I think this is tremendously important, what

you’re doing. I think this is tremendously valuable. I know there

are those who question the motivations behind all of this, but I

can’t think of any more valuable function that the Senate Foreign

Relations Committee can perform than do exactly what we’re doing

here. I think it not only educates our colleagues, educates ourselves

and the American public, it gives the administration an opportunity

to focus its ideas and policies. I think one of the best debates

that ever occurred in my 20 years in the Senate was the debate

surrounding the issue of the gulf war back in 1989.

And so I thank you for doing this. This is a very, very valuable

service, and I hope our colleagues pay good attention to what we hear.

Senator BROWNBACK. Mr. Chairman.

Senator BROWNBACK. If I could for just a quick moment, I want

to thank you for holding the hearings and second what Senator

Dodd has said as to their importance. And I know the administration

looks with importance on these hearings as engaging the country.

I would just note, I think, to our panelists and to other, I don’t

think there’s a question but that we’ve got to, at some point in

time, deal with Saddam Hussein. Many would have argued we

should have done it 11 years ago. Some would have argued we

should have done it 5 years ago. I think the question now becomes,

should we do it now? And if so, how? And what does it impact

throughout the region?

So I hope our panelists can really address that issue, because I

think there’s pretty strong unanimity in the Congress that at some

point in time we’re going to have to deal with this guy. Is now the

time? And what’s the way? And I hope we can get at that through these hearings.

Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. I think

these statements by our witnesses and the responses already to the

questions make the case of the value of having these hearings. And

we appreciate immensely your participation.

Let me pick up again, just on a followup point that Senator

Lugar was making, Professor Cordesman, that I would like you to

address, if you could, and that is the importance and the prosecution

of a military option of international support or regional support.

You mentioned in your statement the necessity of having

bases of operation, being able to place supplies in forward positions

and the like would be very important. We at least hear today of

the criticism that is coming from allies as well as regional powers

in the region who at least call themselves allies. Could you please

give us some sort of an assessment of how important that factor

is in the successful prosecution of the military option?

Do I have time for one more question?

Let me jump back, if I can, doctor—Ambassador

Butler, to the efforts of compliance. Is there any sense or any scenario

which you could conjure up which would cause Saddam Hussein

to—and his government—to take a different view toward inspections?

Or is that, in your view, an option that has been exhausted

and the past events have proved the futility of trying to

have the kind of cooperation necessary to pursue that avenue of dealing with this issue?

May I ask you quickly what specific avenues

would you pursue to take this the final yard or two, as you describe it?

Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Well, Mr. Chairman, I just want to make sort of

the same comments. I’ve been on this committee 21 years, and this

is what this committee was designed to do. And, unfortunately, we

haven’t done it enough over the years. And the fact that we’re

doing it here is tremendously worthwhile and valuable. It’s the reason

why there is a committee process. It’s the way that foreign policy

ought to be conducted, in a partnership with the Congress. And

so I want to add my voice to that of Senator Sarbanes in thanking

you and Senator Lugar and others, the administration, for allowing

this to go forward and doing it in such a cooperative fashion.

And it was tremendously instructive yesterday. I found the hearings—

I couldn’t attend, unfortunately, some of the afternoon, but

the ones that I watched on television or the ones I participated in

I just think were tremendously worthwhile and already is having,

I think, a very worthwhile and beneficial impact on the decision making process.

But just—while some of the conclusions—obviously we haven’t

formed any firm ones, but I thought some conclusions about how

we ought to approach this were tremendously worthwhile. And,

just very briefly, I wrote down some of them.

First, that we shouldn’t underestimate the capability of the Iraqi

military. I think we all agree with that today. Then, second, we

should understand that the undertaking of any effort to oust Hussein

will be extremely difficult without the support of the international

community. I think, again, we all sort of agreed, that’s a

given. Third, that the U.N. inspections, when it was functioning,

was successful and having some effect on the quality and quantity

of weapons of mass destruction that are accumulated. That efforts

to contain Hussein through the reintroduction of U.N. weapons inspectors

is still worth trying, particularly of Russia and the French,

but particularly if Russia would be involved. That seriously exploring

the reinstatement of the inspection option may build in national

support. We shouldn’t abandon that idea. Don’t necessarily

have to jump to it, but I thought that was very worthwhile and tremendously

helpful. And, finally, once the inspections option is no

longer perceived by our allies to be a viable response to Saddam

Hussein, then the international community would be more amenable

to come together and support the use of force if that’s the decision.

So I just want to thank you and than others, thank our witnesses,

as well. We had terrific witnesses yesterday. I’m assuming

nothing less than that today from the panel that’s here, and I think

the question we’re raising about the day after is very, very important.

And the debate and discussion that preceded this, I think,

makes the point, as you’ve done already.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.