The hearing will please come to order. We have

two very distinguished witnesses in our first panel, and I will get

to that in just a moment. I would ask unanimous consent, in the

interest of time, that my formal statement be placed in the record

at this moment as if read. Let me just very, very, very, very briefly

summarize it, because I want to have as much opportunity to get

to the issue of discussing Afghanistan with our first two witnesses.

Whenever anyone asks me about Afghanistan, and whether or

not we should be there, and should we expand the force, and so on,

I always say, ‘‘Everybody ought to try to think back why did we

go in the first place. Why did we go in the first place?’’ Interestingly

enough, I think, as usual, the American people are way ahead

of the political leaders in both parties, the administration, the Congress

throughout the country, in that in a recent Gallup poll, 80

percent think the United States should keep troops in Afghanistan,

while 16 percent of the U.S. population thinks we should take the

troops out. The bottom line is, they understand why we went in the first place.

What I want to examine today, because I have had, and I want

to say it publicly, absolute cooperation, as chairman of this committee,

from the State Department and from the White House. I do

not interface as well, and I always—anything with Secretary

Wolfowitz has always been responded to, but I do not interface

with Defense as much in my capacity as chairman of this committee.

But two things have emerged, and I just want to give the

witnesses a heads-up of the direction I would like to take this hearing.

I know I am a broken record to both of them about the need to

expand the international security force. It seems as though we

have replaced the strategy—not replaced; we have, instead of a

strategy of an international security force being extended beyond

Kabul, that we basically have, my phrase, not yours, a warlord

strategy, which is, if there is peace and calm in any of the four

major sectors of Afghanistan, even though it is imposed by and/or

is primarily accountable to the fact that a warlord is in charge,

that—that constitutes stability.

I also want to talk about the time needed to buildup an all-Afghan

army and police force, its status, its personnel, its timing. Because

as I understand the basic underlying premise of the administration,

one that I do not disagree with, is that there is a need to

have a central government, have a security force that is made up

of all factions, all of the major tribes represented in Afghanistan,

and a police force, and that the notion would be that they would

be the ultimate stabilizers of a government.

But there is sometimes, as my grandmother would say, something

missed between the cup and the lip, and we have to get to

that point. How long is it going to take us to get to that point, what

kind of progress are we making to get to that point, and what is

the structure for stability in the meantime? That is what I want

to talk about today.

I am anxious to hear from both our witnesses,

and with that, I will yield to my colleague, Senator Lugar.

Thank you very much.

I might note that there are a number of people in the audience

who have been keenly interested in this subject. Among them, as

working with the President, have been women’s groups in the

United States, who have testified before this committee about the

security question, and today the Feminist Majority, now the Women’s

Alliance for Peace and Human Rights in Afghanistan, and

NOW Legal Defense Fund and Education Fund, and the Equality

NOW, are all represented here in the audience, and have importuned

this committee and this chairman on occasion, and I am sure

they have at the State Department. I know they have spoken with

the Secretary.

Today’s paper, the New York Times, and other major papers are

full of stories relative to the assertiveness of women in Afghanistan,

taking significant risks to make sure they do not go back to

the Dark Ages that they just came out of. So I welcome them and

others that are here today.

We have two very distinguished witnesses. Deputy Secretary of

State Richard Armitage recently returned from a mission in South

Asia, where he successfully averted a nuclear war. Not bad for a

few day’s work. You did a hell of a job, Rich; congratulations. I

want to state again publicly, I think the administration, and you

in particular, played a very significant role in diffusing the single

most dangerous circumstance that exists at the moment.

We also have Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, who

has been one of the administration’s leading architects of strategic

planning for Afghanistan. I am particularly looking forward to his

discussions on plans for sharing security in the months to come,

and I want to thank him again, not only for his being publicly

available, but privately available whenever we have sought, or I

have sought, at least, any information from him.

I invite you to make any comments you wish in your statements,

and do not worry about the clock. We are anxious to hear what you

have to say. So as fully as you think you need to speak, please feel

free. Do not worry about these lights going on. They will go on for

us, not for you. Mr. Secretary, you can begin.

Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary.

We will take 7-minute rounds so everybody gets in, and then if

you have time, we will try for a second round.

Let me begin by saying to you both that, speaking for myself, I

think it is a remarkable military undertaking. Having spent 4 or

5 days down on the ground, it was impressive. It continues to be

impressive, and I think, notwithstanding the fact that it is going

to be fairly easy to Monday morning quarterback everything about

every operation, I think we should all be very proud of what you

have put together, and what our fighting women and men did.

I must tell you, I have had this conversation with Secretary

Armitage. I wish every American could see those young women and

men. I mean they are incredible and will make everybody proud.

But what I want to talk about is not to second-guess anything

we have done so far, I want to figure out what we do from here.

Would one of you, or both of you—I will just ask a generic question,

rather than the finely tuned questions my staff have developed

here, and that is: Explain to me what the role is of the warlords.

In Mazar, Dostam is obviously the guy in charge, but there is a

power struggle going on up there. In Herat, there is—obviously,

you have a guy named Ismail Khan, who is a tough actor, and

there seems to be some more to that. I am going to put a map up

here, in the absence of my ranking member. This is too hard to see

from here, but these various indications show armed clashes, attacks

against minorities, attacks against refugees, attacks and intimidation

of loya jirga candidates, and attacks and intimidation of

women, and attacks on international humanitarian NGOs.

Now, over in Iraq, there is not a lot happening there, which is

good, on the surface; but when I was there, the talk was that we

were all concerned about each of these warlords having their own

sponsors. In Herat, we were worried about the Iranians and their

cooperation with Ismail Khan. I spent hours, and hours, and hours,

literally, I mean 6 or 7 hours with the now officially near-term

elected President and his people, including Tajiks in the administration.

The concern was that these warlords all had their own agendas,

and that although they could maintain peace, there would not be

any loyalty to and/or allegiance to a central government. I

thought—and it may be able to be done anyway, I thought our purpose

here was not only to drain the swamp, but as—the Congressional

Research Service, we asked them to look at this for us, and

they came up with the following summary.

It says, ‘‘U.S.-led efforts to end Afghanistan’s role as a host for

Osama bin Laden and other anti-Western Islamic terrorists requires

not only a defeat of the Taliban, but also the reconstruction

of a stable, effective, and ideologically moderate Afghan state.’’

Now, do we think that is true? I mean do we think—obviously,

defeating Osama bin Laden and the Taliban, everybody agrees on

that one, but is it important, is it important that we be responsible

for, the world community and us included, the reconstruction of a

stable, effective, ideologically moderate Afghan state? Is that part

of our charge? If it is, what role do these warlords play in bringing

that about?

Well, is it not flowing directly, some of it directly

to these warlords? In other words, one of the things we spent a lot

of time talking about in Kabul, in Afghanistan, and here, with you,

with the State Department, with the White House, is that Karzai’s

popularity and support rest on a couple of factors.

One, he is viewed by all the parties—and when I met with

Kanoni, and all the rest of these guys, they all said, basically, ‘‘We

are not crazy about the guy, but he is the best thing we have to

get aid. He is a magnet for us.’’ Two, he does not have an army.

He does not have any guys. He cannot control it by himself. No.

3, he is the guy who represents the majority, but is going to count

us in on the deal.

So I thought, initially, the notion was that in order to give him

some heft, we had to make sure that everybody understood that

they had to go through him to get that road built in Herat, go

through him to get that school reconstructed in Mazar, and as I understand

it, that is not—let me just ask the question. Is that happening?

How much goes directly, so that you have a guy like Birkat

Khan who seized control of the whole province, being the guy who

is building the road for the folks down the street?

Well, I will come back to that. My time is up.

Senator Lugar.

Do the toilets flush yet?

No, no, no. I want to make sure—well, do we

need to provide money so you can build something else? I mean——

Senator Boxer has to leave, and Senator Nelson

has been gracious enough to——

Of course, but I go by the seniority rule; but go

ahead.

I know you are.

No problem.

I thought I was just being nice here.

Yes

Thank you. Let me make sure about, I guess,

something factual. There is no doctrinaire position, but we did—I

met with the British one-star who was in charge of that operation,

and with our military there. We are not opposed to expansion of

ISAF, but we made clear we would be no part of it; is that right?

That is not my question, Paul. I know that. That

is our first job. But did we not—I was told by the Brits that we

explicitly said we would not be part of an ISAF force, period; is

that right or wrong?

No, not that we ‘‘are not,’’ we would not, under

any circumstances be part of an ISAF force; is that correct?

Well, let me say it another way, and you sound

like your State Department guy now; no offense, Mr. Secretary.

Not like you.

I apologize to my colleague for interrupting.

Senator Hagel.

I think it is important to note that those three

examples you gave, Korea, Philippines, and Taiwan, we invested

about 50 years, I hope we understand that we are in for a long

haul, and no one calls for a timetable for withdrawal.

Senator Chafee

Sure.

Mr. Secretary, how many al-Qaeda do you estimate

are left in Afghanistan or on the border with Pakistan?

That would be helpful, if you could. Well, I will

refrain from any more questions. Do you have any questions? I

know that the Senator from Florida had another question. Go

ahead and finish.

Thank you very much. Gentlemen, thank you

very much. We will have a few written questions, if that is OK. Let

me say in your parting here that I think you have done an incredible

job. I do think, one area of disagreement, personally, is that

I think that U.S. leadership is still possible to expand ISAF beyond

Kabul. I think absent doing that, and relying on warlords as much

as we do while we are trying to set up this interim government,

is a judgment call. I respect the call, but I think we are making

some mistakes.

Every time I see the President, the first thing he says to me, ‘‘Do

you have anything to say, except about Afghanistan?’’ So I am a

broken record on this, but I appreciate your answers, and I appreciate

you making yourself available.

You are excused, unless you have any closing comment either

one of you would like to make

You guys are like good trial lawyers. Never ask

a question to which you do not know the answer. Thank you both

very much.

We have a second panel, and I would like now, while some are

leaving the room, Ambassador Peter Tomsen knows the political

landscape of Afghanistan inside and out. As Special Envoy to Afghanistan

for the previous President Bush, he dealt with many of

today’s power brokers long before they had any real power to

broker. He is currently the ambassador-in-residence at the University

of Nebraska at Omaha. It seems to me, that in my former capacity

as the Chairman of the Judiciary Committee, I kept calling

people from the University of Nebraska at Omaha, and I do not

know what the deal is here, but it must be a real sanctuary there.

No, no.

In my mind, that elevates it considerably.

The thing I know most about Omaha is that it is very close to

Iowa. It is a long story; it is an inside joke.

Brigadier General David Grange earned three Silver Stars and

two Purple Hearts during his service in Vietnam. He has served in

Delta Force, Ranger, and Special Forces operations during his 30-

year military career, and as commander of Task Force Eagle in

Bosnia, he is particularly well equipped to comment on U.S. participation

in peacekeeping operations.

Now, I would invite you, Mr. Ambassador, if you have an opening

statement, and then General Grange, and then we will go to questions.

And I thank you for your patience.

Thank you very much, Mr. Ambassador. General,

welcome.

Maybe we can talk after this.

I said, maybe we can talk after this.

Thank you very much, general.

Mr. Ambassador, in my foray into Afghanistan and the region, as

well as following it very closely here, I have not met anybody in

uniform in place in Afghanistan, nor have I met anyone engaged

on the ground in Afghanistan in a civilian capacity, who says anything

other than what both of you just said, there is a need to expand

the security force.

It is amazing.

Well, the irony is, and I do not—I mean you have

been there, in terms of an administration working on this, this

kind of reminds me, general, of, I was a broken record with the

Clinton administration about exercising force in the Balkans. I will

never forget, I came back from my first trip in 1992 having met

with Milosevic, where I had the interesting conversation, when he

asked what I thought of him, and I said, ‘‘I think you are a war

criminal and I am going to spend the rest of my career seeing that

you get tried as one.’’ It was a very nice conversation. I mean he

looked at me like, ‘‘lots of luck in your senior year,’’ and that was

it.

But I came back, and at least in the Oval Office convinced the

President that we should lift the arms embargo, and he turned to

Christopher, who did not think that was a good idea, and he said,

‘‘OK. We will do that, but we will not do it unilaterally, so Chris,

head to Europe and talk them into this.’’

Christopher went to Europe, he was a fine Secretary of State,

and a fine man, I am a great admirer of his, and basically said,

‘‘You guys really do not want to do this, do you? We think we

should lift the arms embargo, but you guys do not really want to

do this, do you?’’

Everybody said, ‘‘No, we do not want to do this,’’ and that was

the end of it. He came back and reported that no one wanted to

lift the arms embargo.

This reminds me of the same thing. I do not see, in my experience,

where the uniformed military is objecting to expansion. I

think the civilian military is objecting to the expansion, in country,

in country. I am not going to get anybody in trouble, but in country,

I could name you the highest ranking military officials, and

they all think we should expand ISAF. This idea of legitimate concern,

of interfering with the efforts of going after al-Qaeda—the

remnants of al-Qaeda and the Taliban, that is arguably true in one

of the three parts of the country.

You might be able to describe this policy as sort of paraphrasing

Julius Caesar, all of Afghanistan is divided into four parts. In one

part, that is arguably the case, but it sure as heck is not the case

over in the Iranian border. It sure in heck is not the case up in

Mazar. It is not the case in other places. So I am confused here as

to why, why there is this resistance, when on the ground with our

military, there is not resistance.

I mean I could—again, I do not want to get people in trouble, but

I spent hours, and they say, no, no, no, look, it has to be expanded,

and asking the Europeans and other allies to expand, and say we

are unopposed to expansion is very different than saying, ‘‘I want

to make clear to you, we are not going to be any part of it. We are

not going to supply any forces. We are going to stay here and concentrate

on this, but we encourage you to expand.’’ It is sort of like

Christopher’s trip to Europe. So, I still am somewhat baffled.

I am going to come back in the next round, general, to you, I

want to talk to you about the Bosnia experience, and whether or

not it applies in any way. But, Mr. Ambassador, I do not—I think

it has to do with this overwhelming and overarching fear and concern,

practically and politically, about nation building, and about

us being engaged there.

Please.

Senator Lugar.

Sure.

Sure.

Sure.

Thank you.

Senator Hagel.

General?

Thank you. Gentlemen, we have kept you a long

time. I just want to make two relatively brief comments.

First, I think your experience in Bosnia showed you, general,

that all the protestations by elected officials up here turned out to

be wrong. From 1993, on, I heard from everyone that the American

public will never sustain the allocation of forces, and the deployment

of forces in the Balkans. It will not happen. I do not know

anybody who ran a campaign for Congress or the Senate who won

or ran on the ticket, ‘‘Bring the boys home.’’ I have not had anyone

come up knocking on my door or out there saying, ‘‘The most important

thing is get out of Bosnia, get out of Kosovo, bring the boys

home.’’

Second, the polling data overwhelmingly sustains the position

that the American people understand that we have to keep forces

in Afghanistan. The job is not done, and we have a long way to go.

They are pretty smart. They have it figured out.

I think that part of the problem here is that there is a disconnect

with some, both a hangup and a disconnect. Some of our—what is

left of the left, and what is the furthest of the right seem to have

gathered together to conclude that we are overextended, and nation

building is not something we should be involved in.

I had a long meeting with the President where he outlined for

me for an hour and 45 minutes what we had to do, and I was impressed.

In walking out—I will not mention the official’s name, as

I got from the Oval Office out into the West Wing, but we were outside

and this particular official came running down the hall and

said, ‘‘Are you going to stop at the stakeout?’’ Meaning where the

press is.

I said, ‘‘Not if you do not want me to,’’ and they wanted me to,

because it was a bipartisan effort here.

They said, ‘‘Not that we want you to, but you are not going to

mention nation building, are you?’’

I said, ‘‘You mean what the President has spoken to me about

for the last hour and 45 minutes?’’ I said, ‘‘No, I won’t mention

that.’’

There is an incredible hangup on this notion about ‘‘nation building,’’

just the use of the phrase, in my experience.

Second, I really do think that there is a disconnect among some

in the Congress and the administration, between our objectives

with regard to Iraq and the unfinished business in Afghanistan. I

have had numerous world leaders and counterparts in parliaments

in Europe say, ‘‘You want to go in and take down Saddam, and you

are not even going to stay in Afghanistan.’’

The greatest worry I find, Mr. Ambassador, is they are worried

about not whether we can take down Saddam, but what do we do

after we take him down? I facetiously say, ‘‘Your old boss stopped

for a simple reason. He didn’t want to stay for 5 years in Baghdad.’’

So I hope we can begin to articulate this correlation between getting

the job done properly in Afghanistan and our flexibility and

ability to deal in other parts of the world, and what impact failure

to do that might have on interest in other parts of the world, but

both your testimonies have been extremely helpful.

General, you headed up Task Force Eagle in Bosnia. Do you

think it is time for us to get out of the Balkans and out of Bosnia?

Well, thank you both for your time, your testimony,

and your input. Hopefully together—we are joined together

bipartisanly here, and hopefully together with the administration

we can develop or be part of implementing that agenda, that plan,

but like the Senator from the great State of Indiana said, I have

not seen it yet, and I am anxious to see it.

I thank you both very much, and we are adjourned. Thank you.