Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let me join my

colleagues in expressing my appreciation for the opportunity to appear

before you on this very timely and important subject. The last

time I sat in this chair was during my confirmation hearings, when

you grilled me on Turkish policy toward Cyprus. All things considered,

I think I would just as soon talk about Turkish policy toward Iraq.

I do not think that there is any question that Turkey’s attitude

will be critical in the event the United States seeks to remove Saddam

Hussein through the use of force. In the interest of time, I am

not going to recite the many reasons why that is so. All one has

to do is look at a map and consider the options to realize that you

really cannot exercise any of them without Turkey.

What do the Turks think about the prospect of direct U.S. military

action to topple Saddam Hussein? The short answer is, they

hate the idea. The Turks’ dread of a new war against Iraq stems

from their negative experiences of the last one. In security, economic,

and strategic terms, Turkey emerged a loser from the last

gulf war and its aftermath.

From a security standpoint, Saddam’s oppression of the Iraqi

Kurds’ short-lived uprising in 1991 and the coalition’s subsequent

expulsion of Iraqi central authorities from the north had a profoundly

negative impact across the border in southeast Turkey.

PKK terrorists exploited the situation to expand their operations

exponentially. It took most of the nineties, thousands of lives, lots

of money, and frequent interventions into northern Iraq itself for

the Turkish military to get the situation back under reliable control.

From an economic standpoint, U.N. sanctions against Iraq cutoff

Turkey’s access to what had been its largest trading partner. The

impact was on the order of what would happen here if the U.S.-

Canada border were sealed from one day to the next. Turks estimate

the cost over the last decade at between $40 and $80 billion,

and that may be low.

From a strategic standpoint, Ankara saw the emergence in

northern Iraq of local administrative organs to fill the gap left by

the withdrawal of Iraqi central authorities as a step toward the establishment

of a de facto Kurdish state. Preventing such a development

had long been and remains a cornerstone of Turkish regional

policy, reflecting concern for its impact not just on Kurdish populations,

but on the interests of up to 2 million Turcomen of northern

Iraq, a people ethnically and culturally very close to the Turks.

Over the past decade, Turkey has found ways to cope with most

of the consequences of the gulf war. It is not now uncomfortable

with the status quo that has emerged in the area in and around

northern Iraq.

Would it not be better for Turkey if Saddam were gone? No question

about that. Turks are not insensitive to the potential advantages,

especially from an economic standpoint, of Saddam’s removal,

and of Iraq becoming a more normal neighbor, but for most

of them the appeal of such gains is outweighed by misgivings over

what could go wrong this time around.

Based on their experiences since 1990, the Turks lack confidence

that the United States understands Iraq’s internal dynamics well

enough to give meaning to our repeated commitments to maintain

its territorial integrity. They worry that even if we do understand

the situation better than they suspect, the process of replacing Saddam

could at some point lead the United States to make tradeoffs

at Turkey’s expense, and they remain concerned that if things do

not go according to plan, the United States will not see the project

through, leaving Turkey again to face a neighbor that is either hostile

or in chaos.

Now, seen from this perspective, we should probably not be surprised

that Turkey’s highest leaders, including its President, Prime

Minister, Defense Minister, and senior military have publicly and

repeatedly expressed deep reservations about the wisdom of seeking

forcibly to remove Saddam Hussein, but Turks are realists, and

in virtually all conversations I have had with the Turks on this

subject, their bottom line is a realistic one.

It boils down to this. If the United States does go after Saddam,

Ankara will not have the luxury of sitting this one out. There

would simply be too much at stake in terms of Turkey’s interests.

Turkey would want to be in on the planning and execution of any

operation to ensure that those interests were factored in and that

there was no deviation from an originally agreed concept once

things got started, and Turks who think about these things understand

that the price of this kind of access and this kind of transparency

is some degree of cooperation.

It is clearly in the interests of the United States, if we move

against Saddam militarily, to maximize the extent of Turkish cooperation

and to minimize the possibility of surprises once the operation

begins. The key to making Ankara part of the solution

rather than a potential problem is early and honest and detailed

consultations.

What will the Turks be looking for in those consultations? At the

most general level, they will want to see that whatever we have in

mind is serious. Given the history, they will need to be convinced

that we will finish the job this time around, that we can do it with

dispatch, and that we will do whatever it takes to get their neighbor

back on its feet in one piece and as a member in good standing

of the family of nations.

But the Turks will also have more specific things they will want

to see addressed. They will first of all want to be sure that they

do not again pay an economic price for being on the right side in

this war. I would therefore not be surprised to see Turkey seek to

lock in before hostilities start concrete, specific commitments from

the administration in terms of debt forgiveness or additional economic

or military assistance.

I would also expect Ankara to seek assurance of continued U.S.

support in the IMF and other international financial institutions to

the extent action in Iraq adversely affects Turkey’s economic recovery

program, but it is on issues relating to northern Iraq that U.S.-

Turkey consultations will be most important, because what happens

there very simply may well define Turkey’s role in the broader

conflict.

There have been some provocative but I think ultimately fanciful

things written in the U.S. press about what that role will be. I

think you can forget about Turkish tanks rolling to Baghdad. It is

simply not going to happen, nor is anyone in Ankara sitting around

counting the revenue that Turkey might gain by seizing the oilfields

around Mosul and Kirkuk.

My impression is the Turks are deadly serious about maintaining

Iraq’s unity and territorial integrity. Indeed, I believe that seriousness

underlies what will be Turkey’s primary goal in the event the

United States moves against Iraq. That is, denying the Iraqi Kurds

any gain that might enhance their ability in a post Saddam environment

to press for independence or its functional equivalent.

Now, that imperative has certain practical implications that U.S.

planners will ignore at their peril. One hears a lot around this

town, for example, about how the United States will, quote, improve

the military capability of the Peshmerga, the Kurdish militia,

as part of an effort to topple Saddam. I suspect that a more capable

Peshmerga force is not something most Turks will be wildly enthusiastic

about, either now or on the day after.

Another area of potential tension has to do with the nature and

mission of U.S. military and other personnel who may be deployed

in the north. The Turks have spent a decade developing an ability

to monitor and, to an important extent, to control developments

there. They are likely to be suspicious of and may resist any pres-

ence that dilutes that ability by establishing direct links to the

local Kurdish leaders.

And what about the Iraqi opposition? Turkey has traditionally

been skeptical of Iraqi exile organizations, and has a notably rocky

relationship with the Iraqi National Congress. To the extent the

United States intends to rely on such groups, particularly in the

north, Ankara might have other ideas.

Finally, what would the Turks really do if Iraqi Kurds attempt

to seize Mosul and Kirkuk? The Turks clearly fear that possession

of these politically important cities and their associated oil wells

would put the Kurds in a powerful negotiating position on the day

after. Turkey’s press in recent months has been full of credible reports

that Turkey would itself seize those cities, rather than allow

that to happen.

Mr. Chairman, I raise these examples not to suggest that they

reveal irreconcilable differences between the United States and

Turkey that would keep us from cooperating in an effort to change

Iraq’s leadership. I do not believe that to be the case, but I think

they do underscore the importance of honest, detailed discussions

before any balloons go up.

Thank you very much.

Well, I think there is no question that it

complicates any assessment by the administration of how you

would implement a policy of regime change, which they have declared

to be the policy. There is a question in my mind whether it

is a showstopper, as some of the other witnesses have suggested.

I think we sometimes underestimate the ability of some of our

friends in the Arab world to deal with issues arising from discontent

in their streets. These have proved to be pretty robust regimes

when they need to be, regimes who understand the dynamics

and have been able to dominate them over the years.

My guess is that if the administration were to do this in a way

which provided adequate consultation which satisfied many of the

concerns that have been expressed here and in previous panels

that those governments have shared with us, and are likely to

share with us in the consultative process, that it would be possible

to carry out the kind of operation that we are talking about without

resolving the Arab-Israeli dispute first, which after all is going

to take a long time. There is a real question whether or not, based

on some of the earlier testimony today, we have that kind of time.

My colleagues have made excellent points,

and I’m not going to try to belabor them by repeating them, other

than to underscore what Jeff said, which is that this is the part

of the problem that deserves the most attention, and you’ll being

doing that in detail tomorrow.

So much of it is scenario dependent, and I think you’ll find there

is enormous opinion as to what we can expect when and if we finally

get in there.

But I would like to make one point and to play off something

that Mort Halperin said.

No, I’m a Virginia resident.

It is to play off something that Mort

Halperin said in the previous panel which is, to be sure that there

will be a democratic regime in Iraq over the long term, we’ll have

to stay there for 20 years.

And, you, Senator, asked, I think, the panel if there was anybody

that disagreed with that statement. It’s a profound question, and

basically nobody was prepared to take it on.

I think it merits parsing because what Mort said was to ensure

a democratic regime over the long term. And that suggests that,

you know, there is one quality of democracy.

If our objective is to create the Federal Republic of Germany in

Iraq, we may very well have to stay there as long as we did in Germany.

But there are shades of democracy around the world, many

of which represent close friendships and allies of the United States,

and would be remarkable improvements over the status quo in

Iraq. And I think it would be presumptuous of us to sit here and

suggest that, you know, unless they meet the standard that we do

in this country, we shouldn’t—the game is not worth the candle.

It seems to me that if you take a different approach, if you accept

the proposition that there may be a different standard than ours,

you may take less time. It may be less resource intensive. Some of

the down sides that have been discussed here might be less acute.

Unfortunately many of them will be worried

about the splitting of the spoils of war. I have no doubt about it.

I think that the issue of the oil contracts is going to become an

issue in the thinking of a lot of them, and I think, you know, that

is going to be part of the calculous.

I think one of the problems is a structural

one. And it’s certainly the case with Turkey up until very recently,

which is that if you’re talking point is there is no plan on the President’s

desk, and you’re not prepared to go beyond that, you can’t

get very deeply into conversations with people who would just as

soon, frankly, not accept the premise in the first place. I mean, the

Turks and others, I’m sure, are not standing in line to talk about

the day after.

And you’ll only get their attention when you’re prepared to describe,

in some detail, what you’re going to do, in what timeframe,

and what your vision of the day after is.

Be glad to.