Mr. Chairman, thank you. I, like my colleagues,

am grateful for an opportunity for the hearing. I wanted to advise

my friend and colleague from Montana that we do raise some

chickens in Nebraska.

That is where the beef goes.

But it is important, I think, as Senator Burns has framed somewhat,

that we look at whatever policy we have in Iraq and for Iraq,

and I think that is much of the core issue this morning, not just

the sanctions collapsing, are they effective, what are they doing,

but I think we all realize that enforcing sanctions is not foreign

policy. It is a tool of policy, and I suspect we sometimes get confused

about that, and believe complying with or enforcing sanctions

in fact is a policy.

Senator Burns makes some good points that need to be threaded

throughout, I believe, this morning’s hearing and what we hear

from Secretary Pickering, because most of us understand that the

world is connected.

And when we start throwing sanctions on nations, and I think

the latest numbers, we have now 37 nations where we have essentially

arbitrary sanctions placed on those countries, and what impact

that has on our economy is not only important for our foreign

policy, as Secretary Pickering knows as well as anybody, which we

have had a chance to visit about, but also the future of our relationships

and our allies and where we go in the world.

And it does come back to one thing. What is our policy? What

is our role in the world? What should our role in the world be? And

sanctions are very much connected to that.

So, Secretary Pickering, it is nice to have you up here this morning,

and thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, thank you. Secretary Pickering,

thank you.

This is obviously a difficult situation, no easy answers, but I

want to focus a little bit on a couple of comments you made in picking

up a little bit where Senator Brownback was going. You referenced

our U.N. Security Council partners being a little less than

enthusiastic about continuation of these sanctions.

Realistically, you have asked yourselves, I suspect, and we must

all ask ourselves, what is the viability—the real question here is,

how long can we sustain these sanctions, and if we stay with the

core issue here of the hearing, are these sanctions collapsing in

Iraq with an erosion of U.N. Security Council support, with an erosion

of some allies’ support, and other complications that you have

enunciated clearly, and with other Senators here talking about

some of the specifics.

Could you give me some comment, analysis of where you think

all this is going, and that then leads into the next part of this, Mr.

Secretary. We know short-term solutions can work for a while, and

sanctions are short-term solutions. What is our long-term solution?

What is our policy toward Iraq beyond enforcing the implementation

of sanctions?

Well, I want to go back to another part of the

question, because it is not your fault that we found ourselves a few

months ago with one ally who was willing to step forward with the

United States and say, yes, we will be with you, Great Britain said,

but we are the only one who will be with you to enforce the sanctions,

and I think we are kidding ourselves a little bit, Mr. Secretary,

if we congratulate ourselves on sanctions when in fact there

is no only an erosion, but there may be a rather significant gap

here in what is happening for the future.

And I do not know what the answer is. It is difficult. It is complicated.

It is connected to Iran and all the pieces that you know

so well, better than probably any of us, but what I would like to

hear more is about what we are doing to deal with that for the long

term, because it is pretty clear to me that this is a slow death kind

of thing.

We are eroding and eroding, and everybody is backing off from

the latest position that the administration is taking that Senator

Brownback mentioned on the ILSA sanctions, and I think, by the

way, there is some thoughtful pieces to that, and I think it is defensible

in some areas, but we do not want to keep going through

this and have to put you in a position, nor do you want to be in

that position, to have to defend every 30 days more of an erosion

here, so if you could give me a little more than what you have here,

what we are doing about that, because that is obvious.

Mr. Secretary, thank you.