This is good. It is I.

Thank you for your comments about Nebraska.

I know you are talking about my colleague at the University of Nebraska

at Omaha, Sam Walker. He is a very outstanding fellow.

I am pleased to be back. I have rarely had a Senate hearing like

this, and I have been attending these and giving presentations on

Afghanistan since the early seventies, where there have been so

many people in agreement on so many things. That is very heartening.

I do not say this in any way lightly because I think it really

means very good things for both the United States and Afghanistan.

That is true, exactly, and that is what happened.

I am just going to therefore make some comments which I think

will be in many ways a reiteration of some of the statements made

by your first panel and some of the comments that were picked up

by Members of the Senate as well. First of all, let me just reiterate

that, and I agree with what you have said, we need to be as forthright

and forthcoming with the reconstruction campaign as we

have been with prosecuting the military campaign of this war on

terrorism. The United States has to be the leader and it must be perceived as so.

In response to one comment talking about the possibility of being

intrusive, I think that Afghans are not so concerned about the

United States being intrusive at this stage. Let me be very clear

in saying that. Afghans are more concerned about us meeting their

expectations, and we have not in the past decade.

The Afghans do see us as their friends and supporters. Afghans

are not xenophobic. I think this is one of the myths that exists

about Afghans. Afghans just do not like to have people invading

their territory, raping their women, or stealing their property. If

you are good friends with them— you cannot find more loyal and

devoted friends, people who are very excellent in being able to deal

on an equal level with other people.

So I feel this is not only Afghanistan’s window of opportunity;

this is also the United States’ window of opportunity. We have a

real shot at advancing our whole position, our U.S. foreign policy

interests in the region, in the Muslim world, and around the world.

I certainly do not think this will be as expensive as what we will

need to spend if we do try to do it on the cheap and fail. We have

had experiences in Afghanistan in doing that.

We need to recognize that this is a sound investment in our own

future. I agree with Senator Wellstone in his comments on that.

Our share needs to be the share of one setting the appropriate and effective example.

There is a historical precedent with the United States working

like this in Afghanistan, dealing with Afghans in this type of development.

I think that is something that should give us again a lot

of encouragement. When I lived there in the sixties and seventies,

the United States was very, very much involved with other nations

in helping the Afghans develop. The development that occurred

then went on after the last Loya Jirga. You know, we are talking

now about convening another jirga. That one constructed the liberal,

as it is called, or the progressive constitution of Afghanistan which went into effect in 1964.

During that period there was a lot of development going on in

Afghanistan. It was still a poor country, but women were essentially

not wearing veils, girls were going to school like boys, there

were women who were ministers of cabinet and members of parliament,

and Afghanistan essentially was trying to move itself from

being an absolute monarchy to a constitutional parliamentary monarchy.

So Afghans harken back to those things. That is why the former

King, Zahir Shah, remains such a symbol of hope for most Afghans.

It is very important that we remember that there is this historical

precedent. We are not dealing with a situation where we have to begin from nowhere.

There is the problem, of course, that so much of Afghanistan has

been destroyed. In the sixties and seventies we were building upon

development efforts that had been begun in the forties and fifties,

as well. Now Afghanistan is going to be much more difficult to rebuild, to develop, and to reconstruct.

There is one thing that we need to remember about insulating

Afghans from the meddling of their neighbors. They all have their

own agendas. It is important, as Ambassador Haass mentioned,

that we work with them, the so-called Group of Six Plus Two, because,

if we have them working with us, it is probably more advantageous

than having them working against us.

I was the U.S. member of the United Nations Special Mission to

Afghanistan (UNSMA) in 1996 and 1997 when that same Six Plus

Two was really a formula for disaster. So I think it really requires

a very, very active role by the United States, kind of serving as a

safeguard, because each of these six has its own agenda and they

have been famous and successful in meddling——

Not the same agenda, and it is not the agenda of the Afghans.

I think one of the things that is very heartening from the Bonn

meetings is that without these other six meddling, in a sense, the

Afghans, some of whom had difficulty getting together in the past

because of the meddling, were able to do things that nobody really

expected to happen quite so quickly. We do not need any more

Wahabi or Daeobandi fifth column movements or others like that in Afghanistan.

Our role is going to be very, very important in that regard, and

I appreciate what you just said in the very last comments you had

because I think that was suggestive of that particular role. So Six

Plus Two perhaps has a role, but it needs to be very, very clearly

different from when Pakistan could sabotage it, as it did, and when

others could follow thereafter in doing the same thing. We need

again to try to insulate the Afghans from the meddling that has often proceeded from that.

Concerning the security forces, one of the things we keep hearing

is that they need to be solely Muslim. Any Afghan with whom I

have talked said that should not be the case. They really seek the

best possible peacekeeping forces, and I agree with Richard Haass.

I also agree with you that it will probably require perhaps an introduction

maybe of monitors, if not necessarily helmets, and that

they might lend credibility to any internal forces. I think it would

be advisable if it could be a combination of some international and

some internal, although I do not know exactly how that could be or should be composed at this stage.

Now, I would like to just say a few things about what type of reconstruction.

There needs to be an emphasis on community-based

programs of basic health, basic education, basic infrastructure reconstruction,

basic manpower training for men and women, and

also literacy. I envision places where Afghans can gather together

in a kind of one-stop shop in their villages and regions to engage,

while they may be going after some of their other needs, in some

of the constructive citizen education efforts that the Afghans are going to need in setting up dialogs.

Remember, it has been 28 years since the Afghan’s have had a

representative form of government, 28 years since the King was

overthrown by his cousin in a revenge coup. So it is going to be difficult.

They have had 28 years of regional power lords trying to exercise

their control. So we need to help them find ways to have a

dialog for reconstruction, and I think this might all be done

through these community-based efforts. If you see pictures of Afghanistan,

a country which I remember as very, very scenic, very

beautiful, it is seen as a country today that looks very destitute because

it has been so rubblized, and also has experienced 4 years

of drought in addition to 23 years straight of warfare.

Finally, I would like to address how much will it cost. Whether

it is $10 billion or $20 billion, I think it will be a bargain for us.

It will be a bargain for us in terms of our interests in that part

of the world, it will be a bargain for us in terms of our interests

in the Muslim world, and it will be a bargain around the whole

world as the world takes a look to see how we do sustain our prom-

ises and commitments. I think we are very much on display in this particular thing.

So if I may, I beg your forgiveness here. I want to add one thing

that I think is a very appropriate element to closing this out. Afghans

are always referred to as warriors. They are successful warriors,

but they like to think of themselves as poet-warriors. My favorite

poem from one of the great Persian poets, whose name——

No, this is not the Irish, but they are alike.

They are alike in the love of poetic expression.

This is from the Gulistan of Shaykh Muslihudin Sadi. I am going

to read it in Persian, in honor of my Afghan friends, many of whom

have died, or who are now struggling, and then I will translate it.

This will display how Afghans treasure friends and what we mean

to them as their friends. It is short. It goes:

Oh, good. I know you guys from Wisconsin dovery well on that.

I followed your earlier exchange.

Yes, right. Boy, you are full of that today.

‘‘One day at bath, a piece of perfumed clay was

passed to me from the hand of a friend. I asked the clay: Are you

musk or ambergris, because your delightful scent intoxicates me?

It answered: I am but a worthless piece of clay that has sat for a

period with a rose. The perfection of that companion left its traces

on me, who remains that same piece of earth that I was.’’

This is how Afghans express how important to them friendship

is and what friendship can do to them. They see us right now as

the rose. I think we can be also the clay and see them as the rose.

Let us hope that we truly do what we have promised to do, so that

we can see Afghanistan become what I think we all want it to become

in our interest as well as in their own.

I thank you very much for having me here before your committee.

The campus in Omaha, where I work.

Chuck, we are proud of you.

Thank you, Chuck, Senator Hagel. I appreciate

that. You are right, I am enthusiastic. I am enthusiastic because

I know so many of these people, know them to be very quality people.

One of them, for example, the proposed Minister of Finance,

has U.S. graduate degrees in finance and economics, and has had

experience working at the World Bank. He and his sister helped to

teach me Persian when I was a Peace Corps trainee back in theearly 1960’s.

Hamid Karzai, the Prime Minister, or Chairman of the interim

government, is an individual I have known for 15 years. He is a

very sophisticated, moderate nationalist and an individual who I

know is dedicated to bringing all the parts of Afghanistan together.

He does not see himself just as a regionalist. That bodes well for

Afghanistan.

I could go down the list. Some of them are connected even now

with the University of Nebraska at Omaha and some have worked

with us on USAID, State Department-funded projects during the

war with the Soviet Union. So I have a lot of respect for them, because

most of them are professionals, they are technocrats, in addition

to their political connections.

I am particularly pleased with the nomination and the appointment

of Sima Samar, the woman who is the Minister of Womens

Affairs, the Deputy Chairman. I have known her for many years.

She is an exceedingly courageous woman who has worked against

incredible odds to hold education programs for Afghan women in

the country as well as in refugee camps. We have been proud from

the University of Nebraska at Omaha to work with her.

I could go on and I will not do that. What I will do is say this.

I appreciate what you said, Senator, about the role that the United

States might take in a situation like you were describing with

Ustad Rabbani, who has been the President in the past. I have

known him since 1969. His interests are more regional and religious

than national. What Ambassador Haass indicated Ambassador

Dobbins and others were doing in Bonn as well as Afghan

members of his own group, cautioning him to step back, is very important.

Again, let me reiterate what I said here before. The Afghans

right now see us as their friend. They count on friends very heavily.

They do not see us as intrusive. They see us as those who have

helped them to rid themselves of the terrorists and the Pakistani

volunteers and the Pakistani military, which they did not want in their country.

I think it is very important that we remember that, and we need

to avoid disappointing our friends. Remember, in the last two big

wars, the cold war and the war on terrorism, the big wars, the Afghans

were our allies. They lost over a million in the last big battle

of the cold war. Who won that war? We did. Who lost it? The Soviet

Union. Who were the victims? One million Afghans dead, one and

a half million Afghans severely wounded, 7 million Afghan refugees.

We have talked here in this meeting today about the fact that

we kind of dumped them in the nineties. Now again, they are our

allies in this war, the first campaign in this war on terrorism. They

are our friends. Let us show them how Americans can also be

friends. Let us uphold the ideal of that poem that I read, just as

I know the Afghans will, given the chance.

Thank you for that question. Tom. SFRELA1

I can tell you are not going to hear me disagreeing

with the thrust of your statement. I think one of the

things we need to do when we look at Afghanistan is to set aside

this cliche which the phrase ‘‘nation-building’’ has become. It is

like, ‘‘is this going to become another Vietnam?’’ Let us throw thesethings out.

It is silly, stupid posturing.

But we cannot escape the fact that we are going to have to help

the Afghans rebuild their nation. That does not mean we have to

be nation-building. They have to build their nation, but we have to

help them rebuild their nation. It has to be very, very aggressiveaction.

I am apprehensive about the conference in Tokyo in January. I

think it is a good thing, but every time we go to those conferences

we get together and we say: Now, what are we going to do? As soon

as we say that, the United States is first saying, and the Afghans

will know it, we are trying to do it on the cheap and we are not

trying to do it in the same forthright way that we conducted the military campaign.

It is good that it is co-chaired by the United States, Japan, EU,

and Saudi Arabia. But we need to go in and say: Hey guys, we are

putting down $10 billion and we need to rebuild or help rebuild,

reconstruct Afghanistan. If we do not do it that way, you are right,

I do not think it will get done.

Again, $10 billion, $20 billion, it is a sound investment in terms

of our foreign policy interests in that part of the world and

throughout the Muslim world. It is also a sound investment in the

kind of global world we want for our children and grandchildren.

Let us face it, we cannot have it if there is instability in Afghanistan

that spreads into Pakistan and Central Asia and continues on in the Persian Gulf.

So not to go on, but just to confirm what I said earlier, I am not

going to disagree with your thrust. I believe it firmly. The Afghans

are not concerned right now that we are trying to impose America

upon them. They are concerned that we do 1989 again and we kind of drop them.

They want us to be their friends——

No, they are not.

Just the opposite. They want the opposite and they will tell you that. I am

sure Fatima will say the same thing. The Afghans want the best peacekeeping

force for the future of Afghanistan. They want the friendship that we have provided in the past.

I lived there 10 years. I never heard an anti-American statement

ever in those 10 years. I coached basketball teams and I was successful

and I did not even have players yelling at me in opposition

in that regard. The Afghans understand what a good friend can be.

They are hoping and dreaming and praying that we have learned

ourselves from our mistakes this last 10, 12 years, and that we see

this as our window of opportunity, as well as their window of opportunity.

Well, I would recruit for the Afghan national

basketball team, which I would like to coach once again, and also

the University of Nebraska at Omaha hockey team, which is a division

one hockey team and is ranked nationally right now.

You opened the door.

I remember Islam when I was living in Afghanistan

as essentially a positive force. What was the case in Afghanistan,

although nobody would officially admit to it, is that there was

a kind of separation of church and state at that time, that the real

state was led by the khans and that the church, led by the mullahs

in a sense, was really in that traditional arrangement subservient

to the secular state. I think it was a healthy arrangement. That is

because it was not an extreme period. Extreme periods tend to

bring people moving more to fundamentalists.

You have talked about Fatima Gailani’s extended family and one

of those moderate traditional leaders is from that family and takes

a look in a moderate, constructive, progressive way for the role of women and others.

I am getting to that, and that is this. There is

a difference in Afghanistan in that not all Muslims are Sunni.

There is probably more than most Sunnis would admit in the Shia

sect, probably somewhere in excess of 20 percent. One cannot really

know right because past censuses are not valid at the moment.

But in any case, it will be very necessary for the Afghans, when

they draw up their future, to draw it up in such a way that that

minority Shia population does not feel that, because there has been

a decision to take a Hanafi or Sharia form that is based on the beliefs

of the Sunni majority, that they are again going to be discriminated

against, as they were in the past. That is an issue.

Right now the most important and significant, the immediate future

issue, is the impact over the last 20 years of extreme crises

in Afghanistan, which has tended to move people toward a more

conservative, actually more fundamentalist form of Islam in Afghanistan.

If Afghans see opportunity, if we help Afghanistan, Afghan

citizens, to feel that there is hope to work among themselves,

they are very practical people. I always found them, though good

Muslims, not to be extreme when I lived there.

In a traditional form of society and government, they would naturally

evolve again to a more practical approach to Islam than this

extremist stuff we have seen. To a degree, we have seen some of

that discredited by the last 10 years in Afghanistan, particularly

the last 5 years, with the intrusion of Osama bin Laden and the

Arabs who were trying to enforce extremism through this Ministry

to Promote Virtue and Extinguish Vice. Afghans are aware of these things.

But again, we are talking more about the urban Afghan who

came into play with this than the rural Afghans. In many ways,

they continue to go on in some ways with their lives as they have

for decades and centuries. It is the urban areas in Afghanistan that

really do drive the reconstruction and the development of that country.

In Afghanistan, you have heard about all these, the Pashtuns,

the Farsiwans, Tajiks, the Aimq and the Hazaras, et cetera, the

Uzbeks. The one population that nobody talks about, and it is my

favorite population, is the Kabuli Afghan. This is the Afghan who

came, no matter what the ethnic group, to Kabul decades ago and

they became Kabulized. They became intermarried. They became

Afghanistan’s melting pot.

That is what was bringing progressive life, a progressive form of

life, reform, development, education in Afghanistan. It was not imposed.

It was offered as a resource. People came to Kabul for that.

We have to help the Afghans to be able to reconstruct that resource.

I think that is very, very important.

Like other Kabuli Afghans, Fatima’s family will say that it descends

from a lineage that goes back to the Prophet Mohamed.

Others will say they are Pashtuns from Kandahar. But many of

them have never lived there. They have lived in Kabul and for all

intents and purposes, like the King, who speaks Persian, not

Pashto—he is a Pashtun—they have been Kabulized. That was the

driving force for Afghanistan’s development and it was a driving

force to bring a melting pot of Afghans together. That is what we

have to hope returns as part of the whole reconstruction process.

Well, that is another story. One has to harken

back to the politics of the sixties and the seventies. The splintering

began when a member of the royal family staged a coup in revenge

because he had been bounced out 10 years earlier.

You do not want to go back through that kind of history.

Thank you.

No, he is going to go to another hearing.

In the Rayburn Building.

That is true. That is why I stayed.

I would like to close with a statement relating

to the women of Afghanistan, and I know that Fatima will make

important statements about the status of Afghan women. I was the

first male to coach an Afghan girls basketball team and to set up

and organize a girls high school basketball league.

As the head of the Fulbright Foundation in Afghanistan, I was

the first one to be successful in persuading the Afghans to send Afghan

girls on AFS programs. During the war with the Soviets, we

had teacher training programs for women even when we were

being threatened and the women were being threatened by the

Arabs and others in Pakistan in the refugee camps. I could not

agree more with those who have said that the education, the training,

the equality for women in Afghanistan is key, very, very key,

and I believe that from the bottom of my heart.

I have lived with these people since 1964 and I feel women are

the ones who have been the most severe victims of these last 28

years of improper rule in Afghanistan. So maybe I will conclude

with that and thank you very much for the time you have given me today.

I did not coach her.