Well, I got here before he did.

No; I am senior to him.

So what is the problem?

Thanks.

Senator, you are always nice.

I just want to say to both of you, thank you very

much for your focus on this. I could not agree more with Senator

Lugar, as far as making Afghanistan a success, and it is in our

hands, and that is the burden of being the leader of the free world,

and we are, and in this particular case, we cannot afford failure.

It is not an option, as they say. I also wanted to note again the

presence of the women’s groups who are here today, and to thank

them from the bottom of my heart.

Mr. Chairman and our Ranking Member, Senator Lugar, I think

it is important to note what Bernard Lewis said, who is a great historian,

and a pretty conservative one at that, and when asked by

Charlie Rose if he could name the one reason that the Muslim

countries have not been able to be successful, the answer came

back without a moment’s pause, ‘‘The women. They have not allowed

the women to be part of the society.’’ This was quite an eloquent

statement, I think, from him.

So what I want to spend my time doing, and I hope to be able

to do it on a one-on-one with you, Secretary Wolfowitz, if we have

a chance, is to plead the case, make the case for immediate expansion

of the international force. That does not mean our troops. It

does not mean occupation. Of course, you are right on the point,

it means protection, and protection is not occupation.

When you have Hamid Karzai asking for this, and when you

have Dr. Sima Samar, who the President was so gracious to put

in the gallery, the First Lady’s box, during the State of the Union

Address, asking for this, and when you have the women coming to

us via these women’s organizations, and also in person, taking the

risks of travel, to tell us this is their highest priority, and I would

say, Secretary Armitage, you are right, they list security first, then

they talk about education, health, and the rest.

I just want to put into the record, Mr. Chairman, a couple of

third party quotes from my position here. The international think

tank, the International Crisis Group, wrote, ‘‘The security situation

outside Kabul remains tenuous, and roadside banditry and flareups

of fighting between rival military factions have been common.

Many unemployed former fighters, with weapons and time on their

hands, represent a dangerous element.’’ And they say, ‘‘It is deeply

troubling that some Afghans are expressing nostalgia for the relative

security and stability that were present before.’’

I think it is important, because we have to know history, that it

was this very lack of security that led to the Taliban coming into

power in the first place. The Taliban first gained the support of

Pakistan in 1994, when they rescued a 30-truck Pakistani convoy

that was hijacked by a warlord just south of Kandahar. The

Taliban gained popularity throughout Afghanistan at that time by

continuing to eliminate roadblocks that were set up by local warlords,

where hijackings and extortion were common, and we know

what happened then. Osama bin Laden was given haven, et cetera.

None of us wants it to happen. You do not. We do not. It cannot

happen. But I say that there is this lack of security.

The International Crisis Group has recommended that force be

increased from its current level of 4,500 to 25,000 troops, and other

respective organizations, the Stimson Center called for 18,000

troops. I guess I am puzzled, because on this issue we have been

so close together, people from different sides of the aisle, why there

seems to be this hesitancy when it is not going to be American

troops. Karzai is asking for it, and we know in 2 years, hopefully,

the Afghan people can protect themselves. This is an interim kindof solution.

During February and March of 2002, Human Rights Watch documented

cases of sexual violence against Pushtun women, perpetrated

by the three main ethnically based parties, and then militias

in the north. Many women describe how they have to fight off

attackers, or hide young female relatives out of fear of rape. We

know Sima Samar herself had threats. She had to spend one night

at the United Nations guest house. And outside of Kabul, it is far worse.

Reuters reported in April an acid attack on a female teacher in

Kandahar after handwritten pamphlets were found, circulating in

the city, warning men against sending their daughters to school or

their wives to work. I have heard first hand from Afghan women,

who call my office, who say that security is their No. 1 concern.

So I would say one more thing here. Bernette Rubin, an expert

on Afghanistan, wrote the following in the New York Times, ‘‘Both

Afghans and international officials see the refusal to expand the

international force as the start of American disengagement repeating

the mistake of the 1990s, despite promising to learn from that

experience. Providing security for rebuilding Afghanistan is now

the front line in the war against terrorism. Failure here will undermine

all other commitments, and many fear failure has already

started. There is still time to prove them wrong.’’

Now, I do not believe that failure has started. I see so many wonderful,

good things, and when Secretary Armitage talked about the

loya jirga, and the women’s voice, and the fact that in this amazing

setting, things got accomplished, and got done, and Karzai was—

these are all wonderful things.

I am just concerned that for some doctrinaire reason—occupation,

that is not what we are asking for. We are saying, protection

of the people. It is a short-term thing. I would hope we could get

past this idea that if we do support a larger troop deployment, it

is occupation, because I do not see that at all. I see it as an interim

measure, and I—in the time remaining, I wonder if you could comment,

is your mind opened at all to this?

No, no. You misunderstood. Those were people

who were telling reporters this. Of course, it is ridiculous, but if

even some people think that, it is dangerous.

Right. Mr. Chairman, I am going to end here

and just say this. I sense a little bit of spark of hope there when

you say there is no doctrinaire approach to this, you are going to

look at this. So I feel that it is hopeful.

Let me just say, you cannot go to the doctor, and you cannot go

to school, indeed, you cannot go out of your house if you do not feel

safe; so protection, it seems to me, is the key here. I hope we will

listen more to the voice of the women there, because that really is

the voice of the people, I think. And if we do that, I feel so confident

that this will, in fact, be the model that Senator Lugar is looking for.

I thank you for your indulgence, Mr. Chairman.