Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. It is a great

honor to be here, and I commend you and the members of this committee

on this hearing, and it is always kind of—when I came in

in the morning I was confident of everything I was going to say,

and by 5:15, by the time I am called on, I am less confident, but

I have some things to share with you, and I think that when one

is called upon before this kind of panel and with these kinds of talent

that you have available to you, you always wonder what your

comparative advantage is, and I think my comparative advantage

is something of a knowledge——

But I have the Arabic experience, and had your rules

permitted, there were a couple of times when you asked some questions,

Mr. Chairman, I was nearly tempted to intervene from the back.

It is like we now, if we go into this campaign against

Iraq, we are clearly heading into a region which bears us ill-will.

We understand that, and in all the months after September 11,

and all the travel I did, and all the reading of the Arab world I

have done in the last year, I came across something I want to

share with your committee.

It is something that a friend of mine, a very talented Egyptian

playwright named Ali Salim said to an American journalist about

why is there such malice in the Arab world, in the Muslim world

toward the United States, and it is interesting to note that in this

decade behind us American power was used three times in favor

of Arabs and Muslims, in favor of Kuwait in 1990, in favor of Bosnia

in 1995, in favor of the Kosovars in 1999, and yet there was

no gratitude there. Very few people spoke about the usage of American

power in favor of these Muslim populations.

Now, I understand in the case of Kuwait it was complicated, because

there is an argument possibly that Saddam would have won

a free election in the Arab street in 1990, had he really contested

an election, but the case of the Bosnians, in which you and Senator

Lugar and a number of your colleagues were quite active in the

case of the Kosovars I think is very interesting. So here is Ali

Salim on this kind of anti-Americanism we are going to in many

ways, I think, mop up and run into and face when we go there.

‘‘History is cruel,’’ he says. ‘‘It is trying to drag America backward.

In this case, history is right. We here need to be more progressive’’—

meaning in the Muslim world—‘‘but you need to take a

step back. If the bureaucrats in your airport were just a little more

paranoid, like us, it would be a different world. Really, America is

a beautiful place. No one even asks why all these guys wanted flying

lessons. You should learn to be suspicious. A little backwardness would be healthy.’’

People say Americans are arrogant, but it is not true. Americans

enjoy life, and they are proud of their lives, and they are boastful

of the wonderful inventions that have made life so much easier. It

is very difficult to understand the machinery of hatred, because

you wind up resorting to logic, but trying to understand this with

logic is like measuring distance in kilograms. Measuring distance in kilograms.

These are people who are afraid of America, afraid of life itself.

These are people who are envious. To them, life is an unbearable

burden. Modernism is the only way out, but modernism is frightening.

It means we have to compete. It means we cannot explain

everything away with conspiracy theories.

Bernard Shaw said it best, you know, in the preface to St. Joan.

He said that Joan of Arc was burned for no other reason except

that she was talented. Talent gives rise to jealousy in the hearts of the untalented.

So we shall go into the Arab world, into the Muslim world. We

should launch this campaign in the face of this kind of sentiment

about America. Now, this will not be Desert Storm, I think we

must understand that, because in Desert Storm there were even

Muslim jurists, Muslim jurists in Saudi Arabia and Egypt who argued

that Saddam was a menace to his world and a tyrant, and

resistance to him is legitimate.

They issued a ruling opinion in that direction, so we went with

that, and at the time there were jurists who even ruled that you

could have Arab and Islamic, quote-unquote, other friendly forces.

We got in under that loophole, 1/2 million men under the other

friendly forces. It will not be this way this time around. We understand that.

So ideally for the regimes in the region what they want for the

Desert Storm of a decade ago, I have written in the statement I

have submitted to you, Mr. Chairman, is they now want the perfect

storm, and this is really what they want. A swift war, few casualties,

as little exposure by themselves as possible, the opportunity

to be rid of Saddam without riding in broad daylight with the

Americans, and without being brought to account by their people.

It would be great if they could get that, but the political world

never grants these kinds of favors. The fog of war is what it is, and

there will be risks run by these regimes, and there will be risks run by ourselves.

I agree partly with my colleague, Shibley, on one point that I

think, and I would elaborate by saying this would be a war in the

time of the satellite channels, and so a lot of this will be in the

open, and I think this is the nightmare of these regimes, that we

would call upon them to make commitments in the open.

So my feeling is that we would end up not with a very brilliant

position, but not with a bad one if we choose to draw the sword,

if you want your metaphor, to pull the trigger, that there would be

people who would associate with us quietly in Kuwait, in Qatar,

and there would be people who would associate with us even in

Jordan, though the case of Jordan requires, I think, focus and discussion,

but they will dread having to be brought out into the open.

Will the Arab street greet us warmly? It will not, but I tell you

one thing, the one street that will trump all streets, and this, I

think, is a very important point to put on the record, the one street

will be the street in Baghdad and Basra. We shall be mobbed. We

shall be mobbed when we go there by people who are eager for deliverance

from the tyranny and the great big prison of Saddam Hussein.

Some months ago, I did a piece on Al Jazeera television, and I

watched very closely Al Jazeera television for hours and hours, and

I thought one of the most interesting and one of the most difficult

days for Al Jazeera came during the liberation of Kabul, when the

Afghanis who we thought would greet us, if you will, in this war

that was going to frustrate us and we were going to be thwarted

and they were going to do to us the damage that they had done

to the Brits in earlier times and to the Russians, when in fact we

were greeted with kites and boom boxes.

We shall be greeted, I think, in Baghdad and Basra with kites

and boom boxes, and we should understand this, and the embarrassment,

the embarrassment for those in Nablus and Cairo who

were then protesting an American war or an Anglo-American war,

or whatever label you put on that war, will be enormous.

Yes, to them the embarrassment will be enormous. I

think we now—and just in terms of wrapping this part of my intervention,

we go into Iraq, and I think we should see Iraq for what

it is. It is a tormented country. It has been violated by this despot.

There are three communities as we know. There are Kurds, there

are the Shia Arabs, who are the majority of the population, and

there are the Sunni Arabs, who have believed that political power was their due.

A decade ago we were unkind to the Shia because we thought

there would be a satrapy of the political regime in Iran. We do not

know Iraqi Shias, and I will tell you one of the things, Mr. Chairman,

I did a book called ‘‘The Vanished Imam,’’ on one Shia cleric

in Lebanon, and studied the Shia clerical culture in Lebanon and Iran and Iraq.

These Iraqi Shia are Iraqi patriots, and we should do them the

honor of understanding that when the wheel turns, that they just

want a piece of the political life of their land. We paralyzed ourselves

in 1991 by saying that there would be a regime that would

emerge in Iraq that would simply be a replica of the Iranian revolution.

Well, the Iranian revolution has fallen on hard times. Its power

to attract other people in the region is no longer what it used to

be a decade or two decades ago, and we now can see, I think, Iraq

in a whole new light, and we should understand one thing about

Iraq. If we are really looking for a place where maybe American

ideals could work, this place may be as good a candidate as any.

Thank you very much for your indulgence.

They can give us access. I think sometimes people underestimate

the power, the coercive power of these governments

and their power, I think, to live with a certain cognitive dissonance,

shall we say. They will have to, some of these states,

maybe even Jordan, it may have to have shades of the Musharraf situation.

President Musharraf, give him credit, he stared down the

Islamists, he stared down the street, he associated himself with

American power in the face of all kinds of arguments that this regime

was destined to fall if it were actually to associate itself with

us, and if it were to be a base for the war against Afghanistan. He

did it, and the way he did it was to say, look, this is the choice

for Pakistan’s majority, that either we are a pariah among nations,

or we actually join this coalition, and he sustained his case.

I think it will come to this, for example, for the King of Jordan.

Imagine now the nightmare of this young King of Jordan, Abdullah

II. Now, it is kind of interesting, if you will, if you like historical

ironies, last time around it was the two fathers, Bush Senior and,

of course, King Hussein, and that time those two men went separate ways.

King Hussein decided that he feared the street in his own country

more than he feared the United States, and he actually bet

right, that when the guns fall silent we would actually rehabilitate

him and we would give him a seat at the table. We invited him,

as we did to Madrid, and we forgave him the choice he made, because

we understand the difficulty that the Hashamites have in the

realm, so I think we can sweeten the pot for some of these rulers.

In the case of the King of Jordan, we will have to aid Jordan economically.

There has already been talk of compensating Jordan on

this panel today for what Jordan may have to do. Some other countries

have an easier call to make. In the case of Qatar, clearly everybody

knows, and the Qatar regime seems to have this amazing

ability in many ways to do things in broad daylight. It even has

Al Jazeera there, and it just does it its own way, and we are building

a presence in Qatar, and I think that presence could be easily used.

Bahrain, that could also be easily used. I think the Bahrainis,

the domestic situation is not as acute, for example, as the case of

the Jordanians.

In the case of the Kuwaitis, it is easiest of all. They know the

bandit for what he is. He has their national archives. He has 600

of their people, incidentally, about whom he is now saying, well, we

are willing to discuss them, even though they did not exist a few

months ago, or a year or so ago, so I think in the case of the Kuwaitis

the body politic could bear this kind of presence and could

bear this kind of war, so we should not exaggerate the weakness

of these states.

There shall be demonstrations against us, to be sure. We shall

not convince anyone, Mr. Chairman, that we are there to deliver

the Iraqis out of their misery, and one point I want to make, already

there are large numbers of people in the Arab world who believe

that we are keeping Saddam there because he is convenient

for us. He is convenient for us. That is why we never removed him,

because he allows us, if you will, this extensive presence in the

gulf, and he allows the Americans to get these joint exercises in the

gulf and to have these extensive weapons sales, so there are all

these kinds of conspiracy theories.

On the issue of terrorism and the connection between—

and I will get to your point, Senator Hagel, but on the

issue of terrorism and the connection with the Palestinian question,

it is interesting to note that the trail of terror, the trail of terror

that dogged America throughout the nineties, that is the World

Trade Center truck bombing in 1993, the bombing in Riyadh in

1995, the Khobbar Towers in 1996, the attacks on the U.S. Embassies

in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam in the summer of 1998, and the

attack on the USS *Cole* in October of 2000, they all happened during

one of the most accommodating American diplomacy toward the

Palestinian question under the Presidency of Bill Clinton, where

Bill Clinton was quoting Yassar Arafat and the terror paid the Palestine

question no heed. Indeed, the master minds of al-Qaeda paid

the Palestinian question in every statement they made no heed.

Two men came together in 1998, Osama bin Laden and a physician

much more interesting for the purposes of terrorism, Ayman

Zawahiri, who is an Egyptian and a foe of the regime of Mubarak,

that came together and gave us this trail of terror. The Palestine

question was the issue de jour just recently for the bin Ladens in

the region, and so that is the connection to terrorism. Terrorism

paid no attention to what we were doing on the Palestinian question.

Terrorism had no regard for the peace of Oslo, and when Yassar

Arafat had more visits to the White House than any head of state

in the world during the Clinton years the al-Qaeda people thought

he was of no relevance to the kind of grievances that they had.

So we come now to Iraq, and it is still a question of linkage, can

we do Iraq without doing Palestine. There is a kind of view of the

Arab world I do not share that all issues that Palestine is the end

all, be all of Arab politics. I do not agree with this. I think the gulf

is very important. I think Iraq is very important. I think the fate

of 22 million Iraqis is extremely important, and I think the idea

that we cannot do anything in the region short of solving, quote-

unquote, solving the question of Palestine, whatever that term

means, is not very persuasive to me.

I think what we can say, we are in this war because of September

11. We have to make a linkage between September 11 and

Iraq, and I think the linkage is indirect, but we must make it, and

we have to insist on our right to prosecute this war, and we can

also say that the President has in place his plan for regime change

as well not only—and we are using regime change in Iraq, but regime

change in the Palestinian territory, and there is a promise to

the Palestinians that they can have a state provisionally in 3 years

if the terror comes to an end, and that ultimately the Israelis and

Palestinians are doomed to an accommodation west of the Jordan

river, but the issue of suspending the liberties and the reform of

the Arab world and keeping it hostage to the question of the Palestinians is not persuasive.

I think the Iraqis have their claim on us, and I think this is the

kind of claim we have to pay attention to.

Well, first of all, let me just take this opportunity to

thank Senator Sarbanes, because he’s been looking after my pension.

And for his great work on corporate reform, we really com-

mend you. You’re a great figure, and I think that if you can handle

corporate reform, you can handle Iraq very easily.

Now, I agree with everything that Jeff Kemp said. And I teach

a class with Jeff Kemp, and I have been doing it for many years,

and this is probably one of our first agreements in a long time.

I think that we are going to be there in Iraq, but I don’t think

we should be frightened necessarily or we should think that it will

be drawn out or that it will be extensive or that we’re going to take

the plunge into imperialism in a very deep way.

There are several things, just in echoing some of what Jeff said,

we want to know about Iraq. This is a country that has the second

largest reserves of oil after Saudi Arabia. It has enormous social

capital; it’s not Afghanistan. It has an educated and technically

competent middle class. So making a stand there will not necessarily be bad for us.

I think Jeff is right; there are these grievances and historical accounts

to be settled in Iraq. There will be things that we should

be good at. There will be truth and justice commissions. There will

be war criminals. There will be people we can’t protect, and maybe

even we shouldn’t protect.

So it won’t be easy, but I think we operated on the assumption,

I think, again, the chairman has given us good marching orders.

And I think Senator Luger was very clear on that, as well. We have

to take this and say, is this worth doing? Is this worth doing?

And that’s what every one of us, I think, really has to make—

that’s the decision that has to be made, whether it’s in Wisconsin

or Maryland or Connecticut or anywhere. You have to really argue

the case and sustain the case if it’s really worth it, that this is a

very volatile part of the world. It is the oil supplies of the world.

It is a very notoriously bad man, and that even though we’re a reluctant

empire—you know, we are reluctant about imperial burden.

We don’t undertake imperial burden willingly, and that’s good. And

when sometimes people say that they heard from the Joint Chiefs

of Staff and they’re against this military intervention or that military

intervention, one is reassured that we don’t have a military

ready and eager to go everywhere and pull the trigger.

So it’s really all—that’s what the national discussion is all about.

That’s what you’re hearing, and that’s what this debate is all about.

Senator Chafee, just one—I mean, on the issue—an

issue has arisen that has kind of great difference to the street. I’m

reminded of the slogan of Kamalism. The Kamalist project in Turkey,

the principle of it was for the people despite the people. Sometimes

you just do things for the people, despite the people. You

modernize them. You tell them the truth. You tell them about the

world. So now, to the issue of whether these—none of the governments

in this neighborhood that we’re talking about, none of

them—I repeat none—has a genuine modernizing project today.

So they offer the people, if you will, this kind of road rage, the

anti-Americanism, the anti-zionism, and they just get away with it.

Now, there is a good answer to the question that Senator Chafee

asked about whether these regimes could survive, could there be a

revolution, and I think the Muslims have a great, great answer to

that. They always would say about something that is completely

unfathomable, only God knows. We don’t know. We don’t know. We

do know the record. Here is the record. Al Sayad have been around

now since the middle years of the 18th century. You’ll always get the Saudis to tell you about that.

The Sabas in Kuwait have been around for approximately the

same time. The Hashamites in Jordan, in a very, very truncated

volatile realm, have been around since 1921. And even Khaddafi has been around since 1969.

And the Egyptian revolution of Nasser, Sadat and Mubarak has

been in the saddle for now half a century, and there is no evidence

that anyone could overthrow these governments. They know. That’s

the one thing they know is how to stay in power.

The combined GDP, we are now told, of the Arab world is $60

billion less than Spain, less than Spain, twenty-two Arab governments.

So they don’t know how to develop their population. We know

they don’t like to give them maturity, but they know how to stay

in power. We should trust them. You know, that’s what the game is all about.

I think, you know, their logic would be if we succeed,

we succeed together; if we fail, we fail alone. I mean, I’m reminded

of, like, soon after September 11, Le Monde had this famous headline,

‘‘Tous Americains’’; we’re all Americans. And a few weeks

later, it became Tous Americains with a question mark. All Americans,

not quite, that they believe that we were using September 11

as a way of expanding our authority in the world and in the region.

I think Iraq is rich; we go back to that. Iraq is a good market.

And I think when we go in, a lot of these countries will come with

us, because they’ll want to be part of the reconstruction of Iraq.

I mean, this will be fundamentally important for the French. It

would be important for the Russians. It would be important for the

Brits, and for others, and for the Germans, so I don’t think we will necessarily be alone.

It’s just the fate of a great power sometimes to be alone when

the hard work has to be done. Yes. Yes. It would be a great honor, Mr. Chairman.