

**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 - AFTERNOON SES-
SION -**

Thursday, February 14, 2008

U.S. SENATE
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Washington, D.C.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:36 p.m. in Room SD-106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Carl Levin, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Members Present: Senators Levin [presiding], Kennedy Reed, Bill Nelson, Pryor, McCaskill, Warner, Inhofe, Sessions, Dole, and Thune.

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, and William G. P. Monahan, Counsel.

Minority staff members present: Michael V. Kostiw, Republican Staff Director, William M. Caniano, Professional Staff Member, and Lynn F. Rusten, Professional Staff Member.

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

Committee members' assistants present: Bethany Bassett, assistant to Senator Kennedy, Sharon L. Waxman, assistant to Senator Kennedy, Frederick M. Downey, assistant to Senator Lieberman, Elizabeth King, assistant to Senator Reed, Christopher Caple, assistant to Senator Bill Nelson, M. Bradford Foley, assistant to Senator Pryor, Gordon I. Peterson, assistant to Senator Webb, Stephen C. Hedger, assistant to Senator McCaskill, Jason D. Rauch, assistant to Senator McCaskill, Anthony J. Lazarski, assistant to Senator Inhofe, Lenwood Landrum, assistant to Senator Sessions, Lindsey Neas, assistant to Senator Dole, 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 afternoon, everybody. This afternoon's session is the second panel of the committee's hearing on the strat-

egy in Afghanistan and on the independent reports of the Afghanistan Study Group and The Atlantic Council of the United States.

This morning, we heard from administration witnesses from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Staff, and the Department of State. This afternoon, we will hear from two experts who participated in the preparation of the independent reports: 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 were principal members of the Afghanistan Study Group, and that group was established under the auspices of the Center for the Study of the Presidency.

We greatly appreciate the work of your groups that you are representing. It is a subject which is of extraordinary importance to the future of this planet and this country's well-being, and we heard a lot this morning which—I don't know if you were present or whether you had any representatives present, but, in any event, we expect, this afternoon, we'll get, at least from the reports that we've read, something of a different slant than we got this morning, because the independent reports provide a very sobering assessment of the situation on the ground in Afghanistan. And I quoted from your reports this morning, at least some of the outstanding comments that stick out, including, according to the Afghanistan Study Group report, efforts to stabilize Afghanistan are, quote, "faltering," and that report finds that, since 2002, that violence and insecurity have risen dramatically as Afghan confidence in their government and its international partners falls. The Atlantic Council report that I quoted this morning said that, "Make no mistake, NATO is not winning in Afghanistan. There's a strategic stalemate in the security situation. And there's no ability to eliminate the insurgency, so long as Taliban enjoys safe haven across the border with Pakistan."

A comment that I quoted this morning about—the antigovernment insurgency threatening Afghanistan has grown considerably in the last 2 years. The Study Group also finds that the Taliban has been able to infiltrate many areas throughout the country, which gives them the power to intimidate and coerce the local Afghan people.

The reports find that more U.S. and international forces are needed for Afghanistan. At the same time, the Afghanistan Study Group points out that more NATO countries need to share the burden and remove national caveats that limit the ability of their troops to participate in ISAF operations. And there was a great deal of agreement on that point this morning.

The Atlantic Council report concludes that, despite efforts of the Afghan government and the international community, Afghanistan remains a failing state and could become a failed state.

As The Atlantic Council report says, we cannot afford for Afghanistan to be—to continue to be the neglected war.

As the Afghanistan Study Group says, Afghanistan stands today at a crossroads. The United States and the international community must ensure that efforts to move Afghanistan towards a sta-

ble, secure, and progressive state succeed. And that's everybody's goal here.

We made a number of points this morning about the difference, in terms of attention being paid to the situation in Afghanistan, compared to the situation in Iraq, and a number of other points, which I'm sure will come out this afternoon.

Before I turn this over to Senator Warner, let me, again, thank you, our witnesses, and your groups and your—and the efforts of your groups, the studies that you've produced. You have volunteered, and, as volunteers, you have contributed to some very, very important reports, and we all look forward to your testimony.

Senator Warner?

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

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

I'll just put a brief opening statement into the record and commend each of these witnesses. [The prepared statement of Senator Warner follows:] [COMMITTEE INSERT]

Senator WARNER. I was so interested in these reports that I actually attended the unveiling of the reports in the spaces occupied by the Foreign Relations Committee, and it was a very well-attended session. And I look forward to hearing it again.

And I want to thank you again, General Jones, for all the various activities that you're undertaking. They're quasi, or not totally, pro bono publico. You certainly deserve to take on that career you wish, but you certainly—not—evaded a lot of invitations to take on this type of responsibility, and you bring to it a remarkable background of experience and knowledge.

And to you, Mr. Inderfurth, I remember you well when you were with ABC. We're glad to have you back in a very friendly spirit before the committee.

Chairman Levin: Thank you, Senator Warner.

General Jones?

STATEMENT OF GENERAL JAMES L. JONES, USMC (RET.), PRESIDENT AND CEO OF THE INSTITUTE FOR 21ST CENTURY ENERGY, UNITED STATES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, AND CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, THE ATLANTIC COUNCIL OF THE UNITED STATES

General Jones: Mr. Chairman, Senator Warner, distinguished members of the committee, it is a—as always, a very special honor to be able to appear before you on any matter, but particularly on the matter at hand which relates to Afghanistan.

Just by way of summary, my experience in Afghanistan stems from my assignment as Supreme Allied Commander of Operational Forces of NATO. The—my initial attention to Afghanistan was drawn by ambassadors of the alliance in 2003, when they asked the military component of NATO to start developing plans that would eventually result in NATO going to Afghanistan. We did that, and, as you recall, those plans were approved in February of 2004, and we began a rather slow, but methodical, foray into Afghanistan, starting with Kabul itself, then to the north, then to the west, to the south, and finally, in 2006, we assimilated the entire responsi-

bility for security and stability under Operation Enduring Freedom, the U.S.-led coalition, and ISAF, which is the NATO equivalent.

I think we can be very proud of the difference that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization has made, despite the fact that there is consistent stories about national caveats and inadequate resourcing of the combined joint statement of requirements, which commanders have repeatedly and without any—without any change, have always been up front, I think, in asking for what they felt they needed.

My—I spent a portion of every month for about 3 and a half years in Afghanistan, and I watched the evolution, not only of the military buildup, but also the international network that grew up alongside it. And it's quite impressive.

Afghanistan has all of the international legitimacy that one could want, beginning with U.N. nation—United Nations Security Council resolutions. It has, on the ground, not only the U.N. as the overarching agency that's responsible for coordination of the international effort, it has the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the European Union, the G8, the World Bank, IMF, and nongovernmental organizations, all operating within the countryside of Afghanistan.

The contributions that allies have made have, in many cases, made a difference in many parts of that country. I will call your attention to Operation Medusa, in the late summer of 2006, when between 8- and 9,000 NATO troops accepted the responsibility of taking over the southern region in Afghanistan. This was a region that had never had many troops permanently present. Half a dozen countries or more accepted the responsibility of that region, went into that region, and very quickly got into almost conventional warfighting, and, with—together with our forces and OEF, dealt a very severe military blow to the Taliban as a result of about a month and a half of very intense fighting, the result of which was a crippling blow, at least to the military capability of the Taliban, so much so that the spring offensive of 2007, that was always heralded after the winter, was really a whimper compared to other years.

So, we—I mention this story because I want to state, up front, that the—that NATO—NATO nations have provided serious combat capabilities, in some respects, and many, many humanitarian reconstruction missions, the administrations of PRS, Provincial Reconstruction Teams. And so, I think we should start on a positive note in saying that where we were in 2003, and where we are now. There certainly has been some positive things on the ground. And the North Atlantic Treaty Organization should be evaluated in terms of its own mandate. It is not responsible for the entire trend of things in Afghanistan, either favorable or unfavorable, because there are just too many other organizations that are participating in various efforts.

At the end of my watch, in December of 2006, I left there with certain conclusions, and I will summarize them very briefly. I still think they're, unfortunately, still valid. And my findings and my opinions are reflected in both studies. And I'll just summarize them very briefly.

What I fear is going on in Afghanistan is—could be attribute—could be best characterized as a loss of momentum, loss of momentum characterized by the—primarily, by the inability of the international communities to come together and to tackle the top four or five things that absolutely have to be done, in my opinion, if Afghanistan is going to continue on the path of progress.

A couple of years ago, you didn't hear the word al Qaeda in Afghanistan. It was almost a footnote. The Taliban was considered to be pretty much on the ropes. We didn't have car bombs and suicide bombers in the capital. The border was worrisome, but certainly had not—was not headed, at least in those days, to where it is today. But, what was consistent in all of my visits to Afghanistan was the fact that the narcotics problem was getting worse and worse each year. Narcotics are responsible for 50 percent of the gross domestic product of Afghanistan today. It is on its way, if not—I guess, at 50 percent, you can say it is a narco-economy. But, when 50 percent of a country's GDP is tied up in narcotics, you have a problem.

Second, it corrupts the entire society. It's corrupting the next generation of young Afghans. It is a irresistible source of income. The income that is derived from the sales of those drugs, that—90 percent of which are sold in the capitals in Europe, is funding the insurgency, and therefore, the renewed capacity of the opposition.

I think this must be addressed comprehensively. One hears about single solutions—eradication, buy the crop, do certain other things. The truth is, it has to be a holistic, comprehensive campaign plan that's agreed to by the international community. As a matter of fact, some years ago the G8 did assign the responsibility for the strategic lead in the war on drugs to the United Kingdom. Unfortunately, the rest of the international community left the United Kingdom to try to sort that out by itself, and it's beyond the capacity of any one country to do that.

Similarly, the second thing that I think is—absolutely has to be resolved is judicial reform in the country. If you can't have a judicial system that is working, you cannot win the war on drugs. If a drug conviction is obtained in a court, and, 6 months later, that same person is back out in the field, again involved in the drug business, that's not a system that is going to inspire confidence. Corruption is one of the big problems in Afghanistan, and it's one of the things that the man on the street consistently talks about in any part of the country that one visits. So, reform of the judicial system is absolutely essential if you're going to fight narcotics.

And even more basic is the absence of adequate police—adequate trained and adequately equipped and adequately educated police force. Much of the countryside is left to decide whether they're going to side with the government by day and with the Taliban by night, because the security structure is simply not adequate.

Again, under the G8 agreements, Italy was—accepted the strategic lead for judicial reform, and Germany accepted the strategic lead for police reform. Neither of those three pillars—the narcotics, judicial, or police reform—has met the standard of making the impact that needs to be made in order to turn the country into a better direction.

Fourth, I think that what's clear on the border between Pakistan—is that now Afghanistan is a—has become a regional problem that is inseparable from discussing Pakistan. Regional problems require regional solutions, and perhaps it's time to engage more countries in the region to have serious dialogue about mutual concerns with regard to the very worrisome trends in Pakistan, in Afghanistan, and along the seam where the tribes don't recognize borders, but where the ideology of taking over or replacing the systems of government that are attempting—that—they're veering towards democracy, and having them try to challenge that successfully.

Lastly, I was very disappointed—and I'll just speak for myself—that a true international servant, Lord Paddy Ashdown, in the midst of a recognized need for an international coordinator to begin to channel the resources of the international community toward a cohesive and organized end state was turned down by the Government of Afghanistan. I think that the requirement is obviously critical, that Lord Ashdown be replaced with somebody close to his capacities. There was an article, written by him in the Financial Times, which appeared yesterday, in which he gave his solution set of what he would do, had he been approved for that job. And if you read that, you will find that the similarity between the three reports that we rolled out and his short thesis in the Financial Times are virtually a mirror image of one another.

So, there is great consensus, I think, about what needs to be done. The question is, How do you do it? And, from my standpoint, it's the—it's a failure of the international community, under the current organizational structures, to bring focus to the four or five things that absolutely have to be done. And I think that the Government of Afghanistan, under President Karzai, should be held to some stronger metrics than previously have been asked of them. I see no reason whatsoever that, about 4 or 5 years later, that the government can't make any significant headroads in combating corruption, for example, or failing to reform the judicial system. The help is there, the international community is there in abundance, and I think that the future progress of Afghanistan hinges on a better cohesion of that international effort.

Afghanistan is not a military problem. I think the commanders should be supported. I believe the troop strengths that they're asking for is modest by comparison to the capabilities existing within the 40-some nations that are on the ground there. But, if we don't do better at—if we don't improve the coordination of the international effort, then I'm afraid that we could backslide into a situation where the military will become more and more important. And then, that will really signal a return to the "bad old days," which all of us want to avoid.

I'll close simply by saying that I'm optimistic, for—because of the capacity that is there. I would be thrilled if that capacity was more focused and more—and better coordinated and better led at the—in the international- community level. And I'm very disappointed that Lord Ashdown was not the man that is going to do this very, very difficult job, because, at the final analysis, I think it must be done.

Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for these opening remarks.
 [The prepared statement of General Jones follows:]
 Chairman Levin: General, thank you so much.
 Ambassador Inderfurth?

**STATEMENT OF HON. KARL F. INDERFURTH, JOHN O. RANKIN
 PROFESSOR OF THE PRACTICE OF INTERNATIONAL AF-
 FAIRS, THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY**

Ambassador Inderfurth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Warner, members of the committee. It's an honor to be here today. It's an honor to be here with General Jones. I feel great comfort that he is going to be a part of this panel, given his vast experience dealing with Afghanistan.

My experience dealing with that country was largely when I was assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs, from '97 through 2001. I had many dealings with the then-Taliban that was in control—met with them on many occasions, met with others, including Hamid Karzai, who was then an expatriate, and he would come to Washington, and we would talk about life after the Taliban; got involved with the U.N. “Six Plus Two” process. So, I had a great deal of experience, during those 4 years, dealing with this country.

But, I do want to relate—Senator Warner mentioned our previous occasions of being together when I was an ABC news correspondent—I want to mention one Afghan-related experience there, because it's highly relevant for this discussion.

In 1989, I was a Moscow correspondent for ABC News, and they sent me to the border with Afghanistan on—in February 1989, when the Soviet troop withdrawal took place, the final military withdrawal across the Amu Darya River and across Friendship Bridge. And the international press corps was on the Uzbek side, and coming across the bridge was the final Soviet military contingent, led by General Gromov. The armored personnel carriers came across. And that marked the end of a 10-year war of occupation, a savage war that took place in that country. And I remember reporting on that great moment of hope for Afghanistan, because this was the end of all of that bloodshed and destruction.

Well, it wasn't, because, soon after that, the United States and the international community departed Afghanistan, decided that we had done our job, done it well. You see “Charlie Wilson's War,” you'll see that story—tells that story at the end. But then, attention turned away. A lot of other things were taking place in the world at that time, but attention turned away, and that left Afghanistan to pick up the pieces—and the seven mujaheddin factions that were then involved in the civil war went at each other—also, by the way, left Pakistan to pick up the pieces. And you cannot think about a solution for Afghanistan today without also thinking about a solution for Pakistan. These two are joined at the hip.

So, we left, and you can do a connecting of the dots between our departure and what took place on 9/11. It is not hard to figure out that leaving that country to fend for itself, leaving that country to fall into the chaos that it did, gave rise to the Taliban, which imposed law and order, gave rise to the return of bin Laden in 1996,

gave rise to the creation of terrorist networks in that country, and eventually led, after the assassination of Commander Massoud, who I also met, in Tashkent, at one point, that gave rise to 9/11.

So, we've got a second chance to get Afghanistan right. A second chance. You don't get many second chances in life. We've got one with Afghanistan.

And so, this discussion, now, about the direction that Afghanistan is going today, which we're all concerned about—and these reports all have a common theme: the situation is getting worse, it is dire, but still doable, in Afghanistan. So, I just implore the committee to give Afghanistan its full attention. And those of us outside of government will make whatever contribution we can in that direction.

Let me say a few words, if I can, about the report, which I was asked to present briefly.

Many of you know Ambassador Abshire, NATO ambassador under President Reagan, founder of CSIS. He was involved with the Iraq Study Group. His new organization, the Center for the Study of the Presidency, was involved in that. And so, he was involved in the Iraq Study Group in 2006. And during that time of listening to the witnesses and the participants, that group became concerned about Afghanistan becoming “the forgotten war.” There was great concern that the war in Iraq had drained away military resources, intelligence resources, time and attention of senior officials, economic assistance, and that that had diverted attention away from Afghanistan.

So, Ambassador Abshire decided to, last year, establish a sort of small-scale version, if you will, of the Iraq Study Group: the Afghanistan Study Group. And we have General Jones and somebody else that you're well familiar with—Ambassador Tom Pickering, with the co-chairs, and a number of us that have either served in government or have expertise in Afghanistan joined that study group.

So, the product that you have before you today—and I've put excerpts in my written testimony, which I have submitted, and we have the full report for you—is a reflection of the work of all of us in looking at where Afghanistan is today and what can be done about it, the challenge it's facing.

Let me just give you the briefest of summaries of what our evaluation of Afghanistan is today.

Standing at a crossroads. The progress achieved after 6 years of international engagement is under serious threat from resurgent violence, some of which has migrated from Iraq, weakening international resolve, which is shown, by the way, in polls that show only two countries in the world today favor keeping military forces in Afghanistan—the U.S. and the U.K. This was a Pew poll during the summer. Two countries. The others, the majority, say, “Bring 'em out now.” Mounting regional challenges in Pakistan and Iran are two cases in point. And a growing lack of confidence on the part of the Afghan people about the future direction of their country; they were euphoric at the beginning of this process. They are more concerned today that things are heading in the right direction. They are, by the way, still with us. They do not want us to be the next foreign occupier, like the British or the Soviets. They're

still—they still want us there, but they are concerned. And things like civilian casualties are undermining that support.

The U.S. and the international community have tried to win the struggle in Afghanistan with too few military forces, and insufficient economic aid, and without a clear and consistent, comprehensive strategy to fill the power vacuum outside Kabul, and to counter the combined challenges of reconstituted Taliban—you all know the reconstitution of the al Qaeda and Taliban that was mentioned in the July NIE, which said that the al Qaeda has reconstituted its attack capability against the homeland—and to counter the combined challenges that were presented by a runaway opium economy, which General Jones has referred to, and the stark poverty faced by Afghanistan. It is the second poorest country in the world. It is in desperate need.

Success in Afghanistan remains a critical national security imperative for the U.S. and the international community. Achieving that success will require a sustained, sustained multiyear commitment from the U.S. and the willingness to make the war in Afghanistan and the rebuilding of that country a higher U.S. foreign policy priority.

Allowing the Taliban to reestablish its influence in Afghanistan, as well as failure to prevent Afghanistan from becoming a failed state, would not only undermine the development of the country, it would constitute a major victory—a major victory—for al Qaeda in its global efforts to spread violence and extremism.

Many of us feel that this is truly the central front in the war on terrorism—Afghanistan and Pakistan—and there is no doubt in my mind that bin Laden, who sees this as one great achievement, the defeat of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, which we were, you know, working toward that end, as well, but he wants to see the defeat of the United States, the other great superpower, and he wants to see it done in Afghanistan. So, I think that this is high on our National security priority list.

We conclude by saying, the light footprint of the U.S. and its allies in Afghanistan needs to be replaced with the right footprint. And that is obviously—leads into our recommendations.

We have 34 recommendations. I will not go through all of them with you right now. But, we do talk about establishing an eminent persons group that would develop a long-term coherent international strategy for Afghanistan and a strategic communications plan to garner strong public support. Right now, we're losing the public relations battle there. These—the European countries, their publics are saying, "Bring out the troops." Something's not working, in terms of convincing them of the need for them to be directly involved and that they have stakes here. So, an eminent persons group be established.

We also believe that Iraq and Afghanistan should be decoupled. We have joined the two in our funding requests. We've joined the two in making the case for the war on terrorism. The fact is that, the fact that the two are couple together in the minds of Europeans, an unpopular war in Iraq is dragging down what may be support for Afghanistan. So, we think that these ought to be decoupled. Both dealt with on their own merits—we did not make any

recommendations about Iraq in this report, but start dealing with both on their own merits.

We also believe that the U.S. Government needs to have a special envoy for Afghanistan, and have a higher level of authority. General Lute was appointed to work at the NSC on Iraq and Afghanistan. I think that was a major task that probably was impossible to achieve without more authority and more visibility. So, we believe a special envoy—including on the reconstruction and assistance side.

So, those were the three overarching recommendations. We then had various recommendations, including an international coordinator. I, too, am very disappointed that Lord Paddy Ashdown did not take that. We have got to get our act together in Afghanistan on the civilian side. We've got over 40 countries, major organizations, U.N., EU, NATO, scores of NGOs, all doing good work, but nobody coordinating anything. We owe it to President Karzai to get our act together to work with him to achieve these things.

We also talk about security—we'll go into that, I'm sure—including on the Afghan Security Forces. Governance and the rule of law. Corruption—Transparency International just issued their latest report. Afghanistan has gone down on their list. It is now one of the eighth most corrupt countries in the world. And that's worse than it was last year.

General Karl Eikenberry, who I'm sure you have heard from with this committee, said that the greatest long-term threat to success in Afghanistan is not the resurgence of the Taliban, but the irretrievable loss of legitimacy of the Government of Afghanistan, and he cited corruption, justice, and law enforcement.

Counternarcotics. General Jones has already discussed that.

Economic development and reconstruction. So much more is needed to be done there, including on infrastructure, roads, electricity, power, water systems. There ought to be a construction surge in Afghanistan, and a surge that would provide jobs, because over a third of the Afghans are out of work. And if we don't address that, the Karzai government will fall further, in terms of public support.

Let me just finish on Afghanistan and its neighbors.

Pakistan. As I said, these two countries are joined at the hip. There will be no successful outcome for Afghanistan if Pakistan is not part of the solution. The future stability of both countries depends on the development of an effective strategy to counter and uproot Taliban/al Qaeda sanctuary in Pakistan's tribal border areas. Easier said than done. These areas have never been under the control of any government, including of Pakistan. And it certainly is not going to be done by sending U.S. military forces, en masse, into those tribal areas. That would be a disaster for Pakistan, it would be a sinkhole for us. But, there are ways that we can work with the Pakistani government, there are ways and channels through which that can be done.

And we do see successes, at times, including, recently, a missile strike that took out a leader, al-Libi. We can work with the Pakistani government on that. Admiral Mullen was recently meeting with the Pakistani chief of staff, General Kayani. There are channels to do this thing. But, it is not a military solution, by itself.

Those areas needed—need to be brought into the political mainstream in Pakistan.

As the Pakistani ambassador said recently—Mahmud Durrani—what is needed in the tribal areas is a multipronged strategy that is military force, development, and empowerment. Using force alone, he said, is not the answer. And I agree with that.

So, Pakistan is key, and also is Iran. Now, I know the committee has heard testimony about covert interference by Iran in Afghanistan. And that may well be taking place. But, I will tell you that my experience working in the so-called “Six Plus Two” process was that Iran was a helpful partner in that “Six Plus Two”—six neighbors and the U.S. and Russia, that’s the “Six Plus Two,” led by Ambassador Brahimi. We were on the same page with them about our opposition to the Taliban, and strongly on the same page on narcotics and what that was doing. And the Iranians were fighting the drug traders coming across their border.

During the Bonn process, Ambassador Jim Dobbins has reported that they were very helpful in bringing about the removal of the Taliban and the installation of a new transition government under President Karzai. The Bonn process ended, and, a few weeks later, President Bush called it part of the “Axis of Evil.” They couldn’t understand why they didn’t get any—at least pat on the back for being cooperative with us to stabilize Afghanistan. I think that that opportunity still exists. It’s gotten more difficult. But, I think that—and the report calls for us to develop a strategy to engage Iran. Right now, we’re not talking to them in Afghanistan. And I think that is not only losing an opportunity, but probably making things more difficult for us in achieving our goals in that country.

So, I actually have, in my written statement, a few upbeat final notes, but I think I’ll just wait to throw those in at the appropriate time, because, as I said, I do see the situation in Afghanistan as dire, but it is still doable, if we can get, as I said, our act together. And we need to do it sooner rather than later.

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

Chairman Levin: Ambassador, thank you.

Here’s the situation now. We’ve got about 5 minutes left, I believe, plus the extra 5 in the first vote, then there’s apparently a second vote immediately thereafter. I think everybody—hopefully we can continue this without interruption, but I’m not sure we can. It’s going to depend on everybody’s speed of—how quickly people can move and their own schedules and everything else.

Let’s start with a 5-minute round. I’ll go 5 minutes, and then, if anyone’s here, I will turn it over immediately to them.

Let me start with a question to both of you. Your reports are pretty sobering. The Study Group says that the efforts to stabilize Afghanistan were faltering. Atlantic Council says NATO is not winning. The Afghanistan Study Group says that the antigovernment insurgency has grown considerably over the last 2 years. Is it safe to say that neither one of you believes that the Taliban and al Qaeda and their allies are on the run in Afghanistan? Is that fair? Ambassador, do you believe that the Taliban, al Qaeda, and their allies are on the run in Afghanistan?

Ambassador Inderfurth: Today, no, they're not on the run. They were on the run. There was a moment, soon after the U.S. military action in—after 9/11, and into the Tora Bora area. But, around 2003, you can start to see a shift, in terms of a—reconstituting the Taliban, including in these tribal areas of Pakistan. They basically dispersed. They were not going to take on the U.S. military. They dispersed, and they basically said—their leaders said, “We’ll be in touch. Stay around. We’ll be in touch.” And they went to various places, some in Afghanistan, some—and they have reconstituted. And they have reconstituted, in part, because they have seen the difficulties of the Karzai government; in part, because they have gotten foreign assistance, and there has been a migration of things into Afghanistan that we never saw before. Even during the Soviet times, you didn’t see IEDs, you didn’t see assassinations, you didn’t see suicide bombers. All this is new to Afghanistan, as it is becoming new to Pakistan.

So, I do not believe they are on the run.

Chairman Levin: General?

General Jones: Sir, I would—excuse me—I would agree—I would agree with that. I think there are some contributing factors. One is that there are safe havens that they can—that they can withdraw to. Two is, as I mentioned, the economic viability of the narcotics trade, I think, fuels at least part of the insurgency. So, they’re—they’re well paid. I think the—I think they have the ability to pay their forces, perhaps, competitive wages with the government’s wages. Three is the fact that the Government of Afghanistan has not been able to materially increase its span of control over what it was a couple of years ago. So, you know, it’s possible to win every single skirmish, as we have been doing, and still lose the war, as we’ve learned in the past.

Chairman Levin: I thought the President’s statement the other day, that the Taliban, al Qaeda, and their allies are on the run in Afghanistan, was just rose-colored glasses to an extreme.

Let me ask you a question about the need to do a lot of the work in the villages. There’s a national solidarity program in Afghanistan, and one of the efforts there was their provision of \$400 million in payments that were disbursed to 16,000 community development councils in Afghanistan. And these payments, these funds, have financed over 30,000 community development subprojects, which have improved access to markets and infrastructure and services. The program has drawn resources from Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund, which is administered by the World Bank. And by distributing funds directly to districts at the lowest level, by bypassing, in other words, the central and provincial governments, the solidarity program has, according to the information we have, significantly reduced corruption and misappropriation, and it avoids that layering of bureaucracies, as well.

This morning, we asked about this. And this morning, it was, I believe, Secretary Boucher who gave a very strong statement of support for that program. Are either of you familiar with that program, and can you comment on it?

Ambassador Inderfurth: I’m not familiar, directly, with that program. I’ve read testimony, which that has been called attention to.

I have no doubt at all we've got some programs that are working in Afghanistan.

Chairman Levin: You're not particularly—you're not familiar, though, with that, specifically.

Ambassador Inderfurth: No, I'm not familiar with that, and it could be taking place in these areas. I mean, the south is where the security problems are.

Chairman Levin: All right.

Ambassador Inderfurth: That's where it's difficult to do programs. But, we're doing a lot of useful programs in other parts of the country.

Chairman Levin: General?

General Jones: I'm not familiar with the specifics of that program, but I do believe that there is a—there is something that I observed, in the few years that I was there, that, where you have a governor of a province that is not corrupt, where you have a police chief who is not corrupt, and you have the presence of the Afghan army and PRTs, and you have direct flow of assistance funds, things turn around very quickly. I agree with the Ambassador, that the overwhelming mentality of the people is to want to live in a democracy and live in freedom.

Chairman Levin: The ability of 16,000 local community development councils in Afghanistan to directly fund these small projects, it seems to me—and, more importantly, the people who know, including Ambassador—including Secretary Boucher, this morning—it really gives us an opportunity to cut through layers of bureaucracy, as well as corruption. And what I'm—and, by the way, according to Boucher this morning, the request of the administration in the supplemental is for \$50 million instead of the 10 million last year. Those are numbers—if my memory is correct—which means there would be a significant increase in that. And what I'm going to do for both of you, just to get your reactions, even though I know your reports are filed, I'd like to send you the information on those—that program, to get your reaction to it.

And now we're going to have to recess, or I'm going to miss a vote, and there's no one else here to pick up the gavel. So, hopefully within 10 minutes, we will resume.

Thank you for your patience. [Recess.]

Chairman Levin: Our apologies, everybody. Both of you have been around the Hill long enough, both of you, to know that these things happen too regularly, but—this afternoon was one of them.

Jack Reed—Senator Reed?

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

And, General Jones and Ambassador Inderfurth, thank you, not only for your very cogent and, I think, accurate testimony, but for your devotion and service to the country. So, thanks very much.

I—one issue I'd like to raise. I was here this morning, but I had to leave before I asked questions, and I kept hearing all the witnesses refer to, as sort of a metric or a benchmark for success, the fact that that we are prevailing in all of our tactical engagements.

General Jones, I just wonder, your comments, about whether that is—you know, frankly, that's encouraging, but I don't think that tells us much about the ultimate struggle, since it's more political than tactical. Your comments on that?

General Jones: I think that we should be careful to celebrate tactics over strategy. In the Financial Times yesterday, Lord Ashdown has an article about what he would have done, and he starts out with a fairly well-known quote by Sun Tzu, who said that, "Strategy without tactics is the slow road to defeat, but tactics without strategy is the noise before defeat." And so, you know, certainly in my lesson in—one of my lessons from Vietnam was the fact that you could win all of your tactical engagements and still not prevail. And so, I think that's—I'd be very careful about signing up to that ideology as a benchmark for success.

Senator Reed: And, Mr. Ambassador, further comments, or do you concur, or—

Ambassador Inderfurth: I totally concur. And, coincidentally, 2 weeks ago I was in Hanoi, my first trip to Vietnam, and it was on the 40th anniversary of the Tet Offensive. And there were a few articles there. Of course, the Vietnamese have turned the page, they want Americans back there to do business. They like us. But, it did raise the question of a military defeat, but a propaganda victory.

So, the Taliban—they can suffer losses, they can't have a set battle with the forces there, but they can create a climate of insecurity and fear in the country that will stop reconstruction in the south. Recently, there was the bombing of the Serena Hotel in Kabul. This was a oasis of, sort of, Western secure life. Everybody went to the Serena. And suicide bombers got in there.

So, this is a—the psychological dimension of this is important to deal with and to counter.

Senator Reed: Thank you.

General Jones and Mr. Ambassador, your report talks about integrating counternarcotics and counterinsurgency operations using international military forces to assist Afghan National Police in the interdiction, including supporting the ANP in its effort to destroy heroin labs. We're told that there's a reluctance by Central Command to have an explicit counterdrug mission, which would seem to undercut this explicit recognition that these two missions are both necessary and should be explicitly embraced. Again, can you comment on that, sir?

General Jones: Sir, the—it's not just the Central Command. There is a reluctance, in most militaries, to take on drug operations, preferring to leave it up to equivalents of drug enforcement administrations and officials and capabilities that are specifically suited for that challenge.

In Afghanistan, the challenge is clearly there. The good news about Afghanistan is, you can see the size of the problem every year. All you have to do is go up in a helicopter and—at the right time, and you can see it. There's no jungle. It's—everybody knows where it is. And you can really measure it with great accuracy.

You know, I think that whatever the solution is, it has to have a—it has to have an Afghan face to it. I think the international community has to figure out ways to support it. NATO does not have that mandate. I was on the receiving end of what NATO would and would not do. We were able to have a passive role—that is to say, we could provide security for forces that were going in

to do a counterdrug operation—but we would not actively send NATO troops to participate in it.

So, the—it's fairly consistent among the militaries that that is not part of the mission. Somebody's going to have to do it.

Senator Reed: It would seem to me, following up, that these laboratories are owned and operated by the traffickers, the real bad guys, and there would seem to be less political objection to knocking those out than trying to eradicate the poppy fields, et cetera. So, it would—it might be—they'll quickly compensate for that, but that might be the most logical target, if you wanted to ramp up the pressure. Is that sensible, in your regard?

General Jones: I think that's certainly part of it. I'd like to underscore a point made by the Ambassador, that this is a regional problem, and, with regard to narcotics, every country that touches Afghanistan is concerned about the trafficking. And it would seem to me that, at least on that score, we can come to some agreements with the neighbors in the region, that we should do more, comprehensively, to not—to halt the flow of drugs across the borders. There are only so many crossings. And, more specifically, since 90 percent of the crop is destined for Europe, and we know the routes through the Black Sea and how it gets there, it seems to me a more coordinated international outcry in response would be warranted, as well.

Senator Reed: Let me shift to the regional aspects of, specifically, Pakistan, and ask you a question, General Jones, but feel free to elaborate on, just, your impressions about Pakistan, and then, Mr. Ambassador, your comments, too. We are effectively denied a physical presence in these tribal areas, American military personnel. And, Mr. Ambassador, you made the point very strongly that that might even be counterproductive. But, with technology, particularly UAVs, Predators, platforms that can pick up signals and that are a least—sort of, not-so-overt presence, would seem to be the way to go, but I—there's a real concern, I think, given the demands in Iraq for force protection, that—are there sufficient platforms in—available in the region—Pakistan, Afghanistan? Or, another way to say it is, if we surge there, with the ISR, UAVs, et cetera, could that give us an advantage now that we don't have?

General Jones: Senator, I'd have to defer to Admiral Fallon at SOUTHCOM—or, I'm sorry, CENTCOM—for that. I don't think NATO has the kind of capacity there to go beyond—take—or, use that kind of technology to go beyond what it's capability of doing today, though. It has mostly been focused on Afghanistan, itself.

Senator Reed: And, Mr. Ambassador, that question, and also any other elaboration about Pakistan that you'd like to make.

Ambassador Inderfurth: Well, Senator, I think that the question of any U.S. presence in those tribal areas—right now, the—I hate to keep talking about polls, but it does give you something to get your head around—the latest poll of favorable/unfavorable views of the United States in Pakistan is 16 percent favorable; 69 percent—call it 70 percent—unfavorable. I guarantee you, if those polls were taken in the tribal areas, it wouldn't even go to 16 percent.

So, if we have a military presence there, any type of U.S. presence there, I'd suggest that they would quickly grow a beard and dress in the native garb, and do their work quietly, because they

will only generate a reaction of these tribes that are—have resisted any kind of authority, including from Islamabad, as well. But, that doesn't mean that there aren't opportunities to have some discreet forces involved there. And I—obviously, I'm not privy to any kind of classified information, so I can't say what we're doing there and what we're not, but I do know that there have been missile strikes there, so we're doing something, and I think that we need to go in that direction.

But, there are other mechanisms to deal with this. There is a Trilateral Commission—Afghanistan, Pakistan, and NATO—a Trilateral Commission that has been meeting to try to get these two countries to work with NATO in a cooperative way to try to deal with the cross-border interdiction. And they are getting better at this. Some of our military commanders have been commending this.

It's also intelligence-sharing. Intelligence-sharing is very important, not only on this question of the interdiction across border, but also on the narcotics side. Even if our forces do not want to become actively engaged in counternarcotics operations, we can sure be sharing intelligence to let the Afghan National Police know, you know, what we have found on a timely basis.

So, I think that there is a lot that can be done there, but, again, the—if we have a heavy hand there, I think we're only going to make our goals, objectives that much more distant to achieve.

Senator Reed: Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Levin: Thank you, Senator Reed.

Senator Warner?

Senator WARNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Forgive us, gentlemen, for departing for the vote, but that's a necessary part of life.

And I must just ask a question and go upstairs; I'm on the Intel Committee, right above here. We have the National Director of Intelligence.

But, I want to return to this subject that I delved into deeply this morning with our first panel, and that is this question of—follow on what Senator Reed was talking about—the drug problem. What haunts me is that we had Secretary Gates before us here a few days ago, I asked him directly—with two marine battalions going on, that's a consequence of the inability of NATO to meet its requirements—and how many times have you talked about that, General Jones?—and his answer was very cryptic and to the point, “Yes, they're going, because the other countries won't step up to their prior commitments or the need for additional forces.” Well, what do we tell the wives and the families of these marines as they go over there, that this drug money is buying the arms that'll be used against 'em?

And, as much as you've both expressed, here, the reluctance of the military to take on the narcotics, it's almost in the realm of force protection to take it on, to help dry up this source of income, which is going to the Taliban and being recycled into weaponry and brought to bear against these young men and women going over in these two battalions, and the ones that are there now.

I just find it difficult how we're doing our responsibility here in the Congress by endorsing—sending these battalions over, at the same time we're not doing something—and I don't know what it is that we could do—we do not wish to appear foolish or rash; the executive branch has really got the responsibility, not the legislative branch—but to doing everything we possibly can to begin to energize some activity against this drug trade.

This morning, it was explained to us, it was a 30-some-percent increase last year; this year, the projection is considerably less, but, nevertheless, a measure of increase in the drug trade. So, I just say we have to do something. And I've gone through your reports. This is my second to have the privilege to be with you on these reports. You do address the various point plans and so forth. But, is there a sledgehammer out here that somebody could use? And I'd be willing to take the responsibility for it in this institution.

General Jones: Sir, I've said all along that I think it's a question of a comprehensive strategy that nations can agree on, but that absolutely have to have an Afghan face to it. I believe it would be a sign of leadership on the part of President Karzai if he launched a national campaign that would be buttressed by judicial reform and the establishment of a police force that can do its job, supported by the international community. And I think it is so critical to his own success as a leader, that even if he has to use his own fledgling army to take this on to make sure that it works, that he should do that. But, it's got to be competitive. I don't think there's a silver—there's one solution to this.

And the international community can help by taking measures, such as providing alternate means of livelihood, encouraging farmers not to grow the crop, providing economic support, where necessary. But, the hard—the harder part of the fight has—I think, in order to avoid chaos—has got to be done by the Afghans themselves, and it's going to have to be done over time. It was a ramp-up that took several years, and it's going to be several years to come down. And you have to be careful that you don't tilt it too much in—because you could create a—conditions of a civil war, when food stocks dry up and the little economy that they have just disappears.

But, I think it's doable. I think it—but it takes that strong international leader to be able to convene the international community, the drug enforcement agencies from many nations, the Afghan statement of purpose that this is definitely with the highest national priority, and the repair work that has to be done and the supporting infrastructure that are essential, the judicial system and the police. And I think he would do himself a lot of good—the president would do himself a lot of good—President Karzai—if he did that internally in his country, and stayed on it.

Senator WARNER. Do you care to comment?

Ambassador Inderfurth: I would, Senator Warner.

I think that the drug problem may be more susceptible to a agricultural solution than a military solution. And there is not a—there is not a sledgehammer. I wish there were.

We've been talking about our two reports from The Atlantic Council and the Afghanistan Study Group. There was a third re-

port that was released at the same time by the National Defense University.

Senator WARNER. Yes. Mr. Ullman?

Ambassador Inderfurth: Exactly.

Senator WARNER. Yes.

Ambassador Inderfurth: Harlan Ullman—which is entitled “Winning the Invisible War: An Agricultural Pilot Plan for Afghanistan.” I’d like to read you the one paragraph that they say, about the issue of eradication and what to do. He—they say, “The stark alternative—the stark alternative of elimination and eradication of poppy growth will backfire. Destruction of poppies throughout the country, even if sustainable, would create massive economic disruption and hardship and, no doubt, recruit many more volunteers for the insurgency,” meaning the Taliban. Then they say, “As we suggest, a pilot program for licit—licit—legal sales of poppies, or, indeed, temporary and massive increases in payments to farmers for cultivating nonnarcotics crops, in addition to other counternarcotic measures, may be the only way to prevent expanding opium production.” We may have to buy ’em out. I mean, that’s not something that we like the idea of doing.

Senator WARNER. I think it would be relatively inexpensive—

Ambassador Inderfurth: It would be relatively—

Senator WARNER.—to pay the farmer. He—

Ambassador Inderfurth:—inexpensive.

Senator WARNER. He gets a very small amount of this.

Ambassador Inderfurth: Yeah. The farmers don’t get anything. It’s the drug dealers that get—

Senator WARNER. Sure.

Ambassador Inderfurth:—the money.

Senator WARNER. That’s where the money is.

Ambassador Inderfurth: So, it may be that we have to think out of the box. I know that there’s been a lot of studies about licit sales and, Is that going to encourage others to go into poppy production? But, right now the current strategy is not working, and using the sledgehammer of aerial spraying with herbicides, every independent report I’ve seen says it will backfire.

Senator WARNER. Chaos. Well, that would bring me to my last observation point. I remember Charlie Wilson very well. Matter of fact, I was on the Intel Committee at that time, and somewhat involved in the stinger decisions that we made here. Matter of fact, I was deeply involved in. Several times, Charlie Wilson urged me to go. And I’m not going to put it in the record why, but I was a relatively young Senator, and I wasn’t going to risk my career on some of his operations, which were unrelated to the main mission. So much for my good friend Charlie, and I really like him.

But, in the context of doing that work, way back then, I undertook my own study of the history of Afghanistan, and one of the most remarkable chapters is in the late 1800s, when the British army were there for, I think, a period of about 15 years, and they suffered enormous losses.

And I say to myself, they failed, in the 1800s, to bring about stability in Afghanistan. The Soviet Union poured enormous sums of money in, and they failed. What is it that we have as an oppor-

tunity to fail, in the wake of those two historical chapters of absolute failure?

General Jones: Senator, for my money, it's our—the ability that the—that we bring—not just the U.S., but the international community—potentially, if done correctly, to make people's lives better in the villages and to offer them an alternative to a return to the draconian days of the Taliban.

You know, this isn't a scientific observation, but, in my 40 years in uniform, I've been to Vietnam, I've worked in Bosnia and Herzegovina, I've worked in northern Iraq, and I've been to Afghanistan, and I'm always amazed at—when I go into these missions, and I see the horrific violence that's going on, the ethnic cleansing of the Bosnians, the horror of the brutality of Saddam Hussein against the Kurds, and so on and so forth. But, even in Bosnia, where I thought, in 1993–94, when I was there, regularly and deeply involved in what was going on, I thought to myself, there is no way that these people are ever going to live side by side again, given all that's going on. And yet, they do. They do.

And my lesson here is that, when you go through these periods—we'll call 'em civil wars, if you want, or insurgencies—eventually, people—they tire themselves out. I mean, they just—they go through a certain phase, and they get to the end of it, and they're exhausted. And they need some outside help to say, "Okay, here's a better way."

My sense of the Afghan people, in my 3 and a half years of going all over the country, is that they are tired of the long history of fighting, and they want an alternative. And that was clearly demonstrated in the elections. The national elections and the parliamentary elections were—hundreds of thousands of voters turned out, and some great stories about incredible treks across the mountains to get to a polling station. I mean, things that would warm the heart of anybody who loves democracy and freedom. And they voted with the expectation that their lives are going to be changed for the better.

And for a brief while, there was that moment in time when the momentum seemed to be rapidly going that way, and then, because of the failure to sustain the momentum, and, I think, the failure of the international community to find the leadership that could harmonize and make more cohesive the effort to be felt in the four or five main areas, including governmental reform and the assistance that's required to help that government succeed, and the metrics that have to be—that that government should be meeting, have just simply not been met in the critical areas. And so, as a result, the momentum has stalled, and, you know, we could be in the danger of backsliding. And I think that that's what the Ambassador and I are concerned about.

And the fact that these three studies really do say the same thing, but in different ways, is—and most people that you talk to behind the scenes, even at NATO, you know, they generally agree with that, but nobody has figured out what to do with it. And that's why I'm so concerned that the turndown of Paddy Ashdown—

Senator WARNER. Was he going to take on the drug portfolio as part of—

General Jones: He would have been the senior coordinator of the international effort—economic, judicial, social, all of the—all the nonmilitary missions, which I would have—I would think, would have included the narcotics business.

Senator WARNER. And that's, maybe, one of the reasons they turned him down, then.

General Jones: Whatever the reason, I think it was a big mistake, and I hope we can find somebody of that stature to take his place. And this time I hope that the international community will be more insistent, to make sure that the government doesn't—

Senator WARNER. Yes.

General Jones:—turn him down.

Ambassador Inderfurth: I think that he was turned down, in part, because of that British Colonial history that you referred to.

Senator WARNER. Yes.

Ambassador Inderfurth: They still have recollections of that. And it just appeared, for Karzai's own domestic reasons. To have a British proconsul come in, as they were describing, probably was more than he could do. I think it was a mistake that he turned it down.

Can I just mention, in terms of your discussion—

Chairman Levin: We'll have to—make it short, if you would, because—

Ambassador Inderfurth: Very quickly.

Chairman Levin:—we're running way over on time.

Ambassador Inderfurth: Very quickly. The history of Afghanistan has to be understood—the British and then the Soviets. But, we are not the successors to those two. The successor to the British and the Soviets is al Qaeda and Taliban. They hijacked the country. We are seen as going in to assist the Afghan people so that they won't return to those days. So, that's the progression.

General Jones: That's a good point.

Ambassador Inderfurth: And, therefore, we are still wanted there. We're not seen as occupiers. But, we have to be very careful that we do things with them, so that we don't become—I mentioned civilian casualties—that, over time, we don't lose their support, because if we do, then that is time to leave.

Senator WARNER. Thank you, gentlemen.

Thank you. I have to go upstairs.

Chairman Levin: Thank you, Senator Warner.

Senator Kennedy?

Senator KENNEDY. Thank you very much. Enormously valuable and helpful hearing.

Just to go—to relate some of the issues that we heard earlier today to some of the things that you've said. One, you know, Secretary Shinn, you know, told the committee that our policy is sound and that implementation is the question. In terms of our ability to clear areas of insurgents, he said we're winning, but it's happening slowly and painfully. This is at odds, obviously, with—the Afghan Study Group and The Atlantic Council suggest otherwise. Is—what is your opinion about—is there convincing evidence, as the Secretary suggests, that we're winning, even if slowly and painfully?

General Jones: I think it depends on how you categorize the term “winning.” If clearing an area of the Taliban, which I'm sure we can do, doesn't result in a—some stability and some security and

some reconstruction that accompanies that clearing in a way that either Afghan forces or Afghan officials or international forces can hold the area, then it's—you know, we're just going to keep on going around in that circumstance.

I don't think that the military, alone, is going to win this, if it's not accompanied by reconstruction and a change in the security that most Afghan families experience in the countryside.

Senator KENNEDY. Well, on this, Secretary Boucher said that to stabilize Afghanistan we need to provide the security, justice, economic opportunity, good governance. He said we are doing what works, and getting the job done. So, it appears that his reference are to those other items: economic opportunity, governance, and the security. I mean, The Atlantic Council points out that in the—civil sector reform is in serious trouble. I'm just trying to figure out where you all—

General Jones: Well, I think there are a lot of individual things that are going on well. One of the things that characterizes the international effort—and this, Senator, is not necessarily a U.S. problem, this is a—kind of a—how the whole thing is set up—most countries, when they arrive in Afghanistan, arrive with a fixed contribution that they're going to make, and they decide that, largely, on a national basis, "We're going to"—a country is going to do a PRT or they're going to a certain project. And I think that's all very helpful. In the aggregate, does it make change—does it move things generally in the direction? Yes. But, on the big issues of—the big issues of tackling what is fundamentally keeping the country from moving in the right direction—narcotics, judicial reform, adequate police and security, and more focus in the international effort—I don't see it—I don't see that happening.

So, I would agree with what the witnesses talked about, in terms of the words they used, but I don't think they can make the case—I don't think the case can be made that, on the four or five big things that have to be done, there we're—that the international community is doing enough.

Senator KENNEDY. Ambassador?

Ambassador Inderfurth: Senator, I used—Richard Boucher has the job I once had. And I know, coming up on the Hill, that you want to present your best case. And I think that a great deal of what's being said—as I mentioned, there are other parts of Afghanistan where there are some important things taking place, but, because this is not a coherent strategy, because we do not have the—a Paddy Ashdown, someone to pull this together, a lot of these efforts are not going well. They need greater coordination, they need more attention.

If you take, for instance, the Afghan National Army, there's no question that this is a bright spot on the security front for Afghanistan. They're working up towards a 70,000-person limit. Secretary Rumsfeld, when he was in office, wanted to go down from that target to 50,000. Fortunately, that got turned around. Now, Secretary Gates has said up to 80,000. That's a good step in the right direction. But the Afghan Defense Minister says they may need 150,000. Well, if they need more, who's going to pay for 'em? The Afghan government cannot pay their Afghan army personnel, so who—sustainability, affordability is going to have to be taken into account.

So, yes, we can paint a good picture of increases in the Afghan National Army capacity, numbers, training, putting more of an Afghan face on operations, but then you ask, “Well, but how far is that going to go, and who’s going to pay for it, and are we going to have the resources to do it?” So, you’ve got to take it to the next step.

Senator KENNEDY. Let me just, finally, ask you about the contributions of these other countries, the other NATO countries. We went through the polls, the Pew Foundation polls of European countries, and—how are we going to—and, Secretary Gates talked about how these countries are getting confused, or at least he expressed some opinion that there may be some confusion. Part of the reason may be because some of these countries are confused, between Iraq and Afghanistan. I mentioned it’s the issue of casualties, as well. But, what’s your own assessment about—one, How do you reverse that? How do you change that? What’s your sense as a former NATO commander, about what the trend line is going to be? What are we facing down there, and how can it be altered and shifted and changed? And what recommendations do you have to do it?

General Jones: Sir, there’s—Secretary Gates, at the Munich Security Conference last weekend, gave a—really, I think, a very sobering and accurate speech, where he basically characterized the fact that in the United States an attack on the World Trade Center was a defining moment akin to Pearl Harbor; in Europe, when you have a similar event—for instance, the attack on—in Madrid on the train system—Europeans react with saying, “Well, I sure hope the Spanish can solve that problem.” It’s not seen as an attack against all. And, therefore, the degree of importance that we’ve put to this battle against ideologies and—sponsored by terrorism—assumes a different metric.

In 2002, the alliance and its Prague—at the Prague summit, decided that they were going to expand the alliance by seven nations, going from 19 to 26, that gentleman’s agreement was that 2 percent of the GDP would be a floor for national investment for all nations in security. In 2008, we now have 26 members, the average investment in national security in the alliance is about 1.7 percent. So, we’ve actually lost ground.

I think the alliance is going to have to decide whether it’s going to continue to expand and add new members and celebrate the expansion of the alliance, and the tremendous potential the alliance has, measured against an equally offsetting will to resource the missions that they take on.

I think this is a—this is a fundamental moment in time for the alliance to develop a new strategic vision for the 21st century that takes into account the asymmetric nature of the world, and we understand that the conventional threats of the 20th century are—have faded into the rearview mirror of history, only to be replaced by these asymmetric threats that we’re fighting.

So, I don’t know how we turn that corner. I know that’s a corner that has to be turned, and I hope that the summit in Bucharest that’s coming up in April will address some of that. I think Afghanistan will clearly be on the table. But, we definitely have a lot of work to do—we, the family of nations—to convince our publics,

mostly European, that this is—this struggle is really—is very important, and it's important to them. And, so far, I don't think—I don't think we've made a—we've made the case in an effective way.

Ambassador Inderfurth: More has to be done to make that case, and I think that you're seeing some of the leaders of Europe beginning to recognize that they have to do that. Gordon Brown, the Prime Minister, has traveled to Kabul. President Sarkozy has traveled there, the first time a French president has been there—this is in December; the new prime minister of Australia, the Italian Prime Minister Prodi, his first visit. There is more attention. Right now, it's fair to say that Afghanistan is not the forgotten war. People are talking about it, it is front and center—hearings such as these, reports being written.

But, there's no question that something has to be done to deal with the millstone that Iraq is on Afghanistan, in terms of public perceptions, in terms of funding, in terms of dealing with Afghanistan on its own merits. That's why we call—the Afghanistan Study Group—for a delinking of Iraq and Afghanistan, and a recommitment to the importance of this for the alliance.

There was a great quote, that I used in my testimony, from Victoria Nuland, our very capable ambassador, to Brussels, to NATO. She said that, "If we can get it right in the Hindu Kush, we will also be stronger the next time we are called to defend our security and values so far away from home." Well, we are going to be called far away from home again, so we'd best get this one right so that we can demonstrate that we are competent and able to defend our values in this fashion. If we can't do it with a country that wants us and the international community is with us and NATO is beside us, where can we do it?

Senator KENNEDY. Thank you very much.

Thank you.

Chairman Levin: Thank you, Senator Kennedy.

Senator Dole?

Senator Dole: Yes. General Jones, I think the most compelling way to convey the gravity of the situation in Afghanistan is to speak, not only in terms of what must be done, but what are the implications if we fail to commit sufficient personnel or resources in a unified manner to Afghanistan. And I believe, while I was over, voting, this did come up. But, let me ask you to be explicit and to spell out, if you would, What are the implications of failure, for the United States, for the region, and for our European allies? If we could spell that out and be specific.

General Jones: Senator, thank you. On page 5 of our report, there is a paragraph called "The Consequences of Failure," but I'll just sum it up very briefly.

I think that, given the enormous investment of the international—the global international community in the institutions that are represented on the ground—the United Nations, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, European Union, the G8, the banking institutions—everything that we need, to succeed in Afghanistan, is represented in Kabul. If, in fact, we are not successful, then I think that will be a signal victory for the ideology that we're fighting—the radical fundamentalism—and it will only mean that we will have to redouble our efforts in other areas, because this will

be a signal victory, and I don't think there's—that we can—that the international community can stand and let that happen—aside from the regional impacts of, perhaps, even a spread beyond Afghanistan and Pakistan. So, I think the consequences are fairly serious. I think they're serious for the United States, as the most powerful nation on Earth. To absorb even a perceived failure would have longstanding consequences, whether it's here or in Iraq.

Senator Dole: Mr. Ambassador, anything you'd want to add to that?

Ambassador Inderfurth: Senator, I cannot improve on that statement. I think those are exactly the right stakes that are involved.

Senator Dole: General Jones, let me ask you about this. We understand that there are over 40 countries and over 300 nongovernmental organizations working in Afghanistan, as we've heard today, without any means of effectively coordinating among their actions. This is the most compelling argument that I've heard for structural and institutional change within our own government in the area of interagency reform. In your professional opinion, I'd like to hear from both of you what you feel are the greatest obstacles, within our own departments and agencies, to bringing about needed reforms.

General Jones: I think the very concept of what constitutes national security in the 21st century is undergoing dramatic change. In the 20 century, it was fairly clear. National security threats were handled by the Department of Defense, National Security Council, and part of the State Department. In the 21st century, I think all elements of the interagency have to be brought together in a much more cohesive way to make the changes required. There is, in Afghanistan, for example, a strong element that argues for judicial reform, that argues for more policemen, that argues for a successful war on drugs. These are not traditional military tasks.

Now, if it's the National will, we can restructure our militaries to do whatever the country wants, but this is not the way things are supposed to play out.

So, I think, within the interagency, we need to have much more agility, we need to be able to take on more issues, more rapidly, as they develop around the world, because the world in the 21st century is cycling around at a much faster pace as a result of globalization. We have to worry about energy security, the security of our critical infrastructures, the weapons proliferation. God forbid that a weapons of mass destruction falls into the Taliban's hands or al Qaeda's hands. These are asymmetric threats. I think, even international narcotics, which clearly is supporting insurgencies and bad things that are happening around the world, have to be dealt with, and the only way to do that, I think, is to get more agility and more empowerment out to the people in the field who are actually doing the job. It—speaking as a former unified commander, I had all the responsibility in the world that I could have wanted, but I had very, very little authority to do anything without always—without coming back and asking for permission—

Senator Dole: Right.

General Jones:—through the interagency. And, as a result—the world goes around faster, and we're still not reacting, you know, in real time to the circumstances that evade us. I don't want to get

into a 30-minute answer to your question, but there is lots more to be said about—

Senator Dole: Yes, there is.

General Jones:—about things that we can do to be more efficient, competitively, in this new world of the 21st century.

Ambassador Inderfurth: I would only add to that that Robert Gates gave a excellent speech recently in Kansas—

Senator Dole: Kansas.

Ambassador Inderfurth:—the Alf Landon speech—

Senator Dole: Yes.

Ambassador Inderfurth:—the disparities between our resourcing and funding for our military side versus our civilian side. I urge you all to read that and to think through what this means, in terms of our ability to engage abroad. Clearly, we can do it with our military. We can take Baghdad. But then, what happens, the day after? And the ability for us to do effective work for post-conflict stabilization, reconstruction, we're not very good at it. USAID is not working. The components of that need more attention.

So, this is a big problem, and I was very glad that my former colleague on the NSC, Bob Gates—when we were both much younger—I'm glad he's addressing that issue now, because it's fairly rare for a Defense Secretary to speak in favor of greater funding for State. There ought to be more of that. And if you look at the budgets now, half a trillion dollars for the military and, what, smaller number—I don't have the exact number in front of me—for State and foreign operations. Somehow, we've got to get this in better alignment. The disparities are making it impossible for us to address “the day after” in these countries.

Senator Dole: Yes. And I agree with you about that speech. In fact, when we were talking with Secretary Gates last week, I utilized that speech to get him to elaborate further. It's a very important subject.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Levin: Thank you, Senator Dole.

Senator McCaskill?

Senator McCaskill: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First, let me say hello, General. It's my understanding you were born in Kansas City, Missouri. Is that true?

General Jones: That's correct.

Senator McCaskill: Well, hello to the friendliest big city in America—from the friendliest big city in America. Thank you both for your service.

I am kind of like—got a bad habit of focusing on one area. I'm very focused on accountability of the money that we've spent. And I noticed, in your report, General, the one—The Atlantic Council report—that even though that we have spent \$21 billion on reconstruction and security institutions in Afghanistan, that less than 10 percent of that has directly gone to the Afghans. Where's the other 90 percent gone?

General Jones: Well, I think that's a good—that's a good question. And I think that part of it has been consumed by—well, this is a—corruption is a big problem, so I think it's been, possibly, diverted. I think that we have not always put in the right control mechanisms to make sure that the international money that's pro-

vided is, in fact, spent in the ways that we would like to see happen. But, I—it's clear that—also, internationally, that we need to tighten up our auditing mechanisms to make sure that the Government of Afghanistan spends the money in ways—in the ways intended. And this is—and because this is not clearly evident, there are efforts to set up alternate mechanisms by which a more direct infusion of money, that's better controlled, directly to the people is going on by major organizations now, absent the reforms that are necessary within the government itself.

Senator McCaskill: Well, the Provincial Reconstruction Teams that are working now in Afghanistan, obviously those are—represent people from various countries and under various authorities with various accountability, or lack thereof. I'm a little concerned—it doesn't appear to me that the Department of Defense has any kind of metric whatsoever for measuring the effectiveness of these PRTs. Are you aware of any kind of performance metric that's in place that we can even judge how these various PRTs are accomplishing any of the goals that we're giving them this money to accomplish?

General Jones: Senator, I think the PRTs that are under U.S. auspices and control are probably very well monitored. I visited them, and their leaders are very responsible. The international PRTs that are under the auspices of sovereign nations are—it's hard to say, there, because that's sovereign-nation business. But, what is true, even though—to me, the PRTs are very important, and, unfortunately, they remain very important today, because the government has not moved out to the—to replace the PRTs. The idea of a PRT was to establish a PRT so that it would give people hope that, soon, help would be coming, more massive help, and the PRTs would then be replaced. Unfortunately, the PRTs are still very, very important. But, I think—I think our National PRTs are probably well funded, and I think the auditing is probably quite good.

Where I think we have a problem is, when we go into the general fund for international contributions and—and, at that point, you know, when you factor in the salaries, you factor in construction costs and contracts and things of that nature, and I think that's where the—that's where the—probably, the abuses are found.

Senator McCaskill: Well, as you both are probably aware, we included a new SIGR for Afghanistan in the Defense reauthorization last year. And I would like, briefly, both of you to comment on advice you would give—succinctly, if you would—advice you would give the new SIGR as to where they would get the most bang for our buck, in terms of spending time in the initial phases of their work, in terms of looking at how the money is being spend and how we are utilizing American dollars in Afghanistan.

General Jones: Within the G8 Accords, the primary responsibility of the U.S. is to train the Afghan army. I consider—and I think that the—of the five pillars that the G8 agreed to, that's probably the pillar that is—has been the best administered. It—I don't know whether the—whether it'll be a national decision that the United States is going to take over some other international responsibilities to, for example, dramatically increase the training for the police or take on more focus on the drug battle or champion judicial

reform. I do know that we can't do it all; and I don't think, with the number of nations that we have there—these are wealthy nations—that we should have to do it all.

But, I'll let Ambassador Inderfurth give his viewpoint.

Ambassador Inderfurth: Well, I think the—we have—annually, we have been spending about \$1.5 billion on economic reconstruction and development programs. I would suggest that that funding stream be looked at very closely by the new special inspector general. I testified recently, on the House side, before the House Armed Services Committee, endorsed that idea. I'm very pleased that it's going to be a part of a—the Senate's endorsement, because, as we saw with Afghanistan, having somebody that is dedicated to that subject can tell us, Are we getting our money's worth? And I think that that has been a valuable addition to looking at the contributions being made on reconstruction in Iraq. And, unfortunately, a lot of that money is not going to the intended purposes. I don't know the programs well enough to say which ones, specifically, but, again, the reconstruction money, I think, needs to be looked at carefully.

And there is a—there is a Catch-22 here, as well. A lot of the money bypasses the Government of Afghanistan because of corruption, but, by bypassing the central government, the Karzai government does not get credit for the decisions made about where that money will be spent. So, the undermining of the central government support is a—partly a product of the fact that so much money is coming in the country, and they've got no clue where it's going, and have no say about where it's going. So, there is a Catch-22 here. That also has to be worked out.

And, again, we don't want to make the Super Envoy into Superman, here, but that person needs to look at the kind of funding that goes through the government and around the government, to try to give the central authority more credit for the work being done in the country, because, as General Eikenberry says, "The loss of legitimacy by the Karzai government is the gravest threat to Afghanistan."

Senator McCaskill: So, we can't trust 'em with the money, but we've got to give 'em the credit.

Ambassador Inderfurth: We have to find mechanisms to be able to trust them better with the money, and then give them credit

General Jones: I might just piggyback on that one, because I think this is central to the point of what's going on, largely, in the government.

I think it's incumbent upon the international community to embed people who—of competence to help these struggling young ministries understand how things work in a democracy. So, I think it's not enough to simply say, "You've had your election, you've formed your government, you're on your own, you're a sovereign nation," without, at the same time, providing the expertise and the wherewithal of helping them write an economic recovery plan, better administer the Justice Department, and so on and so forth. But, it seems to me that if we did have a super—or a senior coordinator, that he or she would want to have—want to make sure that the international community is represented, as much as possible, to help the new Government of Afghanistan function effectively. And

that takes mentoring and teaching, and it's not going to be done over—over the years.

But, the worst thing you can do, in my view, is just to treat 'em as though they intuitively know what to do, now that they've had an election, when the case is clear that there isn't that depth at the ministerial levels. And there are some very good people at the senior levels in the Afghan government, people that—of high education, high quality; but, unfortunately, the numbers are not there.

Senator McCaskill: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Levin: Thank you, Senator McCaskill.

Senator Thune?

Senator Thune: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General, Ambassador, welcome, and thank you for being here today.

And I want to pick up on this issue of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams and their effect on that process. The Atlantic Council report noted that the PRTs, and I quote, “come from the various nations and report back to the Nations' capitals; hence, most are not under central command and coordination, and integration of planning has been modest, at best.” I can understand why the capitals would want to hear what they are doing, and why they would still want command, but it seems, to me at least, that they're very difficult to accomplish what we're trying to accomplish there if they can't be centrally coordinated to avoid some of the duplication of effort. So, I guess I would be interested in your thought on that and what, perhaps, a better solution would be.

General Jones: Senator, when I was in NATO, we relied heavily on the missions of the PRTs, and we worked with the various nations to try to, to a certain point, standardize what the Afghans could be—could expect with—to find in a PRT. There was—there is wide discrepancy between what one PRT of one nation does, versus another.

While I was there, there was also a security aspect that was worrisome. I was very concerned that a PRT could have been overrun with many captives and public executions, and so on and so forth, so we spent a lot of time assuring the security of the PRTs.

But, my overall conclusion was that, where you had a governor who was not corrupt and was working for all the—in the right direction, where you had a police chief that could aid in reforming the structure of the police department, and where you had a good PRT that was supported with the resources necessary, the people around—people in that province turned, almost immediately, in a positive direction—building roads, opening schools, bringing water, bringing electricity where there was none. It's very easy to make a huge difference in people's lives in some of the areas of that country.

So, I think, unfortunately, as I mentioned earlier, that the PRTs still remain an important tool, because we haven't had the sustained momentum of the government being able to gain more and more control over their countryside. And until that—those governmental reforms kick in, and until the metrics on that government are demanded by the international community, I'm afraid that the PRTs are still going to play a very important role for the foreseeable future.

Senator Thune: But, do you see—I mean, just the notion that there are all these independent operating parts or pieces out there, and oftentimes, probably, duplicating the activities of others, that there—as was noted by the report—that there couldn't be some sort of central command or coordination that makes sense, that the countries, the Nations that are involved with that, could subscribe to?

General Jones: I think it would be very good if we could achieve that. We have not been able to achieve the international accords that are necessary, with the exception of the security concept of how we protect the PRTs and how you rapidly reinforce them or how you evacuate them in a moment of stress, because nations will need help there. But, nations guard, fairly jealously, the investment that they're making. It's definitely focused, from the capital, direct to their national effort. And it's important, I think, that we work towards greater harmonization and coordination. But, so far, that hasn't—that—nations have been reluctant to pool their resources and to add or—add or subtract based on the—based on need.

Ambassador Inderfurth: Could I just add—

Senator Thune: Yeah.

Ambassador Inderfurth: I just want to give one, sort of, additional point about the PRTs. This is—the expression “hearts and minds” are at play here. And it's hard to win hearts and minds in counterterrorist operations, counterinsurgency operations, air power being used. PRTs are one way to extend the reach, not only of the central government, but also the international community throughout the country. Focusing on reconstruction, governance issues, security, they are a way to help with the hearts-and-minds part of this. Only 5 percent of the U.S. funds go into PRTs. It's not a big amount of money. It needs better coordination, all of those things, but the idea of PRTs is a helpful way. It's kind of a—it's kind of Peace Corps on steroids. Get 'em out there, let 'em see that we do things to help people. And so, therefore, it's a viable and, I think, legitimate concept. But, it needs, as we have pointed out with so many other programs, more attention and coordination.

Senator Thune: According to the report, there are only 25 such teams. Are more needed? Is that sufficient?

General Jones: Well, I think the answer to that is probably yes. If the government is not going to be able to expand its reach, it is a—unfortunately, it becomes more important. The whole concept was that the government would, in fact, move and make a—be able to assert more control over the provinces, but, since that hasn't happened, the PRTs continue to be very important, and I would imagine that—I don't want to speak for the commanders or the alliance, but I would imagine that people would say yes, probably more PRTs would be beneficial.

Ambassador Inderfurth: But, they will not go into those—they cannot expand until certain parts of the country, the south and eastern part, are better secured, so there is a—sort of a wall that they're running up against, in terms of expansion.

Senator Thune: You talked about the amount of money that our government is putting into the PRT effort. Of the other nations, the international community, that are involved, what kind of invest-

ment are they making, relative to what the U.S. is putting into that? Is it like the military component, where we underwrite the biggest share, proportionally?

Ambassador Inderfurth: I don't have PRT—

Senator Thune: Okay.

Ambassador Inderfurth:—figures.

Senator Thune: Okay, that's fine. I wouldn't expect you to have those at your fingertips.

Just one last question, General Jones. And this comes back, maybe just drawn on your past experience—but, there have been concerns about the military command-and-control structure in Afghanistan, and I'm wondering if—what your thoughts are about how that might be better organized to ensure that there is unity of command.

General Jones: Well, this is an interesting—this is always an interesting discussion, because the metric should not be to try to compare a 26-nation alliance with the unified command structure of a single country; and yet, that seems to what, sometimes, we try to do.

I was one of the ones responsible, along with General Abizaid, for creating the command structure that exists. It was designed and proposed to 26 sovereign nations, and 26 sovereign nations and all chiefs of defense of those nations voted that—to adopt that command structure. It has a lot of challenges. It has the challenges of merging the more kinetic operations of Operation Enduring Freedom with the less kinetic operations of ISAF, the NATO operation. At every level, there are instruments in the chain of command that deconflict those two missions, that call—that provide for command-and-control mechanisms to ramp up operations in certain parts of the country, as need be; that allows for special forces to operate in certain protected zones, or earmark zones, if need be; it provides for allies to come to the aid of one another. It is, on paper, relatively easy to diagram and to explain.

In actuality, what it takes is the goodwill and the cooperation of all commanders. The more senior you get, the more the cooperation, to make sure that this works.

And the proof of the pudding, in my book, that it's a viable structure happened in August of 2006, during Operation Medusa, when we had near conventional combat operations in the southern part of Afghanistan shortly after the arrival of almost 9,000 NATO soldiers. The Taliban evidently had been reading European newspapers and decided that this force wasn't going to fight, and they made the mistake of engaging us very symmetrically. OEF had to come in to reinforce. The Afghan Army was involved in it—the Canadians, the Dutch, the U.K., and a number of other countries—and really achieved a rather stunning victory. If that command-and-control structure was not going to work, the warts of that command-and-control structure would have been revealed.

So, I think it's a question of not setting the expectation too high, recognizing that 26 nations agreeing on how to command and control the troops is a very, very delicate issue. And trying to apply the principles that one would find in a national command structure to an alliance is very hard to do.

I think it's workable. I think it was agreed to. I think it would be—can you make improvements on it? Sure. And do things change, and should you change the command structure to go along with that change? Absolutely. But, I don't think it's the—I don't think there's—I don't think that there's too much—I think the evidence is that the command structure works, let's put it that way, and that it takes the goodwill of people who are within it to make it work.

Senator Thune: General, Mr. Ambassador, thank you for your service.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Levin: Thank you, Senator Thune.

A second vote is on. I want to take just a couple of minutes, though, to ask a few additional questions.

I think the reports—at least one of the reports—suggest that there be a increase in the size of the Afghan National Army. And the question is, Where would the cost come from on that? And I figured out, here, what the cost would be. My math. If we double the size of it from 80,000 to 160,000, it would be something like \$400 million a year. I think my math is correct. That's assuming, by the way, that the soldier be paid \$5,000 a year, which I assume is way more than a soldier would be paid—is that true?—in the Afghan National Army. Do you have any idea what a soldier is paid? It wouldn't be \$5,000 a year, would it?

Ambassador Inderfurth: No. No.

Chairman Levin: It might be a couple of thousand a year.

Ambassador Inderfurth: I understand the point. And it—as our report points out, if you're going to expand it, who's going to pay for it?

Chairman Levin: Yeah, but that's a pretty small amount of money, compared to—

Ambassador Inderfurth: Small amount. And you know what I would suggest? I mean, for our NATO allies who have decided that, for their own political reasons, they can't go south to fight? Well, send the Afghan army.

Chairman Levin: That's—

Ambassador Inderfurth: Train 'em, supply 'em, fund—

Chairman Levin: Pay for 'em.

Ambassador Inderfurth: Pay for 'em.

Chairman Levin: Yeah. That's where I was—

Ambassador Inderfurth: That seems to be a—

Chairman Levin:—going with this.

Ambassador Inderfurth:—nice offset to provide security for Afghanistan.

Chairman Levin: Yeah, that's where I was going. So, if they—that may be a very conservative amount—so, if they're \$2500 a year as an average pay—I'm just taking a number, here—it would be about \$200 million a year, which is pretty tiny percentage of what we—

Ambassador Inderfurth: Sure.

Chairman Levin:—pay in Afghanistan, but, more importantly, if our NATO allies are not going to do what they should do, relative to putting their own troops in harm's way, that kind of funding to train the Afghan army surely could be expected from them.

Now, General, you had a deal with our NATO allies for many years. What would be the likely response? We apparently have failed to get Germany, for instance, to agree to put their troops in combat. Would they, you think, be open to an idea that, for a couple of hundred-million dollars a year, if my math is right, that they could double the size by at least the pay of 79- or 80,000 additional Afghan army members?

General Jones: I wouldn't want to speak for any particular country. The logic is—appears sound. But, if you look at what hasn't been done already—for example, take the case of Germany, which has the responsibility of training the police force, yet we still lack size, capacity, resources, and everything else.

So, I think the financial condition of many of our allies in Europe has gotten much better over the years; you know, their GDP is—has grown, and everything else. But there is great reluctance to, not only provide manpower, but also to provide the resources. So, all we can do is continue to try. I have no idea whether that would be—whether they would agree to do that. I would hope they would.

Chairman Levin: The Study Group has recommended that the administration decouple the missions in Afghanistan and Iraq as a way of improving the overall U.S. approach to the global war on terrorism. And I think you mentioned that the way to do this is both in terms of our budgeting; put the Afghanistan war in our regular budget, keep the Iraq war in a supplemental budget, for instance. The rhetoric, surely we ought to separate 'em. And I think it was your suggestion that the European populations might be more willing to support Afghanistan if they didn't link, in their minds, the two efforts together. Is that a fair comment?

Ambassador Inderfurth: Secretary Gates said that, just the other day.

Chairman Levin: He did. But, I mean, is that a fair statement about your—

Ambassador Inderfurth: It is a fair statement—

Chairman Levin:—report? All right.

Ambassador Inderfurth:—and it's support by the administration's Defense Secretary.

Chairman Levin: Well, we'll press him on that one when he gets up here on that. We had, this morning, General Sattler; we asked him about the reference that Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Admiral Mullen, made about troops in Iraq versus troops in Afghanistan, and he said, "It's simply a matter of resources, of capacity. In Afghanistan, we do what we can; in Iraq, we do what we must." In other words, that we're going to use—or Iraq is our first priority, and that means Afghanistan is a lesser priority. Would it be helpful, in that analysis, if we continue to reduce our presence in Iraq, in your judgment, so that those forces, at least would be available to go to Afghanistan? Whether they would go there or not would be a different decision, but at least would that be helpful? Are they related, in that sense?

Ambassador Inderfurth: The Afghan—the Iraq Study Group made that recommendation, that—as combat forces are withdrawn from Iraq, that some be sent to Afghanistan. The Afghanistan Study Group endorsed that recommendation. So, I think that that's the answer to that question.

Chairman Levin: And they are linked, in that sense, aren't they?

Ambassador Inderfurth: Well, they are linked. I mean, there's only finite resources, and the Army and our military is stretched thin. So, you can't, sort of, make up, out of whole cloth. But, the statement that Admiral Mullen made, "do what we must, do what we can," I think my major point this afternoon is that we have to put Afghanistan into the "we must—do what we must" category. It should be there, too. It's not just a "can," "want to do," "like to do," it's a "must."

Chairman Levin: Well, on that note—I think, General, you probably would agree with that, but I don't want to put words in your mouth, but I have to run and catch a vote. So—

General Jones: No, I do agree with that.

Chairman Levin: Thank you both. I'm just going to run. I won't even have a chance to come, personally, to thank you. It's been very, very helpful. You can tell—this was actually a significant turnout of Senators under a very difficult afternoon. That's how much—there's a lot of interest in Afghanistan.

Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 4:47 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]