The hearing will come to order. In keeping

with the new mode of doing things on time, we are going to start

this hearing on time. I am delighted to have the panel we have to

day to testify on the issue of U.S. policy toward Iraq. This subcommittee

has held a number of hearings on this topic, but this is

a new administration. I think it is a chance for us to discuss some

of the policy options that are presented before the United States

today, this being the third President to confront Saddam Hussein,

hopefully we will get a chance this time to address the root cause

of the problem, that being Saddam Hussein himself.

Senator Kerrey, welcome back. We are delighted to have you

here. Congratulations on your wedding and new job. We are glad

to have you here with your new colleagues. Mr. Perle, delighted to

have you here again, and Dr. Halperin and Mr. Cordesman, delighted

to have both you gentlemen join us as well.

As we all know, this hearing will provide an opportunity to discuss

the future of U.S. policy toward Iraq. Allow me to pose a question

that I hope you will help us answer, and that is, is Saddam

Hussein better off today than he was 10 years ago at the end of

the gulf war? To my mind, the clear answer is yes, Saddam Hussein

is better off today than he was at the end of the gulf war.

The evidence is piling up that Saddam has reconstituted his illegal

weapons programs. Two defectors from the regime have told

British press that Saddam has a small nuclear weapon. I have not

been able to independently verify that charge, but the straws are

in the wind.

Further, there is ample evidence, both public and otherwise, that

Saddam is using the cover of a legally allowed missile program to

work on longer range missiles that could eventually deliver weapons

of mass destruction, and of course officials at UNSCOM were

never willing to consider Saddam’s assertion that he has these

chemical and biological weapons programs. It certainly is logical to

assume that in the absence of inspectors for over 2 years he has

seized the opportunity to beef up his WMD programs.

For our part, according to press reports about Secretary Powell’s

trip to the Middle East, the administration now supports using the

existing sanctions and instituting so-called smarter sanctions, and

I look forward to discussing this with the Secretary next week.

As we listen to all this talk about smarter sanctions, I have to

wonder whether we can put the horse back in the barn at all. The

sanction regime and the international coalition against Iraq have

been completely unraveled. The steady stream of international

flights, kicked off by the Russians and the French, have headed

into Baghdad since August without monitoring or inspection. The

Chinese are working illegally in Baghdad without fear of repercussions,

and press reports indicate that oil is once again flowing in

the Iraqi-Syrian pipeline to the tune of 150,000 barrels per day.

The profits from those illegal transfers of oil go straight into

Saddam’s pockets. To top it off, U.S.-British strikes on Iraqi air defense

targets 2 weeks ago, intended to protect allied pilots from increased

Iraqi threats, drew fire, not only from the usual suspects,

but also from the Arab states we are ostensibly protecting, and are

our partners on the Security Council.

I think we need to face it, Saddam has won a good portion of the

propaganda war. He is and remains a ruthless despot who refuses

to spend all he is allowed for his people’s well-being. Notwithstanding,

the United States seems to be blamed for the suffering

of the Iraqi people.

Now, what do we do? Will we get inspectors back into Iraq? What

sacrifices on sanctions will need to be made to get them in, and will

any such inspections be worth those sacrifices? I rather doubt it.

We are going to have to bite this bullet. After 10 years, sanctions

have not achieved their intended goal, denying Iraq weapons of

mass destruction being the goal that we intended to achieve.

If that remains our goal today, and I certainly hope it does, then

we need to ask whether any refinement to these sanctions systems

will achieve that goal, and I would certainly like to hear our panel’s

opinions on that question.

I believe that any tradeoff for weakening sanctions must be a

more robust U.S. policy toward Iraq. The Republican platform in

2000 called for the full implementation of the Iraq Liberation Act

and support for the Iraqi opposition. I, along with many of my colleagues,

have long supported that policy, and hope the administration

will work toward it. The threat that Iraq poses to its own people

and to the decent nations of this world will remain for as long

as Saddam Hussein is in power.

To my mind, there is only one answer to solving this problem,

and the answer is, Saddam Hussein, and getting him out of power.

What do we do? Well, we make several suggestions here, and I look

forward to those from our panelists. One, I think we can use the

resources at our finger tips in the form of a drawdown and economic

support to bolster the opposition and to fully implement the

Iraq Liberation Act. We have Dr. Chalabi here with the Iraq National

Congress. I am delighted to note your attendance in the audience

as well.

Second, we should stop spending money on conferences for the

opposition and begin to train them, when necessary, even to arm

them. We unilaterally should declare the southern no-fly zone will

be a no-drive zone as well, and we should expand our rules of engagement,

including to target WMD sites and potentially other targets

as well.

Those are several policy suggestions that I would put forward as

we seek a more expanded and robust policy toward Iraq, and we

seek to deal with the root problem, which is Saddam Hussein.

That is a start. I look forward to what our panelists have to say,

and their comments about what we should be doing toward a new

U.S. policy toward Iraq.

With that, I will turn to the ranking member, Senator Wellstone.

We are delighted to have you join us here.

Thank you. I think this is your first time

back to the Senate, Bob. The first witness up will be Hon. Bob

Kerrey, former Senator from the great State of Nebraska, second

best basketball team in the states between Kansas and Nebraska,

and current president of the New School University in New York.

Bob, welcome back. We are delighted to have you here.

Thank you very much. Thank you for the

powerful statement and the clarity of it, and I look forward to having

a good discussion on these points as we go on through.

Mr. Cordesman, let us hear your testimony next if we could.

Thank you for joining us.

Thank you for that strong statement. I will

look forward to further discussion with you.

Dr. Halperin, thank you for joining the committee. We look forward

to your testimony.

If you agree with some of them, too, you

can mention that.

This is an excellent discussion, and a good

starting point. Let us run the clock here 10 minutes, and then we

can bounce back and forth in a couple of rounds.

One of my frustrations with what it seems like has taken place

at least the last 5 years in U.S. policy toward Iraq has been this

lack of resolve, this kind of drift, just, well, we would like to have

him out of there, but we are not really sure how we would do that,

nor are we willing to really take the steps to get Saddam Hussein

out of office.

You each are talking about some different steps, and I think all

of you expressed frustration with where we are today in our policy

toward Saddam Hussein, and I want to use this policy toward Saddam

Hussein rather than Iraq. I think that is a different issue.

All of you appear to support changing somewhat the rules of engagement

on our air targets, if I am hearing you each correctly.

You are being critical of, or several of you are being critical of the

targeting we have done to date, and all of you would support a

more robust rules of engagement on air, on our targets for our air,

our airplanes and the British airplanes. Is that a correct reading

of each of your positions? Mr. Cordesman.

I do not think I am quarreling with you on

this point. You are saying, though, that we should, when we respond,

respond much stronger and on much clearer, bigger targets,

is that correct?

What about Milosevic?

Actually, my point here, and if I could ask

you——

It seemed like toward Milosevic we decided

we do not want this guy in power, and that was projected, and that

was projected around the world. It seems like, toward Saddam

Hussein we are kind of going, we do not like this man in power,

but we are not willing to then go ahead and, OK, here is the steps,

then, you take to show the will that the United States needs to.

I understand, and we have been down that

road before.

It is troubling to me that we are sitting

here saying, I wish we could do this, I wish we had done that, but

if we continue on the current course we are on right now, if we go

into smart sanctions, which a couple of you have noted you deem

as a start toward no sanctions, toward just loosening up what is

taking place, we are further eroding the sort of resolve, and we are

probably just a few more years down the road from just saying, oh,

what the heck, let us just kind of dribble out of the region and Saddam

stays, which is what I think most of our Arab allies in the region

have concluded is actually what is going to take place anyway.

U.S. resolve loosens, weakens over time, we are here in the

neighborhood, we have to take the brunt of any fight, and if you

guys are not going to show resolve with this, then we are certainly

not going to poke a stick into Saddam Hussein’s eye.

That is why I think right now is really such a key time for us.

We have got a new administration, and one that has to make this

choice, and I think the choice they make now determines where

things end up within a couple of years, and we could make choices

now on policy toward Iraq, U.S. policy toward Iraq that may take

a couple of years in their implementation to be successful, but they

could ultimately, I believe, put us in a position where Saddam is

out of there.

It is not a 6-month strategy. I think it is a multiple-year strategy,

but it is one of those forks in the road where, OK, we are going

to take a much more aggressive, robust position now, knowing that

it is not going to produce the solution we want in 6 months, but

it will, we hope, in 3 years, or we could stay on this one we are

on right now which just kind of dribbles down until we get occupied

with something else, and eventually we start pulling people, aircraft

out of Saudi Arabia and we start focusing in different areas,

and we just do not go anywhere further forward.

I would hope all of you would actually work with us at this point

that we take the more robust approach now, where we have a new

administration in, and that we would all conclude together, as we,

I believe, have at the panel, that Saddam Hussein is the problem,

the regime that is currently in control is the problem, and now is

the time for us to take a different approach.

I would welcome your input at our offices, I am certain that Paul

would as well, of what that different approach would be, but more

importantly input toward the administration of saying, we will

need to come together on this as a country if we are going to implement

this policy.

And I think, Dr. Halperin, what you note is correct, there are

costs associated with this, or difficulties associated with this. I

think long term there are far more difficulties associated with the

route we are currently on than picking a new one, that we can fill

a cavity now or we can pull a tooth later, that this is the time to

act and it will be much less costly on that.

That will be my final comment. I do not know, Paul, if you had

anything further you wanted to add, or the witnesses would care

to state.

Thank you. That is all well-put. We will

work together, and let us see if there are things we cannot come

up with together. I do not detect the disagreements that I guess I

thought I would coming in here. Maybe there is on tactics or

thoughtfulness, maybe, of when you go in you cannot move one

piece of this chessboard without impacting four or five other chess

games you have got going on at the same time, and those have to

all be considered.

It has been an excellent discussion, particularly at an important

time for the country, and in looking at a new policy position here.

We appreciate very much your attendance.

The record will remain open for the requisite number of days to

make changes, if you desire, in your testimony. Thank you very

much. The hearing is adjourned.