[presiding]. Thank you very much, Senator

Lugar. It’s fallen to me to close this out. Senator Hagel, I’m going

to ask some questions, but did you have more afterward?

Well, I’m not going to be long because I’ve got

some visitors waiting.

Secretary Burns, welcome and I’m sorry I have to go in and out

here. We just had a wonderful moment on the floor of the United

States Senate. You may have heard. Senator Kennedy came back

to vote and made the difference, and we managed to pass the Medicare

bill. That was a good moment.

I just came back from a trip to Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and the

Middle East. I must say I was really struck by two things. One was

the preoccupation of all of these countries with Iran. There was a

statement by one of those countries’ leaders, quite angry, that the

United States had served up to Iran on a platter a country called

Iraq. And there was a feeling that Iran has complicated these countries’

options. We have complicated these countries’ lives significantly

through our lack of judgment, ineptitude, or whatever.

Almost all of these countries counseled us not to go into Iraq in

the beginning, and I’m sure you’re aware of that. So now we’re

working to try to put these complicated pieces back together.

What also struck me was when I was in Sharm al-Sheikh and

met with President Mubarak briefly during the African Union

meeting. I can’t tell you how disturbing it was to have Robert

Mugabe there, and to listen to some of those countries make

excuses. It struck me that we’ve reached a strange point in global

affairs. Senator Lugar is a great student of global affairs, as is

Senator Hagel.

I’m not sure that the leaders of the past would have been as

quiet, undisturbed, and unmotivated to come together as many

leaders are today. In a sense, the world has lost outrage about

Zimbabwe, about Darfur, and about many other places where people

are interfering, where people are blowing people up, and where

there’s a very clear departure from the standards that folks gave

their lives for and worked hard to achieve in a global context for

most of the last century.

So it’s in that context that I’m really disturbed by the administration’s

approach. Now, your comments, I was here for that part

of it, and your testimony is a change, but it’s a change that comes

on July 4, months before the next election. Frankly, there is little

ability for this administration to do the kind of lifting that needs

to be done in order to change the dynamics with which we’re currently

presented.

I noticed in your own comments that you talked about how you

want to leave the next administration with something that is X, Y,

or Z. That’s admirable, but when you say we shouldn’t let the Iranian

regime off the hook, I blanched a little bit. That is exactly

what has happened for the last 7 years. They’ve been let off the

hook. And for 31⁄2 of those years, the British, French, and Germans

were working diligently to try to create some kind of initiative, and

we gave them the stiff arm and stood at arm’s distance. We set up

a condition. The condition was give up your enrichment before anything

else happens. That has resulted in nothing else happening,

but it has resulted in about a 400-percent increase in Iran’s enrichment

activities.

At some point you’ve got to stop and say: ‘‘This isn’t working;

you’re digging a hole.’’ What bothers me is that the world is sitting

here and it’s disturbing. I had the privilege of meeting with former

Prime Minister Tony Blair a few weeks ago and we talked about

this. It was interesting to hear his perspective now that he’s departed

office. He was talking about how you have global leaders

saying: ‘‘You can’t have this,’’ but how you also have global leaders

who haven’t really crossed the threshold of making the decision to

back up that policy.

People who are good at reading the tea leaves are sitting there

reading them and they know this. Hamas is stronger, Hezbollah is

stronger, and Iraq is confused. We hope Iraq is coming out of that

confusion, but it is hard to tell at this point.

I think you see where I’m going here. The dynamic is: How do

you change this? Let me share with you examples of that loss of

outrage. There’s been a lot written in recent months about the potential

of Israel, the United States, or both using military force to

deal with Iran. Obviously none of us here believe that option

should be taken off the table. It is an option.

But there has not been a lot written about what global unified

true sanctions would achieve. We did it in South Africa. I was on

this committee when we did it. I remember the talk about how

Incidentally, in terms of the loss of outrage, Burma is another example.

Lighthearted little sanctions that do almost next to nothing,

and we all know what China’s interests are, et cetera.

So I don’t think, Mr. Secretary, that we’re doing a very good job

of leveraging our morality, our values, our interests, and creating

the kind of unified global effort necessary to calm the world down,

to deal with terror that’s popping up in country after country

now—Afghanistan, the Indian Embassy, Baghdad. I mean, you run

around.

Let me throw a few things at you. An international arms embargo

could have a profound impact. Resolution 1747 called for it, but

it didn’t require it. Are we serious if we don’t require something

and just call for it?

With Resolution 1737, you could eliminate the exemption for

sanctions on the Bushehr nuclear reactor project. Russia has some

issues there, but those should be on the table as well.

Or, consider a broad freeze on Iran’s facility assets abroad. Resolutions

1737 and 1747 freeze assets, but only on specific entities

and individuals. If you want to have an impact on the Iranian middle

class and the technocrats, let’s get serious about restricting the

flow of capital, restricting investments, controlling energy, et

cetera.

A ban on the inspection of international flights to and from Iran

would have a significant impact as well. We did that from Libya

after Pan Am 103 and it had a profound impact on Tripoli.

Consider a ban on worldwide investments in Iran’s energy sector.

A ban on exports of refined oil or other products and a ban on purchases

of Iranian oil and related trade.

There are a number of more serious things about which I don’t

hear enough talk and that I don’t see on the international table.

These are things I think ought to be the subject of discussion before

we’re talking about going to war again with 150,000 troops on

the ground in a country that is already pretty bogged down.

Now, I’d like you to comment on that possibility of sanctions. The

final comment I want to make is on, as you say in your testimony,

the diplomatic tool as a possibility and our envoys in Baghdad. I

happen to know how restricted our message has been, and I think

you do too. It’s not a full and legitimate diplomatic engagement or

dialogue. Our Ambassadors and our interlocutors are instructed

what to say and can’t go beyond it. It’s a message of do this or else.

So share with us strategically how we can get into a better discussion

of these sanctions, build this larger consortium of energy

and effort, and finally, begin not to hold out the punishment before

we engage, as we have done historically with China, with Russia,

and with the Soviet Union—quite successfully, I might add.

I couldn’t agree with you more, but it’s such a

tragedy that we’re only getting to this now in July 2008. It seems

to me that this strategy was obvious a number of years ago. I’m

not picking on you. You weren’t there. You had a different portfolio.

You’re new to this role.

We all wish that. I think that the signature of

the Secretary on the publicized P5+1 offer letter has had an impact,

and I think that goes to underscore the degree to which engagement

can perhaps make a difference here.

I don’t want to belabor this now. I’d like to ask some more questions,

but honestly I’m not able to. But it did strike me in the conversations

I had in Israel that, while there are perhaps deep—and

you know this—deep reservations about the ability of some of these

things to have an impact, they obviously view this in existential

terms and it’s their terms, which are more real and immediate, and

we have to be sympathetic to that.

Nevertheless, they did acknowledge that these other kinds of

sanctions on a global basis could have a profound impact and make

a difference. I think how they’re offered, how they are proffered,

is particularly important. I think that the United States needs to

assume, to some degree, a different attitude here. I don’t mean diminishing

our declaration of the seriousness of the situation or our

commitment to resolve it one way or the other. I mean simply approaching

the table as a diplomat, in a way that allows people to

come back to you and talk to you and not feel as if it’s a take it

or leave it, all or nothing, threatening kind of discussion.

I think to the degree that we are able to maneuver that way

we’re going to open up more channels of communication and, frankly,

open up possibilities.

So I look forward to that, and I wish you success in that effort.

I’m told Senator Feingold is coming. I’ll yield to Senator Hagel.

I’ll just be in the back room and then I’ll come back in. Thanks.

Can I just, before you answer that? I’m going to

leave the gavel with our good ranking member.

He is not. Apparently he’s not going to be here.

So I appreciate that.

Thank you very much.

Secretary, thanks so much for being with us. We appreciate it.