

neighbors can benefit from a peaceful Iraq, and they can assist us in reaching a political equilibrium among Iraq's various groups. These include Iran and Syria, which are clearly meddling in Iraq but whose cooperation will be necessary for any political solution in Iraq to be relevant for the long term.

To be successful, such a diplomatic initiative will require a great amount of attention and hard work. Thus, I recommend Secretary Rice and Vice President CHENEY go to Iraq and practice shuttle diplomacy. They should lay the groundwork for a meeting of leaders from all three major Iraqi groups to take place outside of Iraq. This kind of a meeting could be similar to the Dayton Accords that helped resolve the conflict in Bosnia. It would allow for intense, sustained discussions aimed at a durable, long-term political settlement amongst the Iraqis. One potential political settlement could involve a three-State, one-country formula. Each of Iraq's major groups would have its own autonomous region with Baghdad as a federal city.

Each group can manage its own affairs while preserving Iraq's territorial integrity. This is something the Iraqi Constitution allows, that the Kurdish people are practicing, and that the Iraqi leaders, I believe, should pursue to get to a political equilibrium. We have made our share of mistakes in Iraq. Still, we have invested the lives of more than 3,000 of our best and brightest for our Nation's future.

The mission for which they died is not yet complete. We still need political equilibrium if we are to achieve a stable, united Iraq that can be an ally in the war on terrorism. We must win in Iraq, and we will. We must win for the future of the region and for the future of the world and for the future of Iraq. We must win for the future of America. That victory will require more than bullets; it will require political arrangements inside Iraq and around Iraq to end the sectarian violence and move toward a peaceful future for the Iraqi people and stability for the region. We are in a tough time, but I believe we have solutions that can work.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Missouri is recognized.

THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY'S PERSPECTIVE ON IRAQ

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Kansas, who made the point well that we cannot afford to lose in Iraq. I thought my colleagues, and maybe those who may be interested—if anybody is paying attention and watching the floor—may be interested to hear what the intelligence community said in public. It is rare we have public hearings in the Intelligence Committee, but once a year at least we have the worldwide threat hearing.

Last Thursday, we had that hearing and we spent about 5½ hours. It was

very informative and mostly dealt with Iraq. Present were the Director of National Intelligence, Ambassador Negroponte; Director Hayden of the CIA; Director of the DIA General Maples; Mr. Foote from the State Department INR; and FBI Director Robert Mueller. Much of the questioning was about what is going on in Iraq. I think the consensus of the intelligence community was that while things have not gone well, the new commitment by Prime Minister Maliki and the rest of his Government—not just the Shia Prime Minister but the Kurds and the Sunnis—was to take over and take ownership of ending the insurgency in Iraq. That gave us the best hope of achieving a peaceful solution that would leave Iraq a stable country—not perfect by any means, with no guarantee of success, but this was the opportunity to get the three major elements in Iraq—the Shia, Sunnis, and the Kurds—to come together on what we believe will be and should be a long-term solution.

Frankly, one of the real problems we have had has been the reluctance of the Iraqi Government to let us go in and eliminate Shia militia, such as the Moqtada al-Sadr Mahdi army. This has been a serious problem. The American forces have been held back. Now it is our understanding—and the intelligence community believes what they have told the policymakers in the executive branch—that this is now the best chance, because they realize time is running out, that while our commitment was strong to Iraq, it is not an unending one, infinite.

They are going to have to take control if they don't want to see their country descend into chaos. So there was a lot of talk about the pros and cons of the policy the President announced to turn over the responsibility to the Iraqi military, for ending the insurgency in Baghdad, and to send our troops into the Al Anbar province to deal with radical Islamists, such as al-Qaida, who continue to stir up problems and who we believe were responsible for the bombing of the Golden Mosque in Samara, which escalated the insurgency.

So I asked another question and the answers, I thought, were very telling. They were not covered in the media. I asked what if we decided now or within 2 or 3 months to withdraw and turn it over to the Iraqi Government, and the consensus was uniform and frightening.

Admiral Negroponte said:

And I think the view pretty much across the community is that a precipitous withdrawal could lead to a collapse of the government of that country, and a collapse of their security forces, because we simply don't think that they are ready to take over, to assume full control of their security responsibilities.

We think that that is a goal that can be achieved on a gradual basis and on a well-planned basis. But to simply withdraw now, I think, could have catastrophic effects. And I think that's a quite widely held view inside of Iraq itself.

Later, I went back and asked what it would mean in terms of the worldwide terrorist threat of al-Qaida. Director Negroponte responded:

I think in terms of al-Qaida's own planning, if you look at the letter that Zawahiri wrote to Zarqawi last year about establishing in Iraq a sort of beachhead for the expansion of al-Qaida's ideology throughout the Islamic world, establishing the caliphate, it would be the very sanctuary for international terrorism that we are seeking to avoid.

In other words, the No. 2 man under Osama bin Laden, Zawahiri, wrote to the notorious, infamous butcher Zarqawi, who had beheaded Americans and others on television, to tell him to cool it; we are trying to establish a basis for al-Qaida to operate out of Iraq. This would be, in Zawahiri's and bin Laden's own words, establishing the range of the caliphate. What they mean by that is to establish a Taliban style of government, such as we saw in Afghanistan, on a regionwide and ultimately a global basis.

I asked General Maples about the impact of withdrawal, precipitous or immediate, or politically, a timetable withdrawal, determined by what we want in Washington, rather than what is available on the ground. He said:

... I believe that a failure in Iraq would empower the jihadist movement. It would give that base of operations from which the jihadist movement would expand. And it's consistent with the goals of al-Qaida in Iraq to establish that Islamic state, and then to expand it into the caliphate.

He went on to say there would be regional impacts and that there would be a tremendous economic impact. He cited hydrocarbons and, obviously, we know Iraq is very rich in oil reserves, and it would make oil reserves available to fund the activities of al-Qaida and the international radical Islamist terrorist movements. He also said it would have an impact on the world market on oil, driving up the power of oil. He concluded by saying it would give Iran the power to expand its evil empire, which President Ahmadi-Nejad is urgently trying to expand not only in the Middle East but throughout Latin America.

I think probably the best summary of the intelligence community estimates of the impact of the choices—and we are talking about choices—is there is nothing good in terms of choices. One option has been put forward by President Bush. I happen to believe it is the best available option to support the Iraqis who have committed to end the insurgency, to bring the Sunnis into a government that would share in the oil revenues and take responsibility for ending the insurgency, while our troops go after the external forces, the terrorists coming in from other countries and joining the al-Qaida movement.

I asked General Hayden to give me a concise statement of his view and the view of the intelligence community on the second option, which would be to

withdraw now, or to set a short timetable deadline in 2 or 3 months. I will read what he said:

Yes, sir, Senator. When I went before the Iraq Study Group, I prefaced my remarks by saying I think I'll give a rather—I'm going to be giving a rather somber assessment of the situation in Iraq. But before I do that, I said, let me tell you. If we leave under the current circumstances, everything gets worse.

At that point, I commended him for being a master of understatement. He went on to say:

Three quick areas. More Iraqis die from the disorder inside Iraq. Iraq becomes a safe haven, perhaps more dangerous than the one al-Qaida had in Afghanistan. And finally, the conflict in Iraq bleeds over into the neighborhood and threatens serious regional instability.

I said, well, what would be the threat to the U.S. homeland? How does that affect us in Washington, in Rhode Island, Missouri, Kansas, New York, Los Angeles, and elsewhere? He said:

The immediate threat comes from providing al-Qaida that which they are attempting to seek in several locations right now, be it Somalia, the tribal area of Pakistan or Anbar province—a safe haven to rival that which they had in Afghanistan.

I have my views on this. This is the overwhelming consensus of the intelligence community. There are no great options, but the best option, they believe, is to provide American troops to support what the Government of Iraq has pledged to do, and that is to end the insurgency, to stop the Shia death squads, to cut the Sunnis in on a fair share of the Government, and take responsibility not only for clearing but for controlling the areas in Baghdad that have been the problem. So I think as we talk about the options available, it is vitally important that we listen to the intelligence community and their best assessments of what happens if we follow the President's plan or if we choose a course of continuing to do what we have been doing, without assisting the Iraqis to take control of their Government, or if we cut and run.

I ask unanimous consent that the transcripts which I cited be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

SSCI OPEN HEARING: CURRENT AND
PROJECTED NATIONAL SECURITY THREATS
JANUARY 11, 2007

NEGROPONTE (responding to a question from Sen. Bond): And I think the view pretty much across the community is that a precipitous withdrawal could lead to a collapse of the government of that country, and a collapse of their security forces, because we simply don't think that they are ready to take over, to assume full control of their security responsibilities.

We think that that is a goal that can be achieved on a gradual basis and on a well planned basis. But to simply withdraw now, I think could have catastrophic effects. And I think that's a quite widely held view inside of Iraq itself.

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NEGROPONTE: I think, in terms of Al Qaida's own planning, if you look at the letter that Zawahiri wrote to Zarqawi last year about establishing in Iraq a sort of a beach-

head for the expansion of Al Qaida's ideology throughout the Islamic world, establishing the caliphate, it would be the very sanctuary for international terrorism that we are seeking to avoid.

BOND: General Maples?

MAPLES: Sir, I'd follow up on that statement by the ambassador, because I truly believe that a failure in Iraq would empower the jihadist movement. It would give that base of operations from which the jihadist movement would expand. And it's consistent with the goals of Al Qaida in Iraq to establish that Islamic state, and then to expand it into the caliphate.

I also think that there, of course, will be very significant regional impacts, both in terms of stability to other countries in the region.

There will be economic impacts with respect to, in particular, hydrocarbons and the effect that that could have, particularly if those resources were in the hands of jihadists. And . . .

BOND: In other words, they could get the profit off of the high price of oil.

MAPLES: Absolutely. And then I would follow with one last, and that is the empowerment—further empowerment—of Iran within the region.

BOND: General Hayden?

GEN. HAYDEN: Yes, sir, Senator. When I went before the Iraq Study Group, I prefaced my remarks by saying I think I'll give a rather—I'm going to be giving a rather somber assessment of the situation in Iraq. But before I do that, I said, let me tell you. If we leave under the current circumstances, everything gets worse. And . . .

BOND: You have a masterful way of understating it.

HAYDEN: Three very quick areas. More Iraqis die from the disorder inside Iraq. Iraq becomes a safe haven, perhaps more dangerous than the one Al Qaida had in Afghanistan. And finally, the conflict in Iraq bleeds over into the neighborhood and threatens serious regional instability.

BOND: Any threat do you see—what threat to the United States homeland?

HAYDEN: The immediate threat comes from providing Al Qaida that which they are attempting to seek in several locations right now, be it Somalia, the tribal area of Pakistan or Anbar province—a safe haven to rival that which they had in Afghanistan.

Mr. BOND. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. MCCASKILL). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. AKAKA. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Hawaii is recognized.

Mr. AKAKA. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. AKAKA pertaining to the introduction of S. 310 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. AKAKA. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IRAQ

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, the issue that is paramount in the minds of many Americans is the war in Iraq. It is a consuming issue for us because we know that as we stand in the safety of the Senate Chamber or in our homes across America, at the same moment in time, 144,000 American soldiers are risking their lives. Sadly, some are giving their lives almost on a daily basis. Many are injured and come home to face a different life than they ever imagined.

The cost of this war, of course, starts with the human accounting. Over 3,013 American soldiers have died as of today, 23,000 have returned injured, 6,600 seriously injured, with double amputations, blindness, or traumatic brain injury of a serious nature.

This morning's Wall Street Journal, in an article by David Rogers, talks about the real cost of this war in dollar terms. Many of us have used the numbers of \$380 billion, \$400 billion, and some have come to the conclusion that the number is really much higher and that when you account for our obligations to our veterans and rebuilding the military after this war, it will range in the hundreds of billions of dollars more. This will affect our Nation. It will affect the quality of our life. It will affect our spending on basics, whether it is the education of our children, the health of our citizens, building the infrastructure so our economy can expand, or creating higher education opportunities so that the 21st century can be an American century, as the 20th century was.

This war has taken its toll. It isn't the first war that has been controversial in our history. Some of us are old enough to remember another war not that long ago. It was October 19, 1966, on the floor of the U.S. Senate, across the aisle, when a Senator from the State of Vermont, George Aiken, rose to speak. George Aiken gave a speech about the war in Vietnam. It is one that has been quoted many times since. He said a lot about the war at that moment. Some of the things he said are interesting in a historical context.

Senator Aiken said, in October of 1966, about the Vietnam war:

The greater the U.S. military commitment in south Vietnam, however, the less possibility that any south Vietnamese government will be capable of asserting its own authority on its own home ground or abroad. The size of the U.S. commitment already clearly is suffocating any serious possibility of self-determination in south Vietnam for the simple reason that the whole defense of that country is now totally dependent on the U.S. armed presence.

Of course, Senator Aiken went on to say that we should declare victory and start bringing our troops home. He said:

Such a declaration should be accompanied not by announcement of a phased withdrawal, but by the gradual redeployment of