Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. This

panel is, the topic is ‘‘The Threat,’’ and I guess that’s probably the

most important place to start, is the threat, and then in subsequent

panels, we’ll talk about possible responses, regional considerations,

the day after, and national security perspectives. But, of

course, I do think the threat is the most important one, of course.

And there was a recent story in the Washington Post, a Sunday

story, in which it says that, ‘‘Many senior U.S. military officers contend

that Saddam Hussein poses no immediate threat, and that the

United States should continue its policy of containment.’’ I know

Senator Lugar and Senator Hagel have talked about containment.

But some of the other quotes from the article are that, ‘‘This approach

is held by some top generals and admirals in the military

establishment, including members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.’’ And

some of the quotes are, ‘‘In my assessment, the whole containment

and sanctions policy has worked better than it’s given credit for.’’

And another quote is, ‘‘We’ve bottled them up for 11 years, so we’re doing OK.’’

I do think that it would have been good to have that perspective

on this panel, for better balance. I think we’ve got, from this panel,

a perspective that the threat is very real, very immediate. And I

maybe would ask you to comment on some of these senior military

officials, including, according to the article, members of the Joint

Chiefs of Staff, and their—— Excuse me.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I guess I’ll put my question specifically to Ambassador Butler,

because one of the quotes from this article was that senior officers

believe the policy has been more effective than is generally recognized.

And as evidence, the top brass said the approach has deterred

Hussein from threatening his neighbors and from backing

terrorist organizations.

And in your testimony, you said the opposite. You said, ‘‘We do

know that Iraq has trained terrorists from around the region and

has mounted terrorist actions of its own as far afield as Southeast

Asia.’’ And I think you mentioned that you had some personal experience

in that. So I’d maybe ask you to expound on that experience

you have with Hussein training terrorists.

No, that was it. Your testimony was about that

experience in Southeast Asia and——

It sounds like you’re taking great exception to

the Washington Post article and some of the quotes in there.

It sounds as though you’re taking exception to

some of the quotes in that article that—the one I just read, ‘‘Senior

officers believe the policy of containment has been effective—more

effective than is generally recognized. And as evidence, the top

brass said that the approach has deterred Hussein from threatening

its neighbors and from backing terrorist organizations.’’

Yes. I know my time is expired, but I want to

say that I think that’s the key here, is the existence of the threat.

And there’s some dispute. And yourself recognize, since we haven’t

been able to inspect, we just don’t know. And I think that’s really

the key. It would be great to hear from some of those officers or

anybody else that has a different point of view on this what is the

threat. I think the three of you have been very strong that the

threat is immediate, and it’s real. I think, for the benefit of our

study, it would have been good to hear an opposing point of view.

Well, yes, I couldn’t agree more. And, in fact,

you were the one that quoted Pliny and talked about body bags,

and that’s why I think the key is the threat, and that’s what we’ve

got to really get to the bottom of. And I believe I was here on the

question about containment and that we haven’t exhausted it. But

exactly what’s taking place in Iraq is, I guess, a mystery.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A couple of our witnesses

have said that first we have to solve the Palestinian issue

before we move here, and I suppose we could have weeks of hearings

on that issue, but I am inclined to agree, and it seems to get

worse every day instead of better.

I do have a specific question. It seems as though some of the Islamic

fundamentalists are using to their propaganda advantage the

presence of our military bases near the holy sites of Mecca and Medina,

and technically, in relation to the value of those bases to us

strategically in the gulf, and the disadvantage to us on the propaganda

front, where does that fit in, these bases that we have, and

both the generals have had experience with?

General HOAR. Of course, the bases in Saudi Arabia are a legacy

from the gulf war. You will recall that King Fahd agreed to that

when Mr. Cheney and Mr. Wolfowitz and Norm Schwartzkopf went

over right after they briefed the President. With the requirement

to conduct Southern Watch, the air campaign over Southern Iraq,

we needed bases in the area, and those bases existed in Saudi Arabia,

and Saudi Arabia agreed to pay the vast majority of the costs

associated with them, but this has been very difficult for many conservative

Muslims in Saudi Arabia.

As you know, the Wahabi sect of Islam is very xenophobic, and

so as a result there has been continuing pressure. Osama bin

Laden used this theme in his program, but he has used a variety

of themes directed at different populations in the Arab world that

are not all consistent. I think the only place that you would find

that problem is in Saudi Arabia with that particular group of people.

How critical are they to us, their presence in the region?

General McInerney, anything to add?

Thank you, gentlemen.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman very much.

Mr. Kemp, you mentioned that there is a worst-case and a bestcase

scenario, and your worst-case scenario, I’m wondering if there

is something even worse than what you might have suggested.

I think Dr. Telhami was kind of going down

that road in talking about the power of the public, and if there is,

you know, public resentment then comes repression, and there is

a spiral that leads to something that did happen in 1979 in Iran.

The Shah was toppled so quickly that we didn’t even get our embassy

people out and took over our embassy and kept them hostage.

It can happen so fast.

And is it possible that this conflagration, this spontaneous combustion,

can take place where these regimes are toppled and the

neighboring countries, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Jordan, of course,

you’ve mentioned, and even those that aren’t neighbors—I mean

Turkey is a neighbor—or even those that aren’t neighbors, we

talked about Pakistan a little bit, is that possible just a spontaneous

combustion of anti-Americanism and a toppling of regimes,

which ultimately—if you want to talk about a worst-case scenario,

is the entire oil—or the majority of the oil production for the world.

No, thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank the panel.