Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will be very

brief, and I just want to thank each of you for being here today to testify.

I want to say I am not surprised to see Senator Feingold here,

who has been a consistent strong voice for human rights. And I

would like to especially thank the human rights community for their concern.

In that film, Mr. Chairman, I noticed that one of the women said,

‘‘What is the world doing?’’ And that just sent chills down my

spine. I would like to thank you for leadership on this.

The only reason I asked for one minute is that I was disappointed

because—although we did pass these resolutions, we did

this work together, and I know it has been important to people in

Chechnya, and others have taken this resolution and it has been

circulated—I do not feel like there was as much of a focus as I

think there needs to be.

And I want to very briefly just repeat some of this resolution,

and note especially for the Administration that I am disappointed,

very disappointed, that we do not have a panelist here representing

the Administration.

I know we asked them to come. My understanding is we will get

somebody in a separate hearing, but frankly my view as a Senator

is there ought to be somebody here from the administration at this

very, very important hearing.

I just want to mention a couple of aspects of the resolution referred

to by the Chairman, S. Res. 262. It called on the government

of the Russian Federation to ‘‘allow into and around Chechnya

international missions to monitor and report on the situation there

and to investigate alleged atrocities and war crimes; allow international

humanitarian agencies immediate full and unimpeded access

to Chechen civilians, including those in refugee, detention, and

so called ‘filtration camps’ and any other facility where the citizens

of Chechnya are detained; and investigate fully the atrocities committed

in Chechnya . . . and initiate prosecutions against those officers

and soldiers accused.’’

It called on our President to ‘‘promote peace negotiations between

the government of the Russian Federation and the leadership of

the Chechen government, including President Aslan Maskhadov,

through third-party mediation by the OSCE, United Nations or

other appropriate parties; endorse the call of the United Nations

High Commissioner for Human Rights for an investigation of alleged

war crimes by the Russian military in Chechnya; and . . .

take tangible steps to demonstrate to the Government of the Russian

Federation that the United States strongly condemns its brutal

conduct in Chechnya and its unwillingness to find a just political

solution . . ..

Every day the reports are horrifying. And the reason that I mention

this is this resolution for—for journalists and others that were

here, was passed unanimously by the—the Senate, in part because

of your help.

This was meant to be a strong message. And I would suggest,

Mr. Chairman, that those of us here—Senator Biden and others—

may want, next week, to reword this and put together yet another

strong resolution, bring it to the floor of the Senate, and have some

discussion on the floor of the Senate, because I think we must put

a focus on this.

I think we are going to have to speak up, Mr. Chairman, more

and more and more so. Thank you.

I will defer to the Senator from Wisconsin,

because I had to go to a markup in another committee. I apologize.

Then I will follow Senator Feingold. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, I want to

thank you for your leadership. We were just talking to one another,

and I really want to work with you in drafting another resolution,

and raising the temperature here, and really putting the focus on this.

I think we can do that together with many other Senators, Senator

Biden, and I hope the whole committee.

I am going to use first names as well. Peter, I just think you do heroic work.

I admire the work that you do. You may

have said this, but I want to make sure that I understand it, or

that it is repeated again: has the infrastructure—homes, schools,

hospitals—in Chechnya been specifically targeted?

How difficult is it to collect the evidence

and is some of the evidence destroyed?

Karen, how important is it to get human

rights monitors into the area around Chechnya, and is the Russian

military capable of investigating itself?

Because you need to be escorted for your

own security and safety.

In other words, you have depended on the

military, because you cannot go in without them, but on the other

hand, by going in with them—

—it puts some restriction on where you go.

And then finally, Tom, with the fall of

Shatoi yesterday, the Russians claim that the Chechens have been

defeated. Do you think that is true, or do you think the Chechens

have the capacity for effective guerilla war? In other words, do you

think this war is going to continue?

Well, I want to thank each of you. I have

such respect for your work. Mr. Chairman, I think it was Camus

who once said murder is never legitimate.

So I do not defend the actions of all of the Chechens and what

has been done, but given now what we now see, this is just a—a

human rights question is too mild of a way of putting it. I mean

this is really a systematic slaughter and murder of people, and I

think it is very important that the Senate depict a profile on this

in a major way. Thank you.