Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Secretary, it’s good to see you again. And I am encouraged,

for the most part, by your testimony and the progress that’s been made on the diplomatic front.

I want to pick up on an issue that at least is related to the previous

question, and that is the expression on the part of this administration,

at least in the press, of Iranian influence in financing

or encouraging destabilizing activities inside Iraq. There are a lot

of Americans who are concerned that there is the potential, at

least, for backing into military action in Iran—not based on concerns

with respect to the—not solely premised on incapacitating

their nuclear capabilities, but under the guise of expanding the

theater of war in Iraq. Now, obviously we’re going to defend American

troops and personnel if they’re attacked in Iraq, or anywhere

else in the region. And we want to give the administration some

flexibility in making sure Americans and American facilities are

safe and secure—you know, imminent attacks, hot pursuit, there

might be certain intelligence-collection activities. So, let’s stipulate

up front that those actions would be fully supported by the American

people and Congress. But I want to get to the heart of the

question. Senator Webb and Senator Byrd have offered an amendment

that would require the administration to get congressional

authorization before using force against Iran, with the—some of

the exceptions that I just mentioned. I personally believe it would

be a mistake for us to back into a military conflict with Iran. So,

I’m interested in what the administration’s position is, in terms of

having to obtain authorization before using force in Iran, akin to

the authorization that was provided in Iraq. And, as I said, I’m encouraged by the progress

that’s been made, at least recently. I think some time was lost, but

that’s water under the bridge. I think the actions you guys are

taking now are constructive. But I do want to get to, sort of, the

central issue that I asked, and that is, if we were to—if the administration

made an assessment that military action, in order to preserve

the integrity of Iraq, might be required, is it the administration’s

position that authorization would be needed to do that?

I just want to amend that. I think you meant

it’s the position of our administration, as opposed to our Government, the——

OK. I just wanted to make sure—— All right. I understand. Right.

I will let Senator Webb pursue this question further,

since he’s done a lot of work on it. I just wanted to get the

ball rolling, since we all—we had some—limited time.

Let me shift to the issue of economic sanctions. I think we obviously

made progress with the most recent vote in the Security

Council. I am still trying to figure out what the status of European

financial interactions are. Are we seeing moves to tighten financial

sanctions, limit export credits, reduce trade, et cetera, across the

board? Which countries are being helpful? Which countries are—wewish were more helpful on this issue.

And, since we only—I only have a limited amount of time, why

don’t I tack on just a couple of other questions to that.

What kind of progress are we making in actually impacting the

Iranian economy on issues like, for example, their gasoline imports?

It strikes me that’s obviously someplace—a point at which

you could end up having significant influence on domestic views of Ahmadinejad’s policies and rhetoric.

And one final point. I guess there has been some talk about the

possibility of—some states have talked about the possibility of divestment

as a strategy of leveraging—applying leverage on Iran.

And I’m curious as to whether the administration or the State

Department has any views on that. Thank you.