I am pleased to testify before this distinguished

subcommittee on Iraq.

I would like to submit three items for the record. I have already

given them to your staff.

The first one is an article I recently published in the New Yorker

magazine detailing Iraq’s use of the oil-for-food program to buy

components that can trigger a nuclear weapon.

The second is a table that my organization prepared after the inspectors

left Iraq in 1998. It lists what remains unaccounted for in

Saddam Hussein’s mass destruction weapons programs. I can show

you copies of it. It is a full page in the New York Times Week in

Review section.

The other thing I would like to submit for the record is a chart 1

that my organization did back in 1993, also in the New York Times

Week in Review, which showed Saddam’s procurement network,

and I will refer to it in my testimony.

As has already been stated, a year has now

passed since inspectors have been in Iraq, and the question I think

the world is looking at is what is going on. In many ways, we are

back in the situation we were in before the Gulf war. I remember

myself—I am beginning to feel old—I was tracking centrifuge components

into Iraq before the Gulf war and testified many times before

Congress on what Iraq had in the early 1990’s. I find myself

back here doing it again, and without inspectors, we are back in

the same mode of discovery. That is, we are looking at procurement

efforts. We are using national technical means. We are debriefing

defectors trying to put the puzzle together. The longer we do not

have inspectors, the more difficult the puzzle is going to be.

I discovered recently that Saddam Hussein has been shopping for

nuclear weapon components in Europe. In 1998, he tried to buy the

special electronic switches that are used to detonate nuclear weapons.

He ordered them as medical equipment. He ordered six machines

that pulverize kidney stones inside human bodies and ordered

120 switches as spare parts. He ordered them from Germany,

which turned the order over to the French, who denied the sale.

The United States encouraged those governments to deny the sale

privately.

Unfortunately, when the contract went to the U.N. and was referred

to our people here for review, we did not catch it and so we

did not block it. Therefore, it went through the Sanctions Committee.

I am told by Siemens, the German company that got the order,

that Iraq only got eight switches. The State Department seems to

think Iraq got a few more than that.

I am also told by the Sanctions Committee people that they are

looking at the machines to see whether the Iraqis are pulverizing

kidney stones or whether they are up to something else.

I think this episode shows that Saddam Hussein is still deadly

serious about getting weapons of mass destruction. The procurement

network, that I so laboriously tracked back in the early

1990’s, has not gone away. Many of those firms are still there. The

U.N. inspectors never figured out the procurement network completely,

despite a lot of valiant effort.

So, it is there. We still have to contend with it, and the only barrier

we have is the U.N. Sanctions Committee. That committee has

to oversee billions of dollars worth of stuff, and it is inevitable that

some things are going to get through. As we have just heard, there

is a lot of criticism about contracts that the United States holds up.

I personally think that we ought to err on the side of prudence, and

when we think there is a dual-use item or something that can be

used for the wrong thing, we should hold up the contract and just

take the consequences.

Saddam Hussein is closer to the bomb than most people think.

The U.N. inspectors believe he has a bomb design that works and

that only lacks the high enriched uranium to fuel it. Also the U.N.

inspectors believe it is small enough to go on a Scud.

The main recent development that we should be aware of in the

procurement area is that now not all contracts will go through the

Sanctions Committee. There will be categories of humanitarian and

oil goods that nobody will check. That means that unscrupulous

companies around the world could send Iraq things that will be

useful for arms under the rubric of humanitarian goods and there

will not be any way to know where these things have gone. Nobody

is going to be checking the labels of all this equipment that is going

to go as an exception to the Sanctions Committee review.

When you combine that with the increased oil revenues that Iraq

is receiving, you can see that there is going to be a lot of pressure

on the system and it is inevitable that things will go through that

should not go through. Since we do not have inspectors in the country

on the ground checking on what is coming in, we are essentially

losing control over the procurement issue. Because of the increase

in revenues, because of the loopholes in the Sanctions Committee,

and because of the volume of goods, we are just not going to be able

to stop things that are going to be useful for arms.

Whether the new inspection system works is going to depend to

a great extent on Mr. Blix. He has said that he will run a regime

that is less confrontational. He does not seem inclined to keep the

previous UNSCOM inspectors. He has, I think, an unsuccessful

record in Iraq at the IAEA. The Iraqis ran a very large, aggressive

nuclear weapon program before the war that his inspectors did not

detect, and after the war, his agency was ready to close the books

on the Iraqi nuclear program long before they understood it.

So, I think we can say that Mr. Blix has a rather—well, does not

have a record that inspires great confidence in Iraq. He is not, I

think, as effective as Rolf Ekeus would have been. Mr. Ekeus was

our candidate. We, for some reason, caved on his candidacy in favor

of Mr. Blix. They are both Swedish diplomats. The reason the Russians

and the French wanted Mr. Blix was because they perceived

he would be easier on Iraq. It is hard for me to see why our Government

would have simply agreed to let the Russians and the

French have their way on that appointment since there were really

no objective reasons why Mr. Ekeus was not suitable.

The table in the 1998 New York Times that I have submitted

lists the many things that Iraq still seems to be hiding in nuclear,

chemical, biological, and the missile areas. I will not go over them

here, but it is clear that if you just look at the numbers of things

that Iraq is still hiding, it is apparent that the potential Iraq has

for making all of these weapons is intact. In fact, we know that the

Iraqis have not disbanded their weapon development teams. They

have moved them from one site to another as a group, and there

seems to be no intention whatsoever of giving up mass weapon destruction

objectives.

The most recent press reports say that Iraq is rebuilding. It has

rebuilt many of the sites we bombed, and our present policy really

cannot prevent that. That is, we do not have a mechanism for preventing

Saddam from rebuilding these sites or from developing all

of these weapons in secret.

I would say that we are also losing the public debate on the effect

of the sanctions. We are not aggressively promoting America’s

point of view in the world about who is responsible for the suffering

of the Iraqi people. The other side is winning this public debate,

and that is the fault of our Government. We should be more aggressive

in persuading other countries that Saddam is the culprit

and not the sanctions.

I would be happy to answer questions from the committee. I do

not want to exceed my 5 minutes. I hope I have not. Thank you

very much.

I am pleased to appear before this distinguished subcommittee to discuss the situation

in Iraq. I direct the Wisconsin Project on Nuclear Arms Control, a research

project here in Washington that is devoted to tracking and slowing the spread of

nuclear weapons.

I will begin by describing a recent Iraqi procurement attempt, and then try to assess

the inspection system created under U.N. Resolution 1284. I will also try to

provide an overview of the threat posed by Iraq to international security.

I would like to submit three items for the record. The first is an article I recently

published in the New Yorker detailing Iraq’s use of the oil-for-food program to buy

components that can trigger nuclear weapons. The second is a table my organization

prepared after the inspectors left Iraq in 1998, which lists what remains unaccounted

for in Iraq’s mass destruction weapon programs. The third is a chart on

Saddam Hussein’s procurement network that my organization prepared a few years

ago but which is still relevant to the issues we face today.

More than one year has passed since U.N. inspectors left Iraq, and the world is

wondering what Saddam Hussein is up to. The short answer is: he has been shopping

for A-bomb components in Europe. Iraq is allowed to import medical equipment

as an exception to the U.N. embargo, so in 1998 Iraq ordered a half-dozen

‘‘lithotripter’’ machines, ostensibly to rid its citizens of kidney stones, which the

lithotripter pulverizes inside the body without surgery.

But each machine requires a high-precision electronic switch that has a second

use: it triggers atomic bombs. Iraq wanted to buy 120 extra switches as ‘‘spare

parts.’’ Iraq placed the order with the Siemens company in Germany, which supplied

the machines but forwarded the switches order to its supplier, Thomson-

C.S.F., a French military-electronics company. The French government promptly

barred the sale. Stephen Cooney, a Siemens spokesman, claims that Siemens provided

only eight switches, one in each machine and two spares. Sources at the

United Nations and in the U.S. government believe that the number supplied is

higher.

The lesson from this episode is that Iraq is still trying to import what it needs

to fuel its nuclear weapon program.

And Iraq is closer to getting the bomb than most people think. The U.N. inspectors

have learned that Iraq’s first bomb design, which weighed a ton and was a full

meter in diameter, has been replaced by a smaller, more efficient model. From discussions

with the Iraqis, the inspectors deduced that the new design weighs only

about 600 kilograms and measures only 600 to 650 millimeters in diameter. That

makes it small enough to fit on a 680 millimeter Scud-type missile. The inspectors

believe that Iraq may still have nine Scuds hidden somewhere.

The inspectors have also determined that Iraq’s bomb design will work. Iraq has

mastered the key technique of creating an implosive shock wave, which squeezes a

bomb’s nuclear material enough to trigger a chain reaction. The inspectors have

learned that the new Iraqi design also uses a ‘‘flying tamper,’’ a refinement that

‘‘hammers’’ the nuclear material to squeeze it even harder, so bombs can be made

smaller without diminishing their explosive force.

How did Iraq progress so far so quickly? The inspectors found an Iraqi document

describing an offer of design help from an agent of Pakistan. Iraq says it didn’t accept

the offer, but the inspectors think it did. Pakistan’s latest design also uses a

flying tamper. Regardless of how the Iraqis managed to do it, Saddam Hussein now

possesses an efficient nuclear bomb design. The only thing he lacks is enough weapon-

grade uranium to fuel it—about sixteen kilograms per warhead.

The lithotripter episode exposes one of the key weaknesses of the U.N. oil-for-food

program. While its humanitarian objectives are laudable, the truth is that oil-for-food

is really ‘‘oil-for-arms’’ as viewed from the Iraqi side. Iraq has been allowed to

purchase humanitarian items such as medical equipment with money earned from

oil exports so long as the funds were administered by the U.N. sanctions committee.

But Iraq was able to disguise its purchase of the nuclear weapon triggers as medical

equipment and the sanctions committee approved the export. The sale was restricted

only by the national export controls applied by the supplier countries.

Under U.N. Resolution 1284, the sanctions committee loophole will now be expanded.

The resolution lifts the ceiling on Iraqi oil exports, and it authorizes the

committee to draw up lists of items including food, medical equipment, medical supplies,

and agricultural equipment that will not have to go through the sanctions

committee for approval. In January, the U.N. Secretary General was able to report

that these lists had already been drawn up. In addition, the resolution sets up a

group of experts charged with speedily approving contracts for parts and equipment

necessary to enable Iraq to increase its oil exports.

The result of the liberalization is this: Iraqi oil revenues will rise, large quantities

of goods will be imported without U.N. approval, and the sheer volume will overwhelm

the tracking system that is currently in place, even if monitors do return to

Iraq. Iraq is now slated to receive $3.5 billion in authorized imports in the current

phase of the oil-for-food plan, more than any small committee can keep tabs on.

Our chart in the New York Times, Week in Review from 1993 gives a good idea

of who Iraq’s suppliers were before the Gulf War. Most of these companies still

exist, and Iraq still wants to buy what they produce. The pie chart illustrates the

scope of the problem. U.N. inspectors never managed to fully expose or eradicate

this procurement network, despite valiant efforts. There is every reason to think

that this network is swinging back into action in the absence of inspections.

Resolution 1284 also promises in paragraph 33 the early lifting of sanctions if

Iraq cooperates with U.N. inspectors for 120 days on the monitoring and disarmament

tasks specified in the inspectors’ work programs. Gone is the requirement

for full disarmament. Instead there is the ‘‘checklist’’ approach that Iraq has been

urging for years. The U.N. inspectors must provide Iraq with a list of things to do,

and Iraq need only show some progress toward doing them in order to suspend the

existing embargo. Iraq will *not* have to answer all the remaining questions about

its weapon programs; it will only have to show that it ‘‘has cooperated in all respects’’

with the work program. What it means to ‘‘cooperate in all respects’’ is not

defined by the resolution. It is clear, however, that ‘‘cooperation’’ does not mean

‘‘achieving disarmament.’’

Another weakness of the new resolution is its silence on who the new inspectors

will be. The resolution never addressed the question whether former UNSCOM inspectors

would serve in the new inspection body, called the U.N. Monitoring,

Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC). In January, Dr. Hans Blix

was chosen to head UNMOVIC. After assuming his post earlier this month, Dr. Blix

said that he would demand ‘‘unrestricted access’’ to Iraqi sites but would not ‘‘humiliate’’

Iraqi leaders with a procession of surprise inspections. He made it clear

that the new agency would seek a more cordial relationship with Iraq. Dr. Blix also

noted that he would rely on former UNSCOM inspectors in a transition period, but

made no promise to give them permanent posts. Lastly, he said that the new inspectors

would have to be full-time employees of the United Nations, rather than come

on loan from their governments.

The United States should keep the pressure on Mr. Blix to retain the former

UNSCOM inspectors on staff. These dedicated men and women not only undertook

personal risk to carry out a hazardous duty, but in the process they developed a

body of knowledge and experience that will be lacking in a new group of inspectors.

Losing the UNSCOM inspectors will mean losing their invaluable familiarity with

Iraq’s weapon programs. The former inspectors should not be thrown over the side

just to please Saddam Hussein.

Dr. Blix has a checkered history in Iraq. While Dr. Blix was head of the International

Atomic Energy Agency, Iraq ran an ambitious nuclear weapon program

under his inspectors’ very noses. This activity included a breach of the international

safeguards obligations that his agency was supposed to be enforcing. And after the

Gulf War, Iraq was nearly given a clean nuclear bill of health by his timid inspectors

in 1991. The IAEA and Dr. Blix were saved from humiliation only by an Iraqi

defector, who provided the lead that caused the discovery of Iraq’s giant uranium

enrichment program. The record shows that Dr. Blix’s agency made repeated errors

in Iraq, and meekly relied on Iraqi disclosures when more assertiveness was clearly

called for. Unless Dr. Blix is more effective at UNMOVIC than he was at the IAEA,

the inspectors—whoever they will be—are unlikely to find anything in Iraq.

Present U.S. efforts won’t stop the Iraqi bomb. American jets are patrolling Iraq’s

no-fly zones and blowing up its air defenses, but these pinpricks won’t hinder bombmaking

at secret sites. The Iraqis have learned the art of camouflage very well. The

United States and Britain are also trying to maintain the international trade embargo,

but it is eroding because key countries don’t support it and there are no inspectors

to check on what comes into Iraqi ports. The United States has threatened

to overthrow Saddam, but this threat is viewed as empty in the absence of a credible

means to carry it out.

In effect, the world is reverting to the position it was in before the Gulf War. With

no inspectors inside Iraq, Western intelligence agencies must try to sniff out Saddam

Hussein’s purchases from abroad, and to divine what his hidden arms factories

are making with them. That method failed in the 1980’s. Western intelligence never

discovered the key component of Iraq’s nuclear manufacturing effort: a string of

giant magnets that would have turned out critical masses of bomb fuel by 1995 if

Saddam had not invaded Kuwait.

The world can ill afford another such debacle. An Iraqi bomb, or even the imminent

threat of one, removes any hope of coaxing Iran off the nuclear weapon path.

With Saddam building bombs next door, Iran can only speed up its drive for weapons

of mass destruction. And once Iraq and Iran are able to target Israel with nuclear

warheads, how can Israel feel secure enough to make the concessions necessary

for peace in the Middle East?

The best chance of containing Saddam is still the same: to disarm him. And the

best way to do that is to unite the U.N. Security Council behind meaningful inspections.

But international cooperation in dealing with Iraq has practically ceased, despite

the negotiation of Resolution 1284.

The cost of paralysis could be high. It is only a matter of time until Iraq’s bomb

factories start producing again, if they haven’t already. The U.N. inspectors believe

that Iraq is withholding drawings showing the latest stage of its nuclear weapon

design, blueprints of individual nuclear weapon components, and drawings showing

how to mate Iraq’s nuclear warhead with a missile. Iraq claims that these things

either do not exist or are no longer in its possession. In addition, Iraq has failed

to turn over documents revealing how far it got in developing centrifuges to process

uranium to weapon-grade, and has failed to provide 170 technical reports it received

showing how to produce and operate the centrifuges. Iraq claims that all these documents

were secretly destroyed. Nor has Iraq accounted for materials and equipment

belonging to its most advanced nuclear weapon design team.

And the nuclear threat is not the only worry. Iraq is also hiding key parts of its

chemical weapon program. Iraq has refused to account for at least 3.9 tons of VX,

the deadliest form of nerve gas, and at least 600 tons of ingredients to make it. Iraq

produced the gas but claims it was of low quality and that all of the ingredients

to make it were either destroyed or consumed during production attempts. Also

missing are up to 3,000 tons of other poison gas agents that Iraq admitted producing

but said were used, destroyed or thrown away, and several hundred additional

tons of agents the Iraqis could have produced with the 4,000 tons of missing

ingredients they admit they had at their disposal. Iraq also admits producing or possessing

500 bombs with parachutes to deliver gas or germ payloads, roughly 550 artillery

shells filled with mustard gas, 107,500 casings prepared for various chemical

munitions, and 31,658 filled and empty chemical munitions—all of which Iraq

claims to have destroyed or lost, a fact which inspectors have been unable to verify.

Many key records are also missing. These include an Iraqi Air Force document

showing how much poison gas was used against Iran, and thus how much Iraq had

left after the Iran-Iraq war, as well as ‘‘cookbooks’’ showing how Iraq operated its

poison gas plants.

The uncertainties surrounding Iraq’s biological weapon program are greatest of

all. The total amount of germ agent Iraq produced (anthrax, botulinum, gas gangrene,

aflatoxin) has never been revealed to the inspectors, who know only that

Iraq’s production capacity far exceeded what it admitted producing. Iraq has simply

alleged that its production facilities were not run at full capacity, a claim directly

contradicted by its all-out drive to mass-produce germ warfare agents. Inspectors believe

that Iraq retains at least 157 aerial bombs and 25 missile warheads filled with

germ agents, retains spraying equipment to deliver germ agents by helicopter, and

possessed enough growth media to generate three or four times the amount of anthrax

it admits producing. Iraq either claims that these items were destroyed unilaterally,

claims they were used for civilian purposes or simply refuses to explain

what happened to them. Nor can inspectors account for the results of a known

project to deliver germ agents by drop tanks or account for much of the equipment

Iraq used to produce germ agents. Finally, Iraq contends that many essential

records of its biological weapon program, such as log books of materials purchased,

lists of imported ingredients, and lists of stored ingredients, simply ‘‘cannot be

found.’’

Iraq also retains some of its delivery capability. Up to nine ballistic missiles, plus

imported guidance components, remain unaccounted for. Iraq claims they were all

secretly destroyed, but their remains were not found in the sites where Iraq claimed

it dumped them. In addition, the inspectors cannot account for up to 150 tons of

missile production materials, or for Iraq’s stockpile of liquid rocket fuel. Because

Iraq has been allowed to produce short-range missiles (less than 150 kilometers in

range) under U.N. monitoring, it has manufacturing capability that it can convert

to longer-range missiles now that monitoring has ceased.

Saddam Hussein has not been idle since December 1998. U.S. officials have been

cited in the media as saying satellite photographs and U.S. intelligence reports have

shown that Iraq has in the last year rebuilt many of the 100 military and industrial

sites damaged or destroyed by American and British air strikes in December 1998.

Of those targets, 12 were reportedly missile factories or industrial sites involved in

Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction programs, at which officials said significant reconstruction

had been seen—including the Al Taji missile complex.

For the moment, our government seems content to live with inaction. The present

U.S. policy is to isolate Saddam diplomatically, maintain the existing trade sanctions,

and give at least some help to Iraqi opposition forces—a strategy known as

‘‘containment plus.’’

Unless U.S. foreign policy makers once again place a high priority on disarming

Iraq and lead the international community in that direction, Saddam Hussein will

achieve his mass destruction weapon aspirations in the relatively short-term. Despite

a seven-year international effort to rid Iraq of these weapons, Iraq today retains

a great potential for producing them. Experts have estimated that Iraq could

resume manufacture of chemical and biological agents within months of a decision

to do so. Similarly, Iraq could probably assemble a nuclear weapon within weeks

of importing the fissile material necessary to fuel it. Five years is a reasonable estimate

if Iraq itself is obliged to produce the fissile material. By refusing to cooperate

with U.N. inspectors, and by foregoing billions of dollars in oil revenue rather than

choosing to disarm, Iraq has shown that building mass destruction weapons remains

one of its primary goals. Therefore, the United States should revisit its own Iraq

policy before it is too late.

I was particularly struck by Senator Biden’s

question, which I consider to be an excellent question; that is, if we

agree to this—I think we have to be honest—watered down inspection

system, what are we getting for it? Are we at least getting

other countries’ promises to abide by the embargo in their own domestic

export decisions?

My impression is that we are not getting anything. We have conceded

on the question of whether Blix or Ekeus should be the exec-

utive chairman, and we have conceded on the standards in the new

resolution. And we are losing the overall public debate on whether

the sanctions are morally justified. It just seems to me that we do

not have a clear game plan. We do not have a comprehensive view

of where we want things to go, and we do not have a strategy for

getting there. We just seem to be reacting to events and then caving

in when the pressure gets too great on one issue or the next.

For me, this is a very disturbing thing, and I wish our Government

were more dedicated and more effective in this area, and I

think if we continue on this path, we will just see a slow diminution

of interest here and we will see less influence in the Security

Council and we will see, if not a precipitous, at least a gradual erosion

of the embargo. More stuff will be going in. We will pick it up

now and then. We will complain about it, but nobody will really

care. And the exporters will all get the message that nobody really

cares. And so, it will all just pretty much fizzle out. That is what

I am worried about.

Well, I think at a minimum we could try to win

the public debate on the validity of the embargo. That is, we seem

to be conceding that the suffering of the Iraqi people is the fault

of the embargo.

Well, I do not see the United States coming out

and saying, look——

But where are the specific examples? Where is

the data? Where is the evidence? I see the statements, yes. I see

the statements.

That is better.

Yes.

I would be happy to answer your question

straightforwardly, at least according to your definition. I think I

would have voted against Blix. I think it is intolerable that two of

our, quote, friends, the Russians and the French, would object to

one Swedish diplomat and then not object to another one and expect

us to go along with it——

Well, that is true, they are not our friends.

But there is no objective basis for——

So, I would have just said no.

No inspections—a Potemkin inspection system is

more dangerous than no inspection——

And I would have insisted on having a Ekeus.

That is the position I would have taken.

I also think that the 93 plus 2 is good. I applaud

the IAEA’s slow steps toward a more aggressive inspection regime.

One thing the IAEA could do is—and it has the authority to do—

is simply unilaterally disclose the amounts of fissile material that

it is safeguarding everywhere in the world. If it had done that in

Iraq, we would have discovered that there were bomb quantities of

material being safeguarded there. Nobody knew that until the war

started. The IAEA did not disclose it because there was less than

a bomb quantity at each different material balance location. So,

even though you had enough in the country to make a bomb, the

fact that it was spread across several different places made it unnecessary

for the IAEA to go there every 3 weeks to find out

whether it was still where it was supposed to be.

So, there is a lot they could do on their own.