Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for including me in these

deliberations. You have convened this morning to examine the

question, Iraq: Are Sanctions Collapsing? You will hear at least

three perspectives on this issue. You have already heard one. I can

give you mine with some efficiency. The sanctions regime is indeed

collapsing, along with American policy toward Iraq.

In fact, there is little to distinguish the Iraq sanctions from

American policy, since American policy is nothing more than the

desperate embrace of sanctions of diminishing effectiveness, punctuated

by occasional whining, frequent bluster, political retreat,

and military paralysis.

What the administration calls a policy of containment has become

an embarrassment. As our friends and allies in the region

and elsewhere ignore our feckless imprecations and reposition

themselves for Saddam’s triumph over the United States. That is

the situation we are facing.

More than 6 years after his defeat in Desert Storm, Saddam

Hussein is outsmarting, outmaneuvering, and outflanking what

may be the weakest foreign policy team in any American administration

in the second half of this century, and as I wrote those

words I thought back through all the foreign policy teams I could

recall.

The coalition once arrayed against Saddam is in disarray, marking

a stunning reversal in the position of leadership occupied by

the United States just 6 years ago.

Ambassador Pickering, I said in my prepared statement, will undoubtedly

tell you—I can now say he did tell you—that everything

was fine, that American diplomacy in the Gulf is determined and

effective, that we have been and will continue to be successful in

containing Saddam.

But everything is not fine. American diplomacy in the Gulf is

weak and ineffective. We have been failing to contain Saddam politically,

and he is getting stronger as American policy becomes

manifestly weaker. The United States, mass marketer to the world,

is losing—and Secretary Pickering acknowledged it—is losing a

propaganda war with Saddam Hussein, mass murderer of his own

citizens, over the issue of humanitarian concern.

With much of the world believing that Iraqi babies are starving

because of U.S. policies rather than the policies of Saddam Hus-

sein, we are facing a political diplomatic defeat of historic significance

in the Gulf. The administration, bereft of ideas, energy, and

imagination, is doing nothing to stop it. On the contrary, they are

working hard to blunt, deflect, and defeat such initiatives as have

been forthcoming from the Congress.

You will hear from others perhaps in classified meetings as well

as this one about violations of the existing sanctions against Iraq.

I am sure that even the CIA, which has a nearly unbroken record

of failure in assessing, understanding, and operating in the Gulf,

will report how Iraqi oil is loaded on barges and shipped to UAE

waters where, after appropriate fees have been collected by Iran,

the cash-flows back to Saddam.

You will certainly hear that enough South Korean four-wheeldrive

vehicles to equip two Republican Guard brigades made it easily

through the barriers erected to enforce the current sanctions—

barriers, by the way, based on 151 United Nations inspectors overseeing

a country of 22 million people.

The committees will learn how Saddam controls the Republican

Guards that tighten his grip on a hapless Iraqi people as they

queue up to receive humanitarian food purchased with oil-for-food

dollars. I think your point, Mr. Chairman, was exactly on. The

Iraqis who receive food through this program, which Ambassador

Pickering suggested was firmly under our control, in fact receive

the food when Saddam Hussein grants them a ration card, and I

leave it to you to decide who they consider to be the benefactor.

After you have been briefed by the administration and its experts,

after you have examined the facts about the efficacy of the

current sanctions and the prospects of their being kept in place and

made effective, I suspect you will come to the following 10 conclusions,

which I urge you to consider.

First, there is no reason to believe that a continuation of the

sanctions will drive Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq, or that

they will be effective in eliminating his relentless pursuit of weapons

of mass destruction.

Second, the pressure to relax sanctions, which has already

pushed to more than $10 billion per year the amount of revenue

Iraq is allowed to receive from the sale of oil, will not subside and

will almost certainly increase.

Third, the French, Russians, and others will continue to agitate

for the further relaxation of sanctions and the United States will

almost certainly make further concessions in this regard.

Fourth, there are already significant violations of the sanctions,

and these can be expected to continue and even increase. The

United Nations is hopelessly ill-equipped to monitor and enforce a

strict sanctions regime.

Fifth, Saddam’s exploitation of the health and hunger issue has

created the impression that sanctions and not Saddam’s manipulation

of the humanitarian food and medicine programs are the cause

of mass suffering and ill-health in Iraq.

Sixth, no one in the region—no one in the region believes that

the United States has or will soon adopt a policy that could be effective

in bringing Saddam down. The result was a collapse of the

support for the United States when it blustered about getting

tough with Saddam, and an inexorable drift away from the U.S.

and toward Saddam.

Seventh, when the sanctions have diminished, as they inevitably

will, when they have been eroded by circumvention, relaxation, and

delegitimization, Saddam’s triumph will be complete and he will

become the dominant political force in the Gulf region, with disastrous

consequences for the United States and its allies.

Eighth, Saddam’s eventual political victory will be followed by a

restoration of his military power.

Ninth, only a policy that is openly based on the need to eliminate

Saddam Hussein’s regime has any hope of attracting sufficient support

in the region to succeed.

And finally, tenth, without legislation and other pressure on the

administration, there will be no change in current policy. Previous

congressional initiatives will be sidelined or ignored, and irreparable

damage will be done to the position of the United States in

the region and the world.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Well, Senator, if I could take a crack at that, the Majority

Leader has sponsored legislation that would begin to give

some American support to the opposition in Iraq. If you believe, as

I do, that Saddam Hussein is either going to achieve a victory or

he is going to be removed but there is no in-between, this is not

going to be a stand-off. It is not going to be a draw. Eventually the

sanctions will disappear altogether and he will triumph, or he goes

before the sanctions do.

But we are dithering now. We are doing nothing to hasten his

departure. I share high regard for Tom Pickering, but when Tom

Pickering described as our heart’s desire, the hope that Saddam

might somehow be eliminated, I thought, that is not the robust terminology

with which I would wish to see American policy objectives

toward a murderous dictator like Saddam Hussein described.

Our heart’s desire that there be a successor regime? There is not

going to be a successor regime unless we do something about it,

and contrary to what we have just heard, I believe the best possibility

of removing Saddam Hussein from power is to support the

opposition to Saddam Hussein. We have no other policy and prospect.

He has certainly been able to eliminate coups against

himself. I would not think that would be the way to go about it,

but there is very widespread dissatisfaction, as you might imagine,

with Saddam Hussein. There is an opposition, with the potential

for being mobilized—not by attempting to engineer a coup but by

very broad and open support for that opposition.

We have talked all morning, and everyone is in agreement that

we have lost the propaganda war. One of the reasons we have lost

the propaganda war is that we have shut off the opposition propaganda—

the opposition to Saddam Hussein. He now dominates the

air waves in Iraq and in the region, and we have turned off the

switch on the democratic opposition.

It seems to me a very short-sighted policy. It is a policy of this

administration. It is the policy of Under Secretary Pickering. It is

the policy of the President, the Secretary of State, and Sandy

Berger, and I do not believe it is going to change except under extreme

pressure.

Now, Senator Lott has encouraged change by sponsoring legislation

to make some money available to the opposition. The administration

will find ways not to spend that money and not to implement

the clear intent of Congress, so I would hope that you would

go further with additional legislation. If necessary, there is a timehonored

technique in moving administrations, and that is to deny

them something important to themselves until they move in a manner

consistent with existing legislation.

Well, it is clearly much diminished as a result of the

damage that was inflicted during Desert Storm. I did not mean to

suggest that we are going to see a significant improvement in his

military capability while the sanctions are in place, but once the

sanctions are gone, then I think we will see him rebuild his military

establishment.

In any case, I believe he has weapons of mass destruction now,

and it is almost impossible to factor those into equations of a military

balance. It is important to remember that Iraq’s military

power is relevant in relation to its neighbors, not in relation to the

United States, unless we intend to fight that war all over again.

Senator, I think that is very much the key point. I

think the answer is that of course they are not going to step up

to the plate as long as the most we can say is, it is our heart’s desire

that there should be a successor regime.

That is not a serious policy. It does not represent any serious

American commitment, and they are not about to risk their necks

by themselves, which is the situation they would be in. It is our

weakness——

I think it has been a disastrous string of failures on

the covert side, and I have no confidence at all, which is one reason

I use the term openly.

I think we should first of all say it is our objective,

not our heart’s desire but our objective to see the elimination of the

regime of Saddam Hussein. We are not talking about assassinating

him. That is not the official policy of the United States today.

But neither has the United States said it is the policy

of the United States to see the regime of Saddam Hussein eliminated

from power. If we said that, I think you would see an immediate

change. It seems to me the first essential step is to adopt a

policy that our policy is not simply to continue the sanctions and

hope for the best.

Second, I believe that we should recognize that there

is an Iraqi opposition whose claim to legitimacy is far greater than

that of Saddam Hussein, and if it were up to me, I would recognize

them as a Government of Iraq.

Well, in exile—some of the individuals involved are

actually in Iraq.

Well, I think there are credible plans for accomplishing

the alternative. We would begin with reconstituting an organization,

an opposition organization reflecting all of the people of

Iraq.

I would seek to do it under the Iraqi National Congress, which

might reconvene and once again go through the election process it

went through at its inception. I believe the leadership will emerge

from that. I am confident a leadership will emerge from that.

Yes. I certainly would not remove the sanctions,

which would be a political victory for Saddam of enormous proportions.

My fear is that they will be eroded and collapse before we

do anything else.

I think the United States should make it clear that

any territory that is not under the control of Saddam Hussein will

be protected by air power, if necessary, from the United States and

whatever allies we can encourage to participate with us.

No. I do not believe it is necessary.

They may not go our way, and I cannot tell you that

I can guarantee the result any more than the current policy can

guarantee its success, but I believe that the amount of air power

that we now have in the region is sufficient for the protection

against Saddam’s armor of areas that would quickly fall under the

control of the opposition, in particular the area around Basra in the

south of Iraq, which is where all the oil is coming from.

And once Basra changed hands I think the politics of the region

and the opposition would change dramatically. Even our allies

would begin to look at things entirely differently. You would stop

the illegal oil flow.

I think the Iraqi opposition elements, with relatively

light armament, could accomplish that provided they were backed

up by air power.

Senator, I think in fairness to the Members, they

would have to look at a plan that they could make some judgment

about, and what I am talking about here is a plan that would depend

significantly on air power of a low risk character and not on

significant American ground presence.

I believe it can be—look, up until August 1996, a

third of Iraqi territory was not under Saddam’s control. We blew

it by failing to defend that territory in the manner that I am now

suggesting. When Saddam moved in, he could have been stopped,

and I think could have been stopped relatively easily even in the

north, and it is more difficult in the north than in the south, because

his armor is so exposed to air power in the south.

I think we could reconstitute that, but the key, the key to reconstituting

significant areas of Iraq beyond Saddam’s control—and

this depends significantly on the fragility of his grasp on his own

military establishment, which is a matter that is perhaps best discussed

in other circumstances.

I believe that a reconstitution of that could be achieved, and the

risks in trying are relatively modest. One can make it sound a far

more formidable task than it really is, and if you want guarantees

that it will work, then obviously you are talking about a much larger

operation. There are no guarantees, but I think there are people

prepared in Iraq, or who would be prepared if they knew they had

U.S. air power to back them up.

I believe in a properly conducted operation he would

be in a position to use weapons of mass destruction. I think the defections

from his own military would be very rapid.

Oh, I am a big supporter of UNSCOM, absolutely.

One of the signs of deterioration that causes alarm is the change

in the way UNSCOM is now permitted to operate as opposed to the

way UNSCOM operated before Kofi Annan. Far from an improvement,

it is in fact much more difficult for UNSCOM to do its job

today, not least of all because—and I defer to David, who is the expert

on this—during the 4 months in which UNSCOM was not operating

at all in Iraq, everything of interest was well hidden, and

so our data base was devastated. We are not going to find anything,

Senator.

When the President says, well, now we are going to see if this

new regime, this new arrangement works, forget it. We are not

going to catch them in violations any time soon, because they have

moved everything that we thought we might have been able to

identify.

Now, if we are there long enough, and we are free enough to operate,

maybe one of these days we will find something, but it is not

going to happen soon, and when it does not happen in 6 or 9

months——

Well, what is the argument going to be a year from

now when Tarik Aziz says, Kofi Annan negotiated this agreement,

you all said this was a wonderful step forward, and you have not

found anything in a year, how much longer are you going to continue

these sanctions?

That is what we are facing and I think you understand that.

That is why I think we are all concerned about where

we go from here, and I do not see any new policy intervening. I

think we are going to coast until we fall off the precipice. It is very

frustrating, frankly, to see the administration mobilize so energetically

to resist all the ideas that have emanated from the Majority

Leader and others without finding anything new to put into its

own policy.

Everybody agreed this morning to repeat the phrase that sanctions

are a tool, not a policy, but they have become a policy by default

because there is no other aspect to the current policy. It is

a policy of supporting the sanctions, period. There is nothing else

going on.

I was only going to make a suggestion. Because of

your interest maybe you could persuade the administration to get

a small group of people together quietly to reflect the views you

have heard today and talk this through, and see whether there

may be some common ground.

What I worry about is that they become terribly defensive about

Senator Lott’s initiative, and so I see no serious fresh examination

of what the options are.

I think you could have a combination of a strategy

that in its political dimension is absolutely overt. We are commit-

ted to the replacement of Saddam Hussein by a Government reflecting

all the people of Iraq, and we could do a number of things

in support of that.

To the degree to which that opposition required weapons, you

could do it either way. There are arguments for doing that part of

the operation without openly acknowledging it, but that seems to

me a detail.