, the brigade from the Tawani charts that I saw were three maneuver battalions and an Iraqi brigade. Although, it may not be as full up with personnel as the U.S. brigade.

Three maneuver battalions and one backup American battalion, is that your general concept in each of these nine sectors in Baghdad?

General PACE. Sir, that is close.

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Mr. HUNTER. Okay.

General PACE. I can say yes, but——

Mr. HUNTER. No. I want you to explain it so we know precisely what you are talking about.

General PACE. Every district is different.

Mr. HUNTER. Okay.

General PACE. You are going to have a mixture of Iraqi police brigades and Iraqi army brigades. There are going to be 18 total—9 Army, 9 police brigades—so it is going to be 3, 4, 5 or there——

Mr. HUNTER. But will there be at least one Iraqi brigade in each of the nine districts?

General PACE. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUNTER. Army brigades?

General PACE. I would have to check my facts on that, sir.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix beginning on page 97.]

Mr. HUNTER. Okay, and have you scrutinized the makeup of the Iraqi brigades with respect to how many maneuver battalions they have? Are they consistent or do they vary fairly widely?

General PACE. I have not. General Casey has. I have not, sir.

Mr. HUNTER. Okay. We need to look at that so, when we look at the match of the U.S. versus the Iraqi, we know what the match is going to be because I presume that our battalions coming in will be full up, and what I think we do not want to see is a situation where the Iraqis are to take the lead, and then because of—because they do not have the fire power or they do not have as many folks showing up, while they may be able to plant the flag, they may not be able to take the lead. So I think what we need right now, I think, is more detail on this plan.

Nonetheless, let me just say thank you for coming, and to all of my colleagues, I was here. To some degree, I have been here before. I was here when Ronald Reagan was responding to the Soviet Union's ringing France and Germany with SS–20 missiles, our moving ground launch cruise missiles and pershing 2 missiles to the theater to offset them. The editorials had said that World War III was on its way, and we had to acquiesce immediately, and this was unwinnable and then the Russians picking up the phone and saying, "Can we talk?" and we ultimately brought the wall down. I was here when El Salvador was unwinnable, our next Vietnam we were told by the left, and today, Salvadoran soldiers are supporting us in the Iraq theater.

There are a lot of challenges here. This is a new world and bringing freedom, even a modicum of freedom, to this new world with the ethnic fractures and the tribal fractures is very difficult, but I think we have got a good chance of winning here in that I think we can have a government that has got a modicum of freedom, is a friend, not an enemy of the United States and will not be a state sponsor of terrorism, and I think this government can hold, which is the main thing we want to see, a free government that can hold, and it has a military apparatus that can protect it.

So, General, I am going to strongly support this request—or it is not really a request. It is an action by the President to send in reinforcements into this theater, both in Anbar province and in Baghdad. Let's work closely in the next couple of weeks to let us

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look at the details because the details here are pretty important, especially around the Baghdad area. So, if you could accommodate us on that, we would certainly appreciate it.

General PACE. I understand, sir.

Mr. HUNTER. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

Just a footnote that I appreciate your mentioning the end-strength situation.

As I understand it, General, the increase which Chairman Hunter mentioned of 30,000 Army and 5,000 Marines will be recommended in the base budget this coming year plus an additional—am I correct?—7,000 soldiers—am I correct?—and how many Marines or can you say at this point?

General PACE. Sir, I know the numbers. I do not know the budget. As far as budget supplement or budget base?

The CHAIRMAN. We are a few-days' premature. That is fine, but at least that is a starting point.

General PACE. Yes, sir. The numbers would be the 30,000 Army plus 7,000 for the new year——

The CHAIRMAN. That has got it. All right.

General PACE [continuing]. Plus 5,000 Marines, plus 5,000 for the new year.

The CHAIRMAN. That answers the question.

General PACE. How it is funded, I am not sure, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, that answers the question.

Mrs. Davis, wrap it up.

Ms. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. [Inaudible. Off mic.]

General PACE. Yes, ma'am. That is a great question.

We have got about 40 percent of our Army's equipment either currently in Iraq or in the depots, being repaired. So, as we move these new forces forward, we need to be very careful about ensuring that they have the proper equipment to go into harm's way, and the Army is working on that very hard.

Ms. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Are those M1117 armored vehicles going to be available to them?

General PACE. Which, ma'am?

Ms. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. The latest in the armored vehicles, are they going to be available to them?

General PACE. There will be a mixture of what we call "Level 1," which is the latest version that you just mentioned and Level 2, which is a little bit less capable than that because the production line has just delivered about the 95-percent level to theater for the forces that are there now. There are, for example, about 1,800 Marine vehicles that have been replaced by the newer vehicles that are up already and almost as protective that are parked there right now that can and will be used by our troops, and we will make sure through use of the vehicles that those who are going into harm's way have the best equipment we can give them. That is something that the Army and Marine leadership is very attentive to, to make sure that PFC. Pace is getting as good equipment whether he is in a unit that is there now or one that is about to arrive.

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Ms. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Thank you, General. Thank you for being here.

General PACE. Thank you, ma'am.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

A formal—those who have questions for the record should get them to our staff immediately. I would strongly suggest by the end of tomorrow.

General Pace, thank you again, and I express our appreciation to Secretary Gates. It has been an even five hours since we started. Thanks so much.

[Whereupon, at 6:03 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

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APPENDIX

JANUARY 11, 2007

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PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

JANUARY 11, 2007

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STATEMENT OF SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ROBERT M. GATES
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, JANUARY 11, 2007 – 1:00 P.M.

Mr. Chairman, Congressman Hunter, members of the Committee.

Let me say at the outset that it is a pleasure to appear before this Committee for the first time as Secretary of Defense. The House Armed Services Committee has long been a steadfast friend and ally of our men and women in uniform and a source of support in meeting our nation's defense needs. Thank you for that. I look forward to working with you.

Let me begin by advising you of two announcements I made this morning.

First, the President announced last night that he would strengthen our military for the long war against terrorism by authorizing an increase in the overall strength of the Army and the Marine Corps. I am recommending to him a total increase in the two services of 92,000 soldiers and Marines over the next five years – 65,000 soldiers and 27,000 Marines. The emphasis will be on increasing combat capability.

This increase will be accomplished in two ways. First, we will propose to make permanent the temporary increase of 30,000 for the Army and 5,000 for the Marine Corps. Then we propose to build up from that base in annual increments of 7,000 troops for the Army, and 5,000 for the Marine Corps until they reach a level of 202,000.

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I am aware that the Armed Services committees have been leading the national debate over the proper size of the military. Accordingly, I hope that you will join in supporting this important initiative.

While it may take some time for these new troops to become available for deployment, it is important that our men and women in uniform know that additional manpower and resources are on the way.

Second, for several months, the Department has been assessing whether we have the right policies to govern how we manage and deploy members of the Reserves, the National Guard and our active component units.

Based on this assessment and the recommendations of our military leadership, I am prepared to make the following changes to Department policy.

First, mobilization of ground reserve forces will be managed on a unit basis instead of an individual basis. This change will allow us to achieve greater unit cohesion and predictability in how reserve units train and deploy

Second, from this point forward, members of the Reserves will be involuntarily mobilized for a maximum of one year at any one time, in contrast to the current practice of sixteen to twenty-four months.

Third, the planning objective for guard and reserve units will remain one year of being mobilized followed by five years demobilized. However, today's global demands will require a number of selected guard and reserve units to be

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remobilized sooner than this standard. Our intention is that such exceptions be temporary. The goal for the active force rotation cycle remains one year deployed for every two years at home station. Today, most active units are receiving one year at home station before deploying again. Mobilizing select guard and reserve units before this five year period is complete will allow us to move closer to relieving the stress on the total force.

Fourth, I am directing the establishment of a new program to compensate individuals in both the active and reserve components that are required to mobilize or deploy early or extend beyond the established rotation policy goals.

Fifth, I am also directing that all commands and units review how they administer the hardship waiver program to ensure they are properly taking into account exceptional circumstances facing military families of deployed service members.

It is important to note that these policy changes have been under discussion for some time within the Department of Defense and would have needed to take place irrespective of the President's announcement on Iraq.

I am also pleased to report that all active branches of the U.S. military exceeded their recruiting goals for the month of December, with particularly strong showings by the Army and Marine Corps. Our nation is truly blessed that so many talented and patriotic young people have stepped forward to defend our nation, and

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that so many servicemen and women have chosen to continue to serve. Copies of the text of these announcements are available.

Iraq Strategy

Last night, the President described a new way forward in Iraq – a new approach to overcoming the steep challenges facing us in that country and in that part of the world.

I know many of you have concerns about the new strategy in Iraq and, in particular, are skeptical of the Iraqi government's will and ability to act decisively against sectarian violence, and are skeptical as well about a commitment of additional American troops. The President and his national security team have had the same concerns, as we have debated and examined our options in Iraq going forward. And yet, our commanders on the ground – and the President's intended nominee as the new commander – believe this is a sound plan, in no small part because General Casey and other senior military officers have worked closely with the Iraqi government in developing it. Further, the President, Ambassador Khalilizad, and General Casey have had prolonged and extremely candid conversations not just with Prime Minister Maliki but with other senior leaders of the Iraqi government and have come away persuaded they have the will to act against all instigators of violence in Baghdad.

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This is, I think, the pivot point in Iraq as the Iraqi government insists on assuming the mantle of leadership in the effort to regain control of its own capital. While I doubt General Pace and I can change many minds here today, perhaps we can allay at least some of your concerns. Above all, I want you to know that the timetable for the introduction of additional U.S. forces will provide ample opportunity early on – and before many of the additional U.S. troops arrive in Iraq – to evaluate the progress of this endeavor and whether the Iraqis are fulfilling their commitments to us.

Before General Pace summarizes the military elements of the President's plan, let me make two additional points. First, this strategy entails a strengthening across all aspects of the war effort – military and non-military – including the economic, governance and political areas. Overcoming the challenges in Iraq cannot be achieved simply by military means – no matter how large or sustained – without progress by the Iraqis in addressing the underlying issues dividing that country.

Second, we must keep in mind the consequences of an American failure in Iraq. Multiple administrations of both political parties have concluded that what happens in southwest Asia, the Gulf region, and the Middle East more broadly is of vital interest to the security and prosperity of the American people. As I said in my confirmation hearing, developments in Iraq over the next year or two will shape

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the future of the Middle East and impact global geopolitics for a long time to come.

Whatever one's views of the original decision to go to war and the decisions that brought us to this point, there is broad agreement that failure in Iraq would be a calamity for our nation of lasting historical consequence.

The violence in Iraq, if unchecked, could spread outside its borders and draw other states into a regional conflagration. In addition, one would see:

- An emboldened and strengthened Iran;
- A safehaven and base of operations for jihadist networks in the heart of the Middle East;
- A humiliating defeat in the overall campaign against violent extremism worldwide; and
- An undermining of the credibility of the United States.

The actors in this region – both friends and adversaries – are watching closely what we do in Iraq and will draw conclusions about our resolve and the reliability of our commitments. And should we withdraw prematurely, we could well leave chaos and the disintegration of Iraq behind us. Further, governments in the region probably are already asking themselves: If the Americans withdraw in defeat from Iraq, just how much farther, and from where else, might we withdraw?

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I would not have taken this position if I did not believe that the outcome in Iraq will have a profound and long-lived impact on our national interest.

Significant mistakes have been made by the U.S. in Iraq, just like in virtually every war in human history. That is the nature of war. But, however we got to this moment, the stakes now are incalculable.

Your senior professional military officers in Iraq and in Washington believe in the efficacy of the strategy outlined by the President last night. They believe it is a sound plan that can work if the Iraqi government follows through on its commitments and if the non-military aspects of the strategy are implemented and sustained.

Our senior military officers have worked closely with the Iraqis to develop this plan. The impetus to add U.S. forces came initially from our commanders there. It would be a sublime, yet historic, irony if those who believe the views of the military professionals were neglected at the onset of the war were now to dismiss the views of the military as irrelevant or wrong.

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In the Name of God, Most Gracious, Merciful

Republic of Iraq

Premiership
Media Office

Saturday 6/1/2007

In the Name of God, Most Gracious, Merciful

Dear Iraqi people

Sons of our brave armed forces

Today we celebrate the 86th anniversary of Iraqi army foundation, which gets rid of the odious dictatorship ruling, this ruling which harmed the army severely, as well as harming the other community's sectors due to its savage, individual policies.

The government of national unity showed a great concern to the army as the country's protector from the enemies' evil outside, and maintains security and stability inside the country.

The reforming of the armed forces, according to national basis that exceed the ethnic, partial, racial, and sectarian loyalties, is considered to be among the government's priorities. The army should be for everyone - its for the Arab, Kurdish, Turkmen, Muslims, Christians, and Sabbians, and should not side with any political or sectarian parties and should be away from the interference of political parties and trends.

I announce here and prevent all parties and political organizations, with no exception, from performing its partial activity among the armed forces because this will increase the strength and tenacity of the military institutions.

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Joining the armed forces should be done according to equality, non-distinction bases. The new army should be a minimized image of the Iraqi community with all its factions, and that this diversity will form the real guarantee for its unity and strength, and to prevent military coup and impetuous wars that Iraq suffered from during the last decades.

The army was turned during the former regime into a repression tool against the people, the same as what happened during the Sha'bani Uprising, al-Anfal, Halabcha, and the mass graves. The Iraqi army did not believe in the destructive wars the tyranny involved the army with. Execution squads forced the soldiers to be engaged with random wars, exposing the army to the defeat it was afflicted with in Kuwait and the 2003 war, is evidence that the tyrant entrusted the army to defend him, and not Iraq, and this is why the soldiers lost the patriotic motives to defend the motherland. We have made our minds not to let these tragedies which the people of Iraq suffered from, and destroyed its different institutions, to take place any more.

Our armed forces

The new army, which we are working on establishing, will not take aggressive actions against Iraq's neighbors that we call on to help us control the security and prevent the terrorist groups from infiltration, as the security cannot be achieved in the region unless having it obtained in Iraq. We demand the regional neighboring countries to implement the concluded security agreements, because the terrorist groups, which seek to instable the security in Iraq, will never stop its evil actions.

The buried dictator has given himself and his clique top military ranks in the way that insulted the military institution where the corruption and bribes widely spread in a way that the new history of Iraq has never witnessed before.

Bold soldiers

We will not permit any political authority to weaken our armed forces or address false accusations to it; because weakening the army will lead to delaying the process of receiving the security responsibility from the MNF, and also the government will consider that as a back-up for the terrorist groups.

Our armed forces have to move from the defense phase to the offensive one in order to eliminate the terrorist cells from the areas that are being exposed to the Saddamists and Takfiris terrorist attacks. Battling the terrorists is a historic responsibility that our armed forces have to shoulder as it defends the values of goodness and freedom on behalf of the whole world's countries. We resolve to defeat the darkness and evil powers, and eventually, we will win the battle which will not last for a long time.

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The national unity government has seriously resolved to accelerate the process of building the armed forces and provide it with the all weapons and equipment it needs in order to protect the motherland and the citizens.

Protecting the national locals is the responsibility of the armed forces which the weapons have to be restricted to it only, and we will not allow any militias, regardless to their belongings, to be a replacement for the state or to mess around with the locals' security. In case that happens, we will strongly and strictly face up to it.

Nobody doubts your boldness in confronting the terrorists, and history will record your heroic defense of your people. The government and the people completely trust the armed forces, which sacrificed a lot while defending the democratic experiment and building the constitutional institutions.

To enhance the rapid efforts exerted by the government to rehabilitate the armed forces, the government seeks to develop the infrastructures and improve the standards of living for the citizens, and to raise the country at all economical, agricultural, commercial, scientific, industrial, artistic and athletic fields.

We, thanks to God, have accomplished all the needed steps for refreshing the economy and the services such as the investment, oil and reconstruction laws, other than the national institutions that oversee the economic, reconstruction and service movements. And with full confidence, we say that the last year has witnessed an economic improvement and an increase in the income of the citizens and the number of those employed by the government institutions. This year will witness a wide campaign to eradicate unemployment through reconstruction in the private and public sectors.

Oh Great Iraqi people

The decision to execute the dictator was not a political one as the enemies of the Iraqi people claim, because it has been carried out following a year-long fair and just trial, which he does not deserve. In addition, as we previously announced, Saddam did not represent any Iraqi spectrum, because the crimes he committed do not honor any one.

We will go ahead to enfotce the law against all those who infringed the sacred rights of the Iraqi people or had the blood of the innocent Iraqi people on their hands, and will never be stopped by these unjust attempts .

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Let us end this dark chapter of the past and work together to build a free, democratic, federal and pluralistic Iraq, free from discrimination and marginalization. The government of national unity is ready to open the door for dialogue with the elements that opposed the political process and has organized the national reconciliation conferences. The government would like to take the opportunity on the execution of Saddam to enhance national unity and distinguish between those who were forced to join the Baath Party and the others who had blood on their hands. We have started to carry out the recommendations approved by the conference of national reconciliation for the political parties through the reintegration of former officers of the Iraqi army into the new army, according to their experience and specialties, or paying pension for those who cannot be integrated and are not involved in crimes against the innocent people.

We hope that the honored House of Representatives pays a great deal of attention to the revision of the constitution and the reassessment of the independent commissions like that of Integrity, Debaathification, Information and Communications.

We view the execution of the dictator as an internal issue which concerns only the Iraqi people, and strongly condemn all the actions conducted by some governments, whether through official channels or the media associated with them. We look strangely at the statements made by some governments who pretend to mourn the dictator for being executed on a sacred day, although these governments know very well that Saddam had desecrated all the sacred things along 35 years at a time these governments stood silent.

I would like to ask the international and human rights organizations where they were at the time the crimes of al-Anfal and Halabja were committed? Where were they during the mass graves and the atrocities which claimed the lives of hundreds of thousands of Iraqis and people of the neighboring countries? We did not hear these organizations condemn the dictator when he was massacring the Iraqi people.
We look at these statements as provocative, raising seditions and a flagrant intervention in Iraq's internal affairs and an insult directed to the families of the victims. The Iraqi government could find itself in a situation to review its relations with any country which disrespects the will of the Iraqi people according to the principle of mutual interests.

Dear Iraqi people
Sons of brave armed forces
The Baghdad security plan is now ready after fully considering the last plans, and we will rely on our armed forces to execute the plan with all the power and capability, and the Multi-National Force will support our armed forces, and the ground commanders will request assistance from these forces when they determine the need for that assistance.

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We definitely refuse the interference of political parties in the execution of the security plan in harmony with our responsibilities and our care on the country's high interests.

The execution of the Baghdad security plan will not provide a harbor for outlaws, regardless of the sectarian or political affiliation, and we will punish those who will underestimate applying the orders or those who work according to political or sectarian backgrounds. They will be legally tracked and will be subject to severe punishments.

According to the Baghdad security plan, the military commander will be given all authorities to execute the plan in the sector he supervises. The Baghdad security plan will last until achieving all missions to strengthen security and to serve the people.

We realize the execution of the plan will cause some annoyance to the dear people of Baghdad, but we do trust the people of Baghdad will provide support and assistance to the sons of our armed forces.

Glory and immortality to martyrs of the armed forces, and long live a strong Iraq

Peace be upon you

Nouri Kamil al-Maliki
Iraq's Prime Minister
Armed Forces General Commander
6 / 1 / 2007

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QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. HUNTER

Mr. HUNTER. Will there be at least one Iraqi brigade in each of the nine districts? Army brigades?

General PACE. The initial employment concept for the Baghdad security framework is to position at least one Iraqi Army or one Iraqi National Police brigade headquarters in each one of the nine security framework districts (SFDs). Each of the 9 SFD commands will be partnered with a Coalition forces battalion. The purpose of this partnership is to increase the capabilities of Iraqi Security Forces through combined operations and coaching, teaching, and mentoring at all levels. This partnership enhances the capabilities of the transition teams and provides a role model for the conduct of operations.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. JONES

Mr. JONES. What are the estimates and additional preparations for casualties that are made with the addition of 21,500 troops?

General PACE. During the past 47 months of conflict in Iraq, there have been moderate fluctuations in casualty rates. None of these fluctuations were the result of increases or decreases in troop numbers, but rather changes in the tactics, techniques, and procedures the insurgency was employing to attack US and Coalition forces.

The deployment of an additional 20,000 troops into the Iraq theatre is expected to yield significant results in the security situation in Baghdad. By working closely with the Iraqi Security Forces, US Soldiers will assist in bringing stability to the Iraqi capital and through this move to a more secure environment. The increase in troop level is not expected to yield an increase in casualties and for the near term we expect to see casualty rates remain consistent. In time, as the security situation improves, US Central Command Joint Staff Personnel Planners anticipate a corresponding decrease in casualty rates between US and Coalition forces.

The US military and Coalition forces have some of the most advanced medical facilities available deployed to provide support to all Coalition members engaged in operations. These resources will have the capacity to provide the necessary level of care to support our forces and manage any change in casualty rates across the Multi-National Force-Iraq area of operations.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. CALVERT

Mr. CALVERT. How do we hold the Maliki government to their commitments not to have political or sectarian interference on military and police operations? Also what can we do to help them meet those commitments?

Secretary GATES. Based on his conversations with our senior leaders, I believe Prime Minister Maliki understands the seriousness of the situation and the necessity of action by his government to secure Baghdad and reconcile the Iraqi people.

Demonstrating his willingness to adhere to the commitments, Prime Minister Maliki spoke before the Council of Representatives on January 25th and said:

- "This is 100 percent an Iraqi plan under an Iraqi command."
- "The role of our multinational forces has become support for our forces."
- "The plan is directed . . . against the person who violates the law."
- "The . . . plan will not be subject to political interference."

The ongoing deployment of Iraqi Security Forces to augment forces in Baghdad is further indication of the commitment of the Government of Iraq (GoI).

We will know the most important aspects of Iraqi compliance over the next few months as the additional forces begin operations in Baghdad. This will be an indication of the capability and the willingness of the GoI to make the tough decisions, and the ability of the Iraqi Security Forces to conduct difficult operations.

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The most important thing the U.S. Government can do to help the Iraqis keep their commitments is remain committed to the Baghdad Security Plan and ensure its success.

Mr. CALVERT. We take for granted the civilian control and the high professional standards of our American military, but we did not get here overnight and we undergo occasional internal reforms within our military such as Goldwater-Nichols to improve cooperation and understanding. What is the maturity of civil-military relations in Iraq and how are we helping them accelerate through that process?

Secretary GATES. Since planning for the establishment of the Ministry of Defense began in 2003, U.S. policy has been to emphasize the importance of civilian control of the military. In 2004, one of the first significant programs DoD conducted for the new MOD leadership, both civilian and military, was intensive training in the U.S. teaching civil-military relations and civilian control of the military.

Although the Iraqi military leadership's thinking on civil-military relations remains shaped by their training in the Saddam era and as they are still not accustomed to being subordinate to democratically elected civilians; the Iraqi military is carrying out the orders of Prime Minister Maliki, the commander-in-chief, as issued through the Minister of Defense.

Mr. CALVERT. How would retreat and/or defeat in Iraq effect commitments made by us and to us in Afghanistan? How would retreat and/or defeat in Iraq affect our commitments and operations generally in the Global War on Terror?

Secretary GATES. Assuring the government of Afghanistan the U.S. commitment is strategic and long-term is one of the basic aspects of our bilateral relationship. A quick withdrawal from Iraq could undermine our credibility in this effort in Afghanistan.

The impact of a retreat and/or defeat in Iraq on the Global War on Terror could be as follows:

- the violence in Iraq, if unchecked, could spread outside its borders and draw other states into a regional conflagration.
- an emboldened and strengthened Iran;
- a safe haven and base of operations for terrorist networks in the heart of the Middle East;
- a humiliating defeat in the overall campaign against violent extremism worldwide; and
- an undermining of the credibility of the United States.

One consequence of a precipitous withdrawal from Iraq is clear: radical extremist groups would grow in strength. As a result, they would be in a better position to topple moderate governments and create chaos in the region.

It should be remembered that the actors in this region—both friends and adversaries—are watching closely what we do in Iraq and will draw conclusions about our resolve and the reliability of our commitments. And should we withdraw prematurely, we could well leave chaos and the disintegration of Iraq behind us.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. MARSHALL

Mr. MARSHALL. Could you provide us with translations of video of Prime Minister Maliki actually saying to the Iraqi people that the plan being described by the President is the plan that he supports; that he does contemplate mixed units of Iraqis working with Americans in Shi'a neighborhoods in Sadr City without restraints?

General PACE. [The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 89.]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. UDALL

Mr. UDALL. The new commander of U.S. forces in Iraq—Lt. Gen. David Petraeus—co-authored a new Army field manual on counterinsurgency. One of its many points is that counterinsurgency campaigns need early successes to inspire confidence in the local populace. The manual also says that in general, successes require a massive superiority in manpower. But we're learning that 20,000 troops will in fact be mobilized gradually—a brigade or two at a time, over the next few months. I'm not sure I understand how a gradual "surge" can help our prospects for success. Others here have already expressed concerns that 20,000 troops won't be enough to make a difference. In Baghdad, there will be only about 17,000 additional U.S. troops. Can you help me understand how just 17,000 troops—deployed gradually—will be able to deal with Sunni insurgents and Shiia death squads in a city of 6 million?

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General PACE. Previous efforts such as "Operation Together Forward" were moderately successful in reducing the insurgency to bring security to the citizens of Baghdad. The lack of Iraqi Security Forces as well as American and Coalition troops impeded our efforts to secure neighborhoods that defense forces cleared of terrorists and insurgent activity.

It is not US Central Command strategy for the 20,000 deploying troops, alone, to provide security in the capital. The strategy requires those troops to enable the Iraqi Security Forces to provide security; to that end, the deployment of an additional 20,000 US troops to Iraq will have a significant impact on the security situation within Baghdad. The rate of the deployment, one brigade combat team per month starting in January 2007, is less significant than the tasks they will be performing. The fight against Sunni insurgents and Shiia death squads is a fight that belongs to the elected government of Iraq, to be supported by US troops.

The main elements of this effort are as follows:

The Iraqi Government will appoint a military commander and two deputy commanders for its capital. The Iraqi Government will deploy Iraqi Army and National Police Brigades across Baghdad's nine districts. When these forces are fully deployed, there will be 18 Iraqi Army and National Police Brigades committed to this effort, along with local police. These Iraqi forces will operate from local police stations—conducting patrols and setting up checkpoints, and going door-to-door to gain the trust of Baghdad residents.

Our commitment of additional troops to Baghdad will help bolster security forces in the Iraq capital. These troops will work alongside Iraqi units and be embedded in their formations. Our troops will have a well-defined mission: To help Iraqis clear and secure neighborhoods, to help them protect the local population, and to help ensure that the Iraqi forces are capable of providing the security needs of Baghdad.

Mr. UDALL. The key to the president's new plan is for the small number of additional U.S. troops to be embedded in Iraqi units, playing a supporting role since the Iraqi troops will outnumber our forces by about 3–1 (the plan calls for one U.S. brigade with every Iraqi division). I have a series of questions about this arrangement—Prime Minister Maliki promised to contribute six Iraqi battalions last fall and only two showed up. What makes you think this time will be different? This time you're expecting 60,000 additional Iraqi troops. Where will they come from? How confident are you that with an Iraqi army made up of roughly 80% Shiites, they can act like a national army (not just militias in disguise)? I've read that the Kurdish militia, the peshmerga, will be assigned to take on Sadr City, since Shiites aren't likely to fight other Shiites. This might be the most realistic way to approach Sadr's stronghold, but how can our training of Iraqi troops be effective if the army we've trained won't or can't ever take on its own? I understand that Lt. Gen. Aboud Gambar (a Shiite) has been designated as the overall Iraqi commander of the Iraqi operations. Please explain what you know about him and his capabilities. Why do you believe he is suited for this position?

General PACE. It has been made clear to the Iraqis through open dialogue from the administration that America's patience is growing short and that they must take responsibility. Prime Minister Nuri Kamal al Maliki has released several statements since the presidential address to the nation, reaffirming his support to this plan and his commitment to progress in Iraq. The Iraqi Security Forces are already making preparations for the offensive operations, which will occur over the next several months.

The additional troops will come from Iraqi forces already conducting operations in Iraq. The Iraqi leadership will conduct their own internal mission analysis and determine from where to move additional Iraqi units in order to support operations in Baghdad. In addition, training and recruitment will continue to allow the Iraq Ministry of Defense to maintain the development of its national security force.

We remain confident that the Iraqi Army with a higher percentage of Shiites will perform well within the framework of the upcoming operations.

The asymmetrical threat faced by US and Coalition forces in Iraq is dynamic. There are elements of foreign fighters in Iraq fighting for radical Islamic purposes, there are militias who fight for Shiite and Sunni rivalries, and there are criminals who are seeking financial gain. The Iraqi Army will be responsible for ensuring each of these elements is prevented from committing violent acts. With continued effective training and strong national leadership, we expect the Iraqi Security Forces to execute its mission in a professional manner. With the support and guidance of the embedded US forces, we will bring the desired effect to the streets of Baghdad.

Prime Minister Maliki personally selected Lt. Gen. Aboub as the overall Iraqi commander for the Baghdad Security Plan. The selection of Lt. Gen. Aboub may signal Maliki's desire to have greater control, via an officer he knows well and trusts,

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than he has had over previous security operations. Lt. Gen. Aboub served in the former regime as a naval infantry commander and has ties to the Shiia United Iraqi Alliance. As of early December, Lt. Gen. Aboub commanded an independent military unit directly under Maliki's control, which functioned as an expanded personal security detail. Lt. Gen. Aboub has demonstrated his support for the lead role Iraqi troops will play in the upcoming operations; he will continue to support Prime Minister Maliki in the months to come.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. MURPHY

Mr. MURPHY. Is there any thought of training them outside so it is not necessarily nine to five, where they go home; training them outside either in Iraq or remote Iraq where there is one commingled place?

Is there a thought on changing the way we train these soldiers so they can commingle and they understand how to take orders for one Iraq and not for one certain imam?

General PACE. Iraqi Army recruits receive basic combat training at one of eight training academies across Iraq. These academies are now run solely by Iraqis. The program of instruction includes training on the Iraqi chain of command, which emphasizes loyalty to the uniformed services above family, ethnicity, or religious affiliation. Five of the 10 Iraqi Army divisions (all odd numbered divisions) are built using soldiers recruited nationally. We have learned lessons from the units that were built using soldiers recruited locally, and the Government of Iraq is implementing those lessons within their training command.

Specifically, as part of the Prime Minister's Expansion Initiative, the Iraqi Army is establishing a program to train one battalion per division as a "deployable battalion" in 2d, 3d, 4th, 5th, 8th, and 10th divisions. This plan is a 4-phased deployment model: Phase I (15 days)—home station deployment preparations; Phase II (15 days)—deployment to Besmaya Range for collective training, while receiving unit conducts reception training; Phase III (90 days)—deployment to operational mission; and Phase IV (30 days)—redeployment and recovery. The Ministry of Defense envisions using these deployable battalions in operations such as Operation Fardh Al Qanoon, the new plan to secure Baghdad. The Ministry of Defense anticipates that these deployable battalions will be fully operational capable by the end of 2007.

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