Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Senator

Wellstone, Senator Thomas, it is good to see all of you again. It is

nice to have a chance to come back, especially to talk on this particular

subject. Mr. Chairman, I have a longer statement that is a

bit mangled, but I would like to ask unanimous consent that it be

put in the record, and I will try not to drag this out too long.

First, I would observe that on Monday we had the opportunity

to watch a very moving ceremony in Kuwait with General

Schwartzkopf and Secretary Powell and former President Bush

celebrating the 10-year anniversary of the liberation of Kuwait.

That liberation occurred on 26 February, 1991. Two days later, on

the 28th, yesterday, we celebrated the cease-fire of that rather remarkable

208-day occupation of Kuwait by Iraq and the driving of

the Iraqi forces out of Kuwait was celebrated quite correctly as a

remarkable demonstration of power used for good in a multilateral,

multinational way.

My guess is, starting that from scratch today people would say

it cannot be done, it could not be done, et cetera, but it was a rather

remarkable accomplishment.

Well, Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, a lot has happened

in the decade since, and I do think it is important to look

at that history. I am not going to go through all of the details, but

I would like to describe five important things that have happened

in the last 10 years that I think are enormously relevant to the discussion

and help frame the debate for what we are going to do

going forward.

First, after that cease-fire was declared, Iraq agreed to allow

United Nations weapons inspectors to verify that Iraq had destroyed

its capacity to manufacture biological and nuclear weapons.

Until verification was complete, the United Nations Security Council

voted to enforce external sanctions that would permit Iraq to

sell oil for food and medicine that they needed for domestic consumption.

The time it was estimated to get this done was in months if Saddam

Hussein cooperated, and what has come to be quite common

practice, he confounded expectations by interfering, by harassing,

and in the end banning the weapons inspectors from the territory.

Now, reliable intelligence, I say to this committee, has confirmed

the reason for Iraq’s behavior. It is quite simply, they want to

maintain a robust program to develop weapons of mass destruction.

The second thing that needs to be considered over the last 10

years is that Iraq has maintained a policy so hostile to human

rights, especially for the Kurdish minority in the north and the

Shia in the south, and I would say, Senator Wellstone, I think if

you stop those no-fly operations we would have Kurds dying in the

north and Shias dying in the south, and they are alive today as a

consequence of those no-fly zones being maintained.

No dissent is possible inside of Iraq. Thousands have been imprisoned,

tortured, and executed for opposing the current regime.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, with or without

sanctions, the 20 million people of Iraq deserve to have the United

States of America on the side of their freedom.

Third, we have sustained a military effort to contain Iraq, and

that military effort has cost us lives. U.S. and British pilots fly almost

daily, as Senator Wellstone observed, to enforce the no-fly

zones in the north and in the south, but Mr. Chairman, members

of the committee, we have also maintained a presence at the

Dahran military installation in Saudi Arabia, and the significance

of that is that this installation, part of our containment policy, was

the target of a truck bomb attack on 25 June, 1996, that killed 19

U.S. airmen. It was cited by Osama bin Laden as a reason for attacking

U.S. Embassies in Africa on August 17, 1998, that killed

11 Americans and over 200 others. Our military presence was cited

again when the USS *Cole* was attacked on October 12, 2000 in the

Port of Aden, Yemen, killing 17 American sailors.

I point this out, Mr. Chairman, because when the debate occurs

as to whether or not military force is needed, do not forget that we

already have a very expensive military operation in place today.

The question is not, should we have a military operation. The question

is, how should that military operation be deployed?

Fourth, when he signed the Iraq Liberation Act into law on October

31, 1998, President Clinton began the process of shifting away

from the failed policy of using military force to contain Iraq to supporting

military force to replace the military dictatorship of Saddam

Hussein with a democratically elected government and, although

our support for opposition forces has been uneven at best,

this new policy is still current law.

Fifth, Mr. Chairman, opponents of establishing our policy objective

as liberation of the people of Iraq use a number of effective arguments,

and I would like to cite them, because I would like to also

refute them. They say, we would never get the support for a military

operation. They say that democracy will not work in Iraq, that

Arabs are not capable of governing themselves. They say finally

that the opposition forces lacks the legitimacy and capability and

in particular the most visible organization, the Iraq National Congress,

lacks the coherency and ability to get the job done.

Well, Mr. Chairman, I am very much aware that these arguments

gather force when they are not answered, so I would like to

answer all three. First, these arguments are little more than excuses,

in my view, designed to keep us from doing what we know

we should do, and we know what we can do if our will is strong.

The argument against military force encourages us to ignore the

hundreds of millions that we spend every single year to contain

Iraq, and the 47 American lives that have already been lost to enforce

this containment policy.

The argument that Arabs cannot govern themselves is racist. It

encourages us to ignore a million Arab-Americans who exercise

their rights when those rights are protected by a constitution and

law, and the argument against the Iraq National Congress [INC]

is little more than a parroting of Saddam Hussein’s propaganda.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I am very much

aware that domestic and international support has been steadily

eroding for continuing sanctions against Iraq, let alone a new military

strategy to end the nightmare of this dictatorship. I have

watched with growing sadness as Iraq has exploited the public’s

lack of memory, the Clinton administration’s silence, and the

world’s appetite for its production of 4 million barrels of oil a day.

I have read the reports of Secretary Colin Powell’s return to Kuwait

this week, and the difficulty that he is having convincing our

allies that we must stay the course in opposing the Iraqi regime.

I have read proposals by informed commentators to try to get the

best deal we can at this point, including one by Mr. Tom Freidman

that would offer an end to sanctions and U.S. recognition in exchange

for allowing U.S. inspectors to verify weapons of mass destruction

are not being built in Iraq.

Mr. Chairman, members of this committee, I urge you not to go

along with the flow. This flow of public opinion in my opinion will

lead us in the wrong direction. The United States should push back

hard in the opposite direction, and the reason, Mr. Chairman, is

simple. Saddam Hussein’s Iraq represents a triple threat to us, to

our allies in the region, and to the 20 million people who have the

misfortune to live in a country where torture and killing of political

opposition has become so routine it is rarely reported.

Iraq is a threat to us because they have the wealth and the will

to build weapons of mass destruction, chemical, biological, and nuclear.

Since the end of the gulf war in 1991, Saddam Hussein has

lied and cheated his way out of the inspection regime and has succeeded

in convincing too many world leaders to overlook the danger

he opposes to them. Iraq is a threat to allies in the region because

Iraq has displayed no remorse, and no regret for its invasion of Kuwait.

Instead, they continue to justify their illegal act and condemn

the U.S.-led effort which forced them to surrender the territory to

their neighbor after inflicting inestimable damage to Kuwait.

The Iraqi Government is a threat to their own people, especially

the Kurds in the northern provinces and the Shia in the south. Mr.

Chairman, without our willingness to maintain no-fly zones in the

north and south, thousands more innocents would have died from

Iraqi military assaults. It is by no means clear-cut that Iraqi civilians

are suffering as a consequence of our sanctions. What is clear-cut

is that the Iraqi people are suffering as a consequence of Saddam

Hussein’s policy of diverting United Nations money away from

needed food and medicine to rebuilding his palaces and his military.

So Mr. Chairman, I come here today to urge you to stay the

course, join with President Bush, and tell him to imagine returning

to Baghdad himself 10 years from now to celebrate the liberation

of Iraq. In my view, it is possible. In the view of the Iraqi people,

the people living in the region, and the people of the United States

of America, it is also desirable.

So what, specifically, can we do? Well, let me just offer modestly,

in the spirit of bipartisan foreign policy, and in the words of a

group of now senior Bush administration officials who wrote the

letter to President Clinton in 1998, there are three things that

would be the beginning of the end of Saddam Hussein’s reign of

terror. First, we should recognize a provisional Government of Iraq

based on the principles and leaders of the Iraq National Congress

that is representative of all the peoples of Iraq.

Second, Mr. Chairman, we should restore and we should enhance

the safe haven in northern Iraq that would allow a provisional government to extend its authority there, and establish a zone in

southern Iraq from which Saddam’s ground forces would also be excluded.

Third, we should lift the sanctions in the liberated areas.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, these three moves in

my view would signal that the United States of America will not

yield ground to the world’s worst and most dangerous dictator, and

we would send a signal to the people of Iraq that we will not be

satisfied until they are free to determine their own fate.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I want to thank you

again for your invitation to hear my views.

Mr. Chairman and members of this distinguished committee, thank you for this

invitation to testify on the question of what United States policy should be regarding

Iraq.

This week marks the tenth anniversary of the liberation of Kuwait on February

26, 2001. On February 28, 1991, a cease fire was declared. The world had witnessed

a breath-taking exhibition of U.S. led coalition power that ended the 208 day Iraqi

invasion.

A lot has happened in the decade since. The detail of that history is terribly important

for those who want to understand what we should do today. I will not take

time to review all this detail but will summarize five points I believe are most important:

First, following a cease fire Iraq agreed to allow United Nations weapons inspectors

to verify that Iraq had destroyed its capacity to manufacture chemical, biological

and nuclear weapons. Until verification was complete the United Nations would

enforce external sanctions that permitted Iraq to sell oil for food and medicine. The

time needed to complete this inspection would have been a few months, if Saddam

Hussein cooperated. As has come to be common practice Iraq confounded expectations

by interfering, harassing and finally banning the weapons inspectors from its

territory. Reliable intelligence has confirmed the reason for their behavior to be simple:

They want to maintain robust programs to develop weapons of mass destruction.

Second, Iraq has maintained a policy so hostile to human rights—especially for

the Kurdish minority in the north and the Shia in the south—that no dissent is possible.

Thousands have been imprisoned, tortured, and executed for opposing the current

regime. With or without sanctions the 20 million people of Iraq deserve to have

the United States on the side of their freedom.

Third, we have sustained a military effort to contain Iraq and that military effort

has cost us lives. U.S. and British pilots fly almost daily to enforce a no-fly zone

in northern Iraq that has saved the lives of Kurds and a no-fly zone in southern

Iraq that has saved the lives of Shia. We have also maintained a presence at the

Dhahran military installation in Saudi Arabia. This installation was a target of a

truck bomb on June 25, 1996, that killed 19 U.S. airmen. It was cited by Osama

bin Laden as a reason for attacking U.S. embassies in west Africa on August 7,

1998, that killed 11 Americans and over 200 others. Our military presence was cited

again when the U.S.S. *Cole* was attacked on October 12, 2000, in the port of Aden,

Yemen, killing 17 American sailors. So when the issue of military force is debated

do not forget that we have an expensive military operation in place now. The question

is not should our military be used; the question is how.

Fourth, when he signed the Iraqi Liberation Act into law on October 31, 1998,

President Clinton began the process of shifting away from the failed policy of using

military force to contain Iraq to supporting military force to replace the dictatorship

of Saddam Hussein with a democratically elected government. Although our support

for opposition forces has been uneven at best this new policy is still current law.

Fifth, opponents of establishing our policy objective as liberation of the people of

Iraq have used a number of effective arguments to keep the status quo in place.

They say we would never get support for a military operation. They also say that

democracy won’t work in Iraq, that Arabs aren’t capable of governing themselves.

Finally, they attack the legitimacy and capability of the most visible organization,

the Iraqi National Congress. But these arguments are little more than excuses designed

to keep us from doing what we know we should do and can do if our will

is strong. The argument against military forces encourages us to ignore the hundreds

of millions spent each year to contain Iraq and the 47 American lives lost

since containment began. The argument that Arabs cannot govern themselves is

racist and encourages us to ignore a million Arab Americans who exercise their

rights when they are protected by constitution and law. The argument against the

I.N.C. is little more than a parroting of Saddam Hussein’s propaganda.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee I am very much aware that domestic

and international support has been steadily eroding for continuing sanctions

against Iraq let alone a new military strategy to end the nightmare of this dictatorship.

I have watched with growing sadness as Iraq has exploited the public’s lack

of memory, the Clinton administration’s silence, and the world’s appetite for its production

of 4 million barrels of oil a day.

I have read the reports of Secretary of State Colin Powell’s return to Kuwait this

week and the difficulty he is having convincing our allies that we must stay the

course in opposing the Iraqi regime. I have read proposals by informed commentators

to try to get the best deal we can at this point including one by Mr. Tom Friedman

that would offer an end to sanctions and U.S. recognition in exchange for allowing

U.S. inspectors to verify that weapons of mass destruction are not being built

in Iraq.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee I urge you not to go along with the

flow of public opinion. The United States push back hard in the opposite direction.

The reason is simple: Saddam Hussein’s Iraq represents a triple threat to us, to our

allies in the region and to the 20 million people who have the misfortune to live

in a country where torture and killing of political opposition has become so routine

it is rarely reported.

Iraq is a threat to us because they have the wealth and the will to build weapons

of mass destruction: chemical, biological and nuclear. Since the end of the Gulf War

in 1991 Saddam Hussein has lied and cheated his way out of the inspection regime

and has succeeded in convincing too many world leaders to overlook the danger he

poses to them. Iraq is a threat to allies in the region because they have displayed

no remorse or regret for their invasion of Kuwait. Instead they continue to justify

their illegal act and condemn the U.S. led effort which forced them to surrender the

territory of their neighbor after inflicting inestimable damage to Kuwait.

The Iraqi government is a threat to their own peoples especially the Kurds in the

northern provinces and the Shia in the south. Without our willingness to maintain

no-fly zones in the north and south thousands more innocents would have died from

Iraqi military assaults. It is by no means clear-cut that Iraqi civilians are suffering

as a consequence of sanctions. What is clear cut is that the Iraqi people are suffering

as a consequence of Saddam Hussein’s policy of diverting United Nations

monies away from much needed food and medicine to rebuilding his palaces and his

military.

So, I have come here today to urge you to stay the course. Join with President

Bush and tell him to imagine returning to Baghdad ten years from now to celebrate

the liberation of Iraq. In my view it is possible. In the view of the Iraqi people, the

people living in the region and the people of the United States of America it is also

desirable.

What specifically can we do? In the spirit of bi-partisan foreign policy and in the

words a group of now senior Bush administration officials used in a 1998 letter to

then President Clinton here are three things that would be the beginning of the end

of Saddam Hussein’s reign of terror:

Recognize a provisional government of Iraq based on the principles and

leaders of the Iraq National Congress (INC) that is representative of all the peoples

of Iraq;

Restore and enhance the safe haven in northern Iraq to allow a provisional

government to extend its authority there and establish a zone in southern Iraq

from which Saddam’s ground forces would also be excluded;

Lift sanctions in the liberated areas.

Mr. Chairman and members of the foreign relations committee these three moves

would signal that the United States will not yield ground to the world’s worse and

most dangerous dictator. And we would signal to the people of Iraq that we will not

be satisfied until they are free to determine their own fate.

Mr. Chairman, I think it is extremely important—

and it may be some modification of the no-fly protocols can

be changed, but I think it is extremely important that we not enter

into a process where it basically is the equivalent of a mission

creep.

I think what is needed is not only a fundamental reassessment,

but hopefully a bipartisan declaration from Congress, and that is

why I very much appreciate, Mr. Chairman, both you and Senator

Wellstone have stayed and listened to us yak on as we have done,

because what is needed is a bipartisan force that says, we want to

have the same experience we had when Kim Dae Jung, Nelson

Mandela, Vaclev Havel, and Lech Walesa came to a joint session

of Congress and said, ‘‘thank you for liberating us.’’

All four of them came to the American people and said—and I

agree with what Mort is saying, and I also agree with what Tony

is saying, you cannot do this on the cheap, and if you just let this

creep along because we think, well, we want to use more force with

our pilots, we may lose a few pilots, and then the American people

will say, what is this all about, I did not realize the mission had

changed.

I think it is very important for us to say, we believe in the liberation

of Iraq, and if we believe in the liberation of Iraq, in my view,

our will equals feasibility. I completely agree with Morton. By the

way, it was not just in the Clinton administration. The first time

we called them up to arms was during the Bush administration,

and we did not provide them with cover, and they died as a consequence.

We call on them to be courageous, and then we do not back them

up, and it happened in two administrations. That cannot be allowed

to happen this time, and I hope that you can get to a point—

I believe that if we recognize the provisional government and protect

that provisional government in the north, and we lift the sanctions

in the area we are protecting, I have absolutely no doubt that

the various factions are going to be able to work together, that if

they will see that the United States of America is open, sincere,

and is going to stay the course, I have no doubt that our will

equal feasibility and will produce a liberation, and will produce a

celebration in Baghdad that is comparable to others that we have

celebrated in the latter part of the 20th century.

That does not tell us anything.

But it does not tell us it is not feasible. The

question is, do we want to get the job done, and if we want to get

the job done, it becomes feasible.

I would answer unequivocally yes, it is worth

it. It is worth the price, and by the way, the opposition forces are

not asking for the kind of American intervention that Mort is advocating.

I do think he is quite right that we have to make certain

that we are not going to start and then stop again. We have to understand,

we have got to go the distance.

We have a major involvement. Nineteen Americans

were killed at Khobar Towers in June 1996. Why? They were

killed because we are in Saudi Arabia. Why are we in Saudi Arabia?

To contain Iraq.

In 1998, 11 more Americans were killed in West African Embassies.

Why? Because Osama bin Laden wants us out of Saudi Arabia.

And 17 more were killed—what I am saying, Senator, is, we

have a significant military operation in place right now, and we are

taking casualties.

The question is not, are we going to have a military operation.

The question is, what is the mission, what is the objective, and I

am saying with great respect that I believe the mission should

change from containment to replacement to liberate the people of

Iraq, and I believe it is entirely feasible for us to do it, and I think

the payoff is enormous, 20 million people of Iraq liberated.

I think it would take a continuation of military

involvement. It is not new military involvement. The point I am

making is, we are taking casualties today, Senator. We have at

least—we have several hundred million dollars of expenditures

right now on the line to try to contain, so I am saying it is a false

choice to say that what I am talking about to liberate Iraq would

require new military operation. It would require a different kind of

planning and a different military operation than the one we have

right now, but it is not a military operation versus none today.

It certainly—if you say that my current mission

is to contain, we have taken 47 casualties and we have spent several

billion dollars in order to contain over the last 10 years and,

as Tony says, we have gotten benefit out of it, and if you want to

liberate, it is going to take a different military operation than the

one we have in place right now.

But Senator, if we end up with a bipartisan effort coming out of

Congress, go to the opposition and ask them, what is the definition

of will? What is the definition of what they want out of the American

people?

They will not say that they need a massive military intervention

in order to be able to carry this off. They are asking for much different.

They are asking for recognition of a provisional government.

They are asking that we protect that provisional government in the

north. They are asking we lift the sanctions in those liberated

areas, and they believe, and in fact they came relatively close in

the past once before during the Clinton administration, when we

pulled back. We did not provide the follow-on support because of

the very reason you are saying.