Thank you, Senator.

Let me begin with a caveat. It is very easy to be arrogant about

trying to predict a war that no one has ever fought in the face of

the kind of information you can obtain from unclassified sources.

And I think it is very dangerous to make quick sweeping generalizations

about the military capabilities of Iraq. As a result, I

would like to enter into the record a net assessment of Iraq’s capabilities—

those of the United States and the other forces in the region—

and call the committee’s attention to that statement as something

to look at as a reference as your hearings proceed.1

I would like to begin with one point that

I think needs to be made very clearly. Iraq might be a far easier

opponent than its force strengths indicate, but it also is potentially

a very serious military opponent, indeed. And, to be perfectly blunt,

I think only fools would bet the lives of other men’s sons and

daughters on their own arrogance and call this force a ‘‘cakewalk’’

or a ‘‘speed bump’’ or a war whose risks you can easily dismiss.

I see every reason for the reservation of the American military

and the Joint Chiefs, and I think efforts to dismiss the military capabilities

of Iraq are dangerous and irresponsible. These forces do

have serious defects, but Iraq is still the most effective military

power in the gulf. It still has active forces of over 400,000 men. It

still has an inventory of over 2,200 main battle tanks, 3,700 other

armored vehicles, 2,400 major artillery weapons. It still has over

300 combat aircraft in its inventory, although perhaps less than

half of these are truly operational. And it certainly still has some chemical and biological weapons.

This is not a force that can be dismissed. It has, out of its 23 divisions,

a core of perhaps six Revolutionary Guard divisions and six

regular-army heavy divisions, plus some significant special forces

which have a long record of combat capability and which I believe

U.S. experts indicate have reasonable levels of manning and readiness.

Having said that, I should note that while Iraq has a total of at

least 23 division equivalents, probably half of these have only limited

effectiveness manning levels as divisions of under 8,000 men.

In the regular army, most of its units probably have manning levels

of 70 percent or less. And, we saw during the gulf war that infantry

units and other elements that were dependent on Shi’ite,

Kurdish, and Turkoman conscripts or low-quality reservists did not fight well or with great competence.

It is a fact that Iraq has had no major new arms deliveries in

a decade. It does, however, still have 700 relatively modern T–72

tanks, 900 BMP series armored infantry fighting vehicles, and significant

numbers of self-propelled artillery weapons and multiple

rocket launchers. It has a significant number of modern anti-tank

guided weapons, and it can still operate a significant number of attack

helicopters and a large number of utility helicopters.

At least in urban warfare, the fact that there are nearly 120,000

other men in the security, border, and other paramilitary forces

has to be taken into careful account. And the Special Republican

Guard units and some Republican Guard units themselves, plus

Saddam’s bodyguards, are trained for urban warfare.

The Iraqi air force is certainly a weak link. Out of the 300-odd

combat aircraft, they can often fly very intensive sortie raids, but

there are no signs of meaningful training for air combat or air-to ground

combat of or organized use of air forces in effective ways.

The air force performed badly during the Iran-Iraq war. It performed only minimally during the gulf war.

It is also an air force without modern intelligence, surveillance,

and reconnaissance assets without modern electronic warfare capabilities

as airborne assets. It is not an air force which perhaps can

do more than fly limited penetration raids, and those would only

be meaningful if it used weapons of mass destruction.

I would be more careful about Iraq’s surface-based air defenses.

It has no modern surface-to-air missiles, nothing like the S–300 or

S–400 series. Its basic force structure is dependent on SA–2s, SA–

3s, and SA–6s, which date back in design to the 1960’s. But it has

one of the most dense air-defense networks around its urban areas

and populated areas in the world, much more dense than any

around Hanoi at the time of the Vietnam war.

Iraq has made real progress in many areas of its command and

control. It has deep buried shelters, an excellent survivable communication

system. It has learned to adapt to things like anti-radiation

missiles. It uses tactics like pop-up and remotely linked radar

activity, decoys, ambushes, deployments in civilian areas, and it

was sufficiently effective to have advised Serbia at length during

the fighting in Kosovo. And I think anyone in the U.S. military

would say it had considerable success. It is a reality that this system

can probably be suppressed, but will survive, and we have

learned that to our cost since Desert Storm.

While sanctions have cutoff arms imports, Iraq maintains a very

significant import network which it uses for the weapons of mass

destruction, as has been described by Ambassador Butler and Dr.

Hamza. The only really disturbing aspect of this that has been

made public is an increasing flow of weapons out of Eastern and

Central Europe through Syria. This flow is known to have included

engines for MiG aircraft, new tank engines, and equipment for the

land-based air defenses, plus spare parts. At this time, however, I

suspect that it has had only limited impact on the overall readiness of Iraqi forces.

The thing that would bother me most is not whether we can win,

but whether we are honest about the intangibles in this war in

Iraqis’ military capabilities. And let me just mention a few of those

very quickly. It is easy to talk about the unpopularity of the regime

and to assert that units are not reliable. People did that throughout

the Iran-Iraq war, and they were wrong virtually every time.

We did not see mass defections in the gulf war until Iraq forces

came, under intense pressure. The Republican Guard units and the heavy divisions retreated in good order.

We talk about tyranny and repression, violence is part of this regime,

but so are incentives and bribery. It is impossible to know

who will take these bribes and incentives seriously. Saddam has

been in power during the entire life of some 80 percent of the Iraqi

people. To say that he has had no impact, that he does not have

loyalty, that there are factions that will not follow him, is reckless

and dangerous. Uprisings can be meaningful in some areas. But

uprisings are very unlikely in the core areas of Saddam’s

strengths—Baghdad, Tikrit, and the cities in the center—and

urban warfare is a dangerous and uncertain structure.

We do not know whether he has reduced the rigidities of his command.

It seems very doubtful, and that does mean that the possibility

of striking at the core of his power and ignoring the flanks is a possibility.

I should also note, when I talk about urban warfare, that it is

one thing to train for urban warfare with the kind of training the

Iraqis get, and quite another to actually fight it. They did not do

well during the Iran-Iraq war in this area. At the same time, their

ability to use decoys, human shields, to use civilian buildings as

cover, is a well-proven capability. And our precision air power did

not, even in Afghanistan, demonstrate the ability to strike with

such precision that you will not inflict significant civilian casualties and collateral damage.

Iraq’s combat engineering is good. I leave it to other witnesses

to comment on the quality of our bridging and water-barrier crossing

capabilities. But one uncertainty here is whether it could use

its helicopter mobility at all, and we have great helicopter mobility.

The problem is not whether we can suppress their air defenses, but

how long it will take and what cost. And certainly over Baghdad,

without stealth, we could face serious limits.

We do not really know how cohesive their maneuver capability

can be in the face of our air power. And the ability to bring units

together and concentrate in one area to deal with limited U.S. attacks could be critical.

People talk about their capability to execute asymmetric warfare

and their support of terrorism. I think this is an area where the

committee should pay very careful attention to the American intelligence

community and put little faith in outside reports.

Other witnesses have commented on weapons of mass destruction.

I want to make a caveat here, and I want to go back to my

own experience as the one-time manager of DARPA’s program on

chemical, biological, and theater nuclear weapons. Very often, we

confuse the ability to proliferate with war-fighting effects. In the

case of the nuclear weapons, those effects are fairly well known. In

the case of chemical and biological weapons, this is not known.

Very minor issues in engineering and in the method of delivery can

affect the lethality of chemical and biological weapons by two orders

of magnitude or more. That is a hundred times. And you can

go, as was the case from anthrax with zero effect, to anthrax attacks

with near nuclear effects, depending on how the agent is presented,

deployed, the quality of the manufacture. It is very unlikely

that we will know the answer to those issues until a war takes

place. It is a certainty that Iraq lacks the sophistication to conduct

training and testing and know the lethality of its own weapons in

these areas before it uses them, an uncertainty we need to remembervery carefully.

Let me just say, in conclusion, that I do not regard Iraq’s military

strength as a massive force that can make use of most of its

assets, but I think it is incredibly dangerous to be dismissive. It is

very easy to send people home unused and alive. It is costly to send

them home in body bags because we did not have sufficient force

when we engaged. And to be careless about this war, to me, would be a disaster.

I am reminded of a quote about 2,000 years old by Pliny the

Elder, ‘‘Small boys throw stones at frogs in jest, but the frogs do

not die in jest; the frogs die in earnest.’’ This is not a game, and

it is not something to be decided from an armchair. Thank you.

Senator, I think that, first, you can always

try a decapitation strike, and you might get lucky. But while

I don’t think it was made a big issue, we thought we had killed

Saddam during the gulf war, and there actually was a premature

celebration of this. It didn’t quite work out that way, as General

Hoar would be the first to tell you. Is it worth trying? Of course. Can we count on it? No.

Is it possible, when we talk about this inside-out strategy, that

a combination of major air strikes preceding the attack, concentrating

our armor and attack helicopters, thrusting at Baghdad in

the core of Saddam’s power, leaving aside the Shi’ite areas, which

may well not support him, leaving aside much of his order of battle,

which might not support him will succeed? Is that a possible

option, particularly if we can bring massive amounts of air power

to bear? Yes. But I believe that that option, as described, involves

some 50,000 to 80,000 men. That is not a light force.

And I would say to you, as I would say to many reporters, as

long as you are reporting on total numbers of men, you are reporting

a meaningless option. What counts here is the amount of

armor, the amount of air power, the attack helicopters, the force

mix and the basing. And when we talk about this kind of option,

we’re talking about access to major bases. And while we might not

need 2,800 sorties a day, as we flew in the gulf war, being able to

mount less than 1,000 to 1,500 would be reckless. Senator, the first assignment I had when

I came out of graduate school, in the Office of the Secretary of Defense,

was to work on a study of proliferation. That was back in

the 1960s, and I have been working on such studies ever since. The

ability of experts to predict who would really develop a nuclear

weapon at a given time over a period, has been so poor that I think

what we really have to say to ourselves is we can’t make such predictions.

I would not put any great faith in WMD predictions. I’m not sure

that we can ever predict this. You ask the intelligence community

how soon they can do it, and the answer always tends to be 2 to

3 years unless you have positive evidence that they have done it.

But the fact is that with areas like centrifuge technology, you never

will really know. They are relative easy to conceal, as Ambassador

Butler pointed out. UNSCOM found that both the calutron effort

and centrifuge effort, the more they looked into it, the worse it was

designed, but that was 10 years ago. And to say that nobody has

changed in 10 years and we can detect it, is not realistic.

In biological weapons, the problem really is not the agent; it is

whether you can convert it to a very small powder of exactly the

right size, coat it, and find an unexplosive or non-destructive way

to disseminate it. Iraq’s designs for chemical weapons and biological

weapons at the time of the gulf war bordered on the actively

stupid. I mean, they did not represent a lack of the necessary technology.

They were just miserably executed. They used contact warheads,

and crude binary chemical weapons and ignored technology

that Iraq had already obtained from Chile. There was simply noreason to do anything this badly.

But, again, as Ambassador Butler pointed out, we haven’t found

Iraq’s sprayers. We don’t know what they’ve tested. You don’t need

to do this in the open, and a lot of it could be done clandestinely.

So in the biological area, let me make a very clear point here.

They may have anthrax weapons today with nuclear lethalities. If

they have smallpox—and they were among the last countries to

have a smallpox outbreak—that is a weapon which has nuclear lethalities.

Our problem here is the more time goes on, the more the time

lines give Saddam the ability to get there, and it is far from clear

that anyone will ever be able to answer your questions or know

when or where or how these kinds of weapons will be used.

You talked about the risk of going in and striking at these weapons.

If they have the kinds of weapons we think they have—primarily

wet agents, old bombs, limited delivery systems—that risk

is acceptable today, but there could be collateral damage. They

might also use them on ports, our bases, or our forces in the gulf. We can’t dismiss those kinds of attacks.

I do not believe that any amount of air strikes, suddenly executed,

will do the job. I invite the committee to look at the battle

damage for Desert Fox and ask very probing questions about the

sources of that battle-damage assessment data and the quality of

that damage-assessment data.

I would remind people that we flew some 2,400 sorties trying to

suppress the Scuds once dispersed in the gulf war. We saw some

48 plumes. We hit nothing. In spite of claims by some British Special

Forces people, the entire Special Forces effort was a waste of

time. It did not produce a single meaningful target. And these are

realities I think we have to live with.

The fact is, the time lines move is toward more and more risk,

as both the previous witnesses have pointed out. 40

I think we have to be prepared for the

fact that if we do this, it will, in many ways, be our first preemptive

war. We will not have a clear smoking gun. There will not be

a simple cause to rally around. I think we will have the support

of the British Government. Most of our NATO allies will, at best,

be reluctant and seek, if anything, to delay it to use the U.N. But

we had some of those problems during the gulf war. Remember, the

French Defense Minister resigned to protest just before the fighting

began. We didn’t get our aircraft into Turkey until 48 hours because

the authorization was only given by the Turkish Government

48 hours before the air war began. Coalitions take on a cachet in

retrospect that they never had at the time. But there are some realities

here. You’re going to need Turkish air basing far more, because

the center of Iraq’s power is a lot further north. Saudi airspace

will be critical. So would Saudi bases, if possible.

There were 23 airfields and air bases at the time of the gulf war.

We used every single one of them to capacity, put Marine Corps

aircraft into unimproved strips because there were no areas left.

And 11 of those bases were in Saudi Arabia.

If we are going to fight this war we, at a minimum, are going

to need all of the capacity of Qatar, of Bahrain, and Kuwait. We

are going to need to be able to stage through Oman. We probably

are going to have to use most of our carrier assets, at least initially,

because of the lack of basing, unless you can get Saudi Arabia.

And so any assessment of relative capability and scenarios is

determined, not so much by what our European allies do, but what

we can actually get by way of support in the region.

You could conduct a very destructive

bombing and air campaign, but short of having access to both Jordan

or Turkey, the answer would be, ‘‘I think not.’’ And, I think

it would be devastating to risk the lives of the Kurds or the Iraqi

opposition or U.S. Special Forces on some kind of operation which

might conceivably succeed, but which would have no probability of

succeeding and where we could never back it up by bailing them out.

I would have to agree largely with the

previous witnesses. I think we should remember, however, what

containment means. It isn’t just sitting there. Are we really aggressively

going to try to stop arms transfers? In which case I have

heard no one in this country point out the fact that Syria’s become a serious conduit.

What happens if we detect proliferation? Remember that we

could go to war tomorrow if we had a U.S. or British aircraft shot

down, and have to repeat another Desert Fox. Are we really willing

to go to war immediately if there’s a violation on missile testing,

if we detect a biological facility, if we have the confidence? Containment

is not pacifism. It is not simply reliance on arms control. But

to say containment is exhausted, you can only say that when you

are really ready, Senator, to do something else. That means we

need a critical minimum of allies and bases, a national commitment

to using decisive force, and a willingness to win the peace as well as the war.

And, I think that until nation-building becomes a bipartisan

term and one where there is a serious commitment to what could

be years of peacekeeping, economic help, and help in building a democracy,

we aren’t ready to say containment is exhausted.

Senator, I do not believe, in any classic

sense, it is imminent, but I have to issue a very strong caution. I

don’t think you will ever get that kind of warning. As we learned

at the World Trade Center and the attack on the Pentagon, the

idea that you have enough warning to tell you an attack is imminent

on the United States or our allies, particularly from a man

like this when he has biological weapons or nuclear weapons, this

is not the world we are going to live in. And I have to say that if

that is the interpretation of the War Powers Act, it is so fundamentally

obsolete that it has become irrelevant to asymmetric warfare.

If I may, Senator, I would be very cautious,

because one thing is what kind of uprising and for what? I

don’t believe you’re going to see the Kurds rush out to take adventures

and risks at this point in time, and that has been fairly clear

from a great deal of discussion. There are problems, certainly, for

the Shi’ites. They have many reasons to rise up, but if they rise

up in the south, they also are now dealing with a much better structured security force.

Saddam has adapted, as well. And I am struck by the fact that

while there are many different opposition capabilities, to the extent

I’ve seen any really organized efforts, they have come from SAIRI.

Yet, they have had more and more operational problems. I’ve seen

fewer and fewer indications that claims of operations actually have reality.

And if this uprising happens in the south and we have not the

strength to get rid of the regime in Baghdad and its core, then we

may see again that we expose people, frankly, to becoming martyrs or victims.

At best, you’re not going to see a united Iraq. But, if we don’t

have the proper military strength, you might well see something

happen that could be just as bad as what happened in 1991.

Senator, I have to say there are no conceivable

conditions under which I would do that. To try to minimize

our casualties and the level of force we use by risking the lives of

hundreds of thousands of civilians is simply not, to me, an option.

And that would be the effective result.

Now, can we use air power to isolate areas in Iraq where we

have reasonable intelligence that there would be strong support for

our operations? Yes, if we can absolutely guarantee that we can secure

them, and if, in an emergency, we can concentrate sufficient

force, which might take things like Rangers or U.S. ground troops,

to protect the people. I do think we have to certainly make every

effort to use the Iraqi opposition. We have to make every use that

we can of isolating troops, perhaps getting them to defect. But the

scenario that you suggested bothers me deeply, because it doesn’t

imply that we can guarantee the protection of the people involved,

that we will have sufficient force.

And I have been here before. I was stationed in Iran in the early

1970s. I visited the Kurds in Iraq then, and I watched them abandoned

after 1975. And I think you might find that the Kurds would

feel they’ve been abandoned since. Once is enough.

Senator, I agree, in broad terms, with

what Ambassador Butler has said. But going anywhere at any time

means having all the manpower, the mobility, the resources, the

monitoring you need. The more you have to do, the more of these

resources you need. And, you have to have a base point to begin

with, which means at some point you would have to survey and inspect

Iraq again, knowing that you will no longer have audit trails to the time of the gulf war.

But beyond that, I don’t know of anyone at CDC and

USAMERID—and I would suggest you ask them—who believe that

if a country is willing to use infectious agents or genetic engineering

you can be certain they will be found through inspection. The

facilities involved are so small, so easy to scatter, the amount of

agent that is needed is so limited, ways you can deliver them can

be covert or use human agents. So, you may end up, if you try to

inspect without putting the resources in, by pushing people into biological

options and into the worst-possible attack scenarios. That

risk should be kept firmly in mind. Yes.

Senator, all I can do is give you another

worst-case scenario, because I think Dr. Hamza and Ambassador

Butler are completely correct. If you could obtain small Russian nuclear

weapons, if you could get these in ways which allowed you to

bypass the Russian security systems on the weapons—and it is a

matter of public record that some of these systems are relatively

primitive and non-destructive——

No, I’m talking only about something like

a nuclear device, whether it is a small tactical nuclear weapon or

the kind of thing that might be used in a MIRVed missile. It would

be a nuclear device, however, that had sufficiently low weight so

it could still meet the very real constraints that Dr. Hamza raised,

and some of these Russian weapons were not designed to be protectedagainst intrusive arming.

Now, if you used a similar payload, got the weight and size exactly

right, and then you started firing what they can logically fire,

which are missiles with the range of 150 kilometers or less, you

might be able to conduct the test of such a warhead without it

being detected. And, if you then put that warhead on a longerrange

missile, and were willing to strike at a city-sized target, it

is just possible that you might be able to create a missile launch

capability without extensive testing or with that kind of testing although

that would be at the absolute margin of risk.

However, Saddam did use chemical weapons that were manufactured

in laboratories early in the Iran-Iraq war with no prior testing

whatsoever. He went directly from the lab to the battlefield.

As Ambassador Butler pointed out, what

makes this man different from all other proliferators is his proven

history of risk-taking. And the fact that the nuclear weapon might

never get near its intended target—— Would not always be reassuring.

Let me just add one other point about biological and chemical

weapons. It is extremely difficult to put useful biological and chemical

weapons on a missile warhead. It requires exact fusing and a

nondestructive mechanism to spread the agent. Nothing Iraq had—

and I will defer to Ambassador Butler and Dr. Hamza—in 1998

that was discovered by UNSCOM came close to that. They were

crude unitary warheads with contact fuses.

One caution. A lot of the necessary fusing is becoming commercially

available, and the best nonexplosive dissemination device,

unfortunately, is the air bag used in cars, so you can’t rule that possibility out.

Let me, if I may, Senator—I felt exactly

the same way after the Iran-Iraq war, which was the first time he

showed he was willing to take incredible risks. But, he did invade

Kuwait. He used chemical weapons against his own Kurds, admittedly

not in the face of the absolute guarantee of retaliation or the

risk of it that he would face in attacking us. But, the problem we

all have is we’re trying to read the mind of one person or those of

a very narrow group of Iraqis and figure out how they might behaveunder stress or over time.

I would add that wars of intimidation in the gulf can be very,

very important if he can use such intimidation to really lever the

behavior of Saudi Arabia and other countries. We do have to remember

that 60 percent of the world’s oil reserves here and our

own forecasts are that the world’s economy will be dependent on

the gulf for twice as many oil exports by 2020 as it is now.

I don’t believe you were here when the

question was asked whether containment was exhausted, and I

think the answer that both Ambassador Butler gave and I gave was no.

Now, I do have to say, Senator, that I get very disturbed when

people quote the Joint Chiefs by anything other than name. And

it is always easy to find somebody in the joint staff who will say

virtually anything if you keep calling. So I do not deny that containment

can go on. But, at least from my own view, one thing we

have to understand is there will never be a point certain at which

this risk reaches unacceptable levels, unless Saddam attacks or

threatens somebody else very visibly.

The other thing to remember is what containment really means.

It means a ruthless effort to stop arms imports, transfers of technology,

the willingness to be in place and strike if he openly violates,

in terms of weapons of mass destruction, as we have done in

the past, and to go on with a low-level war with his air defenses.

If that is sustaining containment, then we are doing a great deal.

But there is not a neat dividing line between resting in place and

throwing Saddam out of power.

I think, Senator one comment, first. I

don’t think the Secretary of Defense would say this carelessly, but

it is a mixture of what you harden and how many things you

harden, how many dispersed soft targets you have, how quickly you

can move your assets when you feel you are about to be seriously

under attack, and how well you can use decoys and deceive.

Now, we know the Iraqis use all four of those techniques. We

know they have refined them steadily since the attack on Osirak.

It is simply a reality that you are not going to be able to target a lot of their assets.

We flew, as I said earlier, some 2,400 sorties against Iraq’s Scuds

the last time. Suppressed them? Probably, at least in part. Killed

any? No. The idea of having the perfect target mix to strike at just

the right times seems to me to be simply impossible.

I think you hit on a very real risk, just

that striking some of these weapons might cause collateral damage.

But several points to bear in mind: it’s going to get steadily worse,

not better. And if it gets bad enough, then the ability to use these

systems to intimidate or to be able to sort of sell or proliferate

them, without credible retaliation, will grow with time, not again

with any clear point at which this occurs.

My guess, and it’s only a guess, would be that this risk at this

point in time is limited. Perhaps, in part, because those countries

that wish to disseminate chemical and biological weapons, or wish

to have them, are already doing pretty well on their own, and the

incremental effect here might be limited.

But your last question, to me, is one of the most important. I

think that you may be able to defeat the core of Saddam’s operation

by focusing on the core of his power. But certainly you have

to be ready simultaneously to go into other parts of the country

and do what UNSCOM couldn’t finish. You can’t simply rely on the

opposition to turn it over to you.

Senator, I think that we have perhaps

found ourselves in a position where, because Syria has cooperated

in some aspects of dealing with al-Qaeda and certain types of

Islamist extremists, we’ve been a little reluctant to point out the

fact that there is an increasing flow, not so much of major arms,

but critical parts. We know things like jet engines, tank engines,

some aspects of armored spare parts are beginning to move

through Syria in very significant deliveries. I think, however, to get

down to the details is something that really only people in the intelligence

community can tell you. No, sir.

I would just say, Senator, that you certainly

hear other views, but all of my experience tells me this is

one of the areas where you are coming to the absolute core of the

intelligence community. One of the great problems you have is that

when you have an extraordinarily unpopular man, you will have

report after report of internal division, support of terrorism, whatever

contributes to taking military action against him. Sometimes

these will be real, and sometimes they need careful verification.

And one of the most disturbing things, not of what Dr. Hamza

has said, but what I have heard from others, is the tendency to assert

a conspiracy theory without citing the fact that there are many

other equally valuable ways of doing it.

Finally, if you have a really good intelligence service, it doesn’t

take much to conceal something as small as, say, smallpox in a

transfer to a potential agent, and you probably will never knowuntil it happens.