Mr. Chairman, might we suspend with the

opening remarks? We have our colleague here who wants to make

a statement and needs your approval. Could we all hold up and let

Mr. Conyers speak, if that is OK?

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will be brief. I am

concerned of the erosion of the international consensus on the Iraq

policy; especially within the Security Council. It is clear that Saddam

Hussein would use any additional resources to rebuild his arsenal

of mass destruction and, frankly, try to increase his ballistic

missile capability.

I think that we have to recognize that if there is a diminution

of support in the Security Council and elsewhere in this country for

this policy, it will not be sustained over the long haul. Just because

we do not have good options, does not mean that we ought to stick

with the policy as it is.

In every conversation that I have had with General Zinni, with

Arab leaders from the region, the opposition is not taken seriously.

I know this Congress spends a lot of time wanting to arm and in

other ways facilitate the opposition. Even the Administration announced

today that it will grant $260,000 to the Iraqi National

Congress. My sense of a leadership that spends most of its time in

fancy hotels in London is that they are not the ones that are going

to lead a revolution on the ground in Iraq.

We do have to build a consensus with Iraq’s neighbors, as difficult

as that is and as often frustrating as it is. It is clear that

Saddam Hussein, with his present resources, is not paying attention

to his people’s needs. It is hard to believe that even if he has

more oil and more resources, that he would use it for his own citizens

instead of building billion-dollar palaces and trying to get

more weapons. But again, we will not be successful unless we build

broad-based support for our policy.

I would like to applaud the president and Secretary Albright for

the steps they have taken toward Iran, made easier, obviously, by

Iran’s own moderate actions and the elections of moderate officials

to their parliament. But I do think we need a new approach and

a new look at this policy in Iraq, so that we can have a broad-based

political response here in the United States and overseas.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

What date would you estimate in this plan they

would be ready to militarily confront Saddam Hussein? In this millennium

or the next?

Thank you. It was a very good answer. I was

getting lost, which is why I have to interrupt you. Ambassador

Jones, at this point within Iraq, is there a groundswell of support

for the opposition?

But right now, momentarily, they cannot do

anything and politically they cannot do anything, because the repression

is very effective.

He kills people that look funny.

All right.

And anybody near that person, just in case they

might have been contagious.

So it seems to me we feel good around here and

we say we are going to give all this money to the Iraqi opposition.

I am sure they are enjoying their stays in London, where the leaders

seem to be for a large part of time. But at the end of the day,

I see absolutely no reasonable hope that Iraqi opposition will have

any impact on our policy, except to make Congress feel like we are

doing something.

Then it seems to me the next place we have to look at is the embargo.

Now, we all know what happens in the debating process. If

you put up a proposition, and we can demonstrate a few failures,

it often undermines the public’s confidence in the whole process. It

is not right, but that is how it works. When you add to that a recalcitrant

Security Council, the reality is, that this 15-Member decisionmaking

group, including us, on what goes through to the Iraqis

makes us look foolish.

Because the Iraqis are not going to show you the palaces, the billion-

dollar palaces that Saddam is building. They are not going to

show you the weapons he is trying to smuggle into the country.

They are going to show you dying children. They are going to say,

‘‘Country A’’ in the Security Council held up syringes, water, medicine,

whatever it was, and that is why we are dying.

So unless you can come up with a better process of getting stuff

through quickly, without these ‘‘We don’t know some minor detail,

so we are going to put a hold on it,’’ that hold then ends up being

the whole reason Iraqi children die. Now, people have told me the

Iraqis get, the Iraqis who live in the north where we get to distribute

or people we trust more get to distribute the food, are doing

fine. They are not dying. Saddam Hussein gets a proportionate

share and so theoretically his people should not be dying either.

But he is beating you on two counts. We have a dumb system for

approving products going into Iraq, so it then shows us is that the

whole thing looks kind of silly. We have evaporating Security

Council support for our policies. Frankly, the same problem is happening

in the United States.

So I agree with your fundamental assessment. He is a very dangerous

guy. If he gets free access to lots of cash, he is going to

spend most of it acquiring weapons of mass destruction; and the

next hearing we could have here is about where we were when

Saddam Hussein got the missile and the chemical, biological or nuclear

weapons that took out some city in the Middle East, children

and all.

So we have got to find a way to reshape this policy very rapidly,

or you are going to find a Congress, an international community,

that isolates the United States, not Iraq. Last, I guess my question

is, we have been very good and lucky, but if one of America’s

planes bumps into one of Saddam Hussein’s antiaircraft missiles,

we have got a major problem here.

He has got an American he can march around. We are heading

for a Presidential campaign. We have got to get through the next

six months before some element of rationality will return to the

discussion here. You have to be very careful with those resources,

because I think he is a threat to the region. I think he is a threat

to the Iraqi people. But I do not think the present policy gets us

there.

You are all very good at this.

I do not want to take up Members’ time. I

would just say it is not a question of heat. Heat, I am always

happy to take. But being able to sustain a policy is the fundamental

question here, and not just doing something because we,

have had this embargo on Cuba now for 40 years. What a great

success. We are fighting whether a boy spends his time with his

aunts and uncles or whether he goes back to his father.

It just does not make sense to sustain a policy that is isolating

the United States, that is losing support in the American public,

because you are not going to achieve your goals at the end of the

day. Sometimes you may have to let something through, I would

argue. If you have not got a good damn reason to stop it, let it go.

I would rather catch him after the fact because we have got to get

the international community to support something that makes

sense and not continue on something that does not seem to be

working.

Thank you. My assessment of our success rate

with insurgences or opposition groups in a military sense, at least

in my time here, has not been all that successful. The Contras did

not work out all that well. Before that, the Bay of Pigs was not exactly

a success. Even if the Afghan guerrillas got the Russians out,

I am not sure that at the end of the day we have ended up with

a better situation there. So first I would like to ask Ms.

Romanowski, and I have talked to General Zinni, is the opposition

even potentially a military force?