I would like to add my appreciation, Mr. Chairman,

to you and your colleagues for hosting this extremely important set

of hearings. I have been asked to talk about the likely response of

Iran to a war against Iraq, and I will try to do it in about 9 minutes.

Iran has a long agenda of unresolved problems with Iraq, including

border disputes, the Kurdish question, religious quarrels, terrorist

and liberation activity, Iraqi Shia refugees in Iran—there are

hundreds of thousands of them—and, of course, the continuing

aftermath of the brutal Iran-Iraq war.

Iran has a huge stake in the future of Iraq, and therefore is

going to be watching very carefully what we do and what happens.

Iran remains extremely suspicious of Saddam Hussein, and most

Iranians hate his regime, I am certain, as much, as my colleague says, the Iraqis do.

However, and this is the point I want to stress, at this time the

Iranian regime is more worried about a U.S. war that calls for a

regime change and regards this to be inimical to its own interests.

From an Iranian perspective the status quo, that is to say, a contained

Iraq, suits their interests much better.

They acknowledge Iraq’s potential to reemerge as a regional

threat, but the United States is seen as the greater threat, especially

since the President’s State of the Union speech designating

Iran as part of the ‘‘axis of evil.’’ Iran’s hardliners have taken this

very seriously, including the frequent calls from the administration

for regime change in the region, and they wonder at what point

their Islamic republic, which is in trouble, will be a candidate for American action.

All Iranians, irrespective of whether they are hardliners,

softliners, moderates, or conservatives, worry about a failed or

messy U.S. operation that would leave the region in chaos. They

would then be on the receiving end for possibly millions of new

Iraqi Shia refugees, and they worry about the enormous disruptions

a messy war would have on world oil markets and their very fragile economy.

It is about 60 percent of the population. About that.

Now, Iranian fears, which I have just articulated, are one thing,

but what, in reality, is the Iranian Government likely to do in the

event that there is a war? Some analysts, and very good analysts,

I would add, believe that Iran has already embarked on a proactive

policy to delay any U.S. attack on Iraq by stepping up support for

terrorism against Israel, and stirring up trouble in Afghanistan.

The greater the violence in either area, the more difficult it will be

for the President to take on Iraq.

On the other hand, there is some evidence that the Iranian-based

Shiite opposition group—this is the one that Dr. Cordesman was

talking about this morning, the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic

Revolution in Iraq, may be open to support from the United States,

particularly air power to topple Saddam, provided we do not send in ground forces.

This would suggest the Iranian Government is at least prepared

to blink or wink in the event of a limited U.S. operation that does

not involve ground troops. In my judgment, Mr. Chairman, if the

United States has serious support for military action, including the

U.N. backing, E.U. backing, some moderate Arabs on board, Turkey

on board, and the Russians on board—this is very important;

the Russians are moving in our favor—Iran is likely to keep its

head down and not take a strong position against the United States during the war.

However, if international support is weak, Iranian protests will

be loud. Much will depend upon how this administration approaches

Iran in diplomatic channels. In my judgment, its current

policies toward Iran suggest that the leaders of Iran are likely to

be warned rather than wooed in the event that we decide to go after Iraq.

The problem here, I think, is that the Iranians could react unpredictably

to what they would regard as a belligerent U.S. posture.

The regime, for instance, might decide to place Iranian military

forces on high alert. Under these circumstances, there is a danger

that there could be military incidents between United States and

Iranian maritime forces in the Persian Gulf, and that could lead to

miscalculation and escalation.

Now, in thinking about Iranian behavior the day after the war,

much will depend upon the nature of the new regime in Baghdad.

It is not inconceivable that Iran might be willing to work closely

with the new regime and reach an agreement to resolve outstanding

issues relating to the Iran-Iraq war—the POW’s, for instance,

and the longstanding dispute they have had over the demarcation

of the Shatt al-Arab waterway. But if U.S. forces have

to invade and occupy Baghdad, this will mean trouble for the

hardliners and they will clearly be eager to exploit regional

resentments if a new Pax Americana, of the kind that my two previous

colleagues suggested, emerges.

Assuming no radical shift in the political balance in Tehran, it

could be expected, that Iran will make greater efforts to develop a

nuclear weapons capability. It is possible that a quick U.S. victory

over Iraq could result in a new bout of pragmatism in Tehran,

leading to a deal with Washington, but this outcome is by no means certain.

On the other hand, an arrogant, victorius America could well

find itself disliked by Iranians who regard themselves as reformers

and pro-West. Iranians are very proud of their independence, as

well as their desire to have a more democratic system, and we

should not be unaware of the fact that while a lot of them may

hate their own regime and like us at this point in time, this attitude can change.

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Chairman, a number of geopolitical

realities are going to face any new regime in Baghdad and ultimately

better relations between Iran and Iraq will be very, very

important. Iran will be Iraq’s neighbor long after U.S. troops have left.

Now, just 2 or 3 minutes on Europe. Direct European support for

initial U.S. military action against Iraq is highly desirable, but not

essential. However, cooperation with the United States would be

essential if this war was protracted. We would conceivably have a

major energy supply problem and working with the Europeans to

resolve that is essential. Europeans’ support, in my judgment, is

going to be vital to make sure that the post Saddam Iraq and the Middle East remains stable.

Officially, cooperation between the United States and Europe on

the Middle East is relatively close. That is to say, cooperation between

the governments. The E.U., as you know, now has a common

policy on the Middle East, and this makes coordination with Washington

much easier than in the past, but the E.U. itself is not a

state. As a consequence, its Middle East policy inevitably reflects compromise on contentious issues.

The key European Governments all share the U.S. view that

Saddam Hussein is a menace, that he is determined to reconstitute

his WMD, and that if he obtains nuclear weapons he will flaunt

them and attempt to change the balance of power in the Middle

East. However, regime change, a phrase now frequently used by

the administration, in the context of the war against terrorism, is

quite another matter for most European Governments and parliaments.

Indeed, without the cloak of U.N. legitimacy, European Governments

will find it difficult to carry public opinion. Though this does

not mean they will not cooperate with us if, in the last resort, the

United States decides that war is the only alternative. Europe obviously

worries about the cost of the war, as we do, particularly one that does not go well.

The Europeans tend to have a more gloomy prognosis as to the

region’s susceptibility to a quick-fix American military option than

many seem to have in this administration. They ask how long will

the United States have to occupy Iraq for, how long, and with what size force?

When pressed, European officials are not prepared to say that

they would contribute to a post Saddam Iraqi occupation, unlike,

by the way, the situation in Afghanistan, when they volunteered

more military forces than the United States thought necessary.

While we are on the subject of Afghanistan, the Europeans do

worry that the United States has no, ‘‘staying power,’’ therefore,

absent a casus belli, a linkage between Iraq and al-Qaeda, or a deliberate,

outright flaunting of WMD by Saddam, most European

governments would argue it would be unwise to take on Iraq while

Afghanistan and also the Pakistani regimes remain precarious.

I would conclude on these two points, Mr. Chairman. Iran will

not be able to prevent a U.S. attack on Iraq. It will likely remain

neutral during the war while intensifying its efforts to develop nuclear

weapons. Its greatest leverage will be during the post war period.

Its population and geography assures its interest must be

taken into account irrespective of who is running Tehran.

In the last resort, European governments will support the United

States if it uses force. I doubt very much whether this will involve

troop contributions, except in the case of the Blair government,

which, as I understand it, shares all our concerns about Iraq except

the issue of regime change as an objective. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Well quite frankly, I am not quite sure what the current

policy toward Iran is, Mr. Chairman. As I understand it, in

the period leading up to the war against the Taliban there were

multilateral meetings with the Iranians in the six plus two forum,

and the Iranians were relatively cooperative during the war

against the Taliban. In the immediate aftermath of the war, the

State Department people who were in Bonn acknowledged that the

Iranians were useful in putting together the Karzai interim government.

Then things went downhill very badly, climaxing with the smuggled

ship that was caught moving arms to the Palestinians and the

President’s State of the Union speech, and so now the problem is

we do not have the sort of relationship with the Iranians we had last fall.

My own personal view is that if we contemplate a major war

against Iraq, we at least have to make an effort to resume some

dialog with the Iranian Government, however unpleasant its activities are in other theaters.

I happen to believe that what the Iranians are doing in the occupied

territories, their support for Hamas and Hezbollah, is linked

to their fear that we are going to go after Saddam Hussein and

that they have got to know that if we are truly determined to get

rid of him they are going to have to make a calculation that they

can either cooperate with us in a passive way during that campaign,

or they can be against us, and if they are against us, then

they are likely to be very much in our cross-fire.

So my advice, if I had my old job, and assuming I survived for

more than a week down there in this climate, I would essentially

suggest we rethink our Iranian strategy as we get closer toward a war with Iraq.

Well, the one clear linkage, it seems to me, between

Iraq and the peace process or the Arab-Israeli conflict, whatever

you want to call it, is Saddam Hussein. What did Saddam Hussein

do in January 1991? He launched Scuds against Israel with the

sole purpose of bringing Israel into a war that would then disrupt

the alliance that George Bush Senior had put together. It did not

work, because the SCUD’s were not effective, and the Israelis showed remarkable constraint.

Saddam more recently has, of course, been upping the ante by

paying bounties to the families of suicide bombers in the Palestinian

territory. These scenarios that you have been hearing about

this morning and read about every day in the paper include the

possibility that in extremis Saddam Hussein will launch his WMD

directly or indirectly against Israel in order to bring the linkage into effect.

And perhaps the most disturbing possibility of all, which there

is now quite some speculation about, is that Saddam Hussein in

extremis would do whatever he could to destabilize the Hashamite

Kingdom of Jordan. It is interesting that though everybody on this

panel has slightly different views—all seem to agree that the

Saudis will ride it out, the Egyptians will ride it out, the Qataris

will, but we are all worried about the King.

In other words, we talk a lot about regime change, but actually

what we have to worry about is regime survival, particularly the

survival of King Abdullah. If anything happened to Jordan under

his rule, promoted by the Iraqis—and they can be very, very unpleasant—

this would be an immediate threat to Israel, and Israel

will respond. That is the linkage that worries me. Can I start?

As I understand it, the U.S. Army began preparations

for the occupation of Germany in 1942. Currency was being printed for the occupation.

I think we’ve got a long way to go in thinking about this problem

of occupying Iraq. I gather tomorrow morning, you’re going to have

some very good people who have looked at this in great detail. So

I wouldn’t want to preempt anything that they say.

But if you’re talking about the occupation of Iraq, you are talking

about tens of thousands of U.S. troops for a long period of time.

Kabul is, you know, the only area that we’re protecting in Afghanistan

and that is a relatively small city. It is not Bagdad. It is not a city of six million.

The idea that we can just win the war and go away would be extraordinarily

irresponsible. The idea that there will be a government

in waiting ready to take over the administrative tasks of Iraq is wishful thinking.

And, furthermore, there may be people cheering us on, and I’m

certain there will be, but there are also going to be a lot of recrimination,

and a lot of violent acts will be committed in revenge. The

southern Bagdad suburbs is predominantly Shia. They have been

suppressed for years and years by this regime. They are not going

to kiss and make up the day after. This is going to be worse than

Paris in 1944 where, as you know, more people were killed in the

3-weeks after the liberation than there had been killed for many years before.

So I think it is a very serious problem, and I am delighted that

you are going to have a special panel on this, because it is the least

thought through element of this extremely political debate that we

see in the press that has been so oversimplified and has so underestimated

the complexities of the problem.

Yes, it does. And some people, of course, would argue

that’s all to the good, because that will put the fear of God into the

bad mullahs and the good mullahs will take over, but I’m not quite

so confident that that’s what will happen.

Right, but as my colleague Fouad said, there are ways

for the Iraqi Government to pay for these troops. They have a lot of oil. I would think years.

A minimum of 5 years, I would think. Oh, probably.

But the public uprising and the revolution, it’s always possible.

And I think we have to—we have to remind ourselves that at the

time of the overthrow of the Shah, many of our own government

officials as well as academics argued that the Shah is very stable.

In fact, that same year, the famous professor at the University of

California at Berkeley, an Iran expert, wrote a book making the argument

that Iran was one of the most stable countries in the

world. And then we had happen what we witnessed.

I don’t think that that is a highly likely scenario, in part, because

I do think that revolutions are scarce in this day. They just don’t happen very often.

States have learned a lot to—unfortunately, mostly through repressive

mechanisms, but you can’t rule it out. You can’t rule it out.

And I think none of these governments are ruling it out as a potential

in their dealings with the contingencies that they have to

deal with, and that is why I’m even more worried about the after—

what happens within these countries, which is what is likely to be

the case. It’s their worry about such a scenario, which is going to

lead to a lot more repression than we have seen.

And if our aim, in part, is to popularize democracy, we should

have no illusions. And today in the tradeoffs in relation to Pakistan,

when we ask what do we want more, is to see less repression

on Pakistan or corporation on the war on terrorism, because we

have a priority of national security pertaining to Afghanistan, it is

clear what our answer is. And it is likely to be the case when our

priority will be to maintain stability in Iraq, to worry about what

happens in Iraq, that we’re going to put a lot of other priorities on

the sideline to get the maximum corporation to be able to succeed,

at least in an intermediate period up to 5 years or whatever it takes to do so.

So we should go in with open eyes about what actually is likely

to happen in the region in terms of dynamics when—if we go that route.

Just on this, Senator Chafee, an even more worse

case, we were worried about Soviet Union nuclear threat in both

the 1967 war, that’s gone. So to me the worst case would be a nuclear

war in the Middle East, which is possible under certain circumstances.

That, I think, would have a devastating impact on the

oil markets, and then I think these regimes that up to now have

been extraordinarily resilient would be facing a day of reckoning,

because what we have not really discussed, because it wasn’t their

mission, but there is a demographic bulge moving through this region

of young people who cannot be employed because they do not

have jobs, and it’s getting worse by the year.

The Arab world, Iran, Pakistan, are entering into this window of

where they have to create more jobs a year than they possibly have

the resources to. And that’s where I think you could get an explosion.

I don’t think it will be a single explosion. It won’t be like 1848

in Europe when all the rotten monarchies collapsed, but sooner or

later some of these regimes have to crack, whether it’s Iran first

or Egypt, I don’t know, but they cannot keep going at this rate of degregation.

It would make a very important difference if part of

the occupation force also includes bringing in UNMOVIC, the U.N.

inspectors that you had discussed this morning, that would also give more legitimacy to it.

The more this is seen as an international operation with cooperation

from the U.N. and the Europeans, the less the chance that we

will be pigeonholed as merely imperialists, but we’ve got a lot of work to do.

Well, I would just say that if we’re not prepared to

go much further in Iraq than we have gone in Afghanistan, we’re doomed from the start.

So that I think the Europeans would argue you’re

going to have to get in in a big way, and we ultimately are going

to have to help you. And one important reason is they would see

this as a way to help diffuse then the Arab/Israeli conflict, which

in the last resort, the Europeans worry about primarily because of

migration and the whole string of European issues which we

haven’t gotten into today. So if we don’t lead in Iraq, then it’s all

over. It’s a hopeless case. Lukoil. Yes.