Thank you, Mr. Chairman and the committee, for the

invitation to testify. I would like to add my voice to others in

thanking you for this wonderful opportunity to generate a public

discussion on the issues involved in this critical foreign-policy decision.

Our panel has been asked to examine what we can expect in Iraq

after Saddam if the United States should be successful in achieving

his fall. I would like to focus on two key issues that will be critical

for U.S. planning in post-Saddam Iraq. The first is the potential for

fragmentation or fracturing once Saddam’s regime is decapitated

and, along with it, the potential for outside interference from Iraq’s

neighbors. The second is the issue of providing alternative leadership

for Iraq.

Let me say at the outset that I regard the replacement of Iraq’s

leadership as a serious and very ambitious project. The decision to

do so is difficult because the potential benefits to Iraq, to the

United States and to the region are substantial. But so, too, are the

possible costs and unintended consequences. If the United States

embarks on this project, it needs to be prepared to see it through

to an acceptable outcome, including, if necessary, a long-term military

and political commitment to assure a stable and more democratic

government. If it is not prepared to do so, the intended benefits

could vanish.

Let me turn to the issue of fragmentation. Incidentally, in my

prepared remarks, I have included a map of Iraq which might be

helpful, together with a great deal more information than I’m going

to give you here. As we know, Iraq is a multi-ethnic, multi-sectarian

country with boundaries that were imposed by foreign powers

at the time of its formation in 1921. It has three main demographic

components consisting of the Kurdish-speaking population

in the north, about 17 percent, the Arab Shia in the south, about

60 percent, and the Arab Sunnis in the center, somewhere between

15 and 20 percent. These are sketched on the map.

For over 80 years, these communities have coexisted and, to

varying degrees, have participated in the process of building a state

and a nation. That process, while well underway, is still incomplete.

Under the current regime, a narrowly based Arab Sunni

community uses repression to enforce its rule over all communities;

hence, the fear that if the regime is removed, the country will fragment

into its ethnic and sectarian components.

How accurate is that assessment? First, in my view, it is very

unlikely—indeed, inconceivable—that Iraq will break up into three

relatively cohesive components, a Kurdish north, a Shia south, and

an Arab Sunni center. None of these communities is homogenous

or shows any ability to unite. Moreover, in many cities—Baghdad,

Mosul, Basra—the communities are thoroughly mixed. Most important

of all, the overwhelming majority of the population, except

possibly for a few Kurds, has consistently shown a strong desire to

keep the state together and profit from its ample resources.

However, the removal of the regime, under certain circumstances,

could result in a breakdown of the central government

and its ability to exercise control over the country. There are two

dangers here. The first is short-term. If firm leadership is not in

place in Baghdad on the day after, retribution, score-settling, and

bloodletting, especially in urban areas, could take place.

On a broader scale, without a firm government, parochial interests

could take over both in the north and the south and the center.

The Kurds, for instance, could seize Kirkuk with its oil fields,

establishing a new reality in the north. The Arab Sunni clans, who

control military units, might struggle for power in Baghdad. The

Shia party, the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq,

SCIRI, located in Tehran, could send units of its militia across the

frontier and attempt to gain control of areas in the south.

Such a collapse of authority could trigger interference from

neighbors. Turkey could interfere in the north, as it’s done before.

Iran, through its proxies, could follow suit. There could even be a

reverse flow of refugees, as many Iraqi Shia exiles in Iran return

home, possibly in the thousands, destabilizing areas of the south.

And, over the long term, if a new government in Baghdad fails

to take hold, if it is not more inclusive of Iraq’s communities and

acceptable to the population, Iraq could gradually slip into the category

of a failed state unable to maintain control over its territories

and borders. This is not the most likely scenario, but it is a little

more likely than a decade ago. While most Iraqis do want the unity

and territorial sovereignty of their state, their sense of identity as

a nation has eroded under the Ba’th, and, in my view, is weaker

than at any time since 1945.

In some respects, the state is already in the process of failure

and needs revival. The Kurds have been governing themselves for

over a decade, for example. While the Kurdish leadership is realistic

about its prospects for independence—they are nil—and willing

to live in Iraq under some federal identity, their Kurdish identity

and aspirations for self government have increased.

In a post-Saddam Iraq, it’s going to be more difficult to integrate

the Kurds into Iraq proper. The Shia population has been in a constant

state of decline for over the past two decades from wars, revolution,

and government repression. The 1991 rebellion, which was

widespread in the south, showed the extent of Shia alienation. And

since that time, a sense of Shia identity has increased.

However, despite considerable alienation from the government,

the Shia have no discernible leadership or organization inside Iraq,

unlike the Kurds. Moreover, there’s no real Shia desire for separation.

Rather, the Shia want a greater—indeed, a dominant—share

of power in Baghdad commensurate with their numbers.

While the Shia are not likely to break away, holding Iraq together

will require new leadership in Baghdad capable of incor-

porating all communities into the decisionmaking body in Baghdad.

How likely are they to get it?

Now, I’d like to turn to the ‘‘center’’ and the issue of alternative

leadership. It’s generally assumed that if new political leadership

emerges inside Iraq, it will have to come from the center. That’s

a term used to denote the central government in Baghdad, but it’s

also employed in a geographic and demographic sense to refer to

the Arab Sunni triangle stretching from Baghdad to Mosul in the

north and to the borders with Jordan and Syria in the west, the

region from which the regime recruits its leadership. It’s this center

and this Arab Sunni minority that has dominated Iraq for decades,

a pattern that is difficult to break.

I think the issue of alternative political leadership is critical,

probably the critical issue in post-Saddam Iraq. At the moment,

there is no visible alternative leadership inside Iraq. There may be

potential leaders, but they cannot emerge or demonstrate their

leadership for reasons that are obvious. So we can only speculate

on the sources of such leadership and the constituencies they could

mobilize.

One problem is already clear, however. If this leadership emerges

from inside the regime or its support system, through a coup, for

example, will this new leadership bring a real change in orientation,

political culture, or even foreign policy? Will it be sufficient

to get support from the bulk of the population or even to meet U.S.

requirements? Or will they simply bring us a modified version of

what we already have?

The outside opposition has a multitude of leaders vying with one

another, they’ve been doing so for years. The key figures and

groups are fairly well known to you, I think. They include Ahmad

Chalabi and the Iraq National Congress, the Hashimite, Sharif Ali

bin al-Husain, the Iraq National Accord, presumably closest to the

Ba’thists, SCIRI, the main Shia contender in Tehran, numerous

generals who have defected, and the two main Kurdish parties in

control of real estate in the north of Iraq.

The main problems with the outside opposition are also clear.

They’re fractious, they’ve been unable to coalesce around a mainstream

candidate, and they have little or no organization inside

Iraq. The Kurds do have an organization inside, but they are unwilling

and unable to take a leadership role in Baghdad. Their interest

is self government in the north.

The main constituency of the outside opposition, as has been

often remarked, is Washington. This raises a paradox. Many of

these outside leaders have demonstrated leadership skills. They’re

Westernized. They generally support U.S. aims, and they are the

most likely to bring change to Iraq, but they will have to be put

in power by the United States and supported by us over some considerable

time if the changes they, and we, envisioned are to be

maintained. And as Western-supported elements, their legitimacy

may soon be questioned.

I would like to turn to the ‘‘inside’’ leadership. In order to give

us some sense of what we may get, I’d like briefly to describe the

three current pillars of the regime from which this leadership could

emerge.

The first is the kin and clan network that dominates most institutions,

particularly the security organs and the military. Saddam,

as we know, has maintained power by putting his kin and clan in

these functions. Together with neighboring clans from the Sunni

Arab triangle they have developed an ever-thickening network of

kin and clan relations in these leading institutions. Even when

Saddam’s immediate family is removed, these clan groups will remain,

and so will the kinship ties that bind them.

Alternative leadership may, indeed, arise from these related

clans. The key issue here is whether such a leader would be able

or willing to go beyond clan politics or whether such a change

would be acceptable to the non-Sunni population and even the educated

urban Sunni middle class that functions outside this system.

The second pillar of the regime rests on the institutions of state,

the Ba’th party, various components of the military, the bureaucracy,

and the educational establishment. These are recruited from

a broader base and include Shia and Kurds as well as Sunnis. At

secondary levels, these institutions are peopled by an educated

middle class. Some are potential sources of leadership.

The Ba’th party is one. It may not survive Saddam’s collapse, but

the party cadre will. The problem here is that amongst this group

is a deeply ingrained attitude toward power and authority that will

persist. And so, too, will the strong nationalist attitudes that have

been the party’s backbone.

The military is the most likely source of change, although the

military is not a single institution. The regular army is probably

the military component with the greatest sense of independence

and distance from the regime. Unfortunately, it’s also the weakest.

Republic Guard units, though presumably more loyal to the regime,

may welcome a regime change, as well. Both the Republic

Guard and army officers may provide alternative leadership. But

here, too, the question is, how much change will they bring. How

willing will they be to embrace U.S. requirements?

The bureaucracy and the education establishment will inevitably

provide leadership for any new regime, but only at secondary levels.

These institutions are unable to provide the leadership at top

political levels. They do not have the muscle to affect a change, and

they both represent a cadre that is used to obeying orders, not giving

them. The education establishment, in particular, has been

Ba’thized. The bureaucracy can be used by whatever leadership is

installed. Indeed, it will have to be used. But it may need several

years of reeducation and redirection.

The regime is also supported by an economic elite often referred

to as an economic ‘‘mafia.’’ It is the product of the state’s control

of oil and other resources which the regime distributes through a

patronage system. While this group may provide some support in

reviving the economy, it cannot be expected to provide alternative

political leadership. In fact, it’s not a true private sector, independent

of the state. Indeed, one of the best changes that could be

introduced would be to separate this economic class from the state

and move toward the creation of a true and more independent private

sector.

This survey of Iraq’s current political direction leads me to several

conclusions. One is that after years of repression, the Iraqis

are ready—indeed, eager—for change. They seek the preservation

of their state and its future development as a nation, but they have

had no experience of democracy, only of a police state, hence the

building blocks of democracy will have to be created, including a

reorientation of attitudes and practices. This will take time.

I suggest that there are three potential options open to the

United States in bringing about leadership change. The first is to

pressure those inside to change the regime themselves. The most

likely source of change, if Iraqis are left to accomplish the deed

themselves will be the center—from kin and clan groups, from the

military, or, less likely, the party. This will be the least expensive

option for the United States in terms of troops and political investment,

but it will probably bring the least change. It is also likely

to be the most destabilizing. It could lead to a struggle for power

in Baghdad, the erosion of central control, and a gradual breakdown of national unity.

Inside leadership is most likely to move against Saddam if it decides

the United States is serious about occupation, but the United

States will need to support this new leadership to prevent fracturing.

If the United States is unsure of the new leadership, if it

cannot give it immediate support, the United States could lose control

of the situation. Identifying potential inside leaders now and

making U.S. requirements clear and public beforehand would help

avoid this slippery slope.

The second option, is to introduce the outside opposition as alternative

leadership. This would produce the most change inside Iraq

in the directions desired by the United States. But this is the most

difficult and costly option. The United States would have to install

and support this opposition with troops over some considerable period of time.

There is a third option. If the United States occupies Iraq, it will

have the best opportunity, in the short-term, to provide law and

order, prevent retribution, and begin the processes by which Iraqis

inside and outside can refashion their political system and move toward

democratic reforms. Most Iraqis would welcome that prospect,

but it represents a considerable commitment by the United States

over several years and some troops on the ground, preferably in

conjunction with allies. And before too long, the United States will

be viewed as a foreign occupier. Thus, the institution of new leadership

and the procedures for establishing a new government need to

be fairly expeditious—say, within 6 months—and the U.S. military

greatly reduced thereafter.

Nevertheless, if the United States is determined to replace the

regime, it’s better to take a firm hand in the beginning to help in

providing the building blocks for a new and more democratic regime.

In this case, the United States will have to keep some forces

on the ground and strong advisory teams in place to assure that

the new regime gets a solid footing.

Iraq has a military and a bureaucracy which can be used to defend

and administer the country, but it will require effort to reorganize

and reshape these institutions in the desired direction. This

is no small task.

If the United States is going to take the responsibility for removing

the current leadership, it should assume that it cannot get the

results it wants ‘‘on the cheap.’’ It must be prepared to put some

troops on the ground, provide advisors to help create new institutions,

and, above all, spend time and effort in the future to see the

project through to a satisfactory end. If the United States is not

willing to do so, it had best rethink the project.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I have one thought before I respond to whether we’re

going to get a lot of burden sharing from other folks, which is, I

think, your question. I think many people will want to go into Iraq

and get the benefit of Iraq’s oil resources and that might be the

hook. If anyone wants future benefits, they’re going to have to contribute

something initially. So I think there’s a good deal to be

made there. But getting contibutions from International folks is

going to be difficult in Iraq, because Iraq is considered a rich country.

And I do agree with my colleagues here, that, there will be a

need for some ‘‘up-front’’ money before Iraq can get the economy

going. In Iraq’s case it may be a little more difficult to persuade

people to come in.

I would like to say that—money aside—if United States troops

are involved at the level and for the time that we’re talking about

here, we had better have some Arab regional states with us, because

there will be a downside for us. The more presence we have,

the longer we’re there, the more anti-Americanism is going to increase

among a portion of the population. That should concern us.

Personally, I think the religious element may be increasing

a little bit. But, my own sense is that the ethnic tie, the

Arab and the Kurdish feeling is stronger than the religious ties between

the Sunni Kurds and Sunni Arabs.

But I wish we could get away from regarding the map as controlling,

because——

No. Yes, I realize that. The identity that must be encouraged

is Iraqi.

There is an Iraqi identity. And, to a very large degree,

if it is encouraged by new leadership, these ethnic and sectarian

divisions as ways in which people identify themselves—Arab versus

Kurd, Shia versus Sunni—will be reduced. There will be a better

chance of getting a viable state.

The Kurds are a problem, in a sense, because they do speak a

different language. And the language distinction, I think is, of

course, a very important one.

I know Rend will want to say something about this.

Yes, it is a factor. I think there’s no doubt about it. This is an ongoing

factor, which is why I said it’s going to be more difficult to integrate

the Kurds into a post-Saddam Iraq than it would be otherwise.

The situation is not bad up there, but without being Cassandra,

I’d like to point out that it’s not quite as good as the Kurds may

say. For one thing, they’re not unified. The area is split in two, divided

between the two main Kurdish parties because they couldn’t

agree on a unified government. They cannot maintain their position

without American support and protection and U.S. mediation

of their disputes. They are not in control of their borders. And,

hence, as I’ve indicated, the Turks have to keep coming across.

Although I’m not totally informed on the situation, I understand

that on the eastern border with Iran, there’s a no-man’s land which

the PUK does not control and, from our perspective, is open not

only to Iranian influence, but other outside influences, even terrorist

influences. That is precisely the kind of situation that we

don’t want.

And even though they like what they have, the Kurds don’t have

a future in northern Iraq, and they know it. They have difficulty

in getting the middle class to come back. So the Kurds understand

that, within some framework, they have to stay within Iraq, and

they’ve said they’d do so.

And, Senator, I would like at some point to send you and your

staffers, a couple of Kurds who may have a little different perspective.

No, I understand. I understand.

I think Rend has addressed it, and I’ve tried to address

that in my written paper. I have to say that I think this is

the most critical unknown in the whole issue. And if we don’t have

some good answers to that, we should go back and rethink.

We do know who’s available outside. The outside opposition is

clear. They will go all the way in fulfilling our objectives, weapons

of mass destruction and so on. But as has been made perfectly

clear, we have to bring them in militarily. Others may disagree,

but I also believe we have to support them militarily.

Now, when it comes to insiders, it’s anybody’s guess, because

leaders cannot emerge inside. That’s what we pay an intelligence

establishment for, and, of course, there are other intelligence establishments

overseas that might have some indication. We should

have contact with people. We should be working through the outside

opposition to identify people who will come over to our side.

I don’t imagine we’re going to have trouble, once we undertake

action—if we’re serious—getting people to come over to our side.

But, as I—and Rend—have pointed out—the folks that are in

charge now who might, provide potential leadership raise real

questions. They are Ba’thized. Do we want that? Army generals?

We really don’t want a general in charge of the political system,

and we don’t know whether this individual may be a member of the

clan, the family, a Ba’thist. However, there may be plenty of generals

and others who are fed up with the regime and have some

democratic instincts.

There’s an education establishment producing doctors, all sorts of

scientists and so on. They, too, have been Ba’thized. So we have a

problem here not getting people who will be willing to change. That

kind of change is not a military job, and it’s going to take time.

One last word that hasn’t been mentioned here. Among the

things we need to think about is the constitutional—the political—

mechanisms that need to be put in to identify this leadership, the

mechanisms by which the process comes together. We need to start

to think about this. If we have a direct administration that is, the

U.S. military picks some people, the Iraqi bureaucracy, I think, can

do its job. But a political process, by which you bring the people

together, is necessary not only to identify leadership, but agree on

a future process. I would suggest a constituent assembly, maybe in

6 months time, which can draw up a constitution and get ready for

some kind of an election.

Iraqis are a sophisticated people. They do not have warlords, like

Afghanistan. They can handle this, but we’ve got to think now

about processes which will identify the leadership for the future.

I would like to take a crack at the gulf. I’ve been out

in the gulf for the last 5 or 6 months and listening to their views.

And what I’m hearing is that people would like to see a change of

regime if it could be done quickly and easily. Their greatest fear

is that we’re going to go in and change the regime and then get

out. They’ll be stuck with the follow-on—a mess.

But the kind of presence and bases, that we’ve heard about today

will certainly arouse anti-American feeling in the area. This feeling

is about the worst I’ve heard in 40 years, I think it has definite

repercussions on the potential for terrorism.

I assume this presence will be viewed with suspicion by Iran, but

I don’t know what Iran can do about that. Frankly, I don’t see Iran

playing a major role. Iran might interfere and try to destabilize

Iraq and to do some of the things I suggested with the Shia, and

the Kurds if the presence looks permanent. Instead we should rely

on a reshaped Iraqi military, which would be my way to go. It has

to be retrained; its officer corps has to be somewhat different, but

Iraq does have a military. Its job is to guard the border with Iran

and the border with Syria.

So I would prefer that our presence be pretty substantial initially

because they need to keep things together. How long this visible

presence would have to be there is a question. And any visible

presence of the U.S. military in the region bothers me, because I

think inevitably it does encourage terrorism.