Mr. Chairman, thank you.

This distinguished committee has long provided our country

strong leadership and bipartisan support, especially now that we

are waging this war on terrorism, and I thank you for that. I thank

you also for the opportunity to come here today to discuss the Department

of Defense’s perspective on how the campaign in Afghanistan

to kill, capture, and disrupt terrorists has helped us to protect

the American people, and also to discuss how we are helping the

Afghan people help themselves, to ensure that their country does

not, once again, become a terrorist sanctuary.

To chart the way ahead, Mr. Chairman, it is important to understand

how we got to where we are, so let me spend a moment on

the early parts of the military operation. From the beginning of the

war on terrorism, President Bush emphasized that the United

States must apply, as he said, every resource at our command,

every means of diplomacy, every tool of intelligence, every instrument

of law enforcement, every financial influence, and the President

concluded, every necessary weapon of war to the destruction

and defeat of the global terror network.

Each of those instruments has a role. Each one reinforces the

other. The military is only one of the instruments that we need to

wage this war on terrorism. The military cannot do its job without

the support of other elements, particularly intelligence and diplomacy,

and its role is frequently to support the efforts of those other

instruments of national power.

This hearing is focused, and appropriately so, on Afghanistan

and on our military effort there, but it is important to emphasize,

as we have done from the beginning, that this campaign is not

about a single country or a single terrorist network. Al-Qaeda alone

has spread throughout the world. It is a network. A network by its

very nature is based on the idea that should one node be eliminated,

the network can still continue to function.

Well before September 11, 2001, al-Qaeda had burrowed into

some 60 countries, including the United States, Germany, France,

Morocco, Saudi Arabia, and the Philippines. It had critical nodes in

Hamburg, Germany, and Jacksonville, Florida, as well as in Afghanistan.

The pilots who flew the suicide attacks were not trained

in Afghanistan. Many got their training right here in the United States.

So Afghanistan was an important node in the network, but by its

nature, a network does not have a headquarters. So while we focus

on Afghanistan today, we must understand that it is only one node

of that terrorist network. The very name of the organization, al-

Qaeda, which means ‘‘base’’ in Arabic, indicates that the entire organization

is the base of terrorist operations. It is spread throughout

the world, and it needs to be eliminated, root and branch.

In Afghanistan, where al-Qaeda’s plots and plans flourished

under the protection of the tyrannical Taliban, America’s Armed

Forces went to work to root out both. Our intention, as Secretary

Rumsfeld said, was not only to deprive the terrorists of a sanctuary

in Afghanistan where they could safely plan, train, and organize,

but also to capture and kill terrorists, and to drain the swamp in

which they breed.

Over the last 8 months, with our coalition partners, we have defeated

a vicious regime that gave refuge to evil. We have killed or

captured many of its ringleaders, and we have others on the run.

Even in Afghanistan, however, our work is far from complete, but

we are encouraged by the many truly remarkable aspects of this

campaign to date.

Our military campaign in Afghanistan has had some striking features,

some surprising, others less so. Not surprisingly at all, we

have seen America’s men and women in uniform conduct their op-

erations with great bravery and great skill, as we saw at MazareSharif and

Tora Bora, and in Operations Anaconda and Mountain Lion.

What may have been a surprise to some was the remarkable

speed with which the military plans were put together, the swift

success of the military operations, measured in weeks, rather than

months, and with relatively few troops on the ground. On September

11, let me remind you, there simply were no war plans on

the shelf for Afghanistan. General Franks was starting from

scratch on September 20, when he received the order from the

President to begin planning a campaign. Less than 3 weeks later,

on October 7, we commenced military operations, and less than 2

weeks after that, we had troops operating on the ground with General

Dostam in the north. In many ways, it was a remarkable feat

of logistical and operational utility.

If you would permit me, Mr. Chairman, I would like to read from

an actual dispatch that we received from one of those Special

Forces captains on the ground, or more accurately, on horseback,

in northern Afghanistan. This is from October 25, shortly after he

and his unit were inserted:

‘‘I am advising a man on how best to employ light infantry and

horse calvary,’’ he said, ‘‘in the attack against tanks, mortars, artillery,

personnel carriers, and machine guns, a tactic which I

thought had become outdated with the invention of the Gatling

gun. The Mujaheddin have done that every day we have been on

the ground. They have attacked with 10 rounds of ammunition per

man, little water, and less food. I observed one man who walked

10-plus miles to get to the fight, who proudly showed me his artificial

right leg from the knee down.

‘‘There is little medical care if injured, only a donkey ride to the

aid station, which is a dirt hut, but the Muj are doing very well

with what they have. We couldn’t do what we are doing,’’ he went

on, ‘‘without the close air support. Everywhere I go, the civilians

and Muj soldiers are always telling me they are glad the USA has

come. They all speak of their hopes for a better Afghanistan once

the Taliban are gone. Better go,’’ he concluded, ‘‘General Dostam is

finishing his phone call with a Congressman back in the United

States. Yes, we had that element of this fight as well.’’

Another dispatch from one of his comrades on November 10,

after the fall of Mazar-e-Sharif, reads in part: ‘‘We rode on begged,

borrowed, and confiscated transportation. While it looked like a

ragtag procession, the morale into Mazar was triumphant. The

locals loudly greeted us, and thanked all Americans. Much waving,

cheering, and clapping, including from the women. The U.S. Navy

and Air Force’’—this from an Army man—‘‘did a great job. I am

very proud of my men, who performed exceptionally well in extreme

conditions. I have personally witnessed heroism under fire

by two U.S. noncommissioned officers, one Army, one Air Force,

when we came under direct artillery fire last night, less than 50

meters away. When I ordered them to call close air support, they

did so immediately without flinching.’’

‘‘As you know, the U.S. element was nearly overrun 4 days ago,

but continued to call close air support and ensured the Muj forces

did not suffer defeat.’’ He concluded, ‘‘These two examples are typ-

ical of the performance of your soldiers and airmen. Truly, uncommon

valor has been a common virtue.’’

In many ways, those two dispatches, I think, capture the ingredients

of an extraordinary military success. But another element of

our success, which was undoubtedly a surprise to the terrorists but

barely noticed by many others, was something that did not happen,

something that calls to mind Sherlock Holmes’ famous observation

about the dog that did not bark. We did not become bogged down

in a quagmire, unlike the British in the 19th century, or the Soviets

in the 20th. Nations that arrive in Afghanistan with massive

armies tend to be treated as invaders, and they regret it. Mindful

of that history, General Franks has deliberately and carefully kept

our footprint small to avoid just such a situation. On balance, our

partnership with indigenous forces has been very positive and continues to be so.

From the beginning of the war on terrorism, we have stressed

the importance of understanding the nature of our enemy as a network.

Al-Qaeda is not a snake that can be killed by lopping off its

head. It is more analogous to a disease that has infected many

parts of a healthy body. There is no one, single solution. You cannot

simply cut out one infected area and declare victory, but success

in one area can lead to success in others, and our success in

Afghanistan has contributed to the larger campaign.

In Afghanistan itself, through actions there, somewhat less than

half of the top 30 or so leaders of the al-Qaeda organization have

already been killed or captured. Well over 500 enemy are currently

detained in Guantanamo or in Afghanistan as a direct result of our

operations in that country. But equally important, if not more so,

the worldwide efforts of our law enforcement and intelligence agencies,

in cooperation with more than 90 countries, have resulted in

the arrest of some 2,400 individuals.

Our military success in Afghanistan has contributed to that larger

success, both indirectly, by encouraging others to cooperate, and

also more directly. Abu Zubayda, for example, one of bin Laden’s

key lieutenants, was driven out of his sanctuary in Afghanistan,

and as a result, was captured last March. His partial cooperation,

in turn, contributed to the detention of Jose Padilla, who came into

the United States with the intention of planning and coordinating terrorist attacks.

A Moroccan detainee in Guantanamo led us to three Saudis planning

terrorist attacks in Morocco, all of whom were subsequently

arrested, including one top al-Qaeda operative. In December, the

discovery of a videotape in a safe house in Afghanistan led to the

arrest of an al-Qaeda cell in Singapore that was planning to attack

a U.S. aircraft carrier and U.S. personnel in that country. The cooperation

of Pakistan under the leadership of President Musharraf

has been extraordinary, leading to nearly 400 arrests in that country alone.

These developments are encouraging; however, it is important to

remember that al-Qaeda is still dangerous and active. This network

still poses threats that should not be underestimated.

Let me talk now about our efforts to build a more stable Afghanistan

in the long term. Because while our primary mission in that

country has been to kill or capture terrorists who threaten the

United States, or those who have harbored them, it is also important

to help the Afghans establish long-term stability in that country,

so that it does not once again become an outlaw country that

provides sanctuary for terrorists.

While the success of those efforts will depend most of all on the

Afghans themselves, the United States and its coalition partners

have a critical role to play in achieving that goal. In shaping that

role, and as in shaping the military campaign itself, we are very

mindful of that historical Afghan animosity to foreign armies and

foreign occupiers. We have always viewed our mission in Afghanistan

as one of liberation, not occupation. So with this in mind, we

have tackled the challenge of striking the balance between keeping

Afghanistan from reverting back to a terrorist sanctuary, and at

the same time, keeping our footprint small.

Afghans are an independent, proud people, and we have worked

from the beginning to minimize the number of our troops there,

and to focus instead on helping the Afghan people to help themselves

in their journey to representative self-government. We have

made it clear, and we need to continue to do so, we have no intent

of colonizing Afghanistan. We have been careful through our actions

and our words to avoid creating the expectation that the

United States can solve all of that country’s problems, and we have

made a determined effort not to take sides in Afghanistan’s internal

quarrels. But we have, in fact, seen that Afghans are good at

solving problems when they must, and we must help them to deal

with as many as they can.

There are positive signs that Afghans are making progress. Secretary

Armitage described in his testimony how the Afghan people

made a significant step forward with the successful convening of

the loya jirga. But along with self-government must come self-sufficiency,

in terms of Afghanistan’s security. That task is made more

challenging by the formidable geography of Afghanistan. It is a

country roughly the size of Texas, with peaks in the Hindu Kush

Range, which translated, by the way, means ‘‘Hindu Killer,’’ that

reach some 24,000 feet, 10,000 feet higher than the highest of the Rockies.

If I might, Mr. Chairman, I would like to put up a chart. When

we say that it is roughly the size of Texas, at least for those of us

who are not natives of Texas, it may not carry enough meaning.

I found it more meaningful to look at a map of Afghanistan superimposed

on the southern United States, and you can see that it

would stretch from Washington, DC, down almost to New Orleans,

and from St. Louis, Missouri, down past Atlanta. It is huge.

It is not only large, but if I could show you another chart, it has

incredible terrain. This is a satellite photograph of Afghanistan,

and the neighboring regions of Pakistan. You can see the enormous

expanse of mountains, and down in the southwest corner, that formidable

desert, which, in the Afghan language, is called the Desert of Death.

The sheer size and unforgiving terrain of the country has been

a major factor in planning our military operations, and it must remain

a key factor in planning long-term security arrangements;

but, encouragingly, the situation is becoming more stable. Out of

32 provinces in Afghanistan, our forces have experienced harassment

mainly in only 5. The Taliban has so far failed to mount their

often predicted spring offensive, and loya jirga convened with no

serious security incidents, despite numerous threats.

Our coalition partners are contributing to stability through their

humanitarian work. It is especially worth noting that Jordanian

personnel have been running a field hospital, which by itself, to

date, has treated some 77,000 Afghan civilians. The overall improvements

in conditions in the country are perhaps best demonstrated

by the fact that people are voting with their feet. In just

the first 5 months of the year, 1.2 million refugees are recorded as

having returned to Afghanistan. That was the U.N.’s projection for

the entire year of 2002. The U.N. has now doubled its target to 2

million refugees that they hope will return in this calendar year.

On the security front, we are committed to working with the Afghan

Transitional Authority and the international community to

find effective solutions to the remaining challenges to that country’s

security. One of the most important pieces is training the Afghan

army. At the beginning of May, U.S. Army instructors took

on the task of helping to build an Afghan national army by initiating

the training of the first group of Afghan recruits. Coalition

partners are also assisting in this effort. France has already begun

training a battalion, and others, including the United Kingdom,

Turkey, Bulgaria, Poland, Korea, India, and Romania, are assisting

with personnel, or funding, or equipment.

I would appeal to you, Mr. Chairman, and all of the Members of

the Senate and of the House, to approve as rapidly as possible our

supplemental request for fiscal year 2002. It contains a request for

$50 million in FMF and $20 million in peacekeeping operations

funds that would permit us to accelerate the training and equipping of an Afghan army.

The biggest gap, I must say, in this effort has been the lack of

authorities for funding. Even though we have a lot of money for

other purposes, we have to scrape around and go to some of the

countries I just mentioned in order to get the funds for salaries or equipment.

To further enhance regional stability, the 18-nation International

Security Assistance Force has been helping to stabilize the situation

in the capital of Kabul. The British did a splendid job leading

that effort in its first 6 months, and we expect the same from our

Turkish allies who have now agreed to take over the lead.

Last month, the U.N. Security Council extended ISAF’s mandate

in Kabul until the end of the year. ISAF forces helped to train the

Afghan national guard that protected Kabul during the loya jirga.

Other important efforts to provide a more secure environment include

the very important German-led effort to train a police force,

and British counterdrug operations.

However, the most important instrument that the Afghan Authority

and we have to establish a stable security situation is the

leverage provided by economic assistance. It is in our interest to

provide such assistance, and to help the Afghans rebuild their

country after almost a quarter century of war so that it will not

once again become a haven for terrorists.

The leadership provided by the State Department, as described

by Secretary Armitage, has been key to that effort. Particularly

important was the organization of the Tokyo Donors Conference that

Secretary Armitage described. In support of those reconstruction efforts,

the U.S. Central Command is also executing a

plan to collocate personnel from the U.S. Agency for International

Development and the State Department besides our Special Forces

and civil affairs teams that are operating throughout the country.

This will allow USAID people to get out beyond Kabul and better

monitor U.S. assistance, while providing them some protection in

what remains an insecure environment.

To conclude, Mr. Chairman, the campaign in Afghanistan, along

with many other efforts now underway by many instruments of our

government, has contributed to the disruption of the global terror

network in tangible and far-reaching ways. Our task extends well

beyond Afghanistan, and even in Afghanistan it will still be a long

and difficult one, but the stakes are enormous.

As President Bush said, speaking to the cadets at West Point 2

weeks ago, ‘‘We have our best chance since the rise of the Nation

state in the 17th century to build a world where the great powers

compete in peace, instead of prepare for war.’’

We can do this not by imposing our own model of human

progress on other nations of the world, but, as the President said,

‘‘we can support this effort when we reward governments that

make the right choices for their own people.’’

In our development aid, in our development efforts, in our broadcasting,

and in our educational assistance, the United States will

promote moderation, tolerance, and human rights, and we will defend

the peace that makes all progress possible.

In Afghanistan today, we see a democratic spirit rising from the

remnants of a once-failed state that is trying to defy the ravages

of decades of war and misrule. Despite a beginning that will at

times be rocky, and no doubt suffer some setbacks, the Afghan people

are hopeful for a new tomorrow, hopeful that they, too, can

have a chance at peace instead of war. We remain committed to

doing our part to help them on that journey, and we want history

ultimately to judge us as having been dedicated to liberation, not

occupation. We appreciate the continued leadership of this committee

and the support of the Congress in these ongoing efforts.

Thank you.

I will just add to that, I agree with everything

that Secretary Armitage said. I think the basic strategy here is,

first of all, to work with those warlords or regional leaders, whatever

you prefer to call them, to encourage good behavior. I think

we have a number of means for doing so. Some of them include

local diplomacy. We have been engaging, particularly up in the

Mazar-e-Sharif area, where you pointed out there have been some

recent incidents, due to fighting between two different warlord factions,

with our Special Forces who have considerable influence to

encourage better behavior.

As I mentioned in my testimony, we are arranging to have State

Department people out in some of the provincial areas with our

Special Forces, so that they can begin to exercise their good offices.

I think it underscores the importance of economic assistance. Because,

as Secretary Armitage said, at the end of the day, what

these people want, among other things and perhaps most of all, are

money and resources to help their people.

The long term solution is to shift the balance of forces between

the central government and the regions—training the Afghan army

is a key element of doing that. Again, I cannot emphasize enough

how important economic assistance is, because the more real resources

that flow through Kabul, through the Transitional Authority,

the more those local leaders have to look to Kabul.

Senator Lugar, if I might just make a point, on

the security front. We do have a plan to train 14,400 soldiers for

the Afghan army over the next 18 months, and quite frankly, we

are looking at whether that number might be increased. The two

biggest issues are recruitment and funding. I would appeal once

again for congressional action on the State Department supplemental,

which contains $50 million for training and $20 million for

peacekeeping operation funds. The sooner we get that money, the

sooner we will be able to look at expanding recruitment.

Also, in our request for fiscal year 2003, we requested $100 million

in authority to move DOD funds, if appropriate, from other

programs or operational funds into this kind of training. I would

appeal to get—I think it is not so far made it through the budget

process up here—but I would appeal to you to try to consider that,

because I think it would give us a great deal more flexibility if the

opportunities develop to do more training.

First of all, let me say, I agree with a great deal

of what you said, particularly about the importance of women, both

in Afghanistan and in the Muslim world, in the larger sense. There

are a few things that are just factually wrong, and it is important

to start from the right set of facts.

Whoever referred to the relative stability and security that were

provided by the Taliban obviously did not read about the 5 million

people on the verge of starvation, or the civil war that was raging

in that country.

The ISAF leadership was held by the British

and then by the Turks, and we are trying to keep our forces focused

on their job of finding terrorists and finding Taliban.

And we are not part of ISAF.

Well, actually, Secretary Armitage is reminding

me, we have 36 people in the headquarters helping to advise them.

There is a very close relationship between ISAF and CENTCOM.

We provide a lot of the basic support that makes them safe and secure.

They are really two operations that are connected to one another.

Senator, we have been crucial to making that

operation work. The British were in at the beginning. They stayed

for 6 months. They did not leave because we were not participating.

They left because they could not sustain it longer than 6

months, just as they cannot sustain some of their operations on the

other side with our coalition forces.

Our people have important work to do that only American forces

can do, or a few allies in small numbers, and that is rooting out

terrorists and capturing them. It is difficult work, and it is work

that is uniquely suited to the U.S. military. As you mentioned, the

Turks said they would not come in without the ‘‘big dog’’ around.

We gave them the assurances they needed to come in, and we will

give whatever assurances, if those are needed, for other countries

that want to participate.

Our biggest problem to date has been that even the countries

that started out there, like the U.K., cannot sustain those commitments

for logistical or other reasons, and there is not a huge number

of countries signing up to volunteer.

I agree with everything that Rich just said. It

is important, the President has said this, not just to kill terrorists,

but to build a better world beyond this war on terrorism. And I

think a key part of that is reaching out to the Muslim world. My

own experience as an American Ambassador in Indonesia, with

some 200 million Muslims, the largest Muslim population of any

country of the world, convinces me that the great majority of the

world’s Muslims would like to be part of successful, free democratic,

prosperous societies, those that embody what might be

called Western values, but that are, in fact, universal values.

I think whoever made the point earlier, that success in Afghanistan

can be a useful model, I think was on the right track. I think

success in moderate countries, like Turkey or Indonesia, can contribute

to a larger dynamic, but we need to work on the positive

side of this as well as the more negative side of fighting terrorists.

I think those lines I quoted from the President

indicate it is up to people to choose their own futures. I think

where they are going on paths that are embracing democracy and

freedom, then it is in our interest to support them. It is their decision,

if they are Muslims, to decide what they think Muslim values

are.

My comment about Turkey, my comment about Indonesia—they

are very different countries, by the way. The Indonesians would

emphatically reject the idea that it is a secular country, but it recognizes

five different religions, not just a single one.

Senator Boxer referred to Bernard Lewis—many years ago, he

came to visit me in Indonesia when I was Ambassador. We had a

long discussion late one evening with a group of some dozen Indonesian

Muslim intellectuals. At the end of it, he said, ‘‘You are Indonesians.

You are Indonesian Muslims. You have to decide for

yourselves the place of religion in society. But after what I have

heard this evening, I hope someday you will send missionaries to

other Muslim countries.’’

There are things that people have to decide for themselves, but

I think what we can decide for ourselves is that those countries

that choose to be on the path of democracy, that choose to be on

the path of freedom, that choose to be on the path of economic

growth, fueled by private enterprise, those are countries that I

think represent the future, and a future we want to support.

Senator, sometimes people suggest that if Islam

is a state religion, that somehow that is inconsistent with our outlook.

I ask people to stop and think how many European countries

have Christianity as an official state religion. There are many ways

to pursue paths that represent democracy and freedom. There are

many different ways, but I think we can tell the difference between

those who are on that path and those who are not.

Senator, as I understand it, there are a couple

of tactical considerations that have to be kept in mind, and then

a larger strategic one. From a tactical point of view, first of all, it

has to be underscored just how quickly everything was happening.

This operation in Tora Bora took place, I think, only 3 weeks after

the fall of Mazar-e-Sharif, and even less time than that after the

fall of Kabul.

General Franks was assembling what he could assemble very

quickly. It was his judgment, and the judgment of tactical commanders,

that to do that operation alone in that incredibly difficult

terrain would have required a massive highly visible buildup, and

a major logistic undertaking, which would have ensured the departure

of many more enemy forces before we even arrived.

Second, and related to that point, is, I would like to go back to

my satellite photograph of Afghanistan. We are talking about an

incredible country. You do not seal borders there. It is not even

clear that if we had had an all-American operation, and the time

to assemble people, that we would have done a better job. It is

true, they would not have been bribed, that was a problem; but on

the other hand, they would not have known the terrain as well,

they would not have known the local people.

The net effect of that operation was, in fact, the capture—both

in Afghanistan and Pakistan—and killing of several hundred al-

Qaeda, so I would not judge it a failure. In fact, under the circumstances,

the speed at which it was put together, I think, is

pretty impressive. So when in Anaconda we relied more heavily on

American and coalition forces, it was not because we had, quote,

‘‘learned a lesson,’’ but we had more capability available.

I would also think that this discussion and many others would

benefit from recognizing the strategic point that I made in my testimony,

which is that we deliberately did not plan an operation in

Afghanistan to put in 100,000 or 150,0000 American troops along

the model of the Soviets. I think that is what the terrorists expected

us to do—they expected us to get bogged down, and to have

opportunities to kill us in great numbers, and for us to make a lot

of new enemies in Afghanistan.

Not everyone that we enlisted at Tora Bora were people we

wanted to enlist; but on the whole, we have had a good deal of success

in enlisting local forces to do our work for us, and in the process,

do some of their own. It is imperfect. I think anyone who sets

a standard of perfection really does not understand anything about

the history or the geography of that country. Against a reasonable

standard, I believe that General Franks and his people have been

remarkably successful and shown remarkably good judgment.

It is our military that deserves to be commended,

but I think they have learned either by studying or by intuition

a great number of the lessons from the terrible experience

of the Soviets there; and I think, as you correctly point out, it took

the terrorists by surprise. I think they expected us to repeat some

of what they had seen 20 years ago, and we did not let them do

that.

It is very hard to determine numbers. The numbers

I have seen are less than that. We think hundreds got away,

but many more hundreds were killed or captured. Even those estimates

are a bit uncertain, because some of those killed people are

still buried in the bottom of caves and tunnels that we will never

find out about.

I would like to answer that for the record. My

impression and recollection from that time—and, again, let me

start out by saying that there was an awful lot we did not know

about that terrain and those conditions. Our estimates—and they

are estimates—I believe were much smaller.

Absolutely, and——

I think the two things we do not

want them, I think your phrase was to become a permanent ward

of the international community, and we do not want them to descend

back into the kind of lawlessness and violence that made

them a sanctuary for terrorists. I do think it is important that we

help them find their own way, but while the history is important,

I believe in many places around the world, over time, the United

States has been able to use its influence to work with local people,

whether it is Korea, or the—I happen to think of Asian examples,

because Rich and I have worked a lot in Asia. But if you think

about Korea, or the Philippines, or Taiwan, American influence

over a period of time has greatly strengthened those people who

favor freedom, and democracy, and progress over those who do not,

and there is not an instant fix, especially not for a country with

Afghanistan’s problems.

I believe whatever fix they come up with is going to involve some

considerable degree of regional autonomy. We had it ourselves, especially

in our founding. It does not mean lawlessness; but hopefully,

even the regional governments will begin to be held to higher

standards, and standards of how they treat their people.

I would like to repeat again, I do not think it can be said often

enough, security is not just a matter of guns, it is also a matter

of money, that when people are rewarded financially for good behavior,

or have those resources withheld when they do not. It is a

major instrument in the hands of a central government.

And that is why, at the same time that we in DOD are putting

a big emphasis on training an Afghan army, we support in every

way we can the efforts of the State Department and Secretary

Armitage to raise as much support as we can from the international

community and the United States to give that central authority

more leverage over the regions.

I even mentioned them in my testimony. As the

Secretary of the Army said, Brahimi’s role is quite key as a coordinator

of all international support to the Karzai government, and

we view him as really crucial in that effort. On the military security

side, the ISAF operates under U.N. Security Council mandate,

in fact.

I think they are all over the place. Some of

them just changed uniforms, and others did not even have to

change uniforms, because it was the same uniform. They changed

sides. It was inevitable, as in a country like that, that you lose

structure. We have tried to focus on those people that we really

think are hard core. Any number of people, I think, have actually

come over to the new authorities, which also is a warning. They

could be rented by a different side under different circumstances.

So you have the combination of people who have been killed and

captured, some numbers who were still very hostile to us, who were

in hiding, or in the mountains, and we have had rocket attacks,

which we assume probably come from people like that, but so far,

these attacks have been small scale.

But as I mentioned in my testimony, there has been a fear all

spring, and predictions from some quarters of our intelligence community,

that there would be a major Taliban offensive. I think they

were trying to mount one. They were not successful. That does not

mean they are not out there, still trying.

I could not agree more strongly with what the chairman said.

This is a long-term project. There is still a lot of work to do, not

only in reconstructing a stable Afghanistan for the future, but also

in clearing out those bad elements that caused us so much grief.

I would not call them sanctuaries. I mean, if it

is large enough to be identifiable as a training area or a base of

operations, I think we can be pretty sure about finding them and

going after them; but for individuals to hide all over the place is

a fairly simple thing. We are accomplishing a lot also by keeping

them in that condition, as opposed to organizing and fighting.

In some numbers, I am sure——

Not in most parts of the country. As I said in

my testimony, there are only 5 provinces today where we find significant

pockets of hostile people, so that tells you that the problem

is confined geographically. I think it is confined in size, but most

importantly, regarding the allusion you made to Vietnam, these are

not, in the old guerrilla phrase, fish swimming in a friendly sea.

I think most of the population is not very friendly to them, and

one of the ways in which we find their hiding places is because

they are very frequently turned in by local people, and that is a

major part of our effort. Sometimes it is lubricated with money, but

sometimes I think it is simply because they earned the hostility of

a great many of the local populations around the country.

Senator Chafee, I might say, I think your questions

bring out what a complex environment it is there. And I must

say that one of the things that was so impressive to me and Secretary

Rumsfeld in the briefings that we got from our Special

Forces people who operated there, it was not only the extraordinary

level of military skill that they display, but their sophistication

about local customs, and local languages, and local politics; and

they have to have it, but they seem to have it, and they seem to

find their way through that complexity with a great deal of skill

and effectiveness.

Thank you, Senator.

I do not know of a reliable estimate. It is easier

to estimate the numbers that we have captured and killed than to

know how many are left. I can try to get you a classified answer

for the record.

Still do.

Senator, on the optimistic side, I am impressed

by that statistic about the 1.2 million refugees who have come

home, which was the goal the U.N. had set for the entire calendar

year, and they reached it in May. I think people are voting with

their feet, and there is still an enormous amount of work to be

done, but it is worth remembering how far that place has come in

a relatively short time.

There is not so much I think we would want to

say here, other than the fact that we have noticed the same phe-

nomenon, and we have been involved in some training. It is very

difficult to persuade natural politicians from wading into crowds.

We have seen that happen even closer to home. It is a natural impulse

of a born politician, but we would be more than happy to provide

on a classified basis just what efforts have gone into this, sir.

Yes, but I guess do not accept the premise that

General Franks’ people made a mistake. They made judgments in

circumstances, as I said earlier, of a very rapidly evolving tactical

situation. They obviously know things now about the particular individuals

that they did not know at the time; and with that knowledge,

they would rely on some of them and not rely on others.

But I think the notion that we somehow could have avoided relying

on local forces is false. If we had not used local forces, I think

even more people would have gotten away. That is certainly General

Franks’ judgment, and everything that I have seen reinforces

that.

If there is a lesson there, it is that you can never have enough

good intelligence on the people that you are working with. You

need to learn from experience. We were there basically for 3 weeks

when all of that happened. I think we have a much better read on

who we can work with and who we cannot work with now; but

look, betrayal is part of that culture, as well. People fight for one

side one day and another side the next day.

You are absolutely right in expressing that concern.

I would say it is one of several reasons why we in the Defense

Department were very appreciative of Secretary Armitage’s diplomatic

efforts. If that conflict breaks out into war, not only will it

be terrible for the people involved, but it will be a real setback for

our effort to get terrorists in some significant numbers, or in these

very wild tribal areas of Pakistan, where, by the way, the Pakistani

Government has never exercised a great deal of authority.

They have made significant efforts over the last few months to

put more people in there, but some of those people were diverted

by the building crisis on the Indian border. If it were to break out

into war, I think it would seriously degrade those efforts.

So far, I must say that the troops that are there seem to be doing

a very aggressive job of going after al-Qaeda. It is wild country, it

is difficult country, but I think they are making progress. We

would like to see that progress continue.

No. Thank you.

But there has been a huge improvement

in the situation. That it is not perfect is not surprising. It is a

country that has been through 25 years of civil war, and it is going

to take time. Things are not going to change immediately.

But the other one is, there is no refusal to expand the Afghan

force, whether it is referring to the Afghan army, where I have

been saying over and over again, we would like more money to be

able to expand it faster, or whether it is referring to ISAF, where

there is absolutely no doctrine. I mean, no one is saying that we

are opposed to expanding ISAF, or opposed to having it play other

roles. Our biggest problem so far has been sustaining ISAF in its

present role.

One of our big diplomatic challenges of the last few months,

which we were successful at, was finding someone to take over the

lead from the British in ISAF. When the Turks agreed to take it

over, they expressed extreme reluctance to take on missions outside

of Kabul. That does not mean that we are holding a doctrine opposed

to looking at other roles, but it is important to remember

both the magnitude of the problems that this government has inherited,

and the sheer size and unruliness of the country.

Are there going to be problems? We are going to make progress

on them, it seems to me, step by step. I think we are making

steady progress, but one of the reasons why we say it is going to

be a long road is that there is a lot of work to do. But there is no

doctrine involved here at all. We are trying to do whatever makes

sense to stabilize that country.