U.S. FOREIGN POLICY IN PAKISTAN: IMPLICATIONS FOR REGIONAL SECURITY, STABILITY, AND DEVELOPMENT

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U.S. FOREIGN POLICY IN PAKISTAN: IMPLICATIONS FOR REGIONAL SECURITY, STABILITY, AND DEVELOPMENT

WEDNESDAY, MAY 7, 2008

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:04 a.m. in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Howard L. Berman (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Chairman BERMAN. The committee will come to order.

We have a really very impressive panel of witnesses for today's hearing. We also have a little partisan conflict on the House floor that may mess up my notion of a sensible and orderly way to go through with this hearing. But we will get started and see where that takes us. We are very delighted that the three of you made the time out of your schedule to come here today.

Today we turn our attention to a region that defense experts have singled out as perhaps the most likely launching point of a future al-Qaeda terrorist strike. The tribal regions of Pakistan provide safe haven for thousands of militants and terrorists who seek not only to destabilize Pakistan and neighboring Afghanistan but who also plan attacks around the globe. For this reason I believe that it is imperative that we review United States foreign policy toward Pakistan to find out what is working, what is not, and how a new administration should approach this critical region.

With new civilian and military leadership in Pakistan we now have a chance to establish a sustainable and mutually beneficial bilateral relationship: A relationship that recognizes how unfettered extremism poses a threat to Pakistan, its neighbors and the world, a relationship that focuses on economic and development assistance, not as an after thought, but as the necessary foundation to promote long-term growth, and a relationship that adheres to the values that both of our nations inherently share, bolstering forces of moderation, holding dear the principles of democracy, and promoting peace and prosperity throughout Pakistan.

However, recent reports of negotiations between the Government of Pakistan and tribal leaders present a challenge for the United States: How can we balance the need to engage with certain tribal leaders but still hold firm against negotiating with terrorists who will continue to fight United States and NATO troops in Afghanistan regardless of any truce? I believe we must remain steadfast in our fight against the irreconcilable forces who wish to attack our

country, destabilize the region, and return Afghanistan to the oppressive, hateful regime that gave safe harbor to al-Qaeda and other terrorist elements. However, this approach will require greater cooperation between Pakistan and Afghanistan, a concerted effort to show the Pakistani people that this is not just a fight for America but also for a secure Pakistan.

The obvious first step would be to create a comprehensive United States strategy toward Pakistan. But a report released 2 weeks ago by the Government Accountability Office shows that this administration has failed to create any comprehensive interagency plan to tackle the problems of this region. Without a plan, how are we measuring, how do we measure our performance in meeting objectives? Without a plan, how do we assure the American people that their taxpayer dollars are being put to good use? Without a plan we make ourselves susceptible to agencies working at cross-purposes with each other.

And we are now seeing signs of just these dangers coming to fruition. Yesterday the GAO released proof that the funds doled out by our Government to support the fight against extremism in the region have been subject to little or not internal oversight. For example, why is the United States Government being asked to reimburse Pakistan for air defense radar maintenance? Al-Qaeda is not known to have an air force, and the purpose of these funds is to support the fight against extremists, not to boost Pakistan's conventional warfare capability. This calls into question not just the value this administration has put on these tax dollars, but the effectiveness of what they are doing to keep us safe.

It is time we learned from our Government's mistakes and move forward. Bringing stability and growth to Pakistan, winning in Afghanistan, and fulfilling vital United States national security goals are all at stake. The democratic institutions of Pakistan are our allies, and it is only through support for these institutions that we will ultimately serve the Pakistani people and gain their cooperation in our mutual fight against extremism.

I look forward to hearing the testimonies of our three distinguished witnesses. But first we turn first to the ranking member of the committee, my friend Ms. Ros-Lehtinen of Florida for her opening remarks.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman, for calling this important and timely hearing on an issue of great importance for United States interests in South and Central Asia, as well as for our security here at home.

Before I address the subject of this hearing, Mr. Chairman, I would like to note that however great the issues and partisan considerations that sometimes divide members on this committee, and in the House as a whole, ultimately our ability to make the process work and secure the public's interest rests upon our ability to trust one another. I regret that this bedrock requirement has been called into doubt in recent days. And I refer to language, as we have discussed, Mr. Chairman, in the Security Assistance bill that this committee approved last Wednesday.

As you are aware, Mr. Chairman, prior to the markup we reached an agreement that I would cosponsor the bill and seek the support of all my Republican colleagues with provisions included in

the text that I believed were necessary to prevent North Korea from being prematurely removed from the list of state sponsors of terrorism, and to ensure that any agreement with North Korea be truly verifiable. The members of this committee then endorsed this agreement when they rendered their unanimous support for the Security Assistance bill containing the compromise language.

To my great surprise, less than a day after the committee's vote that agreement was essentially tossed aside and my staff was presented with a revised text negotiated between the Democrat majority of this committee and the leaders of the Senate Appropriations and Foreign Relations Committees which weakened the provisions in this agreement that we had worked out with the chairman, and again supported by members of this committee. The new text was a fait accompli, as efforts to restore elements of these provisions were effectively ignored.

Mr. Chairman, if we are to proceed in a cooperative manner we need to be certain that agreements that have been negotiated in good faith with you and the members of the majority will be honored throughout and not unilaterally reopened or set aside whenever circumstances change. And I hope that trust and confidence can be restored. In our brief conversation before today's hearing, Mr. Chairman, you assured me that this will not happen again. I thank you. I trust you. And I trust that the dedicated, hard-working staff continues our bipartisan approach.

Turning to the subject of today's hearing, Mr. Chairman, the Afghan-Pakistan border region is of critical geostrategic importance and the United States must continue to work closely with both the Afghan and Pakistani Governments to counter common enemies that are exploiting ungoverned territory in that region. The recent and highly significant democratic transition in Islamabad opens up exciting new opportunities for the people of Pakistan and for the future of United States-Pakistan relations.

The United States congratulates Pakistan on the success of its recent elections. Despite enormous odds, the will of the people prevailed. And although the new government still enjoys strong public support, it also confronts a daunting agenda, from strengthening Parliament and other civilian institutions, to bolstering an independent judiciary and the rule of law, and working through challenges of rising energy demand and skyrocketing food prices.

With respect to critically important security challenges, in the long run the best antidote for Islamic extremism should be a legitimately elected government that can fight this threat with the backing of the Pakistani people. In the short run, however, new uncertainties have emerged that our two governments must tackle together.

The good news is that Pakistan's new government has correctly identified the need to develop a comprehensive counterinsurgency plan, including economic and social development and the integration of the tribal areas into the mainstream of the greater society.

The goal of this plan is to eliminate safe havens and to marginalize the appeal of local militants.

Contrary to popular misconceptions, this new approach largely dovetails with an evolving U.S. strategy premised on the understanding that military efforts alone have not eliminated extremist

recruitment, training or operations in the tribal areas, and that countering extremist influence in these areas requires robust economic development and new security capabilities supported by the U.S. and others.

However, the new government is also pursuing problematic new so-called peace agreements with local militants along the Afghan border. The CIA Director just a month ago said that the situation on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border "presents a clear and present danger to Afghanistan, to Pakistan, and to the West in general," as well as to "the United States in particular."

I look forward to hearing the comments from the witnesses. And in conclusion, let me just reiterate that it remains in our nation's long-term interest to forge an enduring strategic partnership with a democratic, stable, and prosperous Pakistan that remains a strong partner in the campaign against Islamic militants and which maintains responsible controls over its nuclear weapons technology. We look forward to working with the Pakistani Government and the Pakistani people to accomplish this worthy goal.

And I yield back the balance of my time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentlelady has expired. And I am pleased to recognize the chairman of the Middle East and South Asia Subcommittee, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Ackerman, for 3 minutes.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. "The United States has not met its national security goals to destroy the terrorist threat and close the safe haven in Pakistan's FATA region." With that quote, the Government Accountability Office has clearly and succinctly described what is wrong with United States policy toward Pakistan: It has failed. GAO goes on to note that since 2003, the administration and Congress have recognized that all elements of national power needed to be brought together to deal with terrorist threats emanating from the Federally Administered Tribal Areas. Yet despite demands from Congress, there remains no integrated strategy and our Embassy in Islamabad has had to cobble one together for itself without support from Washington.

But we were able to send the Government of Pakistan $10 billion. Ten billion dollars, and we have not met our national security goals. Yet the Bush administration is not actually seeking a new strategy. In fact, it seems they would like to double down on the guy who got them this far. But the inconvenient truth, if I can borrow a phrase, is that elections have produced a new government that ran against the administration's man and implicitly against his relationship with the United States.

We need a new plan. The new plan needs to build a relationship with Pakistani institutions, not just one Pakistani individual. It needs to help Pakistanis build on the foundations of moderate Islam, devotion to democracy and justice, and a vibrant civil society. The United States needs to have many friends in Pakistan, not just one. But our friends in Pakistan must come to recognize that the terrorists who inhabit their borders are an existential threat to them. The Pakistani people, and not just government ministers, must see the fight against terrorism as more than simply yet another war the Americans want them to fight.

I understand the new government's desire to distance itself from President Musharraf's policies and, by extension, to distance itself from us. But I also remain deeply concerned that the policy of negotiating with terrorists is one that has failed in the past and will likely fail again. Perhaps this is the course of democracy in Pakistan, that the path of negotiations must be tried once more before a democratically elected government can apply more forceful measures.

To be fair, the United States must give the democratic government we demanded the room to resolve its own issues, less it be seen as merely a pawn. But if the reported deal with Baitullah Mehsud fails I hope the government in Islamabad will vigorously pursue the people who intend nothing but ill for their country. Too many innocent Pakistanis have died at the hands of terrorist for them to do otherwise. The United States needs the continued cooperation of Pakistan in the fight against terrorism, but we also need to give the government enough political space that the fight becomes their as much as ours. To date, the Bush administration has not shown the deftness necessary to accomplish such a feat, but then again, we can always pray.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired. And we now turn to our distinguished panel of witnesses.

First we will hear from Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, current vice chairman of Perseus, a leading private equity firm. Ambassador Holbrooke has served in numerous capacities for the United States Government. Most recently he was the United States Ambassador to the United Nations where he was also a member of President Clinton's cabinet. In addition, as Assistant Secretary of State for Europe he was the chief architect to the 1995 Dayton Peace Agreement that ended the war in Bosnia.

Appropriate for this hearing, Ambassador Holbrooke recently took a trip to Pakistan to get his sense of the political dynamics at play. His insights will be invaluable to this committee, having served both within and outside the administration on such high profile foreign policy issues.

Next we will hear from Ambassador Tom Pickering. Ambassador Pickering is currently vice chairman at Hills and Company which provides advice and counsel to a number of U.S. enterprises. Ambassador Pickering has an exemplary public service career that has spanned five decades, including service as the United States Ambassador to the United Nations, and Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs. And since I got to Congress, Ambassador, every hot spot from Latin America and Central America to the Middle East to India and around the world. So he is well-versed on the issues confronting the U.S. national security objectives in the region, and I look forward to his frank assessment on today's hearing topic.

And, finally, we welcome the presence of General James Jones, who is currently President and CEO of the U.S. Chamber Institute for 21st Century Energy. General Jones is a decorated combat veteran who retired after 40 years of active duty service. General Jones most recently served as the 32nd Commandant of the Marine Corps and the Supreme Allied Commander Europe. He has worked closely with government, business and civic leaders in an effort to

protect and advance United States and allied interests around the world, most recently on issues dealing with South Asia.

Along with Ambassador Pickering, General Jones was a co-author of a report released by the Afghanistan Study Group which in part focused on the threats posed by the tribal regions of Pakistan. General Jones, we are happy to have you here today.

Ambassador Holbrooke, your entire statement will be part of the record. And we await your testimony.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE RICHARD C. HOLBROOKE, VICE CHAIRMAN, PERSEUS LLC (FORMER UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED NATIONS)

Ambassador HOLBROOKE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is a great honor to appear before your committee. Before I begin testimony, with your permission I would just like to acknowledge the fact that Tom Lantos passed away a few weeks ago. He was a very dear friend of mine personally. I think he was a great chairman and a great American. I know you have honored him in magnificent ways here in the Capitol, but I just wanted to echo my own personal sense of loss and admiration.

And I might just add, that in the last talk I had with him 2 weeks, less than 2 weeks before he died, knowing his situation he went out of his way to talk about how important this committee would be and how, what other confidence he had with the personal leadership that you would exhibit, as well as you, Congresswoman. And that was the bulk of our last conversation. And I just wanted to say that.

You have called a hearing this morning on what I would submit is the second most urgent problem facing the next President of the United States after Iraq, and one that will go on far, far longer than the war in Iraq. I am not talking about Pakistan, Mr. Chairman, I am talking about what I would call theater AFPAK, the Afghan-Pakistan theater of operations. Important though Pakistan is in its own right, the comments that you and your colleagues have just made made clear why we are here today: It is because of Afghanistan. And there is no success possible in Afghanistan as long as Pakistan's tribal areas are a sanctuary for the Taliban and al-Qaeda, and a threat to the United States' national security continues to grow.

All of the comments that you and your colleagues have just made, the GAO report, the terrific report that General Jones and Ambassador Pickering put out, my own observations on my trip last month to Pakistan and Afghanistan, all support the same general concept: This war in Afghanistan is stalemated at best and, at worst, we may be losing ground in some areas. But yet the administration denies that fact in almost every way.

The last time the three of us sat at a table together was on the Senate side a few weeks ago. And after General and Assistant Secretary of State for this region was asked specifically whether he agreed with the conclusions of the Jones-Pickering report, which were that Afghanistan was not yet a failed state but was a failing state, the Assistant Secretary of State for the region flatly said no, said that he could not imagine—these are direct, accurate paraphrases—he could not imagine that anyone could not see how much

better things were in Afghanistan. And he left your colleagues on the Senate side somewhat flummoxed. My own trip does not support his conclusions.

I want to address very, very quickly three issues: One, domestic situation in Pakistan; two, the tribal areas; and three, the Afghanistan.

On the first issue I agree completely with what you and Congressman Ackerman have just said. I think the only—that the best thing that has happened in Pakistan in a long time was this election. The situation is better in Pakistan today domestically than it has been in recent memory. President Musharraf is still President of the country but he has essentially been reduced to the constitutional powers of a chief of state, not a head of government, when he was forced to take off his uniform. General Kiani has made clear that he wants to keep the military out of politics. It is indispensable that take place. Nonetheless, there are many people in the administration who still are nostalgic for General Musharraf. It is always easier to deal with a general and a single person than a complicated coalition government.

And what you have between Mr. Zardari and the PPP and Mr. Sharif and his party is an uneasy grand coalition, similar to Israel. That is not a very easy way to govern. But it is what the people wanted. And the most important thing to note is that the militant Islamic parties got only about 4 or 5 percent of the vote, a very dramatic repudiation of the journalistic cliché that Pakistan is the world's most dangerous nation. It is not the world's most dangerous nation, however, its tribal areas do pose a problem for us and must be paid attention to.

So I would say that the domestic situation in Islamabad—and I happened to be there just as the National Assembly was taking office and I spent a lot of time with the new parliamentarians, and I saw the spirit and energy, that is an encouraging situation. But it needs strong American support. And I might say, it needs American understanding because democracy is not always a clean process.

But the diminution of President Musharraf's power is in the interests of the country. And to his credit he seems to have accepted it. As we speak now, very complicated negotiations are going on between Prime Minister Galani, President Musharraf and the two party leaders, neither of whom are in the Parliament of course, over the future of the presidency. America's voice must be clear here: The best thing for Pakistan is democracy internally.

However, there is no democracy in the Tribal Areas. As everyone knows, the Tribal Areas, often called the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, so if I might I will call them FATA without confusing them with a certain other Fatah to the west, the FATA areas are not democratic. Political parties are not allowed. They are administered under a law written by the British under the Indian Raj in 1901, and they are run in a very peculiar way. And this situation has led rise to a tremendous opportunity for the militants when they were driven out of Afghanistan. This delicate balance of independent tribes going back centuries worked until the United States successfully drove the Taliban out of much of Afghanistan in 2001, 2002, and the Taliban and al-Qaeda moved across the border into

these areas, stirring up immense amounts of trouble which is continuing.

I went to Peshawar. I went up to the Khyber Pass; I met with the Frontier Corps leadership. And I will tell you frankly, Mr. Chairman, I do not have a clue what is going on in the FATA. And if anyone ever comes before this committee and says so you better ask twice, because it is one of the most elusive areas in the world.

But to go back to what you and your colleagues have just said, it is absolutely true, as the GAO has said, that there is not strategy for the United States. Worst than that, the Pakistani Government which is focused on its internal domestic line-up in this new era of democracy in Pakistan after a decade of military rule, is also not clear what it is doing. There are very credible rumors and concerns that one of the things that the government might do is to cut deals with some of the militants that would allow them to have a free hand in Afghanistan if they stayed out of the populated areas to the east in Pakistan. Two years ago when Musharraf tried a similar deal it was a disaster. And by the way, when I saw him privately he admitted that it did not work out very well.

Everyone says, "Oh, this one would be different." But the truth is, Mr. Chairman, you, the members of the committee, we at this witness table, none of us know what is being negotiated there. The only thing we know is that it is of the most immense importance to American security interests and will directly affect the lives of NATO forces, especially American forces operating in Afghanistan. Lives, American lives are at stake and we do not know what is happening.

The American Government says it has a plan for the FATA. And the plan as it was briefed to me is approximately $750 million over 5 years for reconstruction. This was presented to me with some pride by American officials at a very high level. I would submit to you and your colleagues that this is a pathetic amount of money: $150 million a year for reconstruction when everyone agrees that this area is a part of the Afghan theater of operations. You have been authorizing billions of dollars for Afghanistan, and I support that, and yet the State Department and the administration have asked for less than, for less than 5 percent of that money for this all-important area.

Furthermore, the bulk of this money will never reach Pakistan. And I want to stress this to all of you. The system that this administration has put into place, which is essentially to privatize foreign policy, allows, and particularly foreign assistance, means that you will give the money to the State Department or AID, they will contract with NGOs and consultant groups, not necessarily non-profits either, in the United States, and those groups will find subcontractors on the ground in Pakistan. And nobody in the Embassy in Islamabad will know where this money is going. You will not know where it is going. I have been reliably told that a very substantial percentage of it never leaves the United States, it goes into overhead. And I would respectfully recommend to your committee that you hold separate hearings on this question because it is not restricted just to Pakistan. And the American taxpayers are losing billions of dollars. And even more important than the waste, we have no idea how the money is being used.

I sat next to the Minister of Education of one of the states at a dinner in Peshawar. And she was just leaving the government. And I said, "What are you going to do?" And she said, "I am going to go back to my NGO." And she will be the recipient of some of this money. She was a very impressive person; I do not mean to criticize her. But none of you in this room and no one in Washington will know what her personal politics are, how the money would go.

Last, on Afghanistan itself, with your permission I would like to submit five articles, four of which I wrote recently, and the fifth of which was written by my chief of staff Ashley Baumer, about the Afghan-Pakistan area.

[The information referred to follows:]

Hope in Pakistan

The Problems Are Real, but So Is the Progress

By Richard Holbrooke
Friday, March 21, 2008; A17

PESHAWAR, Pakistan -- Pakistan has had a such run of bad news in recent years that it may seem delusional to describe the current mood here as hopeful. Yet that is the impression this country -- often called by the American media the most dangerous on Earth -- is offering a visitor.

The main reason for the new mood is the return of a vibrant democratic process and what is widely believed to be the end of a decade of military rule. Less than two months after Benazir Bhutto's murder, her Pakistan People's Party and the party of her chief rival, former prime minister Nawaz Sharif, swept parliamentary elections that were widely accepted as honest. They have formed a Pakistani version of a grand coalition, with Bhutto's PPP on top.

The victory of these parties -- broadly based political organizations with widespread popular appeal -- is only half the story. The other half is equally important: The military seems to have pulled out of the political arena, at least temporarily, after President Pervez Musharraf's party won less than 20 percent of the seats in the newly elected National Assembly. Since Musharraf's real power base was as military commander, when he "took off his uniform" last year, it turned out that his residual power as president was largely ceremonial -- "like the queen of England," as one enthusiastic new parliamentarian put it. The new military chief, Gen. Ashfaq Kiyani, has said emphatically that the military should stay out of politics. In a country where the military has stepped into the political process with unfortunate regularity since the birth of the nation in 1947, this could be the biggest news of all -- if Kiyani and his colleagues mean it. The military has a central role to play in Pakistan's security, but not in the political arena.

Another positive straw in the wind is the poor showing of the overtly religious parties in February's elections -- they got only 4 percent of the total vote. In the volatile tribal areas near the Afghan border, where the Taliban and al-Qaeda have had a sanctuary from NATO operations in Afghanistan, the Muslim parties were shut out.

This does not mean, of course, that the border region is free of terrorists; sheltered deep in the valleys and villages of western Pakistan, they pose a serious threat to American and NATO troops fighting in Afghanistan. Dealing with them will require a massive program of security and development that goes far beyond the current plan, which is about $150 million in U.S. assistance per year. After visiting the border areas this week, I believe that the place to start is with a vastly improved, better-equipped, better-trained and better-paid Frontier Corps. This ancient force, created by the British in the 19th century, has only 50,000 troops; incredibly, it faces a better-armed Taliban and local rebel groups. Put another way, the eastern front of the American war in Afghanistan is surely worth more than $150 million a year -- money that, I should note, has not yet arrived in any significant amount.

Huge mistakes were made by the Musharraf regime in the tribal areas. Even Musharraf admits that his government's 2006 peace deal with the Taliban was a disaster that gave the Taliban a huge

advantage in the Pakistani tribal areas and greatly weakened the NATO effort in Afghanistan. (Inexplicably, the United States publicly endorsed the deal, perhaps as part of its generally pro-Musharraf policies.)

But it seems a large overstatement to see the militants in the tribal areas as a threat to the rest of Pakistan. Pakistan's problems -- including terrorism -- are monumental, and its future is uncertain. (A bright spot in recent years has been a quietly improving relationship with India.) But Pakistan, the world's second-largest Muslim nation, is too big and its civil society -- with its deeply established political parties, its free press, its vibrant and very visible lawyers, its thousands of nongovernmental organizations, its huge business community, and its own moderate Muslim leaders -- too extensive to in fact become "the world's most dangerous nation."

For their part, educated Pakistanis are following the American presidential campaign carefully. Whoever is elected, they will continue to pay close attention to Washington. (An example: Asif Ali Zardari, Bhutto's widower and co-chairman of the PPP, told me that in choosing a woman to be speaker of the National Assembly, he was deeply influenced by his wife's friendship with Nancy Pelosi.)

Over decades, Washington has usually sent mixed signals to Pakistan. This time the message should be clear and consistent: democracy, reconciliation, the military out of politics, a new policy for the tribal areas -- and more democracy.

Richard Holbrooke, a former ambassador to the United Nations, writes a monthly column for The Post.

WASHINGTON POST

Still Wrong in Afghanistan

By Richard Holbrooke
Wednesday, January 23, 2008; A19

"I'm a spray man myself," President Bush told government leaders and American counter-narcotics officials during his 2006 trip to Afghanistan. He said it again when President Hamid Karzai visited Camp David in August. Bush meant, of course, that he favors aerial eradication of poppy fields in Afghanistan, which supplies over 90 percent of the world's heroin. His remarks -- which, despite their flippant nature, were definitely not meant as a joke -- are part of the story behind the spectacularly unsuccessful U.S. counter-narcotics program in Afghanistan. Karzai and much of the international community in Kabul have warned Bush that aerial spraying would create a backlash against the government and the Americans, and serve as a recruitment device for the Taliban while doing nothing to reduce the drug trade. This is no side issue: If the program continues to fail, success in Afghanistan will be impossible.

Fortunately, Bush has not been able to convince other nations or Karzai that aerial spraying should be conducted, although he is vigorously supported by the American ambassador, William Wood, who was an enthusiastic proponent of aerial spraying in his previous assignment, in Colombia. Wood, often called "Chemical Bill" in Kabul, has even threatened senior Afghan officials with cuts in reconstruction funds if his policies are not carried out, according to two sources.

But even without aerial eradication, the program, which costs around $1 billion a year, may be the single most ineffective program in the history of American foreign policy. It's not just a waste of money. It actually strengthens the Taliban and al-Qaeda, as well as criminal elements within Afghanistan.

According to the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime, the area under opium cultivation increased to 193,000 hectares in 2007 from 165,000 in 2006. The harvest also grew, to 8,200 tons from 6,100. Could any program be more unsuccessful?

The program destroys crops in insecure areas, especially in the south, where the Taliban is strongest. This policy pushes farmers with no other source of livelihood into the arms of the Taliban without reducing the total amount of opium being produced. Meanwhile, there is far too little effort made against the drug lords and high-ranking government officials who are at the heart of the huge drug trade in Afghanistan -- probably the largest single-country drug production since 19th-century China -- whose dollar value equals about 50 percent of the country's official gross domestic product. There is a direct correlation between opium production and security. In relatively secure areas, production has dropped, but along the Pakistan border in the insecure south, production is increasing and amounts to about 80 percent of the overall crop.

Everyone talks about "alternative livelihoods" and alternative crops as the solution to the drug problem. This is true in theory -- but this theory has been tried elsewhere with almost no success. Poppies are an easy crop to grow and are far more valuable than any other product that can be grown in the rocky, remote soil of most of Afghanistan. Without roads, it is hard to get heavier (and less valuable) crops to market -- and what market is there, anyway? It will take years to create the networks of roads, markets and lucrative crops that would induce farmers to switch, especially when government officials, including some with close ties to the presidency, are protecting the drug trade and profiting from it. (Any Kabul resident can point out where drug lords live -- they have the largest and fanciest houses in town.)

Barnett Rubin, a leading expert on Afghanistan and a fellow at the Asia Society in New York and New York University's Center on International Cooperation, writes in a forthcoming study that "the location of narcotics cultivation is the result -- not the cause -- of insecurity." He adds, "Escalating forced eradication" -- as the U.S. Embassy wants to do -- "will only make the effort fail more quickly because it actually builds the insurgency it is trying to eliminate."

To be sure, breaking the narco-state in Afghanistan is essential, or all else will fail. But it will take years, and American policies today are working against their own objective. Couple that with the other most critical fact about the war in Afghanistan -- it cannot be won as long as the border areas in Pakistan are havens for the Taliban and al-Qaeda -- and you have the ingredients for a war that will last far longer than the war in Iraq, even if NATO sends more troops and the appalling National Police training program is finally fixed. Solving this problem requires bold, creative thinking. Consideration should be given to a temporary suspension of eradication in insecure areas, accompanied by an intensified effort to improve security, build small market-access roads and offer farmers free agricultural support.

When I offered these thoughts on this page almost two years ago [" Afghanistan: The Long Road Ahead," op-ed, April 2, 2006], I was told by several high-ranking U.S. government officials that I was too pessimistic. I hope they do not still think so. Even more, I hope they will reexamine the disastrous drug policies that are spending American tax dollars to strengthen America's enemies.

Richard Holbrooke, a former ambassador to the United Nations, writes a monthly column for The Post.

Afghanistan: The Long Road Ahead

By Richard Holbrooke
Sunday, April 2, 2006; B07

KABUL, Afghanistan -- In a region of Pakistan almost unknown to most Americans, a sort of failed ministate offering sanctuary to our greatest enemies has arisen. It is a smaller version of what Afghanistan was before Sept. 11, 2001, and it poses a direct threat to vital American national security interests.

Waziristan and North-West Frontier Province, where Osama bin Laden and the Taliban leader Mullah Omar are hiding, have become a major sanctuary in which the Taliban and al-Qaeda train, recruit, rest and prepare for the next attacks on U.S., NATO and Afghan forces inside Afghanistan. The most recent, on March 29, resulted in the deaths of one American and one Canadian soldier. More attacks must be expected.

For the United States, the dilemma is huge. There is no chance that the training of the Afghan army and police will produce a force able to defend itself as long as the Taliban has sanctuary in Pakistan. Other than "hot pursuit," which is already permitted, the United States cannot invade Waziristan; such an operation would have little chance of success and would create an enormous crisis in U.S. relations with Pakistan. Leave Afghanistan, and the Taliban will return, along with bin Laden and al-Qaeda. The only viable choice is to stay, in order to deny most of the country to the enemy. That means an indefinite U.S. and NATO military presence in Afghanistan. No U.S.official will say it publicly, but the conclusion is clear: We will be in Afghanistan for a very long time, much longer than we will remain in Iraq.

The Afghans have a simple solution to the sanctuary problem: Washington should tell Pakistan's president, Pervez Musharraf, that he must clean out the border areas -- or else. The Pakistanis have an equally simple response: They are doing the best they can in a historically lawless tribal area and, in cooperation with the Americans, have already arrested or killed hundreds of terrorists. The Afghans, who deeply distrust Musharraf, do not believe this; while grateful to the United States for freeing them from the hated Taliban, they think Washington is too easy on Pakistan, in part to make up for Pakistan's anger at the recent nuclear deal with India.

The biggest program of Washington and the European Union is the drug eradication effort. Almost 90 percent of the world's heroin comes from Afghanistan. Official U.S. and U.N. reports claim that last year's programs reduced poppy production by 4 percent -- at a cost of close to $1 billion. That means the United States spent more than the entire national budget of Afghanistan to accomplish essentially nothing! Yet the failed drug policy is continuing without significant change.

If the drug program is the biggest failure, American-inspired efforts to give the women of Afghanistan a chance for a better life have the greatest potential. First lady Laura Bush deserves credit for making this a signature issue. Insisting that more than 25 percent of the seats in the National Assembly be reserved for women was risky but inspired. I met with 10 female legislators; they were more animated and more excited about their country than any of the men. If they form a

women's caucus, a process that has started with encouragement from the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, they will become a powerful force for progress.

But let no one confuse progress for women at the higher levels (there is even one female provincial governor) with a significant change for the average girl or woman. Each time Afghanistan tried to advance the status of women, the men reacted with a strong backlash. They will do so again. Progress is distant and virtually meaningless to rural women. That striking symbol of Afghanistan, the head-to-toe covering of women that is known as the burqa, remains widely used everywhere. One vivacious legislator on the provincial council in Herat told me that while she did not like the burqa, she dared not let her "beautiful" 15-year-old daughter out without it. "The burqa," she said, "is my weapon." And self-immolation, forced on women by their families if they violate strict codes of conduct, is actually on the rise.

Herat, the only major city in the west, highlights the complexities of Afghanistan. Less than 100 miles from the Iranian border, it is enjoying an economic boom and almost no Taliban threat. But the economy is fueled in large part by Iran, which is visibly gaining economic and political influence in the region. So here is the ultimate irony of a situation filled with irony: Our "strategic ally" (in President Bush's phrase) in Pakistan is giving sanctuary to the Taliban and al-Qaeda in the east, while an "axis of evil" country is playing a stabilizing role in the west. In fact, of course, Iran is pursuing the same long-term strategic goal there as it does everywhere: to create a Shiite region stretching from Lebanon as far east as possible. Iran's growing strength in Herat can only heighten Tehran's sense that events are going its way these days.

With so much at stake, it is surprising that the administration asked for a pittance (about $40 million) for Afghan reconstruction in its recent supplemental, after the State Department and the U.S. Embassy requested about 10 times as much. Still worse, Congress compounded the lowered funding request by cutting the appropriation to $4 million.

Let us hope that these cuts were simply an aberration caused by Hurricane Katrina and bureaucratic confusion. Afghanistan will be difficult, and we must do a much better job on the ground. There is always a risk that our presence will, over time, create an Iraq-like anti-American xenophobia (in a country with a famously xenophobic history). But Afghanistan is not Iraq. Denying the country to our enemies is not a long-term strategy, but it is essential in the current phase of history, especially as Iraq stumbles toward an increasingly bleak future.

Richard Holbrooke, a former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, writes a monthly column for The Post.

The Longest War

By Richard Holbrooke
Monday, March 31, 2008; A19

KHOST, Afghanistan -- This former Taliban stronghold, where Osama bin Laden spent time planning the Sept. 11 attacks, has become an American success story. The Taliban is being pushed out, and a government presence is extending into previously hostile territory. At NATO headquarters in Kabul, most of Khost has been moved out of the "red" column -- at least for now.

Khost shows that, with the right combination of resources and leadership, it can be done. But Khost is not simply a good-news story. It also underscores a larger, troubling truth: The conflict in Afghanistan will be far more costly and much, much longer than Americans realize. This war, already in its seventh year, will eventually become the longest in American history, surpassing even Vietnam.

Success in Khost required some of America's best troops. Today elements of the legendary 101st Airborne Division -- the Screaming Eagles of the Battle of the Bulge -- are replacing troops from another storied unit, the 82nd Airborne, who, over 15 tough months, took Khost back. That success resulted from tactics developed locally by a stellar team: a courageous and honest provincial governor, Arsala Jamal, who has survived four assassination attempts; a creative American troop commander, Lt. Col. Scott Custer (yes, he is a direct descendant), who devised a more aggressive system of joint patrols with local Afghan army units; and a remarkable young Foreign Service officer, Kael Weston, who has established a direct dialogue with tribal leaders, university students, mullahs, madrassa students and even Taliban defectors.

As I saw in hours of meetings with these groups, Weston's intense hands-on process identifies problems and misunderstandings that might otherwise spiral out of control. One of these -- serious enough to attract international media coverage and public expressions of concern from Afghan President Hamid Karzai -- was the death of several women and children in two recent nighttime U.S. Special Forces actions. The tribal elders were blunt in our meeting; a white-bearded chief said, "Not even my brother can enter my house at night, but you Americans did not even knock." Gov. Jamal, his own closeness to the Americans making him even more vulnerable, was distraught. "This undermines everything we are trying to do here," he said.

Jamal and the elders understood that locally based American troops were not involved in the operations and that the targets were supposed to be an important Taliban cadre. Despite the furor, they stressed that they want the Americans to stay as long as necessary, knowing that will be a very long time; without NATO's continued presence, their government would fail. They have little confidence in the Afghan army, even though it seems to be improving, because there is as yet no indication that it can function in difficult conditions without active NATO support. Moreover, the elders, like everyone else, despise the national police -- Afghanistan's most corrupt institution. I heard firsthand accounts of blatant police shakedowns on the main roads, police destruction of agricultural produce because the officers were not paid off and direct police participation in the drug trade (which makes the police and the Taliban de facto partners).

The police are the front edge of Afghanistan's biggest problem. In conversations with more than 80 foreigners (diplomats, journalists, soldiers), Afghans in the private sector and, most important, senior members of the Karzai government, I found unanimity on only one point: The massive, officially sanctioned corruption and the drug trade are the most serious problems the country faces, and they offer the Taliban its only exploitable opportunity to gain support.

One case came up repeatedly, that of the notorious warlord Gen. Abdurrashid Dostum. After he attacked, brutalized (allegedly with a beer bottle) and almost killed a rival warlord recently, Dostum was not arrested, despite pleas from Afghanistan's chief law enforcement officials. Kabul was aflame with theories regarding Karzai's decision not to move against Dostum; even the university students and the tribal elders in Khost raised it with me. The effect on Karzai's standing and reputation has been enormous. Excuses were made, but none justified his open disregard for justice.

This affair also highlights the conundrum Afghanistan presents the United States and NATO. There will be more successes like Khost as additional NATO troops, including 3,000 U.S. Marines, arrive later this year. But with each tactical achievement, Afghanistan will become more dependent on international support, which will always be better, faster and more honest than anything the government will be able to supply.

In the extraordinary intensity of what James A. Michener called "one of the world's great cauldrons," in his 1963 bestseller, "Caravans," no one has had time to think about the day after the day after tomorrow. The effort in Afghanistan is vital to America's national security interests, and we must succeed -- as the team in Khost has. But even as the United States and its NATO allies move deeper into the cauldron, questions must be asked: When, and how, will the international community hand responsibility for Afghanistan back to its government? Will short-term success create a long-term trap for the United States and its allies, as the war becomes the longest in American history?

Richard Holbrooke, a former ambassador to the United Nations, writes a monthly column for The Post.

WASHINGTON POST

Hearts and Minds on the Durand Line

A Tribal Fund for the Pakistan-Afghanistan Border Is Critical to Winning the War on Terror

By Ashley Bommer
Monday, February 18, 2008; A17

The United States has counterterrorism operations in places all over the world -- but not in Pakistan, the center of world terrorism. Last month, Defense Secretary Robert Gates made an offer: "We remain ready, willing and able to assist the Pakistanis and to partner with them, to provide additional training, to conduct joint operations, should they desire to do so." Within hours, fearing a backlash on Pakistani soil, President Pervez Musharraf rejected the American offer.

But there is another counterterrorism strategy option for Pakistan: Empower millions of oppressed people who live there to be native allies against the insurgents, through the establishment of a Global Tribal Fund.

We cannot win the war on terrorism when we are losing the border to insurgents. The heart of the Taliban and al-Qaeda insurgency is in Balochistan, the Northwest Frontier Province and the tribal belt along Pakistan's border with Afghanistan, known as the Durand Line. Top al-Qaeda and Taliban terrorists -- Osama bin Laden, his deputy Ayman al-Zawahiri, Muhammad Omar, Jalaluddin Haqqani and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar -- are believed to be operating from there. They are conducting military operations in Afghanistan and Pakistan. They are using the radio to spread propaganda against the West. And, most disturbing, they are using the border to set up camps, to recruit volunteers from the tribal population and to train them to build up their operations.

Pakistan cannot tackle the insurgents alone. These harsh mountainous areas have never been controlled or conquered by military forces. Aerial bombing raids by the Pakistani military to fight the insurgency only alienate the populace as civilians are killed and villages destroyed.

An effective counterterrorism strategy requires a global ground response to forge a cooperative relationship with the tribes that harbor the insurgents and the Frontier Corps responsible for border security. We need to offer them more than the insurgency is offering.

The 60 major tribes in the Northwest Frontier province and the tribal belt -- 77 additional tribes are in Balochistan -- are clustered along the 1,600-mile border. In each of these

tribes, the chiefs are the decision-makers and have the power. A friend of mine living in Kabul told me, "You could walk up and down the border if you knew the tribal chiefs; they would welcome and protect you."

The Pashtuns have a tribal code known as Pashtunwali that demands hospitality. But the tribesmen and women living among the jagged mountains are terribly oppressed. This is a poor frontier: Millions are without access to health care, clean water, education and jobs. In Balochistan, with a population of 10 million, there is one doctor for every 8,000 people. The people have no voice to the outside world; foreign journalists are banned from the area.

The links between poverty and terrorism are not hard and fast, but no one would dispute the argument that people are more vulnerable to extremist rhetoric when their needs aren't met. To counter the insurgency, we need more than military measures -- we need to improve the lives of those who live in the region.

That's why I would urge establishment of a Global Tribal Fund to raise money from around the world and direct funding into a three-pronged strategy consisting of:

1. Tribal Scouts: a coalition of locally recruited tribesmen and tribeswomen who would begin to contact and negotiate with the tribes in the border areas. The scouts would meet with chiefs to find out what they need for their people. The Pashtun and Balochi people have come together before in jirgas, or councils, to unite their tribes. Can areas of agreement be negotiated with some of their leaders? This would allow inroads to an area now inaccessible.

2. Tribal Life Support. This would include provision of water, roads, transportation, health care, education, employment opportunities and security to live and work. A major investment in infrastructure -- starting with building roads -- would need to be made. We should provide an infusion of trained Pashto- and Balochi-speaking administrators, builders, designers, health-care providers and educators to jump-start this program.

3. Tribal Security Training, for the Frontier Corps -- the paramilitary force consisting of close to 85,000 locally recruited tribesmen who know the language, the tribes and the culture and are the logical security forces. Right now they are poorly supported and funded. Training, equipment, financial resources and compensation should be provided so that they can resist domination by the insurgency.

This three-pronged strategy won't be easy, and it raises many questions: How would it go over with the Pakistani government? How would tribesmen be recruited for the tribal scouts? Would the security environment allow for this engagement?

But the need is urgent. Al-Qaeda and the Taliban have resurrected themselves in Pakistan's border region and are stronger than ever. Unless we help the local population, these organizations will continue to erode the stability of both Pakistan and Afghanistan, no matter how many forces and military measures we use.

To defeat extremism, we need a global response -- an independent public and private partnership aimed at improving the lives of the people in the region. We need native, on-the-ground, face-to-face negotiations. We need to switch our ideology from winning the war to winning the border.

The writer worked at the U.S. mission to the United Nations during the Clinton administration.

Ambassador HOLBROOKE. And I would just conclude with one bleak but unavoidable conclusion I came back from this trip with.

We are now in the 7th year of the war in Afghanistan. This war is going to be lot longer than the war in Iraq. It is my conclusion that the Taliban cannot win because they are basing their policies on suicide bombers and terrorism. That is not a winning strategy. We should never confuse the Taliban with the Viet Cong who it is a whole different thing.

On the other hand, the government we are supporting cannot win. It is riddled with corruption, it is weak, it is making all sorts of very unfortunate deals with the most conservative elements within Afghanistan itself, elements whose ideology is very close to the Taliban but happen to be in the Parliament. And the United States is getting deeper and deeper into a situation from which it can neither leave nor succeed in.

The theory, of course, is that as we put troops into Afghanistan they will clear out areas and then we will turn those areas over to the local military and police. But the fact is it will not happen because we are so good, for example, they just dropped 3,100 of General Jones' Marines right into the middle of Helmand Province in the last few weeks and they are in the process of doing it, and they are going to be fantastic. And everywhere the Marines go, and they are going to the toughest part of the country, they will clear out areas. The people will be very pleased by and large because they hate the Taliban. And the Americans will be welcomed, as they always are, for what they do. Behind them will come works: Bridges, roads, schools.

But the theory will get caught on the dilemma, Mr. Chairman, of whether or not the United States and NATO can ever turn those regions over to the local security forces. The military is not too good but slowly improving. The police, as their report said, the police are riddled with corruption. And there will be, and the military, improving though they are, are never in the foreseeable future going to be able to take over the security responsibility. We provide the logistics, the communications, a lot of the planning, the close air support. And we are efficient, we are not corrupt. And by doing all that we are running the risk of succeeding short term and creating a long-term dependency.

This is the dilemma that we must face. And that is why I conclude reluctantly that this will be ultimately the longest war in American history but, Mr. Chairman, one we must wage.

Thank you.

Chairman BERMAN. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Ambassador. Ambassador Pickering, do you have a more upbeat story to tell us?

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE THOMAS R. PICKERING, VICE CHAIRMAN, HILLS & COMPANY (FORMER UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED NATIONS)

Ambassador PICKERING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let me begin by joining Dick in his kind words about Tom Lantos whom we all admired, worked with closely, and felt the great loss that I know you and the committee share and the House shares in his absence from us all today.

Let me also say that there is indeed much of what Dick has said that I think I find myself in very broad general agreement with. Much of the predicate of that, as Dick made clear himself, has to do with Afghanistan. And, in effect, we have a combination of three interrelated, perhaps inextricably intertwined very serious problems. Afghanistan, the tribal border regions which provide a special set of concerns and difficulties in dealing with that issue and Pakistan itself. And I know you have wanted to address these questions broadly.

I would like just to spend a few minutes doing two or three things: One, trying to bring this committee roughly up to date on what we found were the major problem areas in Afghanistan and the thoughts that we had on what could be done about them, with particular relevance to Pakistan; and in addition I will have just a few comments to make from my own background and experience on Pakistan and the frontier tribal areas to try to respond to both the GAO report, with which I agree, and to your concerns on this.

There is no question that Afghanistan has come to a critical crossroads and that 2 years ago we might have sublimely thought that it was well on the road to some kind of success. Now, after 6 years it is under serious threat from resurgent violence, weakening international resolve, mounting regional challenges, and a growing lack of confidence in the part of the people themselves. The U.S. and the international community have tried to win the struggle, in our view, with too few military, insufficient economic aid, and most importantly, without a clear and consistent strategy broadly agreed among the participants, including both the Afghans, the United States and our international partners.

We now have to deal, unfortunately, with a reconstructed Taliban and with al-Qaeda forces in Afghanistan and in Pakistan, with a runaway opium economy and with severe poverty faced by most Afghans and, indeed, with a locus of central support that comes in an out of the border regions which continues to aggravate and make an already difficult problem extremely hard to deal with. Why is this important? Well, certainly in the words of our report Afghan has been, as Dick has made clear, is a significant national security imperative for us in terms of finding success there. Failure means new threats from Taliban, and particularly from al-Qaeda in a new sanctuary for them, and to our interests in the region and at home.

Internationally it is seen a weakening of resolve on the part of our friends and our partners and, indeed, on the part of our enemies. It is clear that without an overall strategic vision to reinvigorate where we are we will not be able to attain unified or reachable goals or, indeed, as you made clear this morning, Mr. Chairman, to measure any progress. We are in the world if we do not

know where we are going, any road will take us there. I think the corollary to that is if you do not know where you are going, any road is a road to failure. These are important points and I believe will be brought home in our recommendations.

The most immediate threat remains the anti-government insurgency that continues to grow and has grown over the last 2 years. Attacks on Afghan military and police forces have surged. There have been some successes in targeting Taliban and the leadership, and our forces continue to show success. But significant areas in Afghanistan, particularly in the south, have been lost to friendly control and remain certainly in doubt and highly contested.

Our allies also believe the mission is failing and NATO members have shown over the last 6 months an egregious interest, in my view, in departing from the scene and in certainly trying to find a way not to move ahead with the kind of progress that we have in mind but to cut losses and to remain static. A failure here on the part of NATO would also damage the future of the organization itself. We see an acute need, thus, for coordination, for military and especially police training, for the need to bring together the government, which is weak and is failing and which has shown much too much evidence of corruption. A sustainable government cannot—without a sustainable government and an honest government there is little that we can depend upon in the way of progress toward effective development or, indeed, political legitimacy.

There are many other points that our particular report makes, but an important and I think significant point related to the purpose of the hearing is that Afghanistan cannot be considered as an isolated state that we can deal with on its own. That has not been true for a very long time; it is even less true now. It is vulnerable as never before to external pressure. And what goes on, particularly as we said 4 months ago, in the Pakistan border region is critical to success of failure.

Kabul and the government there have to have better relations with their neighbors, but particularly with Pakistan. And the commitment on the Pakistani part to deal with the tribal areas in the Federally Administered Territories is something that is particularly challenging and elusive, and your focus on it I believe is correct and important and lies at one of the centers of the way forward, if I can call it that, if it can be corrected.

We made several recommendations. I want to repeat just a few of those as further background for the close interrelationship between the problems in Afghanistan, the Tribal Areas, and in Pakistan. One of those goes to the heart of what we have been saying back and forth to each other across this table this morning. We felt it was important to create a group, perhaps eminent persons from among our allies and our partners, to work together with the Afghans to put together this long-term coherent strategy. It would be a strategy that would attempt to reflect intimate knowledge of Afghanistan, not necessarily to be made in one of the partner countries or the United States, but bring to bear the full efforts that all of those parties can collect together to deal with this issue.

We think it is important to decouple in this country legislative and executive branch consideration of Iraq and Afghanistan. Up until now Afghanistan has slid into the debate and indeed the

question of funding in Iraq as what we used to know in the Uniform Code of Military Justice as a lesser included offense. In a way, this needs obviously to stand on its own to get the kind of attention and focus that I know you and the committee would like to bring to it.

And finally, we believe there needs to be a more coherent, more structured, more unified United States effort, perhaps around a specially appointed person to deal with Afghanistan, the border regions, and at least the Afghan-related problems of Pakistan. That person needs to be high in the administration, closely coordinating our activities, and helping in fact to execute the plan that we talked about.

We need greater consolidation, I believe, of our military efforts. And I will let General Jones talk about that. We do need, we believe, more forces on the ground. But even more importantly, as Dick pointed out, when we and our forces are successful we leave behind a security mission that cannot yet be performed either by the Afghan National Army or by the Afghan police. Particularly the latter, at least the experts in our committee believed, requires a great deal of reinforcement and training. They are far below the standard that they need to achieve to have any capacity in fact to deal with the continuing security problems after military engagement while in fact rebuilding and reconstruction takes place. The United States could and should play a larger role in dealing with the Afghan National Police.

We need a coherent and resource strategy to build the capacity and the legitimacy of the Afghan Government. This means tackling tough issues of corruption. And in that country it will not be easy. But we need to begin by developing pockets of competence in the country, bringing together judiciary, justice, prosecutorial and police functions around a system that can work and in which people gradually assume a confidence of posture.

Narcotics remains a major question. It is in fact clearly one of the most important issues. It is frequently cited that 93 percent of the world's heroin originates in Afghanistan, even after in fact we have become, at least for all intents and purposes the military masters of that country in terms of when, where and how we wish to present ourselves on the ground there. In lieu, we believe, of massive eradication attempts we need an approach that can help to build a permanent effort upon current cultivators' part to be committed to alternatives. It has been fascinating to me, I do not think it is believable but nevertheless it is consistently repeated, and there may be a kernel of truth in this, that a very large percentage of Afghans engaged in narcotics production at least are willing to say to investigators they would take half the income if they could find a legitimate alternative crop to engage in. We need to test that. If in fact only half those people are telling the truth we are further ahead than I think we are in terms of current approaches toward that issue.

And I have had the "pleasure" indeed, and I use that word in quotations, of dealing with narcotics issues on a number of continents in a number of jobs in the past.

Economic development and reconstruction is badly lagging. We need Afghans to support the effort. We need a central focus in their

government on making that happen. And as has been said several times, we need quickly to follow up the clearance of Taliban and other forces from provinces, towns and cities with development assistance.

Finally, the neighborhood and your focus. We need to embark on a long-term and sustained effort to reduce traditional antagonisms between Afghanistan and Pakistan. And, indeed, the border area is heavily dominated by the Pashtuns. And true, in working with them, despite the enormous tribal animosities there needs to be a way to begin the process of building back some kind of confidence and indeed shaking their current faith in the Taliban, faith which I think in part is imposed and faith which is in part derived from their desire somehow to avoid central control. Extremist madrassahs and training camps are a beginning place to move. Encouraging the relaxation of Pakistani restrictions on the movement of legitimate goods in an out of Afghanistan will be a help.

We need to find a way to deal with the long-term and somewhat dangerous dispute between Afghanistan and Pakistan over the actual border between the two countries. This will not happen right away but it is something we need to work on.

With respect to Pakistan itself, Dick I think has more than adequately summarized the question. We no longer have, if indeed we ever had, a single individual on whom we can rely in the war on terror in Afghanistan.

Secondly, we now have an electoral process: Parties that have moved to the fore as a result of democratic competition, parties which are strange bedfellows historically and which have had not, in my view, a fantastically remarkable track record either in governments or indeed in honesty in government. They will somehow now have to be dealt with in a new conundrum to move them ahead. They will have to assume the responsibility, I believe, for trying to make progress in the FATA area. Many have suggested——

Chairman BERMAN. Mr. Ambassador, I am going to have to interrupt.

Ambassador PICKERING. I will finish with two sentences.

Chairman BERMAN. Okay. I yield.

Ambassador PICKERING. Many have suggested there needs to be stronger Federal control in this area. I believe they are right but I do not believe that that is going to be an easy or simple proposition.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Pickering follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE THOMAS R. PICKERING, VICE CHAIRMAN, HILLS & COMPANY (FORMER UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED NATIONS)

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

It is an honor to appear before you today to address one of the most pressing and emergent issues we face as a nation. One which for too long has been hidden by our focus and concentration on other issues in the region and beyond.

In recognition of the growing crisis in Afghanistan and its relationship to Pakistan, three major American organizations each carried out studies of what was happening and what needs to be done to deal with the problems. It is no accident that the issue is so exigent that when the three organizations gathered to discuss their reports, they immediately agreed to issue their reports together and to join forces in their presentations. That was done on January 30, 2008.

Today's hearing gives me a chance to highlight aspects of the report I had the welcome pleasure of co-chairing with General James Jones, former NATO SACEUR and US Combatant Commander in Europe.

My task is a simple one. In order to highlight the urgency and the importance of the issue I want to present you a summary of the reports key conclusions on what is happening in Afghanistan. Secondly, I want to provide you with the most important recommendations of a distinguished group of panel members each one of whom has had extensive experience in Afghanistan or Pakistan and the region. I don't claim special knowledge or experience in these two significant countries and have relied heavily on the team's expertise and outside experts to make and justify both our conclusions and recommendations. I will draw directly in many cases on the wording of the report to make sure that its points are clearly and crisply conveyed to you.

ASSESSMENT:

Afghanistan is at a critical crossroads. Six years of progress is under serious threat from resurgent violence, weakening international resolve, mounting regional challenges and a growing lack of confidence on the part of the Afghan people.

The US and the international community have tried to win the struggle with too few military, insufficient economic aid, and without a clear and consistent strategy. We must now deal with reconstituted Taliban and al Qa'eda forces in Afghanistan and Pakistan, a runaway opium economy and the severe poverty faced by most Afghans.

Why is this so important to us? In the words of our report, success in Afghanistan is a critical national security imperative. Failure means new threats from the Taliban and al Qa'eda from a new sanctuary for them in Afghanistan to our interests in the region and at home.

Internationally we are seeing a weakening of resolve among our friends and partners. Polls in many NATO countries show public attitudes are divided on bringing troops from their countries home immediately or remaining until the country is stabilized. In all but the US and the UK, majorities called for withdrawal as soon as possible.

It is clear that there is a lack of an overall, overarching strategic vision to reinvigorate the effort to attain unified, reachable goals.

This year has been the deadliest for US and coalition troops since the invasion of 2001.

The most immediate threat is from the anti-government insurgency that has grown significantly in the last two years. Attacks against Afghan military and police forces have surged. Some success has been achieved in targeting Taliban leadership, but significant areas of Afghanistan, particularly in the south have been lost to friendly control.

Some of our allies believe the mission is failing and several NATO members are wavering in their troop commitments, offsetting the strong involvement of Britain, Denmark, Poland, Canada, Australia and the Netherlands among others.

A failure of NATO in Afghanistan would damage the future of the organization itself.

Realizing an Afghanistan that is stable and secure and free of influence from radical, Islamic forces is a core objective. Taliban and al Qa'eda maintain close links.

There is an acute need for international coordination on both the military and civilian side. Separate military commands with some overlapping missions complicate the process as does the lack of a senior civilian leader. The recent appointment of Ambassador Kai Eide of Norway was a helpful solution to that critical issue.

Military and especially police training are lagging as are counter narcotics efforts and judicial and penal reform.

Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) fielded by many governments have separate reporting channels back to their capitals and there is no unified field theory on how they should operate, be coordinated or accomplish their missions.

A recent report in the Washington Post concluded that: "While the (US) military finds success in a virtually unbroken line of tactical achievements, (US) intelligence officials worry about a looming strategic failure."

Six years after the fall of the Taliban Government in Afghanistan the country is still facing a fundamental crisis of governance. Without an honest, sustainable government there can be little effective development and even less political legitimacy. The country has "a stunning dearth of human capital" and a number of leaders, often in the provinces, are considered to be serial human rights abusers by much of the population. This shakes confidence in the rule of law and democracy and overall governance in critical ways. Underpaid civil servants are asked to undertake

dangerous counter narcotics missions and easily fall prey to bribery and corruption in return.

The public looks to the government not only for housing and health care, roads and schools, but just as much if not more for security and justice. At present the government cannot do this and that leads neighbors, aid donors and troop contributors to hedge their bets.

Former US Commander, LTG Karl Eikenberry, has said the greatest long-term threat is not the resurgence of the Taliban but "the potential irretrievable loss of the Government of Afghanistan."

Equally, if not more disturbing are important findings from 2006 showing the spread of narcotics cultivation from 165,000 hectares to 193,000; more land than is under coca cultivation than in Latin America. And while some key provinces in the north and center are being reported as opium free, some key figures in those provinces continue to profit handsomely from drug trafficking.

Extensive receipts from this activity—"drug money"—weakens key institutions and fuels and strengthens the Taliban, while at the same time corrupting the country's governmental leadership.

There are serious disputes about how best to deal with the drug economy. Some want large scale, aerial eradication with the potential for serious, disruptive impacts on rural Afghans and their livelihood. Others are counseling more gradual but more complete approaches seeking to find crop substitutes and other supports for the 90 percent of Afghans who have said they are willing to abandon poppy cultivation if they can count on earning half as much from legal activities.

Closely linked, but also independently important for Afghanistan's future, are questions of development and reconstruction. It is the second lowest country on the UN's Human Development Index for 2007–08. Life expectancy is short, infant mortality high and access to clean water and health services severely limited. Nevertheless, there are some positive economic indicators—8.7% growth (against a small base), low inflation, a stable currency against the dollar and significant foreign exchange reserves. Refugees are returning, agricultural output is up and roads are being repaired and rebuilt to the rural areas.

The lack of security has disrupted trade, communications, transport and the energy infrastructure.

Even after six years, foreign assistance amounts are hard to tabulate and coordination is weak. School populations have boomed particularly among girls and efforts are being made to fund primary health care. While some experts say it is an exaggeration, claims that only 10% of assistance gets to Afghans are worthy of attention and correction of the faults in these programs is badly needed.

Finally, Afghanistan can no longer be considered as an isolated state to be dealt with on its own. It is vulnerable as never before to external pressure and what goes on, especially in the Pakistan border region, is critical to success or failure. Kabul needs better relations with its neighbors, especially coordination with Pakistan and a commitment on the part of Pakistan to deal with its own tribal areas in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) region, something that is particularly challenging and elusive and has been over the history of modern Pakistan.

With all of these difficulties there is clear reason why we call attention to the need to improve and make more strategic and effective our support for Afghanistan. It is a state poised for a slide. Our ability to provide the help and support needed to make a difference remains a key factor. And for that purpose, I want to provide from our report a key list of major recommendations. The report itself should be consulted for the full list which is put together with the objective of forming a coherent and collective whole.

These recommendations are divided into three overarching recommendations and six groups—international coordination, security, governance and the rule of law, counter-narcotics, economic development and reconstruction and Afghanistan and its neighbors.

OVERARCHING RECOMMENDATIONS:

Create an Eminent Person Group from among our allies and partners to work with Afghans put together a long-term coherent strategy.

Decouple Legislative and Executive Branch consideration of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Develop a unified management structure led by a US Special Envoy to Afghanistan to coordinate and lead all aspects of US policy and implementation.

KEY ISSUE RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. International Coordination—

Work to consolidate command structure, missions and rules of engagement to simplify and clarify lines of authority and strategic objectives.

NATO needs to review its command and control arrangements to simplify and streamline them.

Appoint a high-level civilian coordinator under a UN mandate to work closely with the Afghan Government and to oversee the full range of activities, including contacts with regional governments. (Done).

Develop an agreed concept of operations, goals and objectives.

2. Security—

Increase the number of NATO troops and match quantity with quality

Focus more efforts on the training of the Afghan National Army (ANA) and provide training, adequate pay and equipment to the Afghan National Police (ANP) so they can maintain security once coalition forces depart.

Increase the US role in rebuilding the ANP.

Work to reduce civilian casualties with a goal of "zero civilian casualties."

Better integrate Afghan forces in US and NATO planning and operations.

Develop with the international community a coordinated strategy in support of President Karzai's political reconciliation efforts.

Create a regional plan to target risks coming out of the border with Pakistan involving both the Afghan and Pakistan Governments and work with Pakistan to get it more closely to incorporate FATA into Pakistan.

3. Governance and Rule of Law—

A coherent and resourced strategy to increase the reach, capacity and legitimacy of the Afghan Government should be a top priority.

Refocus efforts to develop and integrated an effective judicial system,

Develop governmental pockets of competence in the country bringing together the judiciary, justice and prosecutorial and police functions.

4. Counter-Narcotics—

Build and sequence the introduction and use of the core tools of counter-narcotics—crop eradication, interdiction (arrests and prosecutions) and economic development.

Increase investment in development—infrastructure and industry.

Enhance drug interdiction efforts.

In lieu of massive eradication, adopt an 'Afghan centric' approach including public information campaigns, voluntary restraint, full delivery of announced programs for alternative livelihood, and provision of all the services for alternative crops now provided by drug traffickers—(agricultural extension, futures contracts, guaranteed marketing, financing and micro finance).

Beware of negative effect of large scale eradication without careful support mechanisms and programs of support for the government and its programs.

5. Economic Development and Reconstruction—

The Afghan Government should get more credit for development and it needs help to improve its accounting and anti-corruption defenses.

Get Afghans to appoint an Afghan development czar.

Spread development more evenly around the country

Follow up quickly clearance of Taliban forces from provinces with development assistance.

Enhance infrastructure development

6. Afghanistan and its Neighbors—

Embark on a sustained and long term effort to reduce antagonisms between Afghanistan and Pakistan with the goals of rooting out support for the Taliban and its ideology, closing down extremist madrassehs and training camps, and encouraging a relaxation of Pakistani restrictions on transport of goods to Afghanistan. The Afghans should continue to be urged to accept the Durand line as its border with Pakistan.

Pakistan needs to be encouraged to regain physical control in the FATA.

An effort needs to be made to resume conversations with Iran to coax out greater cooperation in helping to stabilize Afghanistan.

A regional peace process should be developed beginning with confidence building measures with the eventual goal for Afghanistan becoming a neutral state protected

by commitments against interference in its internal affairs, clandestine weapons supply and a comprehensive regime to support the flow of trade.

PAKISTAN:

This country has gone through a number of critical changes since our report was issued on January 30, 2008.

Previous to that time, former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto had returned to her country, had entered into what appeared to be inconclusive negotiations with President Musharraf over future governance, and was assassinated on December 26th 2007.

President Musharraf's position as leader of his country had been eroding since March of 2007 when he tried to remove the Chief Justice of his country who had challenged the government over a number of cases which they considered important to their remaining in power.

Subsequently, there were public protests and a crack down on the Red Mosque in Islamabad occupied by extremists. These were handled ineptly. The army has been taking a heavy role in efforts to increase their authority and their independence of the government. Previously exiled Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif, returned from exile in Saudi Arabia, and was re-exiled in apparent disregard of a court order.

Sharif and the remnants of Bhutto's party, led by her controversial husband Asaf Zardari, contested an election postponed from early February 2008 and Bhutto's Party won with Musharraf left well behind. The two opposition parties made common cause and agreed on a coalition government which has in turn sought to reinstate the deposed Chief Justice in contrast to Musharraf's past efforts to side line him.

Pakistan remains divided with Musharraf, previously the US chosen favorite, in serious if not total decline. The two opposition parties, weakened by the loss of Benazir Bhutto, are not certain to be able to provide the kind of leadership desired to see the struggle against terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism inside Pakistan and in Afghanistan continue and move toward success.

The two countries, Afghanistan and Pakistan, are closely tied together in the struggle against terrorist fundamentalism, the Taliban and al Qa'eda. There is no real resolution of the issue if the two are not closely combined in the solution. Pakistan has shown itself, in the short term at least, weakened in this effort by the shift away from Musharraf and an increasingly independent line taken by the opposition parties who are acutely aware of the dangers but also wish to avoid being seen as US surrogates inside Pakistan.

Despite Pakistan's efforts over the past four and more years, the Taliban and al Qa'eda have not diminished in size and influence inside Afghanistan and by the reckoning of some have actually grown in strength and control. Their new position makes the pursuit of them and the further development of Afghanistan even more difficult. Troubling too have been the reports that the very large sums of US money provided Pakistan for this effort have not seemingly made a serious difference and some reports indicate the possibility of diversion of such funds from programs designed to reinforce Pakistan's ability to fight the insurgency and the fundamentalists.

Other outside commentators had also noted that large scale intervention in Pakistan's tribal areas in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas would themselves be "disastrous for both Pakistan and US interests and would not provide a lasting solution to the problem."[K Inderfurth, April 1, 2008, File/The Boston Globe]

CONCLUSION:

This is a critically important issue for this administration in the United States and for the next. There are many problems. Among the most important are governance and the building of Afghan capacity in all areas, drug cultivation and export, security in the border areas, the future of Pakistan and its critical role in Afghanistan, and cooperation among our allies.

The urgency is real. The problems can be dealt with. It will require new and enlarged efforts by this committee and the Legislative and Executive branches together.

I look forward to your questions and comments.

Chairman BERMAN. Thank you. Our situation, panelists in general, is that we now have about 3 minutes to get to the floor to cast the first of what might be as few as six or as many as 12 votes, depending on the temperature on that side of the aisle, but not

here but on the House floor. So, and I know Ambassador Holbrooke has to leave at noon. But my guess is the rest of you have plans as well. So we will get back here as quickly as possible or try to make arrangements for you to do what you need to do. I will come back at the end of these votes. But they usually are 5-minute votes so which the good news is they will be done quicker, the bad news is we cannot get back here in time to proceed with the hearing before we go for the next vote. So hope some of you will be here when we get back.

[Recess.]

Chairman BERMAN. There are two critical people to hear your testimony, General, and both of them happen to be here. We are in the middle of the votes but this one is a 15-minute vote so we thought we would come back to try and move through and get this.

General, is this good for you?

General JONES. Yes, it is.

Chairman BERMAN. All right.

STATEMENT OF GENERAL JAMES L. JONES, USMC, RETIRED, PRESIDENT AND CEO , INSTITUTE FOR 21ST CENTURY ENERGY (FORMER SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER, EUROPE)

General JONES. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I will have just a short introduction and then we can get to your questions which I think will be more interesting.

First, I would like to tell you how appreciative I am to be at the same table with Ambassadors Holbrooke and Pickering, both of whom I have known for a long time and have been very supportive and helpful to me in my official capacities as Commandant of the Marine Corps and, more specifically, as the NATO Commander and the Commander of United States Forces in Europe. And so it is a great pleasure to be with both of them to talk about this very, very difficult problem, and a problem that is of central importance to the security of the United States.

My expertise lies more on the Afghan side of the border. I wanted to say that up front. Although I did have some dialogue with the Pakistani military in 2006 when NATO assumed responsibility for, completed its expansion in Afghanistan and assumed responsibility for security and stability, I visited Pakistan on two occasions and even hosted a high ranking delegation at my headquarters in Belgium, which was a first I think in the alliance.

My sense is that what we have been witnessing is a migration from two bilateral problems, one in Pakistan and one in Afghanistan, to one big regional problem. And I think that the trend is that we are going to be dealing with Afghanistan and Pakistan as a regional problem that is going to require regional solutions. In Afghanistan the two Ambassadors have talked about our reports. I will simply say that internationally Afghanistan has all of the international legitimacy that is needed, certainly with U.S. Security Council resolutions, the presence of most of the important international organizations, the United States, the European Union, NATO, the World Bank, and non-governmental organizations, over 40 countries on the ground. All of the instruments that one would need to have success are present in Afghanistan. And

yet one has the impression that while we are certainly not losing in a military sense, that we are not making the progress that we would like to make.

The recently-completed NATO summit in Bucharest has reaffirmed the alliance's commitment to being successful in Afghanistan. And indeed, on the 12th of June of this year the Paris Support Conference will convene and NATO allies will discuss ways in which they can make additional commitments to support a winning strategy in Afghanistan.

I continue to feel, as I have said many times, that while the military equation is important, far more important than that is the ability to come to a strategic plan to address four or five things that simply have to be done in Afghanistan if that country is going to turn in the right direction. The first of these, the first three are related. And I would say I would highlight the necessity to deal with the narcotic problem, as Ambassador Pickering has mentioned, but you cannot do that until you have a stable judiciary, which they do not have and they are not moving toward in my view. And then a police force that is capable of providing security and stability throughout the country that is both adequately trained, adequately equipped and resourced. And that is certainly something that has been lagging.

Fourth on my list of things that have to be done is the Karzai government in my view has to be held accountable to the international community for doing the things that it can do, for the expansion in the reach of its influence, for stamping out corruption in the government, and doing the things that the international community deserves to expect from a government that is benefiting so much by the sacrifice in both treasure and lives by so many countries around the world.

So in Afghanistan I think our strategy is to increase the capacity. Many discussions about whether we need more troops or not. Generally what the commanders have asked for is modest, given the capacity of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. And I have always advocated both in uniform and out of uniform that they should be supported.

The recent addition of United States Marines, in fact one of the units I used to command, the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit which I commanded in northern Iraq in 1991 during the Kurdish refugee operation, is in fact the unit that is going to be inserted in the south. And I so confident they will do a great job.

In terms of coherence, we need to make some gains with the United Nations I am happy to say taking the lead in coordinating international assistance to Afghanistan. This has to be a very strong lead. I know Ambassador Qaiyaidi very well and I wish him well in this important undertaking.

With regard to Pakistan, my sense is that this is in terms of the regional context it is still an evolving problem that we are dealing with and trying to understand. I think there is much great focus now. We are establishing our relations with a new government and the tripartite nature of that government. But we do have I think a better understanding of the scope of the problem and its seriousness.

Specifically, the presence of the Taliban and the tribal realities on the border and the global al-Qaeda operations that are all existing in one area in the Federally Administrated Tribal Areas on the one point pinpoints the problem. We know where it is. The question is, What do we do about it? I have a sense that the problem with regard to Afghanistan and, in fact, the region, could be migrating east. That is not a good thing. We certainly want Pakistan to be a free and democratic state. But I am troubled by the fact that the largest proportional increase in suicide bombings is in fact in Pakistan now, not in Afghanistan nor in Iraq. And usually that is the precursor of worrisome things.

I have done a little research on the aid question. WE do have $655 million in AID money, as Ambassador Holbrooke mentioned. We also have the Department of Defense and the Pakistani Government, they have each committed $1 billion toward the Pakistan military's operations in the FATA. Also the development of the Frontier Corps, Special Forces training and education, and the establishment of border coordination centers which I think will represent something that has been needed for quite a while.

We have spent money in Pakistan. Coalition support funds between October 2001 and now amount to $5.6 billion. But these coalition support funds do not just exist in Pakistan, they also exist in 27 other countries. And we also have also other forms of assistance, particularly in security assistance which amount to over $300 million a year.

So I think we have a realization nationally that this is a strategic problem, that it is regional in scope, and you cannot solve one without solving the other. I think one of the aspects of the solution is to get the Government of Pakistan and the new Government—I am sorry, the new Government of Pakistan and the Karzai government in Afghanistan to work together more closely on this common problem. For two long, at least in my active duty days, there was too much finger pointing between the two and not enough cooperation. We participated in a tripartite coordination council which is a council of militaries involving NATO, involving Afghanistan and Pakistan; that was generally a good thing. My last experience had to do with watching the strategy of the Musharraf government which signed this deal with the tribal areas but which collapsed, as Ambassador Holbrooke said, in failure. But it took—it had to run itself out to prove the point that this was not a strategy that had a long-term solution.

So I hope that the regional aspect of this very important problem, the focus on the geographic location that has to be dealt with, and the resources that will be required not just from us but from the international communities in order to do this can altogether turn the direction of the region in a positive way.

I look forward to responding to your questions. Thank you.

Chairman BERMAN. I am just looking at the monitor of the floor votes to try and understand where we are.

Let me ask you, Ambassador Holbrooke, you have to leave here at 12 o'clock.

Ambassador HOLBROOKE. 12:00.

Chairman BERMAN. Ambassador Pickering, 11:00?

Ambassador PICKERING. 12:00.

Chairman BERMAN. 12:00, okay. All right.

General Jones?

General JONES. 12:30.

Chairman BERMAN. We are now voting on—actually this is a resolution out of this committee on the Georgia-Russia issue so I think I have to recess so we can cast our vote. I am very depressed by the situation we face right now because I do not know that we are going to get back here much before 12 o'clock. We will come back. We will vote and I am going to miss the motion to reconsider the vote by this, if you are. We are going to go and just vote. We will be right back.

[Recess.]

Chairman BERMAN. I will be the last to leave this room now, I do not care what they vote on. But I apologize.

I am going to recognize myself to ask a question to give, I know, Ambassadors, I know you have to leave, and then one question and then I will recognize Congressman Royce and Costa. And then to the extent anybody is still here I will come back for the rest of my questions. But it is a real specific one.

Given these recent reports, and you have all talked about this issue, of negotiating truces between the Government of, the new Government of Pakistan and some irreconcilable terrorist elements such as Baitullah Mehsud, how do you believe the United States should react? What steps can we take to dissuade the Pakistani military and civilian leadership from making such deals which will undoubtedly lead to greater cross-border attacks on United States troops? To what extent do these deals represent discord—and I think there was a reference to this in one of your testimonies—to what extent do these deals represent discord between the Pakistani military and civilian leadership on how to instill political reform in the FATA? Install and instill. So?

Ambassador HOLBROOKE. Mr. Chairman, you are asking a question nobody really has an answer to, including, and I stress this, the administration. They do not really know nor do we exactly what the nature of these deals will add up to. There is a difference of opinion over Baitullah's own role in the assassination of Benazir Bhutto, for example.

So I would like to suggest a different approach to the issue which is to deal with the—not to deal with this specific problem out of context which will inevitably lead to a United States-Pakistan Government friction, but to deal with it with a comprehensive plan for the tribal areas. We do not have that now, as the GAO report makes clear, as my own trip made clear, as the comments of my two colleagues made clear.

The Embassy in Kabul and the Embassy in Pakistan reflect the differing views of Kabul and Islamabad on that issue. President Karzai will tell you that everything that is going wrong in Afghanistan is Pakistan's fault. The ISI, with which I spent a morning, gave me chapter and verse on how they turned over certain number of terrorists to the Afghan Government at the request of Karzai and half of them were then released. So you can go back and forth between Islamabad and Kabul forever in this argument; it is a bitter anger between the two governments. And I hope that the new

political situation in Pakistan will allow an American-sponsored reconciliation between Kabul and Islamabad.

But to your point, we need a massive economic program not this pathetic little $750 million over 5 years, as I said earlier half of which will never leave the United States. We need to regard above all Afghanistan and Pakistan as a single theater of operations, in the western half of which NATO troops operate but in the eastern half of which NATO cannot enter. And, therefore, we need other means. Because following them into their sanctuary in hot pursuit on the ground is not a possibility. Predator missiles occasionally, everyone understands that, but not ground pursuit.

I recommend strongly, Mr. Chairman, that your committee create a special oversight task force composed of your best staff that works 24/7 on AFPAK so that you on behalf of the American taxpayers know where the money you are appropriating goes. Last year you appropriated over $10 billion for Afghanistan. No one in this room could tell anyone where that money went. The short listing will tell you, for example, that $227 million went to alternative livelihoods. I have yet to meet anybody in Afghanistan who actually went into an alternative livelihood. Where did that money go? You do not know. I do not know. And I think it is worth pursuing.

There is a good idea on the table which I would like to put forward to you. It has been sponsored in your House by Chris Van Hollen and in the Senate by Maria Cantwell. It is called Reconstruction Opportunity Zones, ROZs. It is a way of creating in effect many free trade areas in the Tribal Areas of Pakistan which could create many jobs. I would recommend that that get high attention from your committee and that it gets positive consideration.

On the drug programs the money has been not only wasted, it has actually helped create Taliban and recruit both sides of the border.

On the media front the Afghan Government is clamping down on free media. I have with me today Saad Mohseni, the leader of the largest independent media organization in Afghanistan, Tolo TV. He is under intense pressure not to report things accurately, to cut out Indian soap operas and other things which are offensive to the most conservative elements. That is, in effect, the government yielding to pressure from people who are in cahoots with the Taliban.

So we need to do this comprehensively because the issue you raised taken out of context inevitably will lead to massive friction.

With your permission, sir, I really ought to go, if that is all right.

Chairman BERMAN. Okay.

Ambassador HOLBROOKE. Thank you for the great honor of being here today.

Chairman BERMAN. No, I apologize for the fractured meeting.

Ambassador HOLBROOKE. Tom, not for the first time Tom will speak for me whether I agree with him or not. We have been friends and associates now——

Chairman BERMAN. Yes.

Ambassador HOLBROOKE [continuing]. For over 30 years and there is no one I respect more in the Foreign Service. Thank you.

Chairman BERMAN. Great. Well, thank you for I mean coming. And I apologize again for all the distractions that just go along with being in this place.

Ambassador Pickering, do you have any thoughts you have on these questions?

Ambassador PICKERING. Yes, I do. I totally agree with what Dick has said. It will be difficult to put together a unified plan in any short period of time. We have to recognize that.

Chairman BERMAN. Let me just interject one thing. Ambassador Holbrooke mentioned the Karzai-Pakistan, the relationship between the two. Based on one meeting I had with representatives of, a representative of the new government my sense is they think that relationship is going to get much better than the Musharraf-Karzai relationship.

Ambassador PICKERING. Let us hope that it is right. It is hard to think that it could get worse.

Chairman BERMAN. Right.

Ambassador PICKERING. But let us assume in fact that it is also going to be a continuing difficult relationship in part because Nawar Sharif and Mr. Zardari have not yet shown that they can stay together through thick and thin even on the Pakistani side. But let us hope that they do. Let us hope it all goes well. It will still take time.

I think the United States needs to send a signal. As General Jones said and as others said, it did not work last time, it is not going to work in the future. That any commitment that is made on the part of the new Pakistani Government to things that are decidedly against their interest and our interest has to be from our point of view at a minimum a null set. It has to be used in my view to do everything you can to leverage the new Pakistani Government in the direction in which we think we need to go which is the overall plan. And we have to be very specific that we are not prepared to accept a set of agreements on the ground that will not work in our interest as we see the process go ahead. And whether this has monetary reflections or not I do not know.

I rather like the point that Dick made, 750 is not enough. If we have a large amount to put in we have a large amount of leverage. I also believe that in fact in tracking the money it is very careful to understand that in that part of the world we are going to have to spend things on stuff that may not quite pass muster if we are going to have some influence.

Now, my own feeling is it may be better to spend $100,000 on renting a tribal chief, if I can put it that way, than it is to spend $100 million in trying to kill him and his tribe. That is hard to say. It is not the kind of thing the government finds comfortable to advocate. We know it has been done. And, indeed, one of the most successful aspects of our original combat success in Afghanistan involved some of the same tactics. But we have to be acutely conscious that this is a rental program, not a buying program.

Chairman BERMAN. But does that not become an alternative to building capacity and——

Ambassador PICKERING. No. It becomes basically a facilitating process to capacity building because capacity building absolutely has to accompany this. You are buying security in order to move

ahead with capacity building. And I hate to say that because the traditional way of providing security is not available in the FATA, we know that. Let us train the Frontier Constabulary. But until in fact we have them committed not to their tribal objectives but to the plan objectives we have a problem.

So this in my view is just one more piece of evidence of the whole difficulty. And we have to use different and more imaginative techniques to move it ahead. But my feeling is that we have to attack this from all sides and we will need your help and understanding to do that.

Chairman BERMAN. Any thoughts you want to add to this, General Jones or should I turn it over to Mr. Royce?

General JONES. Just one brief point. One is to recognize that we do have leverage to piggyback on Ambassador Pickering's comment and this leverage that we should not be reluctant to use on both side of the border, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

And the second point I would make is that while we are having here a discussion about U.S. policy, let us not forget the international equities that are at stake here as well. On the Afghan side of the border we have over 40 countries involved in providing resources, manpower and the like. They have a huge stake in this as well. So that leverage can be international and we should not, I do not think we should be reluctant at all to stimulate the use of international leverage to solve some of these problems.

But I think those would be the two points that I would make.

Chairman BERMAN. Mr. Royce is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Two of the main criticisms that we heard laid out is that the administration does not have a master plan for the Tribal Regions and that the approach there has primarily been military. But it is worth noting we have killed several hundred militants with this approach; that is one plus. But as we look at the development aid into the Northwest Frontier, and I was in the Northwest Frontier last year, I find it a little difficult to just going off the basis of what I have seen with development aid elsewhere in the world to assume that it is going to create the desired effects there. You have illiteracy running at 90 percent.

The GAO, you know, raised the argument that the administration does not have a plan but the GAO would not go into that region because of the security concerns. And I remember a journalist from South Waziristan telling me, "There is only 2 percent of the people in this room that agree with you so, you know, do not raise any issues like Taliban or al-Qaeda." And he said, "I am that person that happens to agree with you. But I was educated in Britain and everybody else here is not."

And so with this conundrum I think it is understandable why security would be the first focus. And I would like to know why we should be more optimistic about prospects for us sparking development in these regions based on what we have seen? I hate to sound pessimistic about that but I think we are bringing our mindsets and our structures to Pakistan instead of dealing with it as it is and as I think it is going to continue to be because the rapid transformation of Pakistani society we are seeing is primarily the

Talibanization of the country as these madrassahs graduate more and more students.

And also, regardless of what we spend on infrastructure, on health, on governance, on trying to create jobs, I do not think that that is going to be for anything but naught if—and actually some of that may harm our interests in the long term if Pakistan's education continues in the direction it is going. And there is no way we could afford to educate all of Pakistan.

And lastly, this is not just an educational issue, it is not just because that education system is weak. The idea of radicalism that has this power to win adherence in that society is a phenomenon that is growing in the culture.

Lastly, I just wanted to throw out an idea that I think Senator Joe Lieberman has raised which strikes me as a good one with regards to Afghanistan. The Afghan army has the confidence of 90 percent of the people there. Its one problem is it is so small it can only secure the capital. And so, as a consequence the government itself is now in the process, Karzai's government, in making negotiations with warlords in the outside area in order to try to secure some kind of stability, which we do not like to see. But if we paid that army properly it would still be paid at 1/70th the rate of pay of NATO troops or U.S. troops in the theater. And if we built that army up, and what he is suggesting is the concept of an international trust fund, we could get NATO members, we could get European countries to pay into that because they do not want to send additional brigades. But you could have 70 brigades for what it would cost to get another brigade out of Germany over there.

So what about Senator Joe Lieberman's idea about setting up for the future something that would decrease the Karzai's government dependency on any of these warlords and increase the future government's, Karzai's or whoever wins the next election, ability to actually pull the country together?

Thank you. Those were my two questions, Mr. Chairman.

General JONES. With regard to the military side, I think that one of the things that is most difficult to understand and explain in Afghanistan is it is estimated that less than 10 cents on the dollar ever gets to where it is intended to go to. So that is a problem of significant proportions endemic and representative of the current state of affairs in the government as it exists. And over the years I have made a lot of friends in Afghanistan who have participated in government, left government, and said one of the reasons they left was because they could not stand the level of corruption.

The army in Afghanistan is one of the success stories up to a point in that the people of Afghanistan react to it well and the army when it is employed generally does a pretty good job. But it is the pay and the salaries need to rise. It is expensive; the equipment needs to get better. And the training needs to increase the size of the army.

I think that Senator Lieberman's idea has merit. Obviously, the quicker you get the army on its feet the better. But the other side of the coin is that you have to develop the police force as well. And I think you could get to the point where you have the army functioning reasonably well but the police force I think is the glue that is going to hold the country together in terms of providing the

sense to the people of Afghanistan that they can in fact go to sleep at night and wake up the next morning and be reasonably secure that drug lords and terrorists are not going to threaten their families during the absence of the army's presence, and that is not where we are in Afghanistan right now.

So while I have always been pleased with the rate of progress in the Afghan army, it is the other part and the failure to do that adequately that concerns me.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

I am going to recognize Mr. Costa next because Mr. Costa, Mr. Royce and I skipped a few votes to come back here so we could get this proceeding going and hear General Jones' testimony. So I am making a unilateral decision to go out of regular order for the people who missed votes so they can ask a question.

Mr. Costa, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. COSTA. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for that kindness.

Gentlemen, I have been to Afghanistan twice in the last 3 years. Was there most recently at the end of March and saw some improvement in 3 years and saw some other areas that, frankly, were lacking and I think in measure with the testimony that you have provided here. In your testimony Ambassador Holbrooke and I think Ambassador Pickering referenced the political changes in Pakistan. But I was in visiting Afghanistan in the end of March I was questioned with the change in the politics, are the politics evolving in Afghanistan. Karzai told us he is seeking reelection.

We talked about the issues we discussed this morning in terms of dealing with Helmand Province and the narcotrade and the governors and who is involved. But it just seems to me that there is an awful weak bench there in terms of—and I do not know what we can influence. We can help build up the army. We can try to professionalize the police team that was spoken of. Certainly General McNeil and all of those folks I think are doing a good job. But, Mr. Ambassador, I mean we just cannot remove the current leadership in Afghanistan; how do we address that issue? I mean you can have a plan but if you do not have good people implementing the plan it is not going to be very effective.

Ambassador PICKERING. I understand very clearly the point you are making. The only thing I can say is they do have elections in Afghanistan. And in the end it will be up to Afghans to decide who it is that they want to see running their country. We know and understand President Karzai would like to run again. And we certainly all wish him well. I understand there are others who may seek that office too and who may one way or another in the eyes of Afghans be better equipped to deal with it. We will just have to wait and see how that particular part of the process goes.

Having been involved in the United States Government for a long period of time one of the things we do least well is to pick other people's leaders for them.

Mr. COSTA. Obviously. We do not have a good track record there.

General Jones, I was struck when we were there in March, the balance of soft power versus our hard power. And going up to Kunar Province watching a platoon fighting the Taliban, at the same time building a road and building bridges is truly inspiring.

But the primary mission of our troops is not to build roads and bridges. How do we strike a balance that allows us to build the schools and the water systems without putting that burden on our military?

General JONES. Well, I think just to piggyback a little bit on Ambassador Pickering's point is that we have—there are a lot of contradictions in that country, we have the PRT system and every country has its own PRT.

Mr. COSTA. Right.

General JONES. And different standards. We have to understand that there is not a one-size-fits-all category here. Somebody has to do it. The ultimate solution is in fact in my view civil reform. The disappointment that the electorate might feel in Afghanistan after these really fantastic stories of the vote in 2004 meant that the Afghan people got it; they really understood what the promise was. And they will now express their opinions at the polls whether those expectations are realized, and I suspect that in many parts of the country they will say they were not.

But clearly wherever the, whatever part of Afghanistan one finds a problem you have to apply the solution that is most available to you. And sometimes, unfortunately,——

Mr. COSTA. It is our troops.

General JONES [continuing]. It is our troops.

Mr. COSTA. Final question, General. We were talking about the areas in the western area and having been up to the Khyber Pass and looking at that, clearly Pakistan's focus has been with India and a traditional armed forces. We have been trying to help them, I know, with their counterinsurgency efforts with the new general in command. I think Mr. Vickers has been there. What progress are we making there? Are we giving them the tools to deal with that?

General JONES. Well, it has been a while since I have been up there. But in my recent conversations with people who know about these things say that we have in the eastern part of the country been quite successful in our counterintelligence, I mean counterinsurgency operations. We need to transfer some of that expertise into the south. And I think that between those two areas we really have the vulnerabilities from a military standpoint of the country because of the proximity to the border regions. So——

Chairman BERMAN. General, I am sorry.

General JONES. Okay.

Chairman BERMAN. The time has expired. Hate to do that to you but thank you.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much.

Chairman BERMAN. I recognize the ranking member for 5 minutes, then the gentlelady from Texas.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you.

Well, thank you for wonderful testimony, very insightful. And, General, I am a proud stepmom of two Marines. My stepson and daughter-in-law served in Iraq and she served in Afghanistan as well. Now they are back home at the U.S. Naval Academy. And they are proud of their service. And we congratulate you for the great contributions you have made in the past, present and the future. You have worn our nation's uniform proudly.

I wanted to ask you gentlemen about the opium trade and the projections and what we can do about it. As all of us know, in spite of ongoing international efforts fighting Afghanistan's narcotic trade, the U.N. officials have estimated a record opium poppy crop was produced last year, supplying 93 percent of the world's illicit opium. And clearly, opium poppy cultivation, and drug trafficking constitute serious strategic threats to our security and to the stability of the country of Afghanistan. It jeopardizes the success of post-9/11 counterterrorism, and reconstruction efforts. In a nutshell what has worked, what has not worked with our counternarcotics policy there and what must we do to arrest this trend in the future?

Ambassador PICKERING. It is hard to see, Ms. Ros-Lehtinen, that much has worked. At least as part of our recommendation that we need to get a grip on the problem through a gradual but continuing transformation of our efforts. We made suggestions. One of those is that obviously we need to find the right substitute crops and the right markets for them. And we need to find a way to support this transition from growing to selling so that we are not putting people in a position where they grow something they cannot dispose of.

There has been a strong suggestion by some people that fruit and tree crops are particularly important in the region and there will be a strong market for those. I am not a USDA specialist but it seemed to be interesting. And, of course, once you get invested in that it is hard to get disinvested, hard to pull up the trees once they get growing. But we do know that the drug lords provide everything from——

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Transportation, pick-up.

Ambassador PICKERING [continuing]. Transportation,——

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Yes.

Ambassador PICKERING [continuing]. Agricultural extension, loans, microfinance.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I am going to cut you off, Ambassador, just to get the General's take on it.

Ambassador PICKERING. Okay.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Because I only have 1½ minutes.

Ambassador PICKERING. I follow that.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you, sir.

Ambassador PICKERING. So we need to do that. We also need to get some of the middlemen who are also government officials out of the business.

General JONES. Thank you. I really appreciate that question because I think the direction of Afghanistan is directly linked to our inability, our international inability to deal with the narcotics problem. Ninety percent of the products produced, the illegal products are sold on the streets of European capitals. That money comes back and funds the insurgency, buys the weapons that kills and wounds NATO soldiers and ours as well. And it is really to me at the core of turning around that economy from being a narcoeconomy into an economy as we know it.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I am going to interrupt you there, General, just to see if I can sneak in a quick question about new troops, new military assistance to Afghanistan, a fresh deployment of about

1,000 troops. How meaningful are these new deployments and commitments?

General JONES. The overall request by NATO standards is modest, and it has always been modest. It has been in the thousands of troops. It has been additional helicopters, mobility assets, communications, intelligence gathering and the things. But if you rack it and stack it, it is modest. And it was modest 2 years ago, it still remains modest. And if—for the life of me I do not know why it is that we seem to have so much trouble providing those troops.

But I want to state that despite that, the overall problems that we need to address are not more military troops. I think you could put 10,000 more troops in there and you would still have the same problems. If you do not address the civil sector reform, if we do not hold the Karzai government to metrics——

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you.

General JONES [continuing]. That are deliverable we are going to continue to mark time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Correct. Thank you, sirs.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentlelady has expired. The gentlelady from Texas, Ms. Sheila Jackson Lee, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I think this is one of the more important hearings that we will have an opportunity to participate in. I thank the chairman and the ranking member, and I thank the witnesses and appreciate the presence of Ambassador Holbrooke and Ambassador Pickering and General Jones waiting because we have had a difficult morning.

I co-chair the Pakistan Caucus and have the pleasure of co-chairing with my colleagues the Afghan Caucus. And probably was one of the early members who went into Afghanistan in the early stages I believe was 2002. And really saw the rawness of Afghanistan. I think we were in before now President Karzai was elected, he was then Chairman Karzai, and we were in before the assassination had occurred in June of that year. In fact this country assisted, of course, with the security system that he had and was in place at that time.

To Ambassador Pickering and General Jones as well, I frankly have a different perspective. I am glad to hear General Jones saying 10,000 more troops or 20,000 more troops; we must work on the diplomatic infrastructure of Afghanistan. And I believe we must work on the people aspect of it which means the education of people, etc., etc.

And I like the statement let us find those or 50 percent of those poppy farmers and give them some alternative and let us see how it works. Some I am going to take you up on your offer.

I am also going to take you up on the offer, Ambassador Pickering, of some high-placed person that is focused only on Afghanistan. I do believe we have to win the war in Afghanistan but there are many principles to win it by. Likewise, decouple Afghanistan from Iraq. And, frankly, let me say it again and again: Bring the troops from Iraq. We have won that conflict in honor by the troops having done everything we asked them to do. It is now in the hands of the diplomats and a better Iraqi Government. And Maliki

has to stand up and be counted on leading that country and he is not doing that.

But I want to go to Pakistan. I have a much more different attitude. I think we should applaud the PPP. And they are trying to work with Sharif. And, frankly, I believe that is more of a problem than the PPP. The PPP wants to govern and we should give them a chance to do so. They recognize that toppling Musharraf is not valuable, that Musharraf has history and experience. And, frankly, in talking to President Musharraf directly he wants peace and wants to work with the new government. Sharif has to be watched. I see no reason in moving forward for any actions against Musharraf. I think the people did do the right thing by restoring the judiciary.

I would like you to speak to this new proposed agreement and so we can understand it. The agreement is not being made with the terrorists per se, it is not the same as it was before, and I am talking now of the agreement that is being made with the tribal groups of the Mehsud area where the tribal groups have asked for Pakistan to make an agreement with them. They have asked for them to provide protection. They have asked for them to help them get rid of the Taliban and other insurgents and al-Qaeda. The agreement is an agreement from a position of power. The government is operating from a position of power.

So I do not think we should run away from Pakistan when it is making its own decisions to make peace. I think we should be monitoring it but we should look at it differently from the agreements that were made with the tribal areas before, even by Musharraf, that the PPP have a different perspective and they are doing it from a position of power. Ambassador Pickering, could you just in these waning minutes tell me how we treat Pakistan differently because you do have people there that love democracy and are prepared to move forward in moving their country forward, how do we deal with Pakistan?

Ambassador PICKERING. Two things I think in terms of your very eloquent statement: One, certainly encourage the coalition government, the new civilian, democratically elected government, to move along the directions that both we and they agree that they should be moving. This has to be 50 percent made in Pakistan at least.

And secondly, as I said earlier, let us look at the agreements, let us look at the context and let us look at the construction. What is it that is there? Does it suit the common interests in Pakistan, Afghanistan, the United States? Fine; we should support it. If it does not suit those common interests then we should be very clear and we should make that clear to the Pakistanis as this process goes so we do not end up at the end of the day with take it or leave it. That is not the way I think to conduct the diplomacy here.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank you. And I think that is very instructive.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentlelady has expired. The gentleman from Colorado, Mr. Tancredo, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. TANCREDO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

An interesting mixed message that we hear here. On the one hand there is a need to retain the military in Afghanistan in order to, after we have essentially secured the country there is a need to have the military there to make sure that we have a civilian government in place that is competent and can take control. But on the other hand that is not an acceptable course of action in Iraq. Sort of a mixed message as I say.

More directly to the point of the problems we face in Afghanistan, Mr. Ambassador, I am perplexed and have been for a long time when we talk about countries that are steeped in traditions that only encourage corruption and we talk about ending the corruption, which is absolutely necessary of course to get to the next stage of civil government, but we say it as if there are these magic elixirs that we can use in the country in order to attain that. And yet I look around the world even as close as our southern neighbor and see the degree of the problem that exists there as a result of corruption and our inability to effectively deal with it, being not part of that country, not matter what aid package we propose, no matter what.

When corruption is so endemic just saying things like, you know, we have to deal with it, does not seem to be very clear to me, it does not seem to be clear to me how we can. I mean assume on one hand the Taliban are still hated by a majority of the people in this country or not that country, and there is no acceptance of the idea of having them back in power, there has got to be some alternative to that. And is it one that we can establish and is it one that we can in any way guarantee will be free of this corruption, of the corruption that has been problematic to date? I just do not know how to get there from here, that is all.

Ambassador PICKERING. Mr. Tancredo, a terrifically important and very good question. There is no magic snake oil. We have in this country at least fought corruption. I wish I could say we were totally free of it, but you and I read the newspapers and we know.

Mr. TANCREDO. Yes.

Ambassador PICKERING. But at least we have a judiciary, we have a prosecutorial system, we have evidence, we have in fact a bias against corruption. Those are the ways that we know how to deal with it. We have to help others accept the fact that corruption is the rot that eats away at the vitality of a country and over time it will destroy governments and regimes and it will force change one way or the other. We have to convince them that in fact their future rests in a different course.

This is not easy. We have leverage and incentives. It is a long-term possibility. And you and I know because in fact we understand that in fact it has to be a constant preoccupation. It is not a Hollywood movie that ends at the end of the third reel when the glorious couple walks off into the sunset, corruption is finished, never to come back again.

So all of those things are true. But my own feeling is that countries have made that change. It takes a lot of time and a lot of effort. There are ways that people have to help them. But it does not begin with us; it has to kind of begin with our selling them on the notion that in the end they do not have anything unless they can work this problem.

Mr. TANCREDO. Well, I think an important and an enormously difficult challenge for us, as difficult if not more so than the military one that confronts us.

And, General, why do the better armed and trained regular forces frequently relinquish their security role in the frontier regions to the poorly equipped—now Pakistan we are talking about, I am sorry—to poorly equipped Pashtun Frontier Corps?

General JONES. I think it is because of the sophistication of the problem in the region where regular Pakistani army units do not typically do well and have suffered a lot of casualties. And the tribal authorities representing the local population are sometimes, even though they are not as well equipped, are sometimes more capable of achieving the goals. This is a very sophisticated problem and I think one that the Government of Pakistan is going to have to deal with very centrally in order to resolve it.

Mr. TANCREDO. Thank you.

General JONES. I would like to piggyback if I could on your question——

Mr. TANCREDO. Sure.

General JONES [continuing]. To the Ambassador just for one sentence. And that is to say that the corruption problem in Afghanistan will not be addressed until the international community en masse levies a certain metric on the government itself to show demonstrated performance. And it is inexcusable in my view that this is not being done. We will never solve the drug problem without a judicial system that works and without adequate police force.

Mr. TANCREDO. Thank you.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Gentlemen, you have been very patient with us. We have two more people. Can you squeeze in another two 5-minute periods? If so, that is wonderful. The gentlelady from California, Ms. Woolsey.

Mr. WOOLSEY. Thank you very much. So, all right, we are talking about narcotics and we are talking about how much it affects everything that is going on in that part of the world, what is going to happen with our young people, their young people, the average age, what, of a Pakistani is 21 years old. They need a future. What, you have been over there, what do you think the alternative crop is? What are the crops besides poppies? What is the market? How do we get these young people engaged in being educated and doing the right things and wanting to do the right things?

I mean we are a nation that really does not know enough about alternative areas in the world. We tell them how we think they should do it and then we are so surprised they will not do it because we are talking as Americans. So I guess could I get you started on that and then I would appreciate it?

General JONES. Thank you. One of the things that I think we have to understand is that during the Russian occupation of Afghanistan as a means of controlling the population the Russians destroyed the irrigation system of Afghanistan, which was really fairly sophisticated and complex and supported agricultural diversity in the country. Clearly what has to be done is in order to give the agricultural reform a chance to succeed is to rebuild the irrigation system and provide a comprehensive plan to wean the economy off of its narcotic leaning and dependency.

This is not going to be done overnight. It was not, this problem was not created overnight. But you can see it grow exponentially every single year. One thing about the narcotic crop in Afghanistan is you can visually see it as opposed to some of the areas the Ambassador worked in where it was in jungles and hidden. In Afghanistan you can measure it because all you have to do is go up on a clear day and when the poppies are in bloom you can see exactly how the problem is growing.

But there are alternatives. And it takes, it is going to take the reforms that I think we suggested in our reports and it is going to take the focus of agricultural experts internationally to massively turn the attention to the problem of water, to the problem of irrigation, and to the problem of supporting a livelihood. But in a secure way the problem of the lack of security is that even if they had the wherewithal to plant the crops and grow them, without adequate security at night when the army is not there and the police is not corrupt and is inadequately trained the population gets caught between the struggle, and what they have been doing for the last few years is waiting to see which side is going to win.

Mr. WOOLSEY. Well maybe, Ambassador Pickering, you could follow up on that with we have been there for 7 years, I mean we were involved before that in Afghanistan, have we started? Are there any plans to help them with the irrigation system? If it were built would it remain or would it be destroyed or why are we not doing it?

Ambassador PICKERING. We helped them in the monarchy build the irrigation system in Helmand and Kandahar in particular, so we know it. Some have told me that in fact the people who brought back parts of the irrigation brought them back for poppy cultivation. So we face another problem there.

I suggested earlier on that some are thinking about fruit crops because there is a potential market. You have to have a market, obviously.

Mr. WOOLSEY. Right.

Ambassador PICKERING. Maybe vegetables. Of course there are the traditional crops and grains. But all of those have a local market but we have to facilitate that through security, through roads and through supports. We do not see yet the focus in the government or in our people on the comprehensive plan. And the one thing that we came with today was there is not a comprehensive plan that we can see to deal with these kinds of questions. And so your question is exactly the right one and our answer is we have to get to going in that particular area. And I wonder why after 7 years we have not been able to.

Mr. WOOLSEY. Thank you. I will yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BERMAN. I thank the gentlelady. Time has expired. And the gentleman from California, Mr. Rohrabacher, is recognized.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. And just to let you know, this is not a public announcement, but there is a coalition that has been working on this whole issue that you have been just discussing. And a bipartisan coalition of which I am a part will soon offer a grand bargain to our Afghan friends that those aqueducts will be rebuilt and that the irrigation will be re-

built. There will be packaging available for food products and transportation improvements based on an agreement that they will end the poppy production, not the United States. With the understanding if they do not after we build, provide them this building material, we will have the right to step in and destroy the poppy crops.

That might be a subject, Mr. Chairman, for an entire hearing, but some of us have been working on that for a long time.

I am a bit concerned about some of the misconceptions about Afghanistan. I have spent a lot of time there, as you know. I do not believe that we will ever find a single individual that we can rely upon. And the fact that we are looking for a Musharraf of Afghanistan is not going to ever happen. And if we do, it is not going to end up well, just as it has not ended up well in Pakistan. That whole area, including Pakistan, is based on the tribal culture and we should recognize that. We should understand that that is the way they work in that part of the world.

One of our major successes in driving out the Taliban was due to the fact that we worked with the tribal leaders, known as the Northern Alliance and others, rather than trying to just come in and do it all ourselves or trying to. And to the degree that we have not succeeded I think can be traced back to the fact that we have been trying to create this strong central government in a society that has no traditionally strong central government. And instead we should make sure that those people down at the bottom of the tribal level all know we are on their side.

Now, with that said let me take that into Pakistan. In Pakistan we have relied on one guy, Musharraf, and before that Zia, and a list of these one individuals. I believe that we are reaping a bitter harvest for that now. We are reaping a bitter harvest for looking at the Pakistan army as the bulwark against radical Islam when in fact Musharraf and the Pakistan army and the ISI have been allied with radical Islam. We have equipped them then, what, we have equipped our army in Pakistan to fight who? To fight India rather than to actually do, be the bulwark against radical Islam as we have suggested.

So I just have made a couple points there you might want to comment.

And one last thing, General, I understand the Afghan army is still under 50,000 men. How could we ever expect the Afghan army—in Iraq we have built up a major force and it seems to me—how can you rely on an army of under 50,000 men with a country the size of Afghanistan? Why do we not rely on what is natural to them and that is their militias and their—what would be the equivalent of their National Guard?A whole different strategy. Just some thoughts.

General JONES. The traditional function of an army is to defend the integrity of the country. I think the number is 80,000. But whatever it is there it is encouraging at any rate to see the people of Afghanistan, at least during the time I was there, react to the national army. But again I think you can create the size, you can continue to create the size of the army that one wants. And here there is a similarity between Iraq as well. If you do not create the internal security mechanisms that are required to sustain and

overcome the problems that face the individual citizen every day then you are losing ground because armies generally do not do police work very well, and police do not do army work very well. You need both.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. The idea of a militia it should not be something that we just instinctively reject.

General JONES. Right.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. And, in fact, it seems to have worked in many places.

General JONES. Right. Well, one of the things that I thought should be considered in Afghanistan is the idea of compulsory national service. Interesting enough, the Afghan army is a volunteer force. What happens to all those young people who choose not to volunteer simply because the money generated by the narco-economy can pay them more to be part-time Taliban than full-time Afghan soldiers? So I think the concept of national security in Afghanistan, the country that has a very, very young population, is something that the government should consider. I proposed it privately many times in my meetings but it still is an all-volunteer force. But I think that Afghanistan needs to have its young people educated in the values of democracy and where the country is going so that when you return to society they can be contributing members.

There are too many competing alternatives economically, there are too many other ways to make money in that country that are preventing it from following a more rapid direction in the ways in which we would like to see it go.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you, that is fine. Thank you very much.

Chairman BERMAN. All right, gentlemen, thank you very much. It has been a very useful hearing. One certainly understands the connection between these two countries and our policy. And I appreciate your spending a long morning with us.

Thank you very much.

[Whereupon, at 12:43 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING RECORD

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE GENE GREEN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing.

I would like to welcome our distinguished panel and thank them for being here today.

Pakistan plays an instrumental role in our foreign policy and counterterrorism efforts in the Middle East, and given the political change that we have witnessed there over the last six months, this hearing is long overdue.

Since 9/11, America has worked closely with President Musharaff and the Pakistani army to conduct counterterrorism operations in the Middle East.

Now, with a new Pakistani parliament in power, it is questionable how influential President Musharaff is these days.

What we do know, however, is that Islamist extremism and militancy, especially in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, continues to grow.

Al Quaeda also continues to operate in the western part of the country and threaten our progress in Afghanistan.

Nationwide in Pakistan, the human rights situation has worsened and inflation is rising.

Several food and energy shortages have also been reported.

Therefore, it is so important that we work with the Pakistani government to ensure security, stability, and development in their country, and I look forward to our panel's views and suggestions on we how should do this.

The good news is that Pakistan's new Prime Minister, Yousaf Raza Gillani, has identified terrorism and extremism as Pakistan's most urgent problems.

So my questions for our panel are what aspects of our policy have been the most successful in serving the national interests of both the United States and Pakistan and what should we change as we move forward?

Anti-American sentiment persists across Pakistani society, and yet roughly three-quarters of the supplies for U.S. troops in Afghanistan pass either through or over Pakistan.

How can the United States fix its image amongst the Pakistani people and work towards greater cooperation with their new leadership?

I look forward to the testimony of our witnesses, and again, thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this important hearing.