Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am struck, I guess, by listening to this conversation this afternoon,

about the enormous variety and range of uncertainty which

is expressed by all of you, and it is not that people are keeping all

options open, because you are all experienced professionals, and

that is not your purpose, but the effect of what you are saying gives

that impression, that we need to keep all options open, so the concept of uncertainty interests me.

For example, people talk about galvanizing the people in some

way. Well, I mean, you know, they talked about that in Indonesia

when Sukarno was in charge, and nothing happened, until something

eventually did after decades, and Assad the same thing—was

he a 7-year term, something of that sort—and now we have Hussein,

and people are talking about, well, if we could only figure out a way to get the people going.

To me, the pan Arabism argument followed, as Senator Lugar indicated,

our total inability to understand what Islam is, and getting

off all the signals that we do not, and then even in conversations

like this, where there is this sort of—where the sense of uncertainty

about the development of American foreign policy, or potential

American foreign policy, military or diplomatic, is just wrapped in uncertainty.

I mean, I think that one can speculate that it is a lot easier to

use intelligence to find out, for example, what is going on in the

chemical world with emissions and effluents than it is in the biological

world, which is much more discrete. You say that the nuclear

thing, if we were really sure about the nuclear thing I cannot

imagine that we would not go in, and yet my understanding this

morning was that there was a feeling that each day that goes by

the threat gets greater, and then we get back to the threats, which are the subject of all of this.

The question I would ask you is that there is an extraordinary

polemic involved in this, because the stakes are so high, the consequences

Senator Kerry mentioned, are we preparing the American

people, and that is as if Iraq existed by itself in the world, and

of course it does not. They have their own nations, we have our

own problems, and there are uncertainties everywhere now which

encourage each other and compound, therefore, so I am just interested

in what is a resolution process? I mean, if we are stuck with

uncertainties, and then we can go from here to here, and we are

rational here and we are rational here, we make sense here and

we make sense here, and we are right here and we are right here,

so we describe all the options, but time closes in, the dean said so,

and every day that passes gets more dangerous.

And then this not insignificant point that if, perchance, we wait

3 days too late, and either from that country, through others—and

some people say no, they will not do it through others, because

they want to keep it for themselves because it gives them power,

but who knows about that, too, and then some day all of a sudden

some series of terrible things happens in this country, and then the

whole concept of body bags takes on a very different concept.

So I guess the only question, certainly the only question I have

time for, is that we can deal with uncertainties because we are an

honest Nation and we tend to be very open in expressing our views

and our concerns and our worries, and that is fair to the American

people, part of the democratic process, unique in the world, I might say, we are that way.

But at some point there comes the point of a resolution of what

you are going to do, and you cannot talk about uncertainties because

you do not have all the answers, and you never will have all

the answers, and we all know that we will never have all the answers,

and so sort of a collective sense from you gentlemen of how

one deals with the process of going from continuing uncertainties

on very, very large issues to the point of decision. Obviously, it

rests in the hands of the President of the United States.

I have a Confucian temperament, Mr. Chairman.

A couple of things come to mind. In the days of these hearings,

there’s been just an enormous array of thoughts and suggestions.

And yesterday I sort of concentrated on the uncertainty factor.

And, you know, you—Mr. Berger, you talked about removing Saddam

does not do it all. And that brings up a question which I’ve

actually sort of wanted to ask. We’ve been talking a lot about nation

building here. And you say, well, that could be $100 to $150 billion for Iraq alone.

Americans tend to be kind of episodic, you know, crisis oriented

when we—obviously, 9/11 is a little bit more than episodic, but—

and what we’re in is profoundly dangerous, but we jump from sort

of country to country, and then we will take Iraq and we’ll sort of

isolate Iraq and say, well, what are going to be the repercussions of this?

Are we talking about, in fact, removing Saddam Hussein because

he is Saddam Hussein, alone, or because of the weapons of mass

destruction? And is it not really what we’re talking about, the removing

the threat to this country of—weapons of mass destruction—

of which he is the dictatorial keeper and decisionmaker?

So if it’s the removal of weapons of mass destruction, and if you

accept that al-Qaeda is in 60 other countries, that South America

has not yet bubbled up, Africa, in many ways, hasn’t bubbled up,

well, Southeast Asia is all yet before us, perhaps, or probably, and

many other places in the Middle East—Iran—who knows? You

can’t do it all. You can’t go in and say, well, here’s Afghanistan—

and that’s kind of more of a futile warlord thing and that history—

but Baghdad is much more of a stabilized middle class. Perhaps we

can make a democracy out of that, and so let’s nation build. And,

oh, by the way, that may cost $100 to $150 billion. Then you go

down to the Indonesian archipelago and you’re talking about thousands

of islands—and, who knows, the largest Muslim country in

the world, which is not to tie Islam into this in any greater than

is appropriate. But you start stockpiling an inventory which becomes

absolutely out of the question for this country.

You talk about educating—I’m not questioning you, Mr. Berger,

I’m just questioning the proposition—we talk about educating the

American people to what we’re doing, leveling with the American

people. Well, if we’re going to level with the American people, we’d

better tell them that this—that we’re talking about, you know, and

$8 or $10 trillion project here worldwide, in all probability, unless

we think that 9/11 was isolated, and it surely was not, and nobody

even pretends to think that.

Isn’t it really our security that we’re talking about? And if it’s

really our security, isn’t it keeping ourselves safe from weapons of

mass destruction from wherever they might come? And, you see,

that doesn’t have to just be a nuclear bomb. That can be a suicide

bomber. That can be a plane into the World Trade Tower. That can

be, you know, something else into a chemical plant, a power grid,

whatever it is, but it’s the combination of the intelligence, the preemptive

intelligence, as opposed to the—as well as the tactical, but

particularly the preemptive—and keeping ourselves safe—and,

therefore, as much as possible, the world, because we’re the largest

target, and if we’re keeping ourselves safe—but we’ve gotten into

this enormous discussion on nation building.

And I would just like to, sort of, get both of your thoughts on

that. If you’re suggesting—and I don’t disagree that—to stay the

course and that—we had some witnesses this morning that said,

no, you only have to have about 5,000 troops in Iraq for 3 or 4 or

5 years or less—a couple of years, I think one of them suggested.

That doesn’t seem very probable to me if they’re talking about nation building.

And what it seems to me that you started off with is making

America secure, removing the means of destruction of us and other

parts of the world from different terrorist groups, of whom Saddam

Hussein obviously is a classic definition.

But I’d like your response to that, because it just seems to me

we’ve kind of run away, let the wagon get out of control here in

terms of what it is that our responsibilities are as a nation and

what we can possibly afford to do without having our people rise

up on us, because we won’t—if we tried to do all of it, we would

do a lot of it unsuccessfully, because there’s not any tradition for

democracy in a lot of these places.

Sandy Berger, do you include nation

building as part of our obligation? Because the question I would

pose to you—isn’t there a point at which there is an inverse correlation

between our determination to nation build after we remove

the bad guys and our ability to remove both weapons of mass destruction

wherever they exist in the world and the whole threat of

terrorism as it surely does exist in the world?

I mean, at some point you—if you do one, you can’t do the other.

And our first obligation, it seems to me, is to make sure that there

is a security factor for our country.