The Committee will come to order. On behalf of the

Committee, I would like to welcome our distinguished witnesses to

the first hearing of the Subcommittee of Asia and the Pacific in

this Congress.

I am especially pleased we are holding the Subcommittee hearing

jointly with Chairman Ed Royce and his colleagues in the Subcommittee

on International Terrorism and Nonproliferation.

Chairman Royce will be here in a minute. We both have an awkward

situation that there is another Committee we are both on

which is meeting with Chairman Greenspan at the same time.

In any regard, at the outset I would like to express my appreciation

to our panel for agreeing on short notice to appear before us

this morning. In particular, I would like to extend a word of

thanks, or perhaps commiseration, to Mr. Cossa in Honolulu for

getting up well before dawn in order to contribute to our discussion.

A housekeeping note is in order. As my colleagues are aware,

Secretary Rice is scheduled to appear before the Committee later

this afternoon. In addition, at least one of our witnesses is under

some time constraints and must leave before noon.

In order to expedite our proceedings today, I therefore intend to

keep my opening rather brief.

There are few parallels in history in which the United States has

found itself with a less appealing menu of options than with North

Korea.

Pyongyang’s ongoing nuclear program and the potential export of

weapons of mass destruction have profound implications for regional

stability, the international nonproliferation regime, United

States leadership in Asia and the Pacific, and even terrorist threats

to the American homeland.

As we all understand, the North Koreans have lit a firecracker

with the foreign ministry statement last week that Pyongyang will

increase its nuclear weapons arsenal and indefinitely suspend its

participation in the multilateral Six-Party Talks. It is difficult and

usually presumptuous to apply motives to others. A possibility exists

that North Korea’s intentions are entirely negative and the

provocative rhetoric may be followed by provocative actions. On the

other hand, the possibility also exists that this is classic North Korean

saber-rattling to alter what they regard as unfavorable diplomatic

dynamics, to increase their leverage, and to seek additional

economic incentives prior to returning to the negotiating table. Indeed,

the last sentence of the announcement which stated that

there is no change in the North’s stance of resolving the issue

through dialogue and negotiations with the ultimate goal of

denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula suggests that the announcement

may well be a negotiating ploy and therefore may provide

grounds for cautious optimism.

The judgment call of the day on the Korean Peninsula is a question

of time: Whose side is it on? With each passing month, North

Korea increases its nuclear weapons capacities. As a consequence,

the odds may have increased that Pyongyang could export nuclear

weapons or fissile material to foreign governments, shadowy middlemen

or even terrorists. On the other hand, the history of the

20th century has shown that governments which lack democratic

legitimacy and fail to give their people the opportunity for a decent

life are vulnerable to rapid internal implosion. Military might is

simply no substitute for societal attention to human concerns.

In this setting, the only prudent approach is to maintain wariness

and concomitant preparedness, while seeking to de-escalate

tension. Given our lack of credible options, there is no alternative

to attentive engagement.

The Six-Party Talks, as currently configured, are a reasonable

way to proceed, but there is nothing theological about process approaches.

Reasonable questions must be raised whether additional

approaches might also be considered.

In this context, the Subcommittee has a number of questions for

our panelists, including: Is the United States’ strategy for dealing

with North Korea consistent and viable? Given the lack of substantive

progress to date in the Six-Party process and the importance

of U.S. diplomatic engagement to alliance management, is it

time to think out of the box about creative ways to demonstrate a

concomitant or a commitment to peacefully resolving the nuclear

issue?

Should our hard diplomacy be fine tuned to include any softer

cultural elements? For example, despite the abhorrent nature of

the DPRK regime, should the United States explore the feasibility

of expanding people-to-people and other technical exchanges with

elements of North Korean society?

In many regards, North Korea today politically resembles

Stalinless Russia. It is therefore interesting by analogy to note the

importance during Eisenhower’s term of certain nonpolitical exchanges,

such as Khrushchev’s visit to an Iowa farm. And,

bizarrely, ping-pong diplomacy played a role in leading to the normalization

of relations with China.

Cultural exchanges involve no political content, but at the people-

to-people level they betoken the prospect of mutual respect and

therefore, are at times of more than slight consequence.

Hence the question whether artist or professional exchanges in

fields such as medicine or agriculture are in order. Would it not be

wise for the United States to proffer such options, including the

possibility of North Korean leadership visits to the west coast or

heartland?

These are some of the kinds of questions the panel might address.

We look forward to your testimony and the discussion to follow.

At this point, if it is all right with Chairman Royce, why don’t

I turn to Andy or would you like to go next?

Mr. Faleomavaega.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Leach follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JAMES A. LEACH, A REPRESENTATIVE IN

CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF IOWA, AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON ASIA AND

THE PACIFIC

On behalf of the Committee, I would like to welcome our distinguished witnesses

to the first hearing of the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific for the 109th Congress.

I am especially pleased that we are holding this hearing jointly with Chairman

Ed Royce and his colleagues on the Subcommittee on International Terrorism

and Nonproliferation.

At the outset, I would like to express my appreciation to our panel for agreeing

on short notice to appear before us this morning. In particular, I would like to extend

a word of thanks, or perhaps commiseration, to Mr. Cossa in Honolulu for getting

up well before dawn in order to contribute to our discussion of this critical national

security issue.

A housekeeping note is also in order. As my colleagues are aware, Secretary of

State Rice is scheduled to appear before the Committee in open testimony later this

afternoon. In addition, at least one of our witnesses is under some time constraints

and must leave before noon. In order to expedite our proceedings today I therefore

intend to keep my opening statement brief.

There are few parallels in history in which the U.S. has found itself with a less

appealing menu of options than with North Korea. Pyongyang’s ongoing nuclear program

and the potential export of weapons of mass destruction have profound implications

for regional stability, the international nonproliferation regime, United

States leadership in Asia and the Pacific, and even terrorist threats to the American

homeland.

As we all understand, the North Koreans have lit a firecracker with the Foreign

Ministry statement last week that Pyongyang will increase its ‘‘nuclear weapons arsenal’’

and indefinitely suspend its participation in the multilateral six-party talks.

It is difficult and usually presumptuous to apply motives to others. A possibility exists

that North Korea’s intentions are entirely negative and that provocative rhetoric

may be followed by provocative actions. On the other hand, a possibility also

exists that this is classic North Korean saber rattling to alter what they regard as

unfavorable diplomatic dynamics, to increase their leverage, and to seek additional

economic ‘‘incentives’’ prior to returning to the negotiating table. Indeed, the last

sentence of the announcement, which stated that there is no change in the North’s

‘‘stance of resolving the issue through dialogue and negotiations’’ with the ‘‘ultimate

goal of denuclearizing the Korean peninsula,’’ suggests that the announcement may

well be a negotiating ploy and therefore may provide grounds for cautious optimism.

The judgment call of the day on the Korean Peninsula is the question of time.

Whose side is it on? With each passing month, North Korea increases its nuclear

weapons capacities. As a consequence, the odds may have increased that Pyongyang

could export nuclear weapons or fissile material to foreign governments, shadowy

middlemen, or even terrorists. On the other hand, the history of the 20th century

has shown that governments which lack democratic legitimacy and fail to give their

people the opportunity for a decent life are vulnerable to rapid internal implosion.

Military might is simply no substitute for societal attention to human concerns.

In this setting the only prudent approach is to maintain wariness and concomitant

preparededness while seeking to de-escalate tension. Given our lack of credible

options, there is no alternative to attentive engagement.

The six-party talks as currently configured are a reasonable way to proceed, but

there is nothing theological about process approaches. Reasonable questions must

be raised whether additional approaches might also be considered. In this context,

the Subcommittee has a number of questions for our panelists, including:

Is United States strategy for dealing with North Korea consistent and viable?

Given the lack of substantive progress to date in the six-party process and

the importance of U.S. diplomatic engagement to alliance management, is it

time to think ‘‘out of the box’’ about creative ways to demonstrate a commitment

to peacefully resolving the nuclear issue?

Should our ‘‘hard’’ diplomacy be fine-tuned to include any ‘‘softer’’ cultural elements?

For example, despite the abhorrent nature of the DPRK regime, should the

United States explore the feasibility of expanding people-to-people and other

technical exchanges with elements of North Korean society?

In many regards North Korea today politically resembles Stalinist Russia. It

is therefore interesting, by analogy, to note the importance during Eisenhower’s

term of certain non-political exchanges, such as Khrushchev’s visit to

an Iowa farm. And, bizarrely, ping-pong diplomacy played a role in leading

to the normalization of relations with China.

Cultural exchanges involve no political content, but at the people-to-people

level they betoken the prospect of mutual respect and therefore are at times

of more than slight consequence.

Hence the question of whether artist or professional exchanges in fields such

as medicine or agriculture are in order. Would it not be wise for the U.S. to

proffer such options, including the possibility, particularly if progress in the

six-party context is made, of North Korean leadership visits to the West coast

or heartland?

These are some of the kinds of questions the panel might address. We look forward

to your testimony and the discussion to follow.

Thank you.

Chairman Royce.

Thank you very much, Mr. Royce.

Does anyone else wish to make an opening statement?

Yes, Mr. Sherman?

Thank you.

Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. Blumenauer, did you want to make an opening

statement?

Thank you very much.

Yes, of course.

Thank you very much.

Let me now turn to our witnesses and I will briefly introduce

them by their background and then ask them to speak.

First, Ralph A. Cossa is President of the Pacific Forum CSIS in

Honolulu. He is the Senior Editor of the Pacific Forum’s quarterly

electronic journal, *Comparative Connections*. Mr. Cossa has served

in the United States Air Force from 1966 to 1993.

Dr. Nicholas Eberstadt is a Henry Wendt Scholar in Political

Economy at the American Enterprise Institute. He has written extensively

on Korea, East Asia, and countries of the former Soviet

Union. He has numerous degrees from Harvard as well as the London

School of Economics.

Robert Sutter has been Visiting Professor in the School of Foreign

Service at Georgetown. He specializes in Asian and Pacific affairs

in U.S. foreign policy. He has written a number of books and

has worked—and we are very proud of this—for the Library of Congress,

the United States. He has a Ph.D. from Harvard.

John Wolfsthal is Associate and Deputy Director for Nonproliferation

at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Prior to his position at the Carnegie Endowment, Mr. Wolfsthal

worked at the U.S. Department of Energy. He is co-author of *Deadly*

*Arsenals: Tracking Weapons of Mass Destruction.*

We are honored that this panel has agreed to assemble and I

thought we would first give deference to our most distant scholar,

and we would like now to turn to Mr. Cossa.

Can you hear us well, Mr. Cossa? You are welcome to proceed.

You are being heard quite fine, sir.

Thank you, Mr. Cossa.

Dr. Eberstadt.

Thank you very much, Dr. Eberstadt.

Before hearing from Dr. Sutter, I just want to make one very

clear distinction. Sometimes when you read something it is different

than the paper.

When you said the ROK Government, the South Korean Government,

was irredeemable, you meant the North Korean view of the

ROK Government.

Not your own of course.

Dr. Sutter.

Without objection, all the statements will be fully

placed in the record.

Thank you, Dr. Sutter.

Mr. Wolfsthal.

. Thank you all very much for your very insightful testimony.

Everyone has added something of great significance.

In your written testimony, let me begin Mr. Wolfsthal, you mentioned

the necessity of a Presidentially-appointed envoy. Now as

you know, the Administration has designated someone to play this

role. Does this fit your description?

Could you pull the microphone closer?

Let me just ask a little different kind of question. I

think there appears to be unanimity on the notion of containment

and the notion of multilateral negotiations.

Is there a role for out-of-the-box contacts that aren’t part of the

political negotiations? I think the Six-Party framework makes eminently

good sense.

If there is a psychology that people want to directly deal with the

United States, is there a way to put that in another kind of box?

I am thinking in two ways. One, as we know, in the Six-Party

context, there are informal discussions that occur bilaterally. One

might upgrade that bilateral to a more significant status.

By the same token, might one take totally out of politics some

sort of exchange that implied people-to-people relations and is that

helpful or just foolish that might have some symbolism?

Dr. Sutter?

It would have to be an Administration initiative. It

couldn’t be anything else.

An Administration initiative to suggest that there

might be bilateral discussions, for example in the field of agronomy,

in the field of medicine.

In arts. In this regard, let me say it would be United

States’ leadership, not North Korean manipulation, and the reason

I stress this is that almost any exchange is the type of thing that

I think we hold the upper edge in, in basic quality and the only

conceivable purpose is to make it clear that there is a respectful

relationship and to manage alliances.

But only an Administrative initiative and nothing

outside of that.

The only theory behind it is, are you looking for some

way also to take a country that is deeply antagonistic, potentially

irrational, and giving them a way to get out of a box of their own

making?

If that is conceivable that it looks more forthcoming when the

rest of the world thinks we are not forthcoming, it might have

some trivial advantage.

I personally think the Six-Party framework is the most sensible

way to proceed on any political issues.

At some point.

Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Blumenauer.

Excuse me, Mr. Blumenauer, if you would restrain

for a second.

Mr. Cossa, did you want to add——

Mr. Cossa, did you want to add anything?

Of course.

This Committee has a Sunshine Policy.

Mr. Blumenauer.

Of course.

Thank you. I want to thank all four of our witnesses

for a very profound and insightful testimony. I want to make one

very clear point, because it relates to several things that have been

said, and that is that several of you have noted the importance of

an envoy.

You have also noted the importance that an envoy has to have

clear Executive Branch support, and I just want to make it clear

that this Committee holds an exceptionally high regard in Ambassador

Hill and his new role as Assistant Secretary of State for Asia.

We also hold in very high regard the Ambassador Joseph

DeTrani, who will be involved with North Korean issues; and the

Congress and the Executive, I think, have a more similar mind

than many might suspect.

Several of you have hinted that maybe there has been a misstep

or two in the past Administration, maybe even earlier in this Administration,

but we are all in the same boat together and we are

all very supportive of what the Administration is now trying to do.

I was going to conclude, but I see our good friend from Indiana,

Mr. Burton, has returned and we are delighted to open to your

questions.

Mr. Cossa, you have the last word.

Thank you. Let me just thank you all again. You presented

compelling and thoughtful testimony. Thank you, sir. The

Committee is adjourned.