

**HEARING TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON THE
STRATEGY IN AFGHANISTAN AND RECENT
REPORTS BY THE AFGHANISTAN STUDY
GROUP AND THE ATLANTIC COUNCIL OF
THE UNITED STATES - MORNING SESSION -**

Thursday, February 14, 2008

U.S. SENATE
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Washington, D.C.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 11:15 a.m. in Room SD-106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Carl Levin, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Committee Members Present: Senators Levin [presiding], Lieberman, Reed, Akaka, Bill Nelson, E. Benjamin Nelson, Warner, Inhofe, Sessions, Collins, Thune, and Martinez.

Committee staff members present: Richard D. DeBobes, Staff Director, and Leah C. Brewer, Nominations and Hearings Clerk.

Majority staff members present: Evelyn N. Farkas, Professional Staff Member, Michael J. McCord, Professional Staff Member, and William G. P. Monahan, Counsel.

Minority staff members present: Michael V. Kostiw, Republican Staff Director, William M. Caniano, Professional Staff Member, David M. Morriss, Minority Counsel, Lynn F. Rusten, Professional Staff Member, Sean G. Stackley, Professional Staff Member, and Dana W. White, Professional Staff Member.

Staff assistants present: Kevin A. Cronin, Ali Z. Pasha, and Benjamin L. Rubin.

Committee members' assistants present: Sharon L. Waxman, assistant to Senator Kennedy, Frederick M. Downey, assistant to Senator Lieberman, Elizabeth King, assistant to Senator Reed, Bonni Berge, assistant to Senator Akaka, Christopher Caple, assistant to Senator Bill Nelson, Tim Becker, assistant to Senator Ben Nelson, Jon Davey, assistant to Senator Bayh, Gordon I. Peterson, assistant to Senator Webb, Anthony J. Lazarski, assistant to Senator Inhofe, Todd Stiefler, assistant to Senator Sessions, Mark J. Winter, assistant to Senator Collins, Jason Van Beek, assistant to Senator Thune, Brian W. Walsh, assistant to Senator Martinez, and Erskine W. Wells, III, assistant to Senator Wicker.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. CARL LEVIN, U.S. SENATOR
FROM MICHIGAN**

Chairman LEVIN. Good morning, everybody.

First, let me welcome our witnesses. We very much appreciate their being with us today. They're adjusting their schedules to accommodate ours. There was a memorial service—still, as a matter of fact, going on—for Congressman Tom Lantos, which is the reason that I, at least, had to delay this until now. We very much appreciate, as always, the cooperation and advice of Senator Warner as to how to approach these delays in the scheduling today.

Today, the committee receives—

Senator WARNER. But, this was very, very well-deserved—Lantos was an extraordinary member; and you and I, throughout our long career, have intertwined our official duties with him many times in many places of the world.

Chairman LEVIN. Indeed, we've traveled with Tom Lantos, and know him and Annette well, and it—the eloquent testimony that's now being delivered about his life goes on as we speak here, and we shall all miss him and his committee, his love of this Nation.

The committee, today, receives testimony on the situation in Afghanistan, including the assessments contained in two recently released reports from the Afghanistan Study Group and The Atlantic Council of the United States.

Our witnesses on this morning's panel are assistant Secretary of Defense for Asian and Pacific Security Affairs, James Shinn; assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs, Richard Boucher; and Lieutenant General John Sattler, the director for strategic plans and policy, J-5, of the Joint Staff.

This afternoon at 2:30, this committee will hear from two experts who participated in preparing the independent reports on Afghanistan, Retired General Jim Jones, chairman of the board of directors of The Atlantic Council, and Ambassador Rick Inderfurth, professor of the practice of international affairs at George Washington University. Both General Jones and Ambassador Inderfurth participated in the Afghanistan Study Group, which is established under the auspices of the Center for the Study of the Presidency.

The American people understand the stakes in Afghanistan. Unlike the war in Iraq, the connection between Afghanistan and the terrorist threat that manifested itself on September 11th has always been clear. American support for the mission in Afghanistan remains strong.

Last week, the Director of National Intelligence, Admiral McConnell, reiterated the significance of the threat emanating from the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region. He told the Senate Intelligence Committee that al Qaeda's central leadership based in the border area of Pakistan is al Qaeda's, quote, "most dangerous component." He added that the safe havens that extremists enjoy in the tribal areas along the Pakistan border serve, quote, "as a staging area for al Qaeda's attacks in support of the Taliban in Afghanistan, as well as a location for training new terrorist operatives for attacks in Pakistan, the Middle East, Africa, Europe, and the United States."

For too long, U.S. military operations in Afghanistan have taken a backseat to the war in Iraq, leaving our forces in Afghanistan short of what they need. Admiral Mullen acknowledged as much in December, calling the Afghanistan mission a, quote, "economy-of-force operation." And he added, quote, "It is simply a matter of re-

sources, of capacity. In Afghanistan, we do what we can; in Iraq, we do what we must,” close quote.

Last year, Congress took action to strengthen the focus on Afghanistan. The National Defense Authorization Act included several measures to increase transparency and expand congressional oversight, including establishing a special inspector general for Afghanistan reconstruction, requiring the President to submit a comprehensive strategy for security and stability in Afghanistan, and provide regular updates on the progress of that strategy, and requiring a report on plans for the long-term sustainment of the Afghanistan National Security Forces. The President continues to paint a rosy picture of the situation in Afghanistan. Last Friday, he said that, in Afghanistan, quote, “the Taliban, al Qaeda, and their allies are on the run,” close quote. But, the reports by the Afghanistan Study Group and The Atlantic Council provide more sobering assessments of the situation on the ground. Among the findings of those reports are the following:

Efforts to stabilize Afghanistan are, quote, “faltering,” according to the Afghanistan Study Group report. That report finds that, since 2002, quote, “violence, insecurity, and opium production have risen dramatically as Afghan confidence in their government and its international partners falls,” close quote.

The Atlantic Council report states that, “Make no mistake, NATO is not winning in Afghanistan.” Instead, the security situation, according to The Atlantic Council report, is, quote, “a strategic stalemate, with NATO and Afghan forces able to win any head-to-head confrontation with the Taliban, but not being able to eliminate the insurgency, so long as the Taliban enjoys safe haven across the border with Pakistan.”

The antigovernment insurgency threatening Afghanistan, quote, “has grown considerably over the last 2 years,” according to the Afghanistan Study Group. Last year was the deadliest since 2001 for U.S. and international forces. The Taliban are relying increasingly on terrorism and ambushes, including over 140 suicide bombings in 2007. The Afghanistan Study Group reports—the Afghanistan Study Group report also finds that, quote, “The Taliban have been able to infiltrate many areas throughout the country,” close quote, intimidating and coercing the local Afghan people.

The reports find that more U.S. and international forces are needed for Afghanistan. The NATO-led insurgent—the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force, or ISAF, currently consisting of more than 43,000 soldiers from 40 countries, remains short of the troops and equipment that it needs to meet mission requirements. These shortfalls include maneuver battalions, helicopters, and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assets.

The United States has announced its intention to deploy an additional 3200 marines, and other NATO members have upped their contributions, including Britain and Poland. Yet, as the Afghanistan Study Group points out, more NATO countries need to share the burden and remove national caveats that limit the ability of their troops to participate in ISAF operations.

Opium production continues to be at record levels. The Atlantic Council calls drug production, quote, “the most striking sign of the international community’s failure.” That report cites World Bank

estimates that around 90 percent of the world's illegal opium comes from Afghanistan. A report this month from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime finds that cultivation levels this year are likely to be similar to last year's, quote, "shockingly high level."

The Afghanistan Study Group finds that the need for greater international coordination is "acute," in their word. Contributors to Afghanistan reconstruction include over 40 countries, the United Nations, the World Bank, the European Union, and NGOs. Unfortunately, the recent withdrawal of the widely respected Paddy Ashdown from consideration for the position of United Nations International Coordinator for Afghanistan, reportedly at the request of the Karzai government, is a real setback. The Atlantic Council report concludes, quote, "In summary, despite efforts of the Afghan government and the international community, Afghanistan remains a failing state. It could become a failed state," close quote.

We look forward to hearing from our witnesses this morning concerning recommendations for getting Afghanistan on the right track. I hope they'll address the assessments and recommendations of the reports of the Afghanistan Study Group and The Atlantic Council. These reports highlight the urgent need for the administration to reassess its approach, to ensure that Afghanistan moves towards a stable and progressive state, and never again becomes a safe haven for terrorists intent on exporting violence and extremism.

Senator Warner?

STATEMENT OF JOHN A. WARNER, U.S. SENATOR FROM VIRGINIA

Senator WARNER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I'd like to ask unanimous consent that my entire statement be placed in the record this morning.

Chairman LEVIN. It will be. [The prepared statement of Senator Warner follows:] [COMMITTEE INSERT]

Senator WARNER. Given that we started at a late hour, I'm going to abbreviate my comments here.

But, I'd like, first, to begin by commending Secretary of Defense Robert Gates. And, by the way, we all wish him well with his current problem with his arm. But, I want to commend him for his efforts over the past few weeks to impress upon our NATO allies the importance of the NATO mission in Afghanistan. He also emphasized that militant extremists, either in Afghanistan or elsewhere, still pose a significant threat. And the threat posed by these extremists may be greater in Europe than some in Europe may now believe.

The debate on the importance of the mission in Afghanistan may be among the most complicated that the NATO allies have faced since the alliance was formed to counter the Soviet Union threats.

Mr. Chairman, I request unanimous consent to place the entire statement of Secretary Gates, on February 10th, when he addressed the Munich Conference on Security Policy, into the record.

Chairman LEVIN. That will be made part of the record. [The information previously referred to follows:] [COMMITTEE INSERT]

Senator WARNER. In addition to expressing my strong support for Gates's remarks, I'd like to highlight a few matters concerning Afghanistan.

First, I concur with those who assert that the credibility of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the most successful political and military alliance in contemporary military history—that credibility is at stake as they continue to perform their missions in Afghanistan.

In Afghanistan today, there's been no doubt that progress has been made since 2001, that the Taliban's recent resurgence in Afghanistan, the escalating opium economy, and the presence of cross-border sanctuaries in Pakistan threatens to challenge positive momentum and potentially lead Afghanistan to slip back into the pre-911 role as a safe haven for terrorists.

You mentioned General Jones; I'll overlook that part.

I also want to point out that we should never forget that the failure of Afghanistan would be a significant boost to militant extremists. Secretary Gates said that the Islamic extremist movement, so far, was built on the illusion of success, that all the extremists have accomplished recently is the death of thousands of innocent Muslims. Secretary Gates went on to say, "Many Europeans question the relevance of our actions and doubt whether the mission is worth the lives of their sons and daughters," end quote. Well, the bombings in Madrid and London, and the disruption of cells and plots throughout Europe, should remind all of us that the threat posed by the global extremism in Afghanistan, the Middle East, Europe, and globally, remains, as Secretary Gates said, a steep challenge.

I'll put the balance of my statement in the record, so we may get started.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Warner.

And, by the way, I do concur with your remarks supporting the comments of Secretary Gates. I think they're very significant and accurate.

And I think—Secretary Shinn, I think you are going to go first, followed by Secretary Boucher, and then I—I don't know if—General Sattler, do you have an opening statement?

General Sattler: I'll just introduce myself, sir; that's it.

Chairman LEVIN. Okay. Well, we already know you appreciate your work, but we'll get to you, then, in that order.

Secretary Shinn?

STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES J. SHINN, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR ASIAN AND PACIFIC SECURITY AFFAIRS, OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR POLICY

Mr. Shinn: Thank you, Chairman Levin, Senator Warner, members of the committee. We appreciate the opportunity to discuss Afghanistan with you today.

If I may just submit some written remarks for the record, and use the time efficiently to respond and build on comments made by both you and Senator Warner, so we can leave time for questions—

Chairman LEVIN. We would appreciate that. And all your comments and statements will be made part of the record.

Mr. Shinn: Great.

If I may, with regard to the Afghan Study Group study, as well as The Atlantic Council report that you made reference to, we concur with many of the conclusions of those reports. To the degree that the reports suggest that our strategy in Afghanistan needs to be fundamentally changed, I believe that we would submit to the committee that U.S. strategy in Afghanistan is sound. The real challenge is execution of that strategy—resourced and done systematically, sustained over time.

Two weeks ago, Afghan Defense Minister Wardak, who's known to some of you, gave a speech to the NATO ministers, and he described the strategy in Afghanistan in terms of clearing, holding, and building. I'd like to very briefly touch on those three aspects of the strategy.

With regard to the clearing part of the strategy, we would submit to you that we believe we are winning, slowly and painfully. As the chairman mentioned, I believe where and—quoting the report, where our forces—where the Afghan forces together meet the Taliban who stand and fight, we always prevail. Much of this is due to the Afghan National Army—and General Sattler can speak more to how that was trained into a disciplined and effective organization—but also by U.S. and alliance troops. We have, currently, as you know, 27,500 troops in Afghanistan, and another 3,200 marines on the way.

We would point out that the success in the clear part of the strategy has been purchased at a horrible price: 415 Americans have been killed in and around Afghanistan, another 1,863 wounded, some of them very seriously.

Our analysts have concluded that the Taliban usage of assassinations, of terrorism against soft civilian targets, and even, to some degree, the use of suicide bombs is really, in part, a result of—a reaction to the success of the clearing strategy.

But, that brings us to the hold and then to the build part of the puzzle. And we would submit to you that both of those pieces of the strategy are both harder and slower to make progress in. It's harder—it's inherently more ambiguous and hard to measure when you're making progress.

One example, probably known to most of you, of course, is that much of the hold part of the puzzle devolves around the Afghan National Police. And, as an institution, the ANP has a much spottier record than the ANA, the Afghan National Army, less credibility with the Afghan citizens, some reputation for corruption in some districts. Again, General Sattler can speak to some of the reforms underway. We are encouraged by efforts by the Ministry of the Interior in Kabul, with our assistance, to pay and rank reform of the Afghan National Police, to train and equip them better, and, in particular, a program called the Focused District Development Program, where they take—they go to a district, they take out the existing police corps, they put in a trained and vetted temporary police force, and they take out the ones, and vet them for corruption or involving in trafficking; they train them, equip them, and put them back in, with mentors. We're in phase 1 of this program, and we look forward to the results.

Moving to the build part of the puzzle, this starts from a very tough base. I know many of the Senators on the committee, and

staff, have been to Afghanistan. When you see it with your own eyes, you know, you realize how much of the physical and human capital has been destroyed by the three decades of war and civil war. It's really pretty striking.

The good news is that the GDP is growing now. It's about—between \$8- and \$9 billion a year now. But, if you divide that by the Afghan population of about 32 million, that gives the average Afghan a—annual income of about \$300, less than a dollar a day, which is crushing poverty. And if, into that mix, you then add the trafficking problem, the narcotics problem, you have a seriously corrosive effect on already weak state institutions.

We have a 5-part counternarcotics substrategy to deal with that. Secretary Boucher can speak to that, because that's principally in the State Department lane. It involves, as you know, both public education, alternative livelihood, eradication, interdiction, and law enforcement, on the back end of that. This is going to take time, patience, and a sustained effort.

I conclude by just pointing out, again, that this part of the execution puzzle, as well as the other two pieces, is not solely, nor, in many cases, is it even primarily, the responsibility of the United States, that execution on these three pieces involves us, our NATO allies, the OAF partners, certainly the U.N., the international community, writ large, and, of course, most importantly, the Government of Afghanistan and its citizens.

Maybe I could close with another quote from Minister Wardak, who said, "In my opinion, the war in Afghanistan is eminently winnable, but only if the Afghans are enabled to defend their own homeland. And the enduring solution to this war must be, in the end, an Afghan solution."

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. [The prepared statement of Mr. Shinn follows:]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Secretary Shinn.
Secretary Boucher?

STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD A. BOUCHER, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIAN AFFAIRS

Ambassador Boucher: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, Senator Warner, distinguished members of the committee, I thank you for having us over today.

This is a subject of vital national interest to all of us, and, as the chairman referred to, I think we all understand the danger of renewed terrorist attacks to the homeland stemming from this part of the world. I think it's also good to keep in mind the opportunities—the opportunities of creating a stable, peaceful, strategic hub in Afghanistan for Central and South Asia, for new routes for energy, trade, ideas, and people, and also the opportunity to see to the welfare of some 30 million people in Afghanistan, who, as my colleague pointed out, are suffering from great poverty. And Afghanistan, in the '50s and '60s and '70s, was one of the poorest countries in the world, and then they've gone downhill for 20, 25 years, and it's no wonder that the challenges of development alone are enormous, and development, given fighting and the circumstances now, are—is even a harder task.

We're doing this task. We have, I would say, many achievements, but not yet success, in this task. And the focus is, increasingly, on the people of Afghanistan, the people that I said are—they're largely rural, they learn to rely on local and traditional structures over the last several decades. They've seen too much fighting, and, frankly, too little benefit from government. We—that's the situation we're trying to change. And, I think, to fundamentally win this war, to stabilize Afghanistan as a peaceful nation, we need to provide those people with security, with justice, with economic opportunity, and with good governance, just what anybody in the world expects from their government.

So, how are we doing? I think—my summary is that we're doing what works, we're getting the job done, but we need to do it more broadly, we need to do it better. And I'll talk about that, as well. As Secretary Rice said, last week, our counterinsurgency effort is having good effect, but the work is not complete.

We've seen, now, more and more police, more and more military available to Afghan population to provide them with security. As you travel around Afghanistan—and I've been there twice in the last month—you see the green police trucks that we've provided with our supplemental funding from last year, new policemen out on the streets, new trucks out on the street. We know the numbers are still low, the quality is still not what it should be, but they're getting out there, and they're more and more visibly providing security for the population. You see new governors and new district chiefs. The government is extending itself, including a renewed effort on local governance, on working with local populations in the districts, and providing better personnel through the Office of Local Governance that has been set up in President Karzai's office.

You do see economic growth. Every time I've gone, for the last 6 years, you see different products being sold, you see Internet cafes starting up, you see, you know, oranges in the market, better quality stores, people no longer selling from containers, but selling from buildings. There's economic growth. The legitimate economic growth last year was estimated to be 13 percent, really remarkably high. And you see the other aspects of this—3 and a half million cell phones. Whereas, 5, 6 years ago there was virtually—a very small phone system that really didn't work.

There are now 4,000 kilometers of roads, versus 50 in 2002—50 kilometers of roads, to 4,000. Those roads have a transforming effect. I was up in the district of Kunar, on the Pakistan border, and you see there, they're no longer talking about the number of insurgents in the Konar valley, they're talking about the number of gas stations, the number of Internet cafes along the road that was built by the U.S. Provincial Reconstruction Team and the local governors office.

You see education, healthcare being delivered to the population—5 million kids in school now, versus about 900,000 in 2001. Healthcare now reaches 80 percent of the population. The real effect of this is that there are 85,000 babies and children every year who survive in Afghanistan who would not have survived without that service.

All those things said, all those achievements listed and seeing them around the country, you can see them have an effect in dis-

tricts, you can see them have an effect in provinces, where they've been done in a coordinated and concentrated fashion. But, we still have enormous challenges through the country, as a whole.

As my colleague Mr. Shinn referred to, we've routed the enemy from their strongholds, but they've now turned more and more to tactics of pure terror—to bombs, kidnaping, things that make the population feel unsafe, and things that we need to prevent. And, in some cases, we're able to prevent those, because we get tips from local populations. I've heard that story in districts of Afghanistan. In other places, it's harder to prevent, because we don't really have solid government control, police control and governance in all the areas of the country yet.

The narcotics problem is still enormous. We're pleased to see the U.N. early assessment for this year that says there's probably going to be a slight decrease, but what it also says is that the high levels of poppy production in the south are going to stay that way, and that the link between the insurgency and the narcotics production is even more focused, even more—tighter.

Where we establish good governance and are able to carry out the full scope of antinarcotics programs, we can see a decrease in the poppy cultivation; where, because of insecurity, we're unable to do all the things that government would like to do and all the aspects of the narcotics program, we're still seeing a very high level of production. And we both—needs to get a hold of these areas, but also to carry out this full-scope counternarcotics effort in those areas.

And, finally, weak government, and, particularly, corruption, remain endemic. And the reform and training of government, of government ministries, of local officials, and of police forces has to be a high priority, because what of—the Afghan people expect from their government, they expect basic decent government, they expect government to be on their side, and not to try to take advantage of them through corruption and other means.

In 2008, therefore, we're trying to deal with all these problems, and attack both the enemy and the problems with all our various tools. I'd say there are four main tasks this year.

One is to concentrate and coordinate our efforts. If you look through the reports that you've been talking about, a lot of the recommendations have to do with, How do you tighten the coordination in the international community? How do you tighten the coordination between civilian and military activity? And how do you tighten the coordination between the international effort and the Afghan government? Those are all tasks that we're concentrating on.

Second is to try to focus our resources, focus police, justice, roads, electricity, governance, the things that people want in the most troubled area. So, we bring all those things to bear in a district—for example, the district of Musa Qala and Helmand, which was a Taliban stronghold, which they have been pushed out of in recent weeks and now are going in—the Afghan government's going in with police and local government, we're going in with electric generators, with projects for the local population, to try to help stabilize those areas by bringing all our tools to bear.

Second is that—you'll probably see a dramatic expansion of the availability of electricity in Afghanistan this year, dramatic expansion that reaches, still, a minority percentage of the population, but people on the grid in Afghanistan—it's about 6 percent of the population. We've got some major projects cutting in this year in Kabul, bringing electricity down from countries in the north, getting Kajaki Dam in the south, back on, that should let us provide a lot more electricity to people in Afghanistan. That turns on the lights for kids to do homework, but it also gives farmers opportunities to do things like cold storage and marketing of their products in a way that they haven't been able to do, and, therefore, to increase their yields from legitimate crops instead of poppy.

Third, there's a real focus on the narcotics problem, I think, in—especially in two ways. One is stepping up the interdiction of networks and traffickers, and, second of all, to go into these denied areas where the poppy production is protected by large landowners or protected by the insurgency, and to make sure that we can go into those areas and demonstrate that we can get the poppy that's grown in those places.

And fourth, I'd say, there are increasingly good signs of cooperation between Afghanistan and Pakistan, and we want to work with both countries so that, instead of having the insurgents use these territories in Pakistan to push out in two directions, that, in fact, between what's going on, on the Pakistan side and what's going on, on the Afghan side, we are, in fact, pushing in on them from two directions, and that they have to deal with that situation.

I think we have, as I said, enormous challenges that remain, but we have good programs to deal with them, we have a focused strategy that needs to be concentrated and coordinated better, but that we could really have an opportunity here in Afghanistan this year to put the government in the ascendancy.

The Taliban no longer control territory, but they're able to operate very widely throughout the country, and I think this has to be the year where the government is able to implant itself and bring stability to the key areas of Afghanistan. And I think we have the programs to do that, if we do them properly, if we do them well.

And that's about all I'd like to say at the beginning. I'd be glad to take questions. [The prepared statement of Ambassador Boucher follows:]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you so much, Secretary Boucher.

General Sattler, would you like to add anything?

General Sattler: No, Mr. Chairman. I'm ready for questions, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

We'll try a 7-minute round, if that's all right.

Senator Warner made reference to Secretary Gates's comments about NATO and the need for NATO to step up and provide a greater share in their commitments. Secretary Shinn, is NATO at risk of failing if alliance members do not come forward with the resources to meet the requirements of the ISAF mission?

Mr. Shinn: I believe that's something very close to what the Secretary mentioned in his comments to the NATO ministers, week before last. My understanding, that he was talking about the future, that it hadn't happened yet, but that there was a real risk to the alliance if, as he said, it evolved into, you know, one set of—

one set of members who will fight, and others who will not put their troops in harm's way.

Chairman LEVIN. And would you agree—and I'll Secretary Boucher this—with Secretary Gates, that NATO is at risk of being a two-tiered alliance, for the reason that Secretary Shinn just gave? Is that a real risk Secretary Boucher?

Ambassador Boucher: It is, sir. I think we have to remember that there are difficult tasks throughout Afghanistan, and we have to value the contribution that everybody's making. But, one of the things our commanders keep telling us is, they need the flexibility to use the different forces in different parts of the country—

Chairman LEVIN. And they don't have that—

Ambassador Boucher:—and they don't have that flexibility, both through caveats, people who put their troops in a certain place and want them to stay there, and just through the overall manning levels that haven't been reached yet.

Chairman LEVIN. Now, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Chairman Mullen, said that the coalition forces are facing a classic growing insurgency. DNI Michael McConnell—Admiral McConnell—testified, on February 5th, that, quote, “The security situation has deteriorated in the south, and Taliban forces have expanded operation into previously peaceful areas of the west and around Kabul.” Do you agree with that? Secretary Boucher, do you agree with that? That's the DNI saying that.

Ambassador Boucher: I guess—I'll always agree with DNI, but I think we—

Chairman LEVIN. Well, we—you don't have to agree with him. I'm just—do you agree with him?

Ambassador Boucher: I think the answer is “yes and no.” What we've found is, they set out, last year—the Taliban set out, last year, to take territory. They set out to put a ring around Kandahar and see if they could take Kandahar. They set out to strengthen their hold on particular strongholds. And what we showed, last year, is, they were unable to achieve those goals. They failed, last year, in their goals, as they stated them for last year. Spring offensive never happened.

So, we have, last year, pushed them out of strongholds—the Panjwayi district, near Kandahar, Musa Qala district, in northern Helmand, the Sanguin district, in northern Helmand. Those were strongholds. Those are heartland for Taliban. They've been unable to hold them.

On the other hand, they have been able to change their tactics, adjust their mode of operations, and they've adopted tactics of bombings and kidnappings and intimidation of villagers. And—

Chairman LEVIN. Have the Taliban—

Ambassador Boucher:—they have been able to—

Chairman LEVIN.—forces—

Ambassador Boucher:—do that more broadly.

Chairman LEVIN. Have the Taliban forces expanded operations into previously peaceful areas of the west and around Kabul, as Admiral McConnell said?

Ambassador Boucher: They've been able to carry out attacks in those areas, yes, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. General Sattler, do you believe the antigovernment insurgency in Afghanistan has been contained?

General Sattler: Mr. Chairman, it goes back to your previous question. We have expanded—NATO has expanded their operations, doing more distributive ops outside major bases, which means you obviously encounter more enemy forces in locations they may have declared safe havens previously, but now you're there. So, our engagement with the enemy, and each—as was already articulated, sir—each and every time we do encounter the enemy, mano-a-mano, that they come out on the short end. So, I would say, contact with the Taliban and the insurgent forces has been greater over the course of the last year. But, once again, I cannot confirm, sir, that either they may have been there and now we're operating in areas which were previously perceived as safe havens, or if, in fact, they've grown, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. So, you're not able to tell us that, as of now, the antigovernment—antigovernment insurgency in Afghanistan has been yet contained. You cannot tell us that.

General Sattler: Mr. Chairman, in the areas where we have forces, it is contained. Where we have been able to do the clear and the hold, it is contained. In other areas, I cannot comment on, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. You can't comment, or you can't tell us that—

General Sattler: I can't—

Chairman LEVIN.—it has been?

General Sattler: I can't tell you that it has been contained, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. Now, The Atlantic Council report says that the future of Afghanistan is going to be determined by progress or failure in the civil sector. And I think a number of our witnesses have confirmed the importance of that. The reconstruction effort has been criticized for the lack of international coordination among contributors, which include over 40 countries, the U.N., EU, NATO, and a number of nongovernmental organizations. Both the Afghanistan Study Group and The Atlantic Council reports recommend the appointment of a high-level U.N. international coordinator. Paddy Ashdown, former high representative for Bosnia, was considered for this position, but, apparently, the Karzai government nixed it. Do you—do we know, Secretary Boucher, why that appointment was nixed? And does that represent a setback?

Ambassador Boucher: First of all, I think it's regrettable that the Karzai government didn't accept Paddy Ashdown as the international senior civilian. We very much looked forward to having him that role.

We've heard a lot of explanations and discussions, mostly having to do with the domestic political environment. But, ultimately, I think it's for them to try to explain, rather than me.

But, I would say, at the same time, we've sat down with them, subsequently, both in the Secretary's talks last week and in my subsequent followup with the Foreign Minister. They tell us they do agree on the need for a strong international coordinator, they will look forward to working with an appointment by the U.N. Secretary General, and we're now engaged in the process of identifying the proper person.

Chairman LEVIN. The Atlantic Council report finds that less than 10 cents of every dollar of aid for Afghanistan goes to the Afghan

people directly. One program that has worked, we believe to have worked successfully to establish community development councils to identify local priorities and implement approved sub-projects, that has been the National Solidarity Program. Now, according to a press release from December, the National Solidarity Program has provided \$400 million in payments disbursed to 16,000 community development councils in Afghanistan. These payments have financed more than 30,000 community development sub-projects to improve access to infrastructure, markets, and services. The program draws resources from the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund, which is administered by the World Bank, by distributing funds directly to districts at the lowest level, which are the villages. By bypassing the central or provincial governments, the National Solidarity Program reduces corruption and misappropriation, and avoids unnecessary contractual layers.

I'm wondering, Secretary Boucher, whether or not you are familiar with the National Solidarity Program, and would you comment on it? And, if it is successful, does it—can you tell us if the Afghan government supports the program and their use of community development councils? And, do we support the program?

Ambassador Boucher: The answer is: yes, yes, yes, and yes. This is one of the more successful program in Afghanistan. Ten days ago, when I was out there, I met with the Minister for Rural Rehabilitation and Development, who runs this program. His updated numbers are 35,000 projects in 25,000 villages around the country. These are mostly small projects. They're wells, they're roads, they're retaining walls—schools, sometimes—things that are done in consultation with local people, with local villagers, through the community development councils. And that's a mechanism that we think works. We think the projects are done well, and the—it delivers what people need and what people want from their government, which is, as I said in my opening statement, really the nub of the matter.

So, we have put money in this program, ourselves. I think we've put about \$10 million in. But, we have another 50 million for this program in our budgets this year. I think much of it's in the supplemental funding that hasn't been passed yet, but we would hope to get that money and be able to—

Chairman LEVIN. Well, I'm glad to—

Ambassador Boucher:—expand our contribution.

Chairman LEVIN.—I'm glad to hear that, because apparently it does not have the problems of corruption and bureaucratic layers that these other programs have, and I'm glad to hear there is support for it. And we will continue to look for that money to be flowing in that direction.

Ambassador Boucher: Yeah.

Chairman LEVIN. Senator—

Ambassador Boucher: There are a number of ministries in Afghanistan that have walked—that have gone through the reform progress, that have improved their capabilities, and that are really able to deliver projects at a local, provincial, and district level. This is one of them. Education's another one. Health's another one. And one of the things we're trying to do this year is concentrate inter-

national and Afghanistan resources, so that all those programs can work to stabilize an area.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Senator Warner?

Senator WARNER. Mr. Chairman, Senator Inhofe has asked that he take my spot in the rotation.

Chairman LEVIN. Senator—

Senator Inhofe: Senator Warner, thank you very much for allowing me to do this, and I won't take all of my time, here.

Right after—when Operation Enduring Freedom went in, in October of '01, all the journalists were buzzing around, and then all of a sudden it seemed to have lost its sex appeal and they all went to Iraq. And now they have talked about rediscovering Afghanistan; it's the forgotten war. And I—having made several trips to both Iraq and Afghanistan, I don't think that's the case. Let me just share a few memories, here.

Early on, I was there when they turned over the training of the ANA to the ANA. It was very meaningful to me, I say, Senator Warner, because it was the Oklahoma 45th that was in charge of the training. And they were very much—I've talked to these kids—they're very much impressed with the type of warriors these guys are. Then I was honored to be with General Jones on his last trip that he took.

One of the things—and, again, on—in December—1st—I was over there—but, one of the things, that I haven't heard much in the testimony here, that was a problem in those early years, and apparently still is, or at least it was, according to General McNeil on December 1st, is that there's a unique problem of corruption at the local level, that there's not really a central authority that you can get in there and try to address the corruption problem, because it's the mayors and those—is this a problem that is—that you see, that makes it a little bit unique to—

Ambassador Boucher: It is endemic in Afghanistan, and I think the—when people look to their government for fairness and decency and services, that corruption is really one of the things that separates people from their government, instead of pulling them together. There are a lot of efforts made to improve the quality of government services, the audits and the accounting, the, sort of, insulation of the government against corruption. It's an active program that we have with the Ministry of Finance to try to track money better, keep it from being stolen.

There are—we have a lot of support for the attorney general and the prosecutors, who have started going after corruption. But, it is deeply rooted, it's longstanding, and it's something that we need to get at.

One of the features of the current police program, I think, is to really go into the district and, as we pull out the current police, they're then not only retrained, but reformed and vetted, so that when they go back, they will behave differently than they did before.

Senator Inhofe: Yeah, and that's essentially what General Eikenberry said in his—in this report that we're looking at today.

General Sattler, I know what your answer is, but I've got to get it on the record, so, here it comes. My favorite programs, as I've

gotten from the commanders in the field, are 1206, 1207, 1208, and train and equip, and then, of course, the CERP program, the Commanders Emergency Relief Program. We tried to get this—these programs expanded, as you know, during this last go-around, but the 1206, -7, and -8 will expire at the end of this year. I'd like to know, from your perspective, how significant this is, that we get these, not just reauthorized, but also expanded.

And then, I would ask the same thing about the CERP program, because right now, while it is only good for Afghanistan and Iraq, we were trying to make it global, and this really came from the commanders in the field. Could you respond to that?

General Sattler: Yes, Senator Inhofe. Thanks for the opportunity.

The 1206 is the global train and equip, which the Armed Services Committees have given us the authority—only authority, not appropriations—to reprogram up to 300 million, globally, to go ahead and take a look at problems, to home in, along with the chief of mission—it's a combination—the program is actually executed by the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense—gives us the flexibility—the two secretariats—for the combatant commander to get with the country team and the ambassador and look at a problem that might exist, either a problem that's sliding towards becoming a crisis, or take advantage of an opportunity. Because the budgeting cycle takes a period of time, you can't really get in and fix—train and equip local forces on a normal budget cycle. So, this is that malleable tool, that flexibility, that permits the two Secretaries to help a troubled spot anywhere in the world.

Senator Inhofe: Okay. And I'd ask—since we have both State and DOD represented on this panel, also—I think it was put together in such a way—so that the commander in the field makes a recommendation, then it goes—and it's a real fast track, just a matter of a very short period of time, and yet, it ensures the cooperation of both State and Defense. Would—any comments from either State or Defense on this?

Ambassador Boucher: Sir, if I can echo everything General Sattler said, the 1206 is—in particular, is really important to us in fighting terrorism around the world and really being able to bring some resources to bear fairly quickly on particular problems that confront us. And so, I think there's excellent interagency cooperation in targeting and focusing those funds.

I want to just, you know, praise, as much as I can, the CERP program. We decided, last year at the beginning of the year, that we really needed to expand the money that we spend through Provincial Reconstruction Teams, to help extend the government and help the Afghan government do things on the ground in key areas. CERP has come through. I've been out to these Provincial Reconstruction Teams. They're building dams, they're building schools, they're building bridges, they're building roads, they're changing the environment, really transforming the situation. And it's a combination of the reservists in the U.S. Army, the people who know how to build bridges and plan cities and conduct, you know, the—

Senator Inhofe: What about the idea of—

Ambassador Boucher:—plus the CERC—

Senator Inhofe:—making it global and getting it—so it's not confined to just those areas?

Ambassador Boucher: I think the more, the better. It's money—
 Senator Inhofe: That's good.

Ambassador Boucher:—well spent. It's the best- spent money—
 some of the best-spent money in Afghanistan is CERP money,
 and—

Senator Inhofe: Good. I appreciate that very much.

Any—do you agree with those comments?

Mr. Shinn: Yes, Senator, I'd agree with that and point out, to the
 earlier question about the alliance, you know, the CERP program
 has all the merits that you described, but it's largely limited to the
 12 of the 25 PRTs that the U.S. manages. You know, we've been
 pressing the—our NATO allies, those who run the other 13 PRTs,
 to come up with something similar to that, that would have the
 same positive effects without all the central bureaucracy and with-
 in the short decision cycle that CERP does.

Senator Inhofe: All right. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and—

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Inhofe.

Senator Inhofe:—Senator Warner.

Chairman LEVIN. Senator Ben Nelson?

Senator Ben Nelson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you
 for convening the hearing.

I'd like to thank and welcome the witnesses today.

I think it's helpful for us to hear what you are telling us about
 Afghanistan in relationship to that part of the world, and to—as
 well as what we can expect with respect to NATO's participation.
 It appears to me that the strategy, thus far, has left us with a
 path—to a path with insufficient military force and inconsistent
 strategy to combat the Taliban and al Qaeda, and, as a result of
 that, they are reconstituting themselves, both in the area and on
 the Afghan-Pak border.

The challenge we have is, we've either been unwilling or unable
 to get the expansion of the capabilities of NATO, over the last sev-
 eral decades, at the level that we've needed it in order to be able
 to deal with an issue like we have in Afghanistan. And I don't
 know whether we've kidded ourselves or whether we've known this;
 but, I can tell you, I don't think the American people have realized
 how inadequate NATO may have been.

Fortunately, and thankfully, Secretary Gates has spoken out on
 this. As he said, nobody's united the NATO forces more than he
 has with his remarks in the last several weeks. But, thank good-
 ness somebody has spoken out to at least get the subject out before
 us so we can begin to deal with it.

Now, my question, to begin with, is, as we look at the strategy
 in Afghanistan today, do we have an inverted triangle that we're
 building, the base being very unstable, a base that continues to
 have an agrarian economy that is structured on poppy, as opposed
 to a true agricultural base that is sustainable in the long term? Ei-
 ther we're going to have to wipe out their poppy crop or we're going
 to have to—we're going to have to see them change to a different
 kind of agricultural system. I've been worried about getting a farm
 bill over here. Maybe we ought to be worrying about getting a farm
 bill over there, to be able to restructure their agricultural base, be-
 cause if we don't do that, all that we're doing over there is fun-

damentally based on agriculture that is not sustainable, by any imagination, if it's based on narcotics and if that is what is sustaining Taliban and al Qaeda and other terrorist activity as the fundamental source of the funding.

So, I guess I'm going to start with you, Secretary Shinn. What are your thoughts about—do we have a base building—being built over there, or is it all on the wrong premise?

Mr. Shinn: You're certainly right, Senator, on your two major points, that it's an agricultural economy, and it's—

Senator Ben Nelson: Sort of.

Mr. Shinn:—it's got a narrow base, and much of that base is narcotics, it's growing poppy. The—and there is no easy solution to that problem, other than replacing—you know, widening out the bottom of that triangle with the Alternative Livelihood Program.

Senator Ben Nelson: Do we have a farm bill over there?

Mr. Shinn: I'm not sure we have the equivalent of a farm bill, but—

Senator Ben Nelson: We'll let Secretary Boucher speak to that.

Ambassador Boucher: I guess I'd have to say I'm not familiar enough with a farm bill to tell you exactly—

Senator Ben Nelson: "A" farm bill. Do we have—do we have an agricultural plan there to change the base of the agriculture from narcotics-driven production agriculture to something that is sustainable into the future? Because we cannot permit them to sustain this form of agriculture.

Ambassador Boucher: Yes. I think you've put your finger on it. But, it's broader than just agriculture. There's probably no single crop that's as easy to grow and as lucrative to a farmer as growing opium poppy. But, what we've seen in the experience of other countries—if you take, you know, Turkey or Thailand or Pakistan, places that had been, at one point in time, the major suppliers of opium or heroin to the world, what you see there is, the transformation of the rural economy has been a key factor. And so, the effort of bringing in roads, electricity, irrigation programs, fruit trees, transforms the rural economy, so you get a better market for the goods—for the vegetables and fruit that you grow; your brother-in-law drives a truck, makes some money; your sister-in-law, you know, she has handicraft store, where she is able to supply things to the local area, or even the export market—and the whole rural economy changes. And that's how people get out of poppy production.

Unfortunately, what we've seen is the concentration of poppy in the insurgency areas in the south. And this new U.N. drug estimate report has some very interesting statistics. We're actually doing a lot of assistance in the areas that have now become the major producing areas for poppy. We're doing a lot of—there is Alternative Livelihoods available, there is assistance, there is education programs. But, nonetheless, some of these surveys show 70 percent of the villages that have received some kind of assistance are still growing poppy in the south. That's different from the whole rest of the country. And—

Senator Ben Nelson: But—

Ambassador Boucher:—you've got to, essentially, establish government control, build a different economy.

Senator Ben Nelson: But, if you look at the economics of it, isn't it true that the money to be made in poppy production is not at the agricultural level at the base for the farmer. They're told what they're going to get. They have to do it. But, the money is to be made by the narcotics ring, Taliban and the others that are generating great sums of money for their own evildoing.

So, wouldn't it be wise for us to have a broadbased agriculture plan within the area? I heard the President, the other evening, speaking about agriculture. Unfortunately, it wasn't about American agriculture, it was about agriculture in other parts of the world. Perhaps we ought to have a plan there that's—that we can articulate, that we can facilitate, and we can measure, after the fact. Because, what it seems to me is, we're fiddling, and Rome is burning internally there as we see the enemy regenerate itself from—right in the midst of what we're watching, as we try to continue to put a tourniquet—well, we're not even tourniquets yet—bandages and Band-Aids on hemorrhaging arteries.

Ambassador Boucher: I agree with you, Senator, on what we have to do. I think there is a broadbased agricultural and rural development plan for the country, and including for those areas where the poppy is most prevalent.

Senator Ben Nelson: But, how soon and how long?

Ambassador Boucher: But, in order to apply it, and apply it thoroughly, you need to get security, and you need to get the government in there. And that's where this nexus between insurgency and narcotics—it's areas of insecurity, where the government is—where there's lack of governance, that we've not been able to bring the poppy problem under control.

Senator Ben Nelson: Well, even if we don't require the NATO countries to put up guns, can we help them get involved with helping the Afghans with butter, in terms of supporting that level? That's some of the soft power that I've heard Secretary Gates talk about in dealing with the challenge we have in the world today with asymmetrical warfare, that it's got to be a much broader base. So, maybe we don't have to ask 'em to send guns, maybe we can have them come and help us with the Afghans so they can create their own butter.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My time's out.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Nelson.

Senator Warner?

Senator WARNER. I'm to, again, yield to my colleague Senator Sessions, in that you've got to go to the 12:30 meeting with General Cartwright, as you are the ranking member on our subcommittee on that subject.

Senator Sessions: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Senator Warner.

I want to ask some questions that concern me. I truly believe that it would be a tragedy of monumental proportions if we were to somehow allow Afghanistan to sink into the chaos it was in before. It would be bad for the world and for the 30 million people there, and bad for the United States.

I want us to be successful. We've been at it quite a while. I think, one thing that's clear, that creating a operating, efficient government in an area of the world that's never had one before is very,

very difficult. It's just hard. We can place blame anywhere we want to place it, but it's not easy. And corruption is not something we can just pass a law and have it end; it's part of the cultural history that's risen from the oppression and so forth that they've suffered.

But, I guess I'm looking at The Atlantic Council report that indicates a—on the security side, a stalemate has, sort of, taken place, and then they say, quote, “However, civil sector reform is in serious trouble. Little coordination exists among the many disparate international organizations, agencies active in Afghanistan. To add insult to injury, of every dollar of aid spent on Afghanistan, less than 10 percent goes directly to Afghans, further compounding reform and reconstruction problems.”

Now, the three of you have talked about that. And our two Secretaries, mostly, have discussed it. I'd like to pursue—is it “Bowcher,” Mr. Secretary? Is that correct? Secretary Boucher, who is in charge of this, from the United States side, on the civil responsibilities in Iraq?

Ambassador Boucher: I guess I'd say the chief people are myself, in Washington, and our ambassador, in the field.

Senator Sessions: What other responsibilities do you have, in addition to Afghanistan, in your portfolio?

Ambassador Boucher: I've got India to Kazakhstan, but I also have an Afghan coordinator, working in my front office, who spends all his time on Afghanistan.

Senator Sessions: Does that person—if a decision has to be made about how to distribute our assets or set priorities, who makes that decision?

Ambassador Boucher: Primarily our ambassador in Kabul. They get the funding, and they try to allocate it where it's most needed.

Senator Sessions: But, ambassadors are—on the scheme of things, are pretty far down the line, are they not, in terms of requesting the resources and reprogramming monies? Are they able to effectively make the decisions, and do the—does our ambassador understand that he has that authority?

Ambassador Boucher: He very much understands he has that authority. I think, if you look back at the funding requests that we've made to Congress, and Congress has funded, most of those originated at our Embassy in Kabul, and our ambassadors very much understand and put their requests directly to us and at a high level. Our job is to get the money that the people on the ground need—

Senator Sessions: I believe—

Ambassador Boucher:—to do their job.

Senator Sessions:—you indicated—I believe it was you, or maybe Secretary Shinn—that tightening coordination, focus resources in troubled areas, increasing electricity, poppy eradication, and better cooperation with Pakistan are priorities in Iraq. Who is in charge of executing that? And what name do they have?

Ambassador Boucher: The people I just talked about, I guess, would be in charge of executing that—the Embassy in Kabul, the—Ambassador Wood, out there, myself, and our Afghan coordinator, Pat Moon.

Senator Sessions: Well, it's my observation that our American public is a little bit confused. We, sort of, look to our military to

take care of Afghanistan. We are looking to our military to take care of Iraq. But, large parts of the effort that's necessary to success depends on the civil infrastructure. And so, you acknowledge that that is the State Department's, primarily, responsibility.

Ambassador Boucher: We're the—yes, our, primarily, responsibility—we work with people from all the agencies.

I have to say, the coordination on the ground between the U.S.—U.S. military, U.S. agencies, USAID programs, handled by the ambassador and General McNeil and the other generals out there, is very, very good. I think, where the—key problems of coordination involve, kind of, getting all the international community together to focus on some of these goals and do things in a standardized and focused way.

Senator Sessions: Well, let me ask you, these four goals that you mentioned, I guess that's a plan, although it—not particularly specific. I sense—an objective report that I'm getting here from you, Mr. Secretary and Secretary Shinn, we're sitting back, and you're discussing all of this, and—with wisdom and observation from afar, but I'm interested in who is in charge of fixing it, who has direct responsibility, who understands it's their responsibility, who understands, if we fail, civilly, we place our soldiers at greater risk to be killed, or our allies to be murdered, that it furthers the progress of the Taliban if we're unsuccessful. Do we clearly understand that—I guess, again, our ambassador, you say, is the primary point person on the ground, but how long does an ambassador serve there, and when do you expect a change in that office?

Ambassador Boucher: Ambassadors serve at the pleasure of the President. It has generally been 2 years in Afghanistan. And our—Ambassador Wood started earlier in 2007, late spring, at—if I remember correctly.

I think we all understand, whether it's—whatever department, whatever agency, whatever job we have in Washington or in Afghanistan—the stakes involved and the need for success and the way that we have to operate in order to achieve success. Any problems that come up in that process are the responsibility of me and the ambassador and others involved in the chain, to make sure they get fixed.

Senator Sessions: Well, you, a little while ago, said, “I guess,” in referring to responsibility, and you began listing a group of people with vague responsibilities. I would just suggest one of the weaknesses we have is, we don't have a clear chain of command, that there's one person that we can look to, by name, and who's responsible for the constant adjustments and changes and reallocation of resources necessary to be successful in a difficult situation like this. And my only other question would be, Would—how would the role of someone like Paddy Ashdown, the international coordinator—would that help us be able to focus our resources more effectively?

Ambassador Boucher: Sir, there are—this is a complex problem, and there are a lot of moving pieces to it, there are a lot of people involved in trying to solve it. If anybody's going to be held responsible in Washington, it ought to be me, and that's why I'm here talking to you. So, I'm happy to have my name attached to any success or failure that we achieve out there.

I'd say, we do think that having a senior international civilian would help with that broader effort to coordinate the international community, coordinate the civil and military operations, and to coordinate between the internationals and the Afghans. And, ultimately our job, his job, is to support the Afghan government in building and extending its capabilities.

So, that, we think, would be a boon, not only to us, but also to the Afghans and the international community, as a whole, and that's why we're working on getting somebody who's a strong figure to perform that job.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Sessions.

Senator Lieberman?

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks, Mr. Chairman. Senator Levin, let me, first, thank you for convening the hearing.

It strikes me, as I listen to our colleagues ask questions, Mr. Chairman and Senator Warner, that the situation on the committee and in Congress with regard to Afghanistan is quite different from with regard to Iraq. These two conflicts are different, although, I think, part of a larger war that we're in with Islamist extremism and terrorism. But, what I'm saying, in brief, is that, while we have had a lot of division of opinion on Iraq—unfortunately, too much of it on partisan lines—there does seem to be a kind of unanimity of purpose here with regard to Afghanistan, about the—how critical it is for us to get it right, how we all know how harmful it will be if we fail. And I do want to, in that spirit, thank you for convening these two hearings today, and to express the hope that, under the leadership of the two of you, this committee can play a very proactive role with regard to Afghanistan, in support of the work that these three gentlemen, and all the many who work under you, both here and in Afghanistan, are doing on our behalf.

I was in Afghanistan, about a month ago. Just to state an impression briefly, there are a lot of people worried about where this is going in Afghanistan. My own conclusion was that, this is nowhere near as on the edge as, for instance, Iraq was in 2006, that our forces and the coalition forces, NATO forces, are holding our own, but we're not—we're facing an insurgency that is revived, we're operating in an unbelievably poor country, which has a proud history, but not so much of a governmental history, so it gives us great challenges. And I think we—what we want to see happen—I know, we do and you do—is to see us begin to turn the tide toward more success in Afghanistan, as we've begun to see in Iraq.

So, I want to begin with a question to Secretary Shinn. In your prepared testimony, you state, and I quote, "that the simple counterinsurgency prescription is clear, hold, and build." It's my observation, based on a couple of visits there and, just, what I hear and read, that in the south of Afghanistan, in fact, coalition forces are clearing, but they're not really holding and building. And I wanted to ask you—which is to say that they clear a district, withdraw, the Taliban retakes it, and obviously there's no opportunity for us to build. I wanted to ask you if my impression is correct. If so, why is it so, and what can we do to change it?

Mr. Shinn: Senator, I think your impression is correct. It is exactly the clear, hold, and build problem, particularly the hold part

of it, that we—we agree with you, is what constitutes much of the problem in the south. And we're, shortly, going to have a test case of this in Musa Qala, where, essentially, it was, for a period of time, under Taliban control; they were cleared out; we have backfilled, now, with Afghan National Police, for the hold part. And perhaps Secretary Boucher could expand on this. We're starting to, with the Afghans, flow in the resources for the build, the third piece of the equation, but the jury is out on how hard it's going to be for the reformed—or, in the process of being reformed, Afghan National Police, along with elements of the Afghan National Army, to hold Musa Qala long enough, and at large—big enough of a scale, so that the rebuilding and the governance part can take place.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you. I appreciate that.

Secretary Boucher, do you want to add a quick word?

Ambassador Boucher: I think, Senator, for a variety of reasons, the training of the police has lagged behind the training—

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right.

Ambassador Boucher:—of the military. And I think we've got it right, both in numbers and quality. There's still, sort of, the National apparatus that we've built with the military—the payroll systems, communication systems, command systems—that is still weak on the side of the police; and that's an essential part to being able to coordinate and use police well. Perhaps the job of building police is inherently more difficult, because you have a lot of people with some very bad habits who need to be reformed, retrained, weeded out, and—et cetera. But, I do think we have formulas, now, for really doing the job of the police training right. We've already seen some signs of success with this Focused Development District concept, and it's going forward in a big way this year. So, proof of the concept will be seen this year on the ground.

Senator LIEBERMAN. General Sattler, let me ask you a related question, which really goes to the clear, hold, and build. It's my impression that the comprehensive counterinsurgency strategy that our forces are employing so successfully in Iraq is being employed successfully also in RC East by our—by American forces. But—and which is to say, they have a campaign plan, and they are executing it, and they're executing it successfully—but, it's also my impression that there's no comparable campaign plan for the contested provinces of southern Afghanistan, where NATO forces are in the lead. I want to ask you to talk a little bit about whether that impression of mine is correct. What's prevented that from happening, and what can we do to get the south heading in the right direction—south of Afghanistan?

General Sattler: Senator Lieberman, when ISAF took over, they have an operational plan, which has, basically, the same three lines of operation—security, reconstruction, and governance—as they move forward.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right.

General Sattler: They—when they came onboard, 18 months ago, when ISAF took control of all Afghanistan, at that point most of the countries, when they signed up, they believed they were coming in for security and stability operations, or stability and reconstruction operations. Over a period of time, especially in RC South, the

RC South countries have realized that it is a counterinsurgency in the south. They use the term “comprehensive approach to the challenge” in the south. The Canadians, the Brits, the Dutch, and the Danes have all stepped up to the plate and are doing more counterinsurgency-like operations.

Secretary Gates just submitted a paper to the RC South countries, which is a—it’s a strategy—a counterinsurgency-type strategy which takes credit for what’s being done, talks about what is going on right now in RC South, and also looks towards the future. And that paper was submitted by the secretary to the RC South countries at the same time that the NATO—the North Atlantic Council, the NAC, and the Secretary General have come forward with a campaign architecture to now take all these—all the international instruments of national power, and the lines from security to economic to governance, to come up with a comprehensive approach across the country. So, right now, NATO is taking a hard look at that comprehensive approach, sir.

So, I would—I feel—we feel very comfortable that the RC South countries are doing what needs to be done, but what we need to do is get a more coherent—it was already articulated—

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right.

General Sattler:—a more coherent approach to use all the resources—U.S., NATO, partnership countries, and international organizations—to come together. And that’s being worked on right now, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. So—and just a final quick question—that—so, you think we’re in reach in time of seeing—having a campaign plan by NATO in the south of Afghanistan that’s comparable to the one we’re executing in the east of Afghanistan?

General Sattler: Sir, I believe it’ll be—it’ll go beyond RC South. It’ll be a comprehensive plan for the country—

Senator LIEBERMAN. But—

General Sattler:—of Afghanistan, of which RC South and East, sir, are components, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Well, that would be good. That’s certainly what we need. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Lieberman.

Senator Warner?

Senator WARNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I’d like to start with Mr. Boucher, to be followed by Secretary Shinn. Using, as an example, the steps that are being taken by our government in Iraq to establish written and agreed-upon documents with—between the two governments—namely—you saw that, I hope, very-well—editorial by the Secretaries of State and Defense outlining how they’re going to write two documents, one being a status-of-force agreement. Would you recount for us exactly the legal authority by which NATO is now operating in a sovereign nation of Afghanistan, and the United States is operating as a part of NATO, as well as conducting its own separate operations of a security and antiterrorist nature?

Mr. Shinn: Sorry, Senator, that’s—

Senator WARNER. Yes.

Mr. Shinn: Well, my understanding is—to be as precise as you are requiring us to respond, has to do with some of the technicalities of the U.N. Security Council strategy.

Senator WARNER. Well, that's what I want to sort through. We—I mean, we're—

Mr. Shinn: Right.

Senator WARNER.—we're in—engaged in active combat operations in a sovereign nation. And what is the basis on which that is being done?

Ambassador Boucher: The basis is U.N. resolutions and, of course, the consent—indeed, the welcome—of the Afghan government for those kind of operations and that kind of support. But, actually, to get to a precise legal answer, I'd probably have to back to my lawyers and go through it once again. [INFORMATION]

Senator WARNER. Well, I think it's important that the record, Mr. Chairman, have that in as a part of our deliberations here today.

So, I recognize that there are some U.N. resolutions. What are the expiration dates on this, given that the operations in Iraq are dependent on a resolution which is going to expire at the end of this calendar year?

Ambassador Boucher: The U.N. resolutions—the U.N. mandate has generally been, I think, a 1-year resolution, comes up for renewal about March-April of every year, and we'll look at renewal every year, again this year, with whatever extensions or revisions it might need for this operation over the year to come.

Senator WARNER. Are we contemplating a status-of-forces agreement?

Ambassador Boucher: Again, that's something I'd have to check with the lawyers on. [INFORMATION]

Senator WARNER. Mr. Shinn, do you have any—

Mr. Shinn: Yes, sir. I mean, the—one of the core points you're making is a valid one, and it's an important one, which is that we are going to have to regularize and scale up the legal foundation for activities in Afghanistan, similar to the way that we're doing it in Iraq. And it's our intention to use some of the same models; for example, a SOFA. And it's all the more important because, as you implied, we have the NATO piece of the puzzle that we also have to factor into the equation.

Senator WARNER. Well, I think it's essential that we put that together, because our forces are fighting, taking casualties, and, I must say, regrettably, it happens in all conflicts, inflicting casualties on civilian population, destruction of civilian property, which, unfortunately, is in the path of the combatants. And I think we'd better be all signed up and—to the dotted line on this, to protect not only the credibility of our Nation, but also the individuals—the military individuals, the civilians, and others from our government who are, really, in a courageous way, taking their own risks and sacrifice to make this a successful operation in Afghanistan. I think we owe them no less than to have complete clarity and openness on this issue.

So, you will provide that, in due course, for the record.

Mr. Shinn: Yes, sir.

Ambassador Boucher: Yes, sir. [INFORMATION]

Senator WARNER. Good.

General Sattler, I asked this question of Secretary Gates recently, and he was very forthright in the answer, and that is that the Congress and the general public here in this country have been informed that we're going to send in two augmented marine battalions to become a part of the force-structure contribution by the United States in Afghanistan. I understand part of that force will be utilized to augment our current level of force structure within the NATO. Is that correct?

General Sattler: That's correct, Senator. Of the 3,200, the Marine Expeditionary Unit, about 2,200 of that, they will be under ISAF command and control to be part of the ground forces, correct, sir.

Senator WARNER. And the balance will augment the existing force structure that we have, that are performing various security and antiterrorist operations. Is that correct?

General Sattler: The remaining 1,000 will work under Admiral Fallon, under Operation Enduring Freedom. They will be tasked under the train-and-equip mission, working for General Cone. So, for their period of time, they will be enablers and facilitators, coaches, mentors, and security, to take the police, which we've already talked about, to permit them to get out into some of the areas where it's not safe and secure now. So, they will have police trainers and mentors with them—the marines will. The preponderance of their mission will be security. But, because of their ability to handle and teach weapons, tactics, et cetera, they will probably be dual-use, sir.

Senator WARNER. Now, Secretary Gates, in consultation with the North Atlantic Council and others, recognized the need for these forces. Is that correct?

General Sattler: That's correct, sir. This is fully coordinated with the North Atlantic Council.

Senator WARNER. Right. But, the fact that the United States has to completely fulfill this requirement by NATO, and also our own separate command, it was because the NATO forces have not lived up to their commitments. Isn't that the blunt truth?

General Sattler: Part of the—sir, part of the requirement for the train-and-equip, the coaching and mentoring piece, is a—it is a requirement that has come forward from Admiral Fallon to the U.S. side; but, the Marine Expeditionary Unit—even though the 3,200 went, together, the Marine Expeditionary Unit was Secretary Gates's contribution, to ensure that the proper firepower, et cetera, would be in place in RC South or wherever the ISAF commander wants to use it, sir. So, it was a unilateral placement of those forces by Secretary Gates. That's a correct statement, sir.

Senator WARNER. But, again, it's because of the shortfall of earlier commitments made by our NATO partners, am I not correct?

General Sattler: Sir, there is a requirement on the books, for approximately three battalions, that is unfilled. But, this is not being placed against that requirement, no. It's going into an area where ISAF wants to place it. So, I guess the answer to your question, Senator, to be straight, would be not directly correlated; but, if the other units were there, would the Secretary have had to come forward? And, sir, I would only be speculating. So, this is not being placed against the three-short battalions on the NATO requirements, sir.

Senator WARNER. Well, I'll go back and get exactly what he said, but his answer was fairly crisp and to the point, "Yes, Senator, that is the reason we're sending those forces in, to make up for the shortfalls."

Would you like to—

Ambassador Boucher: Sir, if I could make one comment. Last year, our experience was, the U.S. increased its forces by about 3500, and, in turn, then other NATO allies, other allies, Australia included, stepped up and matched that pledge, if you want to say that, and we ended up with an increase, last year, of about 7,000 in the overall force levels. And we are now actively engaged in the diplomacy, particularly leading up to the NATO summit in Bucharest in April, to try to leverage these—this contribution of 3200 marines with the other allies to get them to step up and both follow on and meet some of these other requirements.

Senator WARNER. Well, we may be working in that, and leveraging that, but the plain, blunt fact is, the troops were needed, and the U.S. was the one that came forward and made that contribution. It's as simple as that.

Do you wish to add anything, Secretary Shinn? I mean, we've got an obligation to the American people, when we make additional force commitments, to say precisely why we're doing it. And we're—

Mr. Shinn: We do.

Senator WARNER.—doing it, because it's the judgment of the military commanders, (a) they need forces, and (b) no other nation was willing, in a timely way, to come forward with that force structure, and force structure that has no national caveat. The U.S. structure does not have a national caveat, and they can be employed by that NATO commander in—to meet all the contingencies, a full spectrum of contingencies facing NATO. Am I correct in that?

Mr. Shinn: You are, sir.

General Sattler: Yes, sir.

Mr. Shinn: It's a clear—it's a fact that there are shortfalls in resourcing the military side of Afghanistan. It's also, I think, true that the Secretary committed those incremental troops in the expectations that our NATO allies would be more forthcoming. I would also point out that the NATO resourcing story is not over yet. As Secretary Boucher mentioned, this is part of the long negotiations that will, hopefully, produce incremental results at the Bucharest—

Senator WARNER. Well—

Mr. Shinn:—summit, which is in April.

Senator WARNER. Okay. Let the record note you're struggling with a response, but I think we got it all out.

Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Well, let the record also show that the Secretary of Defense was very direct. As Senator Warner says, when asked whether or not the reason we had to send the 3200 troops is because the allies didn't come forward with their part of the deal and what they committed to and need to supply. He was very direct. Senator Warner is correct. I don't know why you're dancing around something which the Secretary of Defense was very clear on.

And, by the way, this is all being done, filling in the gap left by our NATO allies, at a time when we're overstretched in Iraq, which everyone acknowledges.

So, Senator Warner's—we will get the record on that, and put that right at this spot in the record. [INFORMATION]

Chairman LEVIN. It's very important that the American people know. There's support—as Senator Lieberman says, there is support for doing this. This is not an area where there's great division. I think there's a—there's kind of a need to fill in where our NATO allies failed, but there's no use mincing words on it. They have failed, and we should put maximum pressure on them to come through with what they need to come through with.

So, I just want to support what Senator Warner—

Senator WARNER. I thank the Chair.

Chairman LEVIN. Senator Thune?

Senator Thune: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And, Secretary Shinn, Secretary Boucher, and General Sattler, welcome to the committee today, and thank you for your service. Up here, sometimes we don't always agree, but there is certainly bipartisan agreement on one thing, and I think that is how important it is that we win in Afghanistan. And I think there's also consensus in the international community about how important it is that we succeed there.

One of the questions that I think has been touched on a little bit already today, that seems to be right at the heart of getting a private economy going in Afghanistan and helping our efforts succeed, has to do with the whole question of counternarcotics and the direct correlation between the narcotics trade and financing for terrorist activity. And I guess I'd like to direct a question to Secretary Boucher, if I might, because there is some question about whether or not there ought to be use of military when it comes to eradication efforts, and some contradictory-type, I guess, opinions on that issue.

From The Atlantic Council report, on page 10, it says, and I quote, "Some have suggested that ISAF take on an aggressive drug eradication role. This is not a good fit for ISAF. Armed forces should not be used as an eradication force," end quote.

The Afghan Study report, however, makes what seems to be a contradicting conclusion on page 32. And, there again, I quote. It says, "The concept of integrating counternarcotics and counterinsurgency by using international military forces to assist interdiction is welcome and overdue."

So, I guess, the question—I understand the need for military forces to take extreme care during these eradication/interdiction types of operations, and the need for integration with Afghan forces, but, in terms of how you would respond to these two conflicting or contradictory reports, do you think we should use our forces for eradication purposes, or not?

Ambassador Boucher: I think there's actually a subtle language difference between the two things you quoted, and that's—therein lies the answer to the question. No, I don't think we should use NATO or U.S. forces to eradicate, but I do think there's an appropriate role, and it's actually part of the NATO mandate, for our forces or NATO forces to provide a secure environment in which

the Afghans can go in and eradicate, so that—the Afghans have about a 500-man Afghan eradication force. They're prepared to go out in the field and eradicate poppy. If they are provided with the appropriate security environment, they can do that in denied areas, areas where the Taliban operate or where there are local drug lords. And so, as we've seen the increasing nexus between poppy-growing and insurgency, it's become even more important that we have, sort of, a secure environment for the eradicators to go into those tough areas, and that's where NATO can play a role, that's where Afghan army can play a role, but the actual eradication would be done by the Afghan eradication force.

Senator Thune: I think this question was touched on earlier, maybe by Senator Nelson, but I posed a question, a while back, to Eric Edelman, who, at that time, was Defense Under Secretary for Policy, about this transition of getting the Afghan economy, particularly the agricultural economy, transitioned from poppy production to some other—some of the types of things that we can grow in this country. The climatic conditions are very similar there. And, I guess, the question is, Is enough effort being made on that level to start making that transition so that we don't have to have as much of the hard power, the military, even if it's the Afghan military, involved? And are we doing the sorts of things—is there enough, I guess, effort on that front to—my impression was—the last time I asked this question, the answer was no, and I'm just wondering if that's changed, if we're making an aggressive effort to try and transition their agricultural economy to more legitimate types of production.

Ambassador Boucher: There is an aggressive effort on the rural economy. A lot of it—first and foremost, you've got to get in roads, you've got to get in electricity, you've got build the irrigation systems, in addition to providing agricultural extension crops and other industries—cold storage, things like that—that can operate in those areas.

The—we're in the process now of trying to beef up our State Department, USAID, and Department of Agriculture personnel at the Provincial Reconstruction Teams, at the provincial level, so that they can do more of that. And it also rests on being able to bring that stuff in, along with military activity, the hold part, so that we can—you can't always build a road or start a new economy or clear the irrigation ditches if there is an insurgency raging in that district, so you have to be able to do these things in a very coordinated fashion, that's sequenced, but very, very close together. So, the answer is yes, there is an aggressive effort, but no, it's not being done everywhere, because it's not able to be done everywhere, at this moment.

Mr. Shinn: Senator Thune, could I just amplify the—a little bit? It depends, sort of, where you are. If you're in Nangahar, for example, in the eastern side of the map, where the security situation is stable enough so that we could succeed in putting in the roads and the infrastructure, so you could begin the conversion from poppy to real agriculture, you'll see that the poppy production, when the data comes out, has gone way down. But, conversely, we'll see the poppy production in Helmand, in particular—in Helmand, in Kandahar, and, to some degree, in—going up, for just this reason.

We—yeah, you can't get in there, because of the security situation, to begin that conversion. So, no matter how many resources you throw at, you know, roads and cold storage, if you can't actually deliver them to the population, it won't have the desired effect.

Senator Thune: Have you seen the connection between this narcotics—the poppy production and insurgent funding and all that sort of thing going up? I mean, is that a—I know there's always been a fairly established connection there, but what's the trend line with regard to the illegitimate activity, in terms of that industry, and a lot of the other issues that we're fighting with regard to the insurgents?

Mr. Shinn: It's a pretty murky picture. There's not enough evidence—I mean, first of all, we don't—we don't know very much about how they actually fund the Taliban insurgency, either as an aggregate or in the groups. And it's not clear whether the trend is up or down, in terms of cash flow. My—you know, my personal inference is that that nexus is growing; then, it's probably becoming increasingly important to them to fund the insurgency. But, I don't have a lot of intelligence information to support that.

Senator Thune: That's my impression, too, just from observation of media reports—

Mr. Shinn: Yeah.

Senator Thune:—and—that there seems to be a growing connection, relationship, between that narcotics trade and the insurgency.

Ambassador Boucher: I think it may actually be somewhat the other way around, that we've always known that the narcotics trade and the insurgency would feed off each other. And that's been especially true in the south. What we've seen is, where we've been able to establish good governance and establish policemen and establish an overall, sort of, climate of development, the poppy has gone way down. So, if you start looking at it on a map, you've got more and more poppy-free provinces and poppy reductions in the east and the north of the country; and, in the south, where the insurgency is, you're left with the poppy and the insurgency, kind of, feeding off each other. So, whether that's actually grown or that's been the case, it's just we've been able to eliminate it on these areas, and we haven't eliminated here yet, I think, is probably hard to say. But, yes, the connection between the two is increasingly clear.

Senator Thune: And do you think that there is sufficient support from the government there, that they—I was there, a while back, and, again, my impression was that they—they know this is a problem, they're—at least they—at least verbally committed to fixing it. But, are they—are they—do the actions follow that? I mean, are they taking the steps that are necessary to help deal with that?

Ambassador Boucher: In a general sense, yes. I think it's especially true in the provinces, where we've seen big reductions and that have gone poppy-free last year. It was—one of the biggest factors has been the governors and the people on the ground—the governors on the ground. And there is even, now, a good-performers fund, so the governors that achieve a decrease can get some money to spend on local projects.

So, I think that remains one of the key factors, including the lack of good governance, in addition to the lack of security in the prov-

inces where poppy is still a big problem. So, it's something we're still working on.

Senator Thune: Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I think my time has expired. Thank you.

Thank you, all.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Thune.

Let's try a 4-minute second round.

As I mentioned, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mullen, before the House Armed Services Committee a few months ago, described the war in Afghanistan as "an economy-of-force operation," and said that, "It's simply a matter of resources, of capacity. In Afghanistan, we do what we can; in Iraq, we do what we must."

General Sattler, can you tell us what Admiral Mullen meant when he said the war in Afghanistan is a—"an economy-of-force operation"? What does that mean, in military terms?

General Sattler: Sir, an "economy-of-force" would mean that you would have two challenges, and you would put a priority of effort on one of the two. In this particular case, as Admiral Mullen alluded, that the priority now for resources is going towards Iraq, at this time. But, sir, I would also like to stress that the resources that are in Afghanistan, that there is no man or woman, no warrior, who goes forward on an operation where they are not fully resources to accomplish the mission at hand. But, that being said, sir, as you're alluding, there are some things we could do, and, as Admiral Mullen said, we may like to do—we would like to do—that we can't take those on now, until the resource balance shifts, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. The Afghanistan Study Group recommends a number of diplomatic steps to be taken to strengthen a stable and a peaceful Afghanistan, including the following. And this is for you, Secretary Boucher. This is what they recommend: reducing antagonism between Pakistan and Afghanistan, including by having Afghanistan accept the internationally recognized border between Afghanistan and Pakistan, the so-called Durand Line, as the official border; next, getting Pakistan to remove restrictions that burden the transportation of goods through Pakistan to and from Afghanistan, including from India; and, third, having the United States and its allies develop a strategy to convince Iran to play a constructive role with respect to Afghanistan, including the possibility of resuming direct discussions with Iran on the stabilization of Afghanistan.

I'm wondering, Secretary Boucher, whether you would support those—or whether the administration would support the diplomatic initiatives outlined in the Afghanistan Study Group report that I've just quoted.

Ambassador Boucher: Generally, yes, but not exactly the way that they recommended, I have to say. We've spent a lot of—we've put a lot of effort into reducing tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan. We all remember, last year, April, March—March, April, when things really flared up, and not only was there shooting across the border, but one of our U.S. officers got killed at a flag meeting that was held to try to reduce that shooting. So, it's a very—it has been a very dangerous situation. I'm happy to report that the situation seems to have turned around quite a bit in—last

fall, there were—a jirga of the tribes from both sides of the border, where peaceful people on both sides stood up together and said, “We don’t want the insurgency, we don’t want the extremists in our midst, and we’re going to work to accomplish that.” That’s a process that we’re confident will continue to go forward between the two countries. President Karzai, President Musharraf met, at the end of December, the day after Christmas, had a very good meeting, and there have been subsequent followup meetings and cooperation between the two sides.

We’ve also promoted border cooperation, economic cooperation, and other areas, so we see things going, I’d say, a lot better between the two countries, both starting to realize, and starting to act upon the realization, that these people are enemies of both nations, and these people need to be dealt with by—from both sides, by both countries.

Frankly, we haven’t taken on the issue of the Durand Line. It’s a problem that goes back to 1893, to the colonial period. I think both sides do operate with that as the border. They shoot across it to protect it. They operate border posts on it. And our goal has been: try to reduce those tensions and get them to work in a cooperative manner across that line.

Pakistan’s restrictions on transit trade from India, truck transit from India, is an issue that we have taken up, and we continue to take it up, because, frankly, we think it’s in Pakistan’s overall economic interest to capture that transit trade and to have it go through Pakistan and not have it go through Iran. And it was—something we continue to raise. Pakistani government keeps telling us it’s really a matter that’s determined by their bilateral relationship with India, and not even by the, sort of, broader global interest, but it’s something we do continue to push, because we think it would be, not only helpful to us and allies and others who operate in Pakistan, but it would be helpful to Pakistan itself.

The strategy for Iran, we are—certainly keep in very close touch with the Afghans on their relationship with Iran. We see Iran doing a lot of different, and sometimes contradictory, things. They do participate in support for the Afghan government. They participate in the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board of countries—donor countries that are trying to support Afghanistan. But, they’re also undermining the politics, and, in some cases, even supplying arms to the Taliban. So, we’ve had a—I think, a comprehensive response to that.

At this point, I think, the issue of whether we sit down and talk to Iran about it is more one that needs to be looked at in the broader context of our relations with Iran. We have had such discussions in the past. But, really, Iran needs to cooperate with the international community and with the Afghan government, not just with the United States, and that’s where we think the pressure ought to be on Iran.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Senator WARNER?

Senator WARNER. General Sattler, I’ve had the privilege of visiting with you in your own office in the Pentagon of recent, and we had some lengthy discussion about my grave concern about the drug problem, and the fact that the continuously rising revenues

from this drug problem are, in part, filtering their way back into the hands of the Taliban, enabling them to have greater purchasing power for weapons and other pieces of equipment to engage, not only the NATO forces, but our forces within NATO and our forces that are not a part of NATO, and that, therefore, it's incumbent upon the United States to really sit down with our NATO partners, in particular, and work out some sort of an arrangement to begin to curtail this flow of funds from the poppy trade.

We keep going around in a circle on this issue. Originally, it was going to be Great Britain, "This is your problem." I think they still have some portfolio investment in trying to solve it, but—I'm not here to point fingers—they've just not been successful.

What are we going to do? Because we're putting at risk the loss of life and limb of our own American GIs as a consequence of the funds flowing from the poppy trade.

General Sattler: You're absolutely correct, Senator Warner. We have a—the United States has come up with a 5-pillar comprehensive strategy to go in and take on the counternarcotics challenge inside of Afghanistan. It goes back to Senator Lieberman's point—we can have a strategy, but it needs to be executed by all elements that are on the ground inside of Afghanistan. The sovereign country of Afghanistan obviously has to buy into it, sir. And then, the NATO—our NATO partner countries, too, who are on the ground beside us. It has an eradication piece to it. It has an interdiction piece to it. It has a rule-of-law and justice piece to it. It has a public information piece, to, you know, illuminate the Afghan public as to why this must be undertaken. And the last thing it has, which has already been discussed here, an alternate-livelihood piece—What other crop do I grow? How do I get it to a market?—sir. So—

Senator WARNER. Those are the pieces, but your operative phrase is that the—Iraq—the Afghan government has to, quote, "buy in," end quote, into this program. So, I would turn, now, to Secretary Boucher. Where are we, in terms of their "buying in" to begin to lessen this risk to our forces?

Ambassador Boucher: I think the Afghan government has basically bought into the strategy. The strategy evolved from their program, which they say has eight pillars. We talk about five pillars. But, essentially, it's a common strategy between us and the Afghans to get at the narcotics problem, both through—through all the tools mentioned, but also just the basic security and government—governance activity. As I said, it is Afghans who go out and destroy the poppy in the fields. You know, we're a long way from reducing it, but we've—it at least seems to have peaked out, this year. But, there is also an effort, a diplomatic effort, underway with other governments to go after the funding and to get at the money that the traffickers use, move around, and sometimes supply to the Taliban.

Senator WARNER. Well, when are we going to see—I'm not trying to put you on report. You're a fine public servant, doing the best you can. But, we don't see any results. What's the increase, this year over last year? About 20 percent, isn't it?

Ambassador Boucher: Last year's increase was 34 percent. Half of that was yield, and half of that was hectarage. The early estimates for this year are that it'll be a slight decrease overall, includ-

ing stabilization in Helmand, in the south. But, obviously it's still at a very high level that needs to be, not just capped, but reduced.

Senator WARNER. So, we'll have some, although, unfortunately, not as large, an increase as the year before, but, at some point we've got to see a reversal and a beginning of a decrease.

Now, can you add anything, Secretary Shinn? Because it is your Department that's taken the casualties.

Mr. Shinn: It is. And I don't have very optimistic things to say about this.

Senator WARNER. What can the Congress do? What can anybody do? We just—

Mr. Shinn: It is—it is—

Senator WARNER. We can't just throw up our hands.

Mr. Shinn: This is a—this is a—this is a tough one. Part of it is just the basic math. The Afghan central government budget is about \$600- to \$700 million a year from their domestic revenue, most of it from customs. The street value of 1 year's production of opium is between \$3- and \$3- and-a-half billion a year. So, the scale—the out-of- scale between the amount of money that can flow in to corrupt and undermine the public institutions in Afghanistan is so big, compared to the fragile base of the government itself, we are—we are really walking up a steep hill.

Senator WARNER. Well, we may be walking up a steep hill, but when General Sattler puts into effect the orders for these 3,000 marines, it's incumbent upon the Congress of the United States to assure their families and the marines that we're doing everything we can to limit the risk that they're going to face over there. And among those risks are weapons that are being purchased by this drug money. So, I'm going to unrelentlessly continue to press on this issue, because I feel a strong obligation to those marines. Anybody—

General Sattler: Sir, I absolutely agree with you on that. I do think this is an issue that deserves unrelenting pressure. And we know what works in Afghanistan. We've seen provinces go poppy-free, we've seen provinces with significant reductions, including places like Nangahar, which was way up, came down, went back, and has now gone down again. And it's a combination of military force, police, good governance, and economic opportunity, in addition to the counterdrug programs. And the most important thing is that we pursue the overall stability in provinces, we get better government down there, and we pursue these narcotics programs with unrelenting vigor.

Senator WARNER. Well, thank you, gentlemen.

And I thank the Chair.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you—

Senator WARNER. It's been a very good hearing.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Warner.

Senator Lieberman?

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

I was thinking that I—before I ask a few questions, I just want to say a word about the American forces over there and say—tell you what I heard from the Afghanis when I was there, a month ago. It's quite remarkable. They have the greatest appreciation and admiration for the American troops that are there—their courage,

what they bring to the fight, their involvement in the fight. But, beyond that, it's encapsulated in this sentence that one of the Afghans said, "We appreciate all soldiers and troops from outside Afghanistan that are here. The American soldiers are the only ones that share their canteens with us." Now, that is a simple statement that says a lot, which is that, "The American soldiers treat us like equals, they treat us, in fact, like fellow soldiers, they treat us like brothers in this conflict." And I was so moved by that, that I wanted to put it on the record here, because, you know, these troops of ours are the best. They're the best of America. And what that said to me is that they are bringing American values to this battlefield, which is far from the U.S., but has so much to do with our own future security. That pride, of course, doesn't mean that we shouldn't—that we don't need, as my colleagues have said, to get more NATO forces in there. And they, frankly, have to be more involved, as our troops have been.

I want to come to the other part of what I think we need, militarily, which is, just as in Iraq, we need to train more of the Afghans to be an effective Afghani National Army.

And I want to ask two questions about that. Among the most perplexing things that I heard was that General—when I was there—that General Cone is actually about 3,000 people short of what he needs to carry out the mission we've given—that is, American short or coalition forces short—to train the Afghani army. Did I get that right? And, if so, General or Secretary, what are we going to do to—because that's the—that's the long-term hope, here: they get to—they get skilled enough, trained enough, to protect themselves from the Taliban.

General, do you want to start that?

General Sattler: Yes, Senator Lieberman. You are correct, sir. General Cone has, through Admiral Fallon, put a request in for approximately 3400 additional U.S. men and women to go and assist in the train-and-equip mission for the Afghan National Security Force, both the army and the police. What General Cone has been able to do—we have not been able to resource that requirement, sir—what General Cone has been able to do is to stretch the forces he has; and, through some very creative management of the assets he had, he's been able to cover the gap, up to approximately this point. But, we are at a point now—which is why the Secretary is sending 1,000 marines in—to go work for, eventually, General Cone in the train-and-equip mission. So, that time on the ground, they will be able to fill his shortfall. But, as has already been clearly stated, that is for a finite period of time.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right.

General Sattler: That is for 7 months. We will then need to find the resources to come in behind, to continue that coaching and mentoring and providing security for Afghan National Security Forces. So, you're correct, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I appreciate the answer, and I hope we, in Congress, can help, in any way we can, to provide those additional personnel, because that seems to be fundamental to the success of our mission.

Second point is, I was also struck by the fact that we are training the Afghan National Army up to a number that is remarkably

below what we're training the Iraqi Army up to, notwithstanding the fact—and this would probably surprise most Americans, based on our focus—that Afghanistan is larger, both in terms of land area and population, than Iraq is. So, I wonder whether there's any thinking, within the Pentagon and within NATO, that we ought to increase the goal for training the Afghan National Army.

General Sattler: Sir, I'll go and take that first, Senator. The—the base forces, which we—what we describe the end state, this is the objective force that we are—the Afghan government has described what they need for military. It was originally 70,000, sir. They have just come in with a proposition to take that up to 80,000—

Senator LIEBERMAN. Eighty, right.

General Sattler:—80,000—from 70- to 80-.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Compare it to Iraq, just for a moment, in terms of the army, as opposed to the local security forces in Iraq. Aren't we going for over 300,000 there?

General Sattler: I don't think it's quite 300,000, Senator. The overall force in Iraq—police, border guards, and the army—will be somewhere close to about 600,000, total.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Yeah.

General Sattler: In this particular case, the police—the objective force for the police is 80,000. So, even if they went to 80- for the army, they'd have approximately 160,000. So, it is a much smaller force. But, once again, we are in conversation with the Minister of Interior and the Minister of Defense to go ahead and come up with what they feel, based on the enemy threat, their objective force should be, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Well, I appreciate that.

Secretary Boucher, did you want to add something?

Ambassador Boucher: Yeah, if I can just say one thing. That new target, of 82,000—or 80,000 for the army—was approved, about a week ago in Tokyo by the international community doing the coordination monitoring.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Good.

Ambassador Boucher: And there is serious look now at, What's the overall force total that they need? We came through, last year, with \$8 billion to step up the training, both in the pace, the quantity, the quality. As we look, now, to being able to achieve those initial targets, we have to look where the ultimate end goal is, and that's a serious study that's going on right now.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks.

My time is up. I just want to put a thought on the table, Mr. Chairman, and that is, one of the things that the future of Afghanistan depends on is an understanding that we are committed to a long-term relationship with them. And—I'm not talking about permanent bases or any of that—and I just hope that, as we announce that we're going to begin to negotiate some kind of bilateral agreement, strategic partnership with the government of Iraq, that we ought to be thinking about doing the same, for some period of time, with the government in Afghanistan, because I think that that will give them the confidence, including in the army, the Afghan army, to go forward. And so, I hope that we're thinking about that.

General Sattler: Senator Lieberman, could I—I know you're out of time, sir, so I—

Senator LIEBERMAN. But, you're not at time, so you can talk as long as you want. [Laughter.]

General Sattler: Mr. Chairman, if you—thank you, sir.

If I could just, sort of, kind of, baseline how this—how we've gone from when we started—you mentioned you've been involved in this all the way along, as everyone in this room has, sir. But, in—if you went back to 2003, when then-Lieutenant General McNeil—three-star General McNeil commanded the forces in Afghanistan, at that point in time, sir, he had about 10,000 U.S. warriors under his command—

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right.

General Sattler:—and about 2,000 coalition warriors. We had one prototype Provincial Reconstruction Team we were just, kind of, experimenting with. And the Afghan National Security Forces, based on the brutality of the Taliban rule, did not exist. There were no Afghan units that—there were warriors, they had the warrior culture, but no units, sir. So, that's 2003.

If you move forward to today now, where General McNeil commands all ISAF, now what he has under his command, sir—he has approximately 27,000 U.S. forces on the ground in Afghanistan, he has 31,000 coalition and NATO forces on the ground. The PRTs now have grown to 25 Provincial Reconstruction Teams, of which 12 are U.S. and 13 are international Provincial Reconstruction Teams. And the Afghan National Security Forces, which are growing in capacity and capability, today there's approximately 75,000 police of some stage of training and effectiveness and efficiency, sir, and 49,000 Afghan National Army, for a total of approximately 124–125,000.

So, I know we use terms, and I read them in the paper, “the forgotten war,” sir, “the unresourced war,” and I—as someone who's been involved with it, myself, for the past 7 years—I apologize if I'm a little emotional on it, but I just wanted to make sure that we did show that there has been tremendous growth in capacity and capability, and a clear—and the hold piece, as Secretary Shinn alluded to, we need to get that Afghan National Security Force to have the ability to fill in and do that hold, where they're respected and they're appreciated by the Afghan national people, sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I appreciate your emotion and the truth of what you've said, which is that we've come a long way. And, of course, I think we all agree, we've got a ways to go yet until we get to where we want to be.

General Sattler: And I certainly agree with “we have a ways to go,” sir.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks, Mr. Chairman, for your—

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you—

Senator LIEBERMAN.—courtesy.

Chairman LEVIN.—Senator Lieberman. I'd just—it's Senator Akaka's turn, but just on this particular subject, if Senator Akaka would mind—not mind, just for a moment.

Your figures were 49,000, currently, Afghan National Army, and 74,000 Afghan National Police personnel. And that's the figures we have. But, what—we have something added to that, which is,

there's a training completion date, for those two groups, of March 2011. Is that right? Are my notes right on that?

General Sattler: Senator, I'll have to check, sir. [INFORMATION]

General Sattler: I—the—there's 8,000 army in training right now, and we're at approximately 49-. So, when they graduate, you're looking to actually hit the goal of the current objective force of 70,000. Sir, I'll have to—I wouldn't want to take a guess at that, Senator, I'll—

Chairman LEVIN. How long does it take to train a police unit, approximately—Afghan police unit? Do you know, offhand?

General Sattler: Sir—

Chairman LEVIN. Okay. It's all right.

General Sattler:—I'll get back to you, rather than guess, Senator, about—

Chairman LEVIN. And the same with the—

Ambassador Boucher: Senator, the—

Chairman LEVIN.—how long it takes to train the army unit. I don't quite understand that figure, in my own notes, so it's—

Ambassador Boucher: The—

Chairman LEVIN. We'd appreciate for the record. [INFORMATION]

Ambassador Boucher: Sir, the Focused District Development Plan that pulls the police out, puts in temporary police, and then moves them back, it's an 8-week training program that they go out on, and then they go back. But, they go back with mentors, and the mentoring is actually probably the key part to how they operate when they get back here.

Chairman LEVIN. We'll get into the mentoring later.

Senator Akaka?

Senator Akaka: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Let me add my welcome to Secretary Shinn and Secretary Boucher and General Sattler for being here and to continue to inform us about what's happening there.

Six and a half years ago, our country went to war in Afghanistan to drive out al Qaeda and Taliban. And now, because we did not finish the job as we should have, we are still fighting the Taliban. Recent developments in neighboring Pakistan have also added to the concern that we must increase our efforts to ensure stability in this region of the world. And so, we look—I'd look forward to hearing your responses on the recommendations of the Afghanistan Study Group and Atlantic Council and how we can best proceed on this important mission.

Secretary Boucher, it has been reported by the Afghanistan Study Group that the United States and its allies lack a strategy to—and I'm quoting—"fill the power vacuum outside Kabul and to counter the combined challenges of reconstituted Taliban and al Qaeda forces in Afghanistan and Pakistan, a runaway opium economy, and the poverty faced by most Afghans," unquote. In your opinion, Secretary, is there a clear political end state for Afghanistan that is agreed upon by both the NATO alliance and within U.S. Government agencies?

Ambassador Boucher: Sir, I think there is. And if you listen to what military colleagues, Defense Department colleagues, other col-

leagues in the government, and even other governments, talk about, you'll find that we're all focused on the same issues: beating the Taliban on the battlefield, providing the safety and security that Afghan people need, and providing them with economic opportunity and good governance throughout the country. The goals are there, the strategy to do that in a comprehensive approach is there. Frankly, we need to make sure that the execution matches the strategy, and that's where a lot of the focus is to improve the concentration and the coordination of all those elements. What you might call the "campaign plan" for any given period is where we—we're very much focused right now.

Senator Akaka: Do you think that there needs to be a change in our strategy in order to achieve that end state?

Ambassador Boucher: We are, indeed, looking at the overall strategy, preparing, with our NATO allies, strategy documents for the Bucharest summit in April, for example, as well as more detailed discussions, for example, of the countries of the south, on how we actually implement that strategy in the south this year.

Senator Akaka: Secretary Shinn, some of the lessons learned in Iraq include the importance of using existing social and political structures within the country in order to more effectively establish a government perceived as legitimate by the people. The extent of de-Ba'athification that was imposed after the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime increased many problems in that country that we are still trying to overcome. Given the tribal and decentralized nature of Afghanistan, what do you believe are the best steps forward to establish a more centralized government, particularly given the country's long history of tribal-centric leadership and politics?

Mr. Shinn: That's a good and important question, Senator Akaka. I think, probably the most important two areas that we can work with the Afghan government to strengthen the hand of the central authorities are, first of all, the general capacity-building of their ministries or their institutions, things that Secretary Boucher referred to, some, earlier in this meeting—in particular, building national institutions, like the Afghan National Army, which is distributed in four-core around the country, but is essentially managed by the Ministry of Defense out of Kabul.

The other piece of this puzzle to which there's not a clear answer is what advice we would provide to the authorities in Kabul as—and particularly to President Karzai, who is attempting to simultaneously manage the tribal network out in the provinces and out on the ground, some of which are in areas that are actually contested by the Taliban, at the same time as he tries to grow these national institutions out of Kabul. And that second question is a much more difficult—much more difficult row to hoe. And we are being very cautious about the degree to which lessons from Iraq—for example, the concerned-citizens organizations that have worked in Anbar—whether or not they are applicable to Afghanistan.

Senator Akaka: Secretary Shinn, in a recent combined ABC/BBC poll, 67 percent of Afghans said they supported the NATO presence, while 13 percent support the Taliban. To what extent do you believe that this poll represents an accurate portrayal of NATO's effectiveness in winning the popular support of the Afghani people?

Mr. Shinn: I might defer that to Secretary Boucher, who knows more about some of the polling data in Afghanistan than I do, while I try to think it through.

Senator Akaka: Secretary Boucher?

Ambassador Boucher: I don't like it when people say "That's a tough one, let him answer it." Let me give you—a try at it.

Chairman LEVIN. Unless you do that, right, Secretary?

Ambassador Boucher: I'm allowed to do that occasionally—

Chairman LEVIN. Yeah, right.

Ambassador Boucher:—sir, I think.

Chairman LEVIN. We all do that, at times.

Ambassador Boucher: The—if anything, it might reflect a—even a less—lower level of support for the NATO forces than actually exists. I think—we find, you know, story after story, place after place, the strong support for the United States forces, in particular, but NATO forces, in general. People want the government—they have, unfortunately, experienced the Taliban. They don't want to be whipped in the marketplace, they want their girls to go to school, they don't really want to grow opium poppy, even if they still do, for economic or other reasons. And so, I think there's a very, sort of, open attitude towards accepting NATO, U.S., Afghan government security, Afghan government structures, if those structures perform, if they deliver what people want, which is safety, justice, economic opportunity, and governance. And that's where the concentration is, is making a government strong enough to deliver those things throughout the country.

One of our former commanders used to say, "It's not that the Taliban is strong, it's that the government is weak." And strengthening government remains, I think, the strongest effort, because that's what people want. They have expectations that need to be met.

Senator Akaka: I'm just interested in this. Do you believe that this informational success is an aspect of the war that NATO is winning and that it is mainly lack of force coverage and presence of insurgent sanctuaries that has enabled and encouraged the recent increase in Taliban activity?

Ambassador Boucher: I think it's not so much the sanctuaries, because we've managed to take away, at least in Afghanistan, much of the strongholds, and we've been able to interdict or otherwise decrease the level of cross-border activity in many places. I think it's the fact that they're adjusting their tactics, they're picking up new tactics, they're picking up on bombs and kidnaping and things like that. And we have to adjust, as well.

General Sattler: Senator, if I might just add to that, I believe that some of those perceived—they may be—perceive they are in these safe havens, but, due to, now, getting out and about more, better intelligence collection, sharing information with the population, all the things that are critical in a counterinsurgency operation, that, as Secretary Boucher just indicated, we are able to precisionally take away those safe havens. But, "Are we getting them all?" is the question that we were asked earlier, and I—and, at that point, we answered that we are—we don't believe we're getting them all, sir, but, when we do find 'em, we do have the resources and capacity to take those out.

Senator Akaka: My final question, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Shinn, it has recently been advocated by both the General Petraeus and Secretary of Defense Gates that further troop withdrawals from Iraq this summer should be put on hold for an indeterminate period for a security evaluation at the reduced levels. Admiral Mullen has also recently testified as to the development strain facing U.S. forces that must be alleviated sooner rather than later. Given the findings of the Afghanistan Study Group that indicate too few troops have been used to fight the war in that country, what do you make of the ability of the U.S. forces to endure what essentially will amount to a shift from Iraq to Afghanistan rather than a reduction that will ease the operations tempo?

Mr. Shinn: It strikes me that one of the most important responses to that question is an observation, made a little bit earlier here by General Sattler, which is, for the forces that we have in Afghanistan, under no circumstances have they engaged in missions for which they were under-resourced—is the first point. And the second point is the broader one, which is, on the military clear side of the strategy in Afghanistan, we believe that we're winning—slowly, surely, but winning.

So, the sourcing level is not, to me, the principal concern about Afghanistan. It has to do more with the execution on the hold and the build side of the strategy.

I'd defer to General Sattler to comment on the Iraq side of that.

General Sattler: I would just say that the Secretary of Defense has that tough call. We talked, earlier, Mr. Chairman, about resources and where the resources go. He has the challenges of Iraq, he has to balance against Afghanistan, against, as you just articulated, the health of the force, the opportunity to be home and reset and retrain the force, and then the global challenges of the long war. And it's—the Secretary, as we—as you mentioned, we will come down—by the end of July, we'll have reduced approximately five brigades of combat power out of Iraq. Then, the Secretary has clearly stated that he wants to take a pause at that point, in conjunction with Admiral Fallon and General Petraeus and Admiral Mullen, and take a look at what that has done. And then, the Secretary, when the time is correct, based on input from his commanders and advice from the Chairman, sir, I believe he will make a decision, at that point, what the next move is.

Senator Akaka: Thank you very much for your responses.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Akaka.

The—you've talked a little bit about the use of the military, in terms of interdiction—drug interdiction. And I may have missed this testimony, in which case I am apologetic for that, but when, I think, you were asked, I believe, Secretary Shinn, but I'm not sure, it may have been Secretary Boucher, about the use of the military, in terms of drug—in terms of eradication, were you also saying that we should not be using the military, in terms of interdiction? Who addressed that issue?

Mr. Shinn: Actually, it was him, but I could answer—

Chairman LEVIN. Well, either one.

Mr. Shinn:—answer for him.

Chairman LEVIN. Either one.

Mr. Shinn: I think—

Chairman LEVIN. Point the finger at yourself on this. Go on, Secretary Shinn.

Mr. Shinn: Yeah, the—I think the response was that the military—our military is not directly involved in either eradication or interdiction—

Chairman LEVIN. Right.

Mr. Shinn:—that we believe it should have an Afghan face to it, but we do have—provide indirect support, in terms of training and equipping, for some parts of the counternarcotics strategy, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. Why can't we join in a—with the Afghan forces in the interdiction side of—you know, leave the farmers alone, don't get involved in the eradication, but, when it comes to dealing with heroin laboratories and smuggling convoys and going after the precursor chemicals, why not use our military jointly with the Afghans—not on the fields, not on the eradication, but on the big guys?

Mr. Shinn: Sometimes, we do, actually. When there—there is some crossover between the Taliban and, you know, macrotraffickers.

Chairman LEVIN. Well, even when—

Mr. Shinn: And when that occurs—

Chairman LEVIN.—there's not a crossover—

Mr. Shinn:—we do go—we do after them.

Chairman LEVIN.—even when there's not a crossover, why not go after the big guys?

Ambassador Boucher: I think they're—

Chairman LEVIN. Militarily.

Ambassador Boucher: It's not—part of it's theology, but, I think, it's more effectiveness.

Chairman LEVIN. Part of it's what?

Ambassador Boucher: Theology. Sort of the—you know, these things get discussed in the NATO mandate—

Chairman LEVIN. I think there's enough theology, as it is, in Afghanistan. Could you use a different word, perhaps?

Ambassador Boucher: Part of it's a theoretical decision that was made by NATO on how the NATO forces should be used. Part of it's the practical aspect of—you want to take down drug lords in a way that is—that can be done through law enforcement means, so that they can be prosecuted and punished. And, therefore, if it's going to be done in the Afghan justice system, it's better for the Afghans to do it. We have extensive DEA presence that we're in the process of beefing up to work with the Afghans, but they need to be able to do these operations, by and large, in a manner that allows them to continue, not just to take down the guy, but to go into prosecution and law enforcement.

That said, NATO is quite aware, because of the nexus, that there are drug lords aligned with the Taliban. And, I think, both in counterinsurgency terms and counternarcotics terms, they're prepared to go after some of these guys.

Chairman LEVIN. Is the Afghan police and Afghan army effective against the drug lords and the heroin labs?

Ambassador Boucher: The Afghan police and army tend to provide the—as I had said, the overall security of the perimeter for the Afghan eradication force, but the—

Chairman LEVIN. No, not eradication. I'm talking about the—

Ambassador Boucher: The—well, the Afghan drug police and the Afghan eradication force—

Chairman LEVIN. Yeah.

Ambassador Boucher:—who are more directly charged with that mission.

Chairman LEVIN. Are they effective in interdicting heroin in the poppy?

Ambassador Boucher: They've had some success with small and medium trackers—traffickers, not a lot success at the bigger levels.

Chairman LEVIN. Do they want to succeed at the higher level?

Ambassador Boucher: I think they do. The people that we've worked with and—

Chairman LEVIN. No, I'm talking about the police, themselves, or is it just so much corruption in the police or the army that you can't rely on them to go after the big guys?

Ambassador Boucher: The counterdrug police seem to have the determination to do so. We're trying to build up their capability.

Chairman LEVIN. There's a short—you mentioned a shortfall in the number of trainee—trainers, I guess—significant shortfall. And you've—I think, General, you've talked about commanders being about 2500 trainers short—900 short in the army, and about 1500 short in the police. I think those were your numbers. A thousand of the marines that are going to be deployed to Afghanistan in the next few months are going to support that training mission, but we're way, way short. Our allies have not carried through on the commitments that they've made for training teams. I guess the operation is called Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams; shorthand being “omelets” [OMLTs], I gather. What's the resistance in our NATO allies to doing that? That's—it's not a combat—direct combat role, it's a training mission. Why have they fallen short on the training mission?

General Sattler: Mr. Chairman, it really is—it becomes a combat mission. When you become an Operational Mentor and Liaison Team, you're paired with an Iraqi battalion or brigade. When you go to that brigade, as do our embedded trainers, you eat with, sleep with, you mentor by your mere presence, and you teach and train as you move along.

Chairman LEVIN. These are embeds.

General Sattler: These are embeds. And OMLTs do the same, sir. When the OMLTs go with that unit, when that unit—if that unit moves into combat, or when that unit moves into combat, the OMLT goes with. The OMLT provides—they call for fire, they provide medevac, they control artillery, so they become a critical enabler to that unit.

Right now, sir, there's 34 international OMLTs that are in the field right now inside Afghanistan. Of that 34, 24 have been certified. There is a certification process, because of the responsibility that the OMLT, with the enablers, that they bring to the fight, sir—so, obviously, they're certified by ISAF in conjunction with General Cone and CSTC- A. There's six more OMLTs that are in

the pipeline, that should be fielded later this year. So, that'll be approximately a total of 40 international Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams on the ground.

Chairman LEVIN. Of the 72 that are needed? Is that—

General Sattler: The—I—sir, I'll have to get the exact end—the objective number. [INFORMATION]

General Sattler: But, they are substantially short of the ultimate goal. Correct, sir

Chairman LEVIN. Which gets to the—back to the question of our NATO allies not being willing—too many of them—because a number of them are, and I don't think we ought to generalize about NATO allies—

General Sattler: Yes, sir.

Chairman LEVIN.—because we have got NATO allies that have had, I think, greater proportion of losses, even, than we've had in Afghanistan, including the Canadians. So, we shouldn't be generalizing about this. But, too many of our NATO allies have not come through. And one of the reason, apparently, is because of the public opposition in their countries to the Afghanistan mission. Is one of the reasons for that, Secretary Boucher, is that, in the minds of many Europeans, the Iraq mission and the Afghan mission are linked? We have a report, Afghanistan Study Group recommended that there be decoupling of the missions in Afghanistan and Iraq as a way of improving our overall approach to the war on terrorism, that if we delink them, it may be helpful, in terms of attracting greater support for the one, and that wouldn't be colored or diminished by opposition to the other. Is there some truth to that, that you would—

Ambassador Boucher: I guess there's some truth to that. I don't find it, extensively. As I've gone to Europe and I've talked to parliamentarians and party leaders and people like that about the Afghan mission, Iraq is not usually thrown up at us.

Chairman LEVIN. How about their publics?

Ambassador Boucher: It's—to some extent, you see it in the public commentary. But, a lot of the restrictions on forces are either parliamentary restrictions or promises that they've made to parliament that, you know, "We're going in for peacekeeping and stabilization, and, therefore, we will do these things and not those things." And that's where a lot of the caveats come from. And it, basically, I think, has to do with the image that they have of their forces, the kinds of things they think they should be doing, and, you know, they're there to be nice to people and give them a happier life. And, when it comes to fighting, not everybody else is as committed as we are, but many are, as you mentioned—Canadians and the Brits and the Dutch and some of the others that are with us in the south. So, I think part of it's lack of understanding of the full breadth of the mission that you have to do. In order to give people a hospital, you've got to be able to give them police, and you've got to be able to give them a secure environment, as well. Our forces, and several others, are fully committed to the whole breadth of that; whereas, others have gone under the assumption that they would only be doing part of that.

Chairman LEVIN. To the extent that the public linkage in some of the countries that have put restrictions on their troops is a cause

for those parliamentary restrictions or government restrictions, to that extent, would it be useful to decouple these two missions?

Ambassador Boucher: Sir, we've been looking at that recommendation. What—I guess the answer is yes, in general, but what it—

Chairman LEVIN. Just to give you an example—

Ambassador Boucher:—what it means in practical terms is not quite clear to me, frankly.

Chairman LEVIN. Well, let me give you an example. The Afghan mission could be put in our regular budget, keeping the Iraqi mission in a supplemental budget.

Ambassador Boucher: The only place that these two seem to go together is in the supplemental budgets. We have—a lot of our funding goes into the regular budget, but there are supplemental needs, and the vehicle for getting that is a combined supplemental. But, at least when we talk about it, when we go out and lobby for it, we're talking about the situation in Afghanistan and what we all need to do to accomplish our goals there.

Chairman LEVIN. Yeah, but I think those two missions are linked in the rhetoric in Washington and in the budgets, both. It's the global war, and we talk about Iraq and Afghanistan. And I think you ought to give a lot more thought to this question. To the extent that the European publics, in those countries that have not come through with what they've committed, link these two efforts, it seems to me that is a diminution of the support that you're likely to get from their representatives in their parliaments. Here, most—many of us have delinked them. I mean, many of us who have opposed the effort in Iraq, including me—been a critic of it and opposed going in—nonetheless, very much supported going into Afghanistan, which, by the way, was a unanimous, I think—a unanimous vote, in the Senate, to go into Afghanistan, go after the folks who attacked us, and who are still there, at least on the border, and Taliban, who supported those folks. And yet—so that I think many of us have delinked it. And I guess you, in your positions, have delinked them.

But, I'm just urging that if there is truth to the perception and to the point that, in those countries, there's been a linkage in the public minds, and if that—if that is one of the reasons why there's been a shortfall on the part of many NATO countries in stepping up to what's needed in Afghanistan, it may be wiser that the administration, in its rhetoric, talk—and in its budget request—separate these two missions. They can argue they're both valid, and you can talk about where there ought to be more troops than the other. You have to do that, obviously. But, in the rhetoric and in the budget, I think it would be useful. It would reflect the public mood here, where the public, I think, sees very differently the challenges in Iraq and Afghanistan—and has, consistently—and it may be true in the NATO—some of the NATO countries, as well.

Thank you, gentlemen, and your staffs, for rearranging your schedules today to accommodate ours.

And we will stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1:45 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]