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Byline: He stressed that the Gulf countries' expenditure on U.S. arms has reached 125 billion dollars

General Zinni compliments the Gulf Countries on their generosity in funding the Marines; And invites the leaders of the Iraqi Opposition to gain the respect of the Arabs before Washington's

By **Hafidh Al-Mirazi**

Washington—General Anthony Zinni, the commander of U.S. troops in the Gulf, stressed that American forces receive all kinds of support and appreciation from the governments of the Gulf countries, including financial assistance.

Zinni, who is starting a tour of the Gulf on Friday, which could be his last before his retirement next July, said that direct financial assistance from the Gulf for American forces reached 300 million dollars last year, and 500 million dollars during the year 1998, which saw the launch of Operation Desert Fox against Iraq.

It is anticipated that during his tour Zinni will discuss with Gulf defense officials the early warning system presented earlier by Secretary of Defense William Cohen to the Gulf countries during his visit last month.

Zinni was speaking before a symposium organized by the Society of American-Bahraini Friendship, and hosted by the Bahraini Ambassador, Mohammed Abdel-Ghaffar, at the embassy.

In his speech, Zinni stressed that the Allied coalition that waged the war against Iraq did not come apart or dissolve as some might think; emphasizing that he learnt the importance of consulting with friends in the Gulf on a regular basis following the advice of Secretary Cohen: "It is important to go to the region for consultation not only during a time of crises, but at normal times also, and it is important to spend some time in visiting the region", and this is what Secretary Cohen does.

Zinni said that what [the U.S.] lacks is "cultural intelligence gathering", meaning that there is a need to understand the culture of the region and its sensitivities and how to deal with them, "for we lack the ability to understand the peoples of the region at many instances, meanwhile we have sufficient political and military data on the region, and this is not enough."

Zinni stressed that the talk of the U.S. presence being unwelcome in the region is incorrect, saying “We are most welcome...but there are some who advise that our presence should be subtle and light”, clarifying that a defense official in one of the Gulf countries counseled him by telling him that “[America’s] role is to help achieve stability, but the Americans should not come here with all their weight like a giant gorilla smashing everything around it...thus, you have to be sensitive to the feelings of the people...this does not mean that you are not welcome, but rather on the contrary”. Zinni gave the example of American officers and their families voluntarily asking to extend their service duty in Bahrain as an example of the cordial atmosphere.

The American General spoke of the importance of the Arab region considering that it is the largest source of energy in the world, adding with pride about the region he militarily oversees: “seventy percent of the world’s oil lies in this region under our jurisdiction, and 65% of this petrol is in the Gulf”.

General Zinni added that the Gulf countries have spent upwards of 125 billion dollars in the last quarter of a century [since 1975] on American weapons.

He said that the Gulf countries “buy for us the most modern equipment, and supply us with materials and facilities required for us to perform our duties, they are with us and are working at our side in many of the operations of enforcing sanctions [on Iraq].” He gave as an example the duties of searching sea vessels, which, he said, all Gulf countries contribute to in one way or another.

General Zinni justified the need of the Gulf countries for the American military presence by saying that their populations cannot provide enough manpower for a balance in confronting Iraq, highlighting that apart from an air force, and all that has been destroyed in the war, Iraq still possessed more ground troops, tanks and armored vehicles than all of the Gulf countries combined.

And regarding the number of American troops deployed in the Gulf, Zinni answered, “we have twenty thousand members from both the Navy and the Air Force”, pointing out that this amounted to one military brigade supported by air cover, while Iraq still has twenty-three military brigades. He said that [the American] forces are rotated regularly and do not have fixed permanent bases, but rather the needed facilities are provided by the Gulf countries, and whose numbers vary depending on times of crises.

Zinni pointed out that his forces conduct ground, sea and air maneuvers and training in all the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council; revealing that the U.S. is getting ready to participate for the very first time in the upcoming combined annual military exercises of the GCC, the most recent of which were the ones held in Oman.

And in response to a question from *Al-Quds Al-Arabi* concerning his opposition, even before the Congress, of arming the Iraqi opposition; an issue that is sought after by several Republican congressional leaders who have formed strong relationships with some Iraqi opposition personalities.

The commander of U.S. troops in the Gulf responded—after affirming that he was not against organizing an opposition to Saddam and the removal of his regime—that he rejects “the idea of arming some opposition groups and sending them inside Iraq while thinking that this is the way to change the regime. I see that this action will increase the instability in the region, and some of the plans I have heard about at the time involve providing U.S. troop support, and we have tried this before, like what happened in Cuba (the failed ‘Bay of Pigs Operation’ in 1961), and this approach is useless”.

Zinni stressed his conviction that “change in Iraq will come from inside Iraq itself, and this is what I have heard from every leader in the Gulf countries and those whose advice I respect, and any change coming from the outside will be seen as imposed by America, and there will be popular rejection for this.”

General Zinni added that from “a military perspective, it is stupid to imagine sending a thousand armed men, from a base outside Iraq somewhere, to the inside, to do battle with Iraqi forces and the Republican Guard and change the regime! This idea is stupid and unbelievable and militarily impossible.”

Zinni went on to present what the Iraqi opposition should do, without hiding his ridicule of them, saying: “there is disunity among the Iraqi opposition groups, which, if we should want to count them, amount to ninety-two. We chose from them seven ranging from the royalists and the such. What they should do is unify their ranks first. There are great divides among them, and they are incapable of cooperating among themselves.”

General Zinni referred to the efforts of the Department of State and the “Special Coordinator for Transition in Iraq”, Frank Ricciardone, to organize the ranks of the Iraqi opposition. Then Zinni called upon the Iraqi opposition, after it had united itself, to agree on issuing a unified declaration for its demands and pledges such as pledging to preserve the territorial integrity of Iraq, and refusing to carve it up, and to commit themselves to the security of Kuwait and the countries of the region, and to stop possessing weapons of mass destruction.

His third recommendation for the Iraqi opposition was that “instead of spending their time in Congress, and tiring themselves in convincing its members, they should spend their time and effort in the region they live in, which does not believe that they are capable of [overthrowing Saddam]. They can condemn what I say and convince some congressmen to support them, but they should first succeed in the region they live in. And if they are unable to convince the leaders of the region of their value then they should realize that they have gone to the wrong address at the ends of the earth.”

General Zinni went on to say that “the Iraqi opposition must do a lot before talking about arming itself, for this idea can be a catastrophe”. He added that he will not allow “those people to drag me into a conflict inside Iraq and put the lives of my troops in danger”, especially after he heard of “strange” ideas about safe havens with American air cover inside Iraq. Zinni said that “if there is a need for military action against the regime in Iraq

then there are clear ways to do that without getting entangled with the Iraqi opposition and bearing the responsibility for what they might do if armed”.

Al-Quds Al-Arabi Daily Newspaper, Wednesday, May 10th, 2000, Issue No. 3420

Byline: Responding to the statements made by the Commander of U.S. troops in the Gulf, Anthony Zinni:

The General at Retirement: Mirages of Commissions from the Gulf Countries?!

By **Nibras Kazimi***

Once again, General Anthony Zinni, commander of U.S. troops in the Gulf, returns to launch his “convictions” against the Iraqi opposition by alternating between ridicule and sarcastic advice. We at the Iraqi opposition have sympathized with General Zinni and his wounded ego ever since he trotted out these same “convictions”, and laced them with ridicule, before the U.S. Congress, with its Republican and Democratic members, who in turn preferred the plans presented by the Iraqi opposition over the General’s “convictions”...

Now, he comes to advise us, much thanked, to unite...and this is what happened at the National Assembly meeting of the Iraqi National Congress last November, where a strong coalition was assembled, which is powerful enough to topple Saddam should it receive international support. The General goes on to advise us to “pledge to preserve the territorial integrity of Iraq, and refuse to carve it up, and to commit themselves to the security of Kuwait and the countries of the region, and to stop possessing weapons of mass destruction.” This is coming from someone who claims to be an expert on the Iraqi opposition yet has no knowledge whatsoever of the political discourse of the Iraqi opposition... We certainly wish that he would provide us with his mailing address so that we can send him several issues of different opposition publications so that the General can see for himself that we do not need his valuable advice.

He then recommends, again much thanked, that we stay away from Washington and spend some time with our Arab brethren... Yet, when we approach our Arab brothers we are immediately confronted by a puzzling question: “Do you have American support?” For it seems that we are not welcome without an American blessing... Who knocks on the door of the other? America or its Arab allies? Is the expenditure of 300 million dollars annually on the upkeep of U.S. forces in the Gulf merely a reflection of the much hyped Arab generosity? Some countries allied to the United States in the Middle East depend on the world’s superpower to maintain their national security and to protect their borders, and some others depend on America to feed their people... But the Iraqi opposition is painted treasonous (even by General Zinni... though implied) if it asks for assistance from America who, whether we like it or not, interferes in all of Iraq’s affairs due to Saddam’s

policies... So a thousand thanks to you General Zinni, and accept from us one modest piece of advice: obey the law... The U.S. government, with both its executive and legislative branches, has committed itself to the Iraq Liberation Act, and the ink has yet to dry off a letter penned by the Vice-President (and the candidate of the Democratic Party for the upcoming presidential elections) pledging himself to the ILA... So why does the General believe that anyone cares for his "convictions" and advice today when nobody bothered with them neither at the Congress, before they went about legislating the ILA, nor at the administration side represented by the Commander-in-Chief, President Bill Clinton, who signed and enacted the ILA into the law of the land...?

General Zinni described the opposition's military plans for the attraction of the armed forces and other forces of revolution inside Iraq as "silly"... Has General Zinni lost even the slightest measure of respect for his colleagues and those who have preceded him in military service such as General Wayne Downing who adopted this plan and presented it to Congress... Furthermore, if we add up the adjectives used by General Zinni to snipe at the opposition and compared them to what he says against Saddam and his regime, we would find that it seems as if he favors the survival of Saddam over the victory of the Iraqi people.

The General talks about the need to understand the Middle East through direct interaction between U.S. officials and the people of the Gulf to facilitate the understanding of the peoples of the region and their sensitivities, which is something we all welcome, but who does this General, who portrays himself as a seasoned expert in Middle Eastern culture, interact with except Emirs and the top echelon of government officials? Does he realize that many people of political influence in the Middle East fear the democratic principles and credentials of the Iraqi opposition? The General should know, even in a cursory fashion, that democracy is not one of the distinguishing characteristics of the regimes allied to America in the Middle East... And probably the embrace by the U.S. Congress (which is democratically elected by the American people) of the Iraqi opposition is a reflection of this fact... And it is rather ironic that he gave this talk at the Bahraini Embassy in Washington, Bahrain being a country that just recently re-established full diplomatic relations with Saddam's court... Does the General, he of finely tuned cultural sensitivities, know anything of the Bahraini opposition, and what they endure at the hands of the Bahraini security forces and army whose members largely speak Urdu and whose head of secret police is a full-blooded Anglo-Saxon?

And if General Zinni portrays himself as a professor of Iraqi history and society, he is certainly not a professor of mathematics: where did he ever get the number "92" as the sum of Iraqi opposition groups? How did he count them and who are they? Would the General, in his free time (he is retiring from military service in July of this year), put together a study of the Iraqi opposition pointing out just who these 92 groups are so that we would benefit from his knowledge of our affairs and numbers... However, the General will be somewhat busy for he could get hired by arms manufacturers, and his job would be to find markets for their merchandise... And here, we have a right to ponder and extrapolate... Would the General spend his retirement time in Riyadh, Manama, Kuwait, Doha, and Abu Dhabi, where, as he said in his speech, he and other American servicemen

found hospitality and a wide welcome, and would he call up his friends at the Defense Ministries of these countries to showcase his latest goodies of tanks, missiles, launchers, canons and air force fighters? Would he scare them, as he did in his talk, by mentioning Saddam's menacing, twenty-three brigades that are always in mid-pounce just to the north of their desert capitals? And when he said that the Gulf countries have spent 125 billion dollars on U.S. arms since 1975, did his mouth water, just a little, as he saw mirage heaps of commissions before his eyes? And let us pray to God that he does a better job of counting his commissions than at his attempt to count the Iraqi opposition groups...

There are some Iraqis who believe that the United States wants to keep Saddam in power, and they will undoubtedly point to Zinni's statements to prove their convictions...But Saddam staying in power, with the consequence of American troops staying in the Gulf, may be a good investment prospect for the General in his retirement...and in this context, his spiteful, bitter words against the opposition are well understood...But who is General Zinni in the hierarchy of the U.S. government when compared to Vice-President Gore, Senator Lott, Senator Helms, and Senator Kerrey? The answer can be found in the Iraq Liberation Act, and in our democratic future.

** Member of the National Assembly of the Iraqi National Congress. Resides in Washington D.C.*

Kindly see Zinni's remarks (now retired) concerning arms sales in bold type towards the end of the document

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**U.S. POLICY TOWARD IRAQ
Part 2**

**Hearing of the
Senate Armed Forces Committee**

September 28, 2000

OPENING STATEMENT OF

**JOHN WARNER,
A Senator from Virginia,**

and
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services

SEN. WARNER: The committee will begin its hearing.

I say with heartfelt sincerity that the world and, indeed, particularly our nation could awaken tomorrow morning and be startled by the news that there's a downed airman, an American, or maybe a British, being paraded through the streets of Baghdad. So few, so very, very few people in our country and, really, the rest of the world recognize the risks that a bold band of airmen, Americans and Britishers, are taking every day to enforce a policy which is very confusing, few understand, and, in fairness to the administration, few have been able to come forward with a better policy that's being followed by this administration and Great Britain and other allied support that we receive in enforcing the restrictions on Saddam Hussein and Iraq in the Gulf region by way of naval interdiction.

So we start his hearing this morning by welcoming two of our three distinguished witnesses. We have reason to believe the third will soon be here.

And I'd like to recite the history. This committee has approached this subject with great seriousness. As a committee, we began these hearings on July 20th with a closed hearing to receive intelligence and operations briefing from the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the CIA on the situation in and around Iraq, and U.S. military operations in that region.

Last Tuesday, September 19th, we received testimony on current administration policy on Iraq from a panel of administration officials -- Undersecretary of Defense Slocombe, Assistant Secretary of State Walker, and General Franks, commander in chief of the Central Command. Today we hear from another distinguished panel of experts on this region of the world. We look forward to your insights on this critical issue, to your views on what is right about the current policy; what, in your judgment, may not be right; and, if there are, what are the alternatives to the present policy being followed.

As I have said at our previous hearings on Iraq, we must always be mindful of the fact that every day, U.S., together with Great Britain, is placing its military men and women in harm's way in an effort to contain Saddam Hussein.

This committee has an obligation on behalf of the men and women in uniform, first and foremost, on behalf of the citizens of this country and indeed, citizens of the world, to carefully examine this containment policy; to try to understand the goals this policy is intended to achieve; to consider whether we have the best policy in place for achieving these goals; and to evaluate whether the value derived from conducting the military operations against Iraq, the containment policy, is worth the risk of the lives and the well-being of our airmen and our sailors.

Ten years after the brutal and unprovoked Iraqi attack against Kuwait, the world is still faced with the threat of aggression from Iraq. And yet the United States and Great Britain seem to be alone in their efforts to contain Saddam Hussein. Over the past several years we have seen a weakening of the resolve with the international community to force Saddam Hussein to comply with the terms and conditions he accepted, and accepted in writing, at the conclusion of the Gulf War in '91.

What is at stake here is the credibility of the United Nations and the enforcements of its mandates, and that of the Security Council. And yet two permanent members of the Security Council, Russia and France, are now openly defying Security Council resolution by conducting flights into Baghdad without prior U.N. approval. How can this world -- how can we hope to secure Iraqi compliance with Security Council resolutions when Iraq sees such behavior by permanent council members? Iraq senses weakness and division and is making the most of it with its continued defiance of the United Nations and the Security Council.

And throughout all of this, as the U.S. administration considers its next move, U.S. pilots are patrolling the skies over Iraq, and U.S. sailors, together with sailors from other nations, are patrolling the sea lanes of the Persian Gulf. For what purpose? Why is there so little support for our efforts and those of Great Britain and other nations in enforcing the U.N. mandates while others stand by the side doing nothing?

When we initiated these hearings in July, I'd hoped that they would lay the foundation for a clearer understanding of U.S. goals and strategy in the region and a solid justification for the continued use of our military in almost daily operations to enforce this strategy. Thus far, we're still struggling to get the clarity we had sought.

Last week, testimony by administration witnesses really in many ways raised as many questions as we had hoped they would answer about current U.S. policy towards Iraq. Some of us came away from that hearing unclear on the administration's plan for getting Saddam Hussein to accept new U.N. weapons inspections, unclear what the U.S. response would be if Saddam Hussein continued to defy the international community by denying access to inspectors, unclear on when and under what circumstances the United States would be prepared to use force again if indeed that use of force is an option against Iraq to seek compliance with the U.N. mandates.

We were told of three red lines: if Iraq reconstitutes its weapons of mass destruction program, or threatens its neighbors or U.S. forces, or moves against the Kurds. Those are three red lines where the option of force would be considered, in the judgment of the administration witnesses. As I understand it, we're prepared to use force, but would not necessarily use force, if any of these red lines singularly were crossed, or multiples of them. So we're not entirely sure where the use of force would be an option.

Curiously, and explicitly, left out of this set of red lines was an Iraq move against the Shi'a in the South and failure to allow the return of U.N. weapons inspectors. Since we are enforcing a no-fly zone in the South for the specific purpose of preventing Saddam Hussein from repressing the Shi'a people, I found the exclusion of a movement against the Shi'a from the list of red lines perplexing. It leads me and others to question why our airmen are being asked to risk their lives on an almost daily basis to enforce this no-fly zone in the South if we're not willing to use force to defend the Shi'a from an Iraqi attack.

Why the difference in the treatment of the Kurds in the North and the Shi'a in the South? Both are human beings. As I recall, we executed Operation Desert Fox in December '98 specifically because Iraq would not allow the return of U.N. weapons inspectors. We're faced with that same situation today. What again? Is the use of force an option?

The American people, and particularly those in uniform and their families, need and deserve a clear explanation of U.S. policy and a clearer path ahead than has been provided thus far, and we look to this distinguished panel this morning to inform this committee and those following this hearing with the benefit of your knowledge, drawn on many, many years of experience in dealing with the issues in this region. We are indeed privileged to have you.

Senator Levin.

OPENING STATEMENT OF

CARL LEVIN, A Senator from Michigan, and Ranking Minority Member, Committee on Armed Services

SEN. CARL LEVIN (D-MI): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let me first join you in welcoming our three distinguished witnesses here this morning. For General Zinni, I believe, it's the first appearance since your retirement; forty years of distinguished service to this country under your belt, and I know there's many more decades ahead, and we particularly want to welcome you and wish you well after your departure. Ambassador Butler, I think this is the first time you've appeared in the Senate since you have -- well, okay -- anyway, I think maybe the first time before this committee since --

BUTLER: First time since --

SEN. LEVIN: -- since you were in S407 at the invitation of Senator Warner and myself, and I may have missed one appearance. But in any event, I haven't seen you personally since you have left your position as heading the inspection effort for the United Nations, and your -- your extraordinary service to this world should not go unnoted, and we're all grateful to you. And welcome, of course, Ambassador Perle. We always are happy to see you here.

As Senator Warner has noted, this is our third hearing within recent weeks on Iraq, and I want to commend him for scheduling these hearings. I think we have a heavy responsibility to look at what our policy is, to understand it, analyze it, critique it, if appropriate; and perhaps most important, I think it's our responsibility and that of our counterparts in the House and perhaps for the whole Congress to determine whether or not we have any recommendations to make, if we see any better options than the ones that we are now exercising, and it's our responsibility, if we do believe there are better options or changes that should be made, for us to say so as a body or as a Congress.

That's ultimately where these hearings could lead. I don't know if they will or not; I -- offhand, I'm not sure I see better options than the policies we're now following, although there may be some tweaking here and there. I'm not sure that I can see a better alternative, although surely the current policy is not achieving the result of removing Saddam. Containing him so far, at least, I believe we are. Removing him, which I think is

every civilized person's desire, both in and outside of Iraq, we have not succeeded in doing.

As our chairman has indicated, we've received testimony last week from Undersecretary of Defense Slocombe, Assistant Secretary of State Walker. They described the policy to contain Iraq and also -- and I failed to mention this -- to prevent renewed aggression by Iraq until there is that hope for a new Iraqi regime and until Iraq is no longer a threat to its neighbors or to international security.

Our witnesses last week advised us as to what those red lines were. The chairman has identified them and has indicated that if those red lines are crossed, the U.S. is prepared to act at an appropriate time and place of our choosing.

We're not going to tell Saddam in advance where that time -- where that place is or what that time is. But he does know that those are three bright lines. Whether there should be additional bright lines or not is surely a matter that this committee and the Congress should consider.

They also indicated that even though it's not a, quote, "red line," that the United States has not ruled out or ruled in the use of force, if Iraq continues to refuse to allow the resumption of U.N. weapons inspections.

We've seen a list of increases -- there's been a list of signals that Saddam has sent recently of increasing hostility towards his neighbors, towards us, towards the international community, towards his own people -- nothing new about any of those. But there are some additional recent signals of hostility and that includes Iraq's accusation that Kuwait was siphoning off Iraqi oil. That is the same type of accusation which Iraq made in the days leading up to its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

And as the chairman pointed out, despite these statements and hostile signals from Iraq, Russia and France has recently sent aircraft to Iraq without approval from the U.N. Sanctions Committee. And in addition, Jordan has done the same thing, by the way. And also there's a number of nations that have called for sanctions on Iraq to be lifted. The reason for those calls are obviously humanitarian. I don't think anybody can do anything but commiserate with the situation that the Iraqi people find themselves in. They are the first victims of Saddam and it's understandable that people call for the sanctions to be lifted, even though most of us have not agreed that they can be lifted until Saddam is removed or until he complies with the inspections requirements of the U.N. Sanctions can be lifted when Saddam decides to comply with U.N. resolutions.

And that, in my judgment, is the only hope that we have to keep him contained, keep the pressure on, and to let him know what the consequences would be if there is any future aggression against his neighbors.

The U.N. yesterday reached agreement to lower the percentage of oil revenues from the oil-for-food program that are set aside to pay for claims resulting from the Gulf War from 30 to 25 percent. That should make it possible for additional food and medicine to get to the people of Iraq.

So I want to again just welcome our witnesses. I look forward to their views as to where U.S. policy is or is not the right policy, how it should or should not be changed, any proposals they have as to how Saddam can be contained that are improvements over our present ones and our present policy, and that might result in the improvement in the situation of the people of Iraq, and the security of her neighbors and the security of the world, facing, as we do, the type of a dictator who is aggressive that we have in Saddam.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SEN. WARNER: Senator Levin, thank you for an excellent statement.

And a point that you raised prompts me to mention one other thing, by way of an opening statement. Yesterday Senator Levin and I were here with numerous colleagues on both sides, and this room was absolutely overflowing as the Joint Chiefs of Staff advised this committee with regard to the shortfall in funds, now and in the foreseeable future, to maintain the military which most of us believe this nation must have.

This operation is a very costly operation to the American taxpayer. The prime motivation of this hearing is for the physical safety of those performing these missions, but indeed a secondary consideration is the cost to the American taxpayers and, although less, a cost to Great Britain, which likewise faces a stringent military budget.

And perhaps, General Zinni, you could give us or help us provide for the record or otherwise get some idea of the cost over and above the normal operational costs for our regularly deployed units in this region. We keep units in the Gulf, of course, for a variety of reasons of security, and in other areas, but clearly there is a delta on top of the base cost for forward deployment occasioned by this operation.

Also, our troops being forward-deployed to carry out this mission in various parts of the world are in areas where there is a high personal risk to themselves, to their associates, and such family as they may or may not have. And that's an added risk. So perhaps you can touch on that in your testimony.

I see the arrival of another one of our colleagues. We have just completed, Senator Levin and I, brief opening statements. If you'd like to address the panel, please join us.

SEN. WAYNE ALLARD (R-CO) (?): I don't have any opening statement -- (off mike) -- Mr. Chairman.

SEN. WARNER: But we thank you for coming.

We don't have any particular order of the witnesses, but I do believe that we should recognize our distinguished former CINC in this region and let you start off, General Zinni, this testimony.

GEN. ZINNI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SEN. WARNER: And such statements that you have, I say to the witnesses, will be placed in the record in their entirety.

GEN. ZINNI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have no prepared statement, but I would like to address some of the issues that both you and Senator Levin brought up in your opening statements.

In addition to the issue of costs and risk, I'd like to say a few words about our presence there, the containment policy, military action and the removal of Saddam, because they seem to me to be at least four key issues that you have dealt with over the series of hearings.

SEN. WARNER: General Zinni, this record will be read and studied by many. Would you put it in exactly the period of time you were there as CINC, your area of operation and how it embraced this region?

STATEMENT OF
ANTHONY ZINNI,
Retired General, USMC,
and
Former CINC, U.S. Central Command

GEN. ZINNI: Yes, sir. I was -- I've been involved in this region actually for over 10 years. I was in the region during the Gulf War, in the north with the Kurds, in Israel when we put the Patriots in, working out of European Command. I've spent time in the Horn of Africa and Somalia, which is part of CENTCOM's region. And when I commanded the First Marine Expeditionary Force, this was one of our regions that we were responsible for and committed to. I was the deputy commander in chief for one year, and then the commander in chief of the Central Command for three years. So the vast majority of the last decade has been focused on the 25 countries that make up Central Region, from Central Asia to the Persian Gulf to the Horn of Africa to Egypt and Jordan.

Mr. Chairman, we have a presence there that grew from the beginnings of the creation of Central Command. CENTCOM was created because of threats to the energy resources and to the region for different reasons -- at that time, the Soviet threat in the mid-'80s. I think we've come to realize the importance of this region. Most of the discussions I had with leaders in the region before I left actually discussed the post-Saddam era and our presence beyond Saddam.

I didn't find any leader in the region that wanted us to withdraw -- obviously, those that are our friends and allies in the region. In fact, I would tell you that if anything, there was more interest in either reconfiguring or increasing our presence in the region. They saw American presence, American military presence specifically, as a force of stability in the region. And they saw the stability of the region as its important value to the world. And I would agree for four reasons.

The first is obvious: the energy resources. And I can quote you the statistics -- 65 percent of the world's oil, probably close to 40 percent of the world's liquefied natural gas, and maybe more, and the highest quality of these resources.

In addition to that, I see this region as growing economically. Several times when I've been out there, I looked at ports like Dubai and Djebabali (sp), Salala in Oman, Aden, Jidda. These places are growing. They're becoming major transshipment and distribution points. The geography tells you that the natural historical tendency for this to be the hingeplate and the center for trade is returning, in a major way. And I think given stability this could blossom economically, and we could see something that looks like Hong Kong in several places in the gulf. It's beginning to happen.

Of course, stability in this region is important to us. Historically, when this region destabilizes or there are influences that destabilize the region, we feel it. The world feels it. Whether it's extremism, whether there are hegemony that take charge, whether we see proliferation of WMD causing trouble, it stretches beyond the region and it touches us, no matter how much we would like it to be otherwise.

SEN. WARNER: If I might interject, indeed the petroleum issue --

GEN. ZINNI: Yes.

SEN. WARNER: -- is one area of great instability, and that could easily be affected by instability in the security relationships among these nations.

GEN. ZINNI: Absolutely.

SEN. WARNER: We saw that with Saddam Hussein and his invasion.

GEN. ZINNI: I think that's an excellent point, and --

SEN. WARNER: Under those circumstances, this country had to open its Strategic Oil Reserve. That was the one time.

GEN. ZINNI: Sir, and I think --

SEN. WARNER: That was a clear case.

GEN. ZINNI: If we go back to the days of Earnest Will, when we reflagged the tankers and protected the flow of oil, it -- I think it illuminates the point you brought out, Senator, about the instability could be created just by virtue of who controls or who threatens the flow of oil.

The final point of interest is just freedom of navigation. I think sea lines of communications, air lines of communications -- it's the hinge plate of three continents, and clearly we have to maintain those.

I wracked my brain for over four years thinking about a policy, other than containment, that would work, a short, quick answer to resolving the problem of Saddam Hussein. And I have to be honest with you; I didn't come up with a better one. I mean, we have been involved in containment of people like Kim Jong Il, Kim Il Sung in Korea; Fidel Castro, the Soviet Union. Containment seems to be what you end up doing when it's difficult to generate the political will, the popular support to take military action. Containment is

difficult, sanctions are difficult, and I'm not going to go over all reasons why, because everybody in this room knows them as well as I do.

Military action is the third point I want to talk about. When we talk about military action, I'm not sure we're clear on what we mean by "military action." Every time we've decided to take military action, as I went around the Gulf, talking to the leaders there to gain their support, I get the same question each time: "Are you serious this time? Is this another pinprick? Are we just going to go north and drop some bombs, and then a defiant Saddam lives through this and looks stronger in the end?"

It's difficult to muster the will to take the military action to resolve this, because I can tell you what it would take, and it's clear in our work plans what it would take, but it would be a major commitment. It would take the political will, popular support, coalition building around the world, international support that may be difficult to muster. Absent that, we're stuck with the pinpricks as a means of responding when Saddam crosses the line and does things or commits actions that are unacceptable.

The last point I'd like to talk about is removing Saddam --

SEN. WARNER: Can I add one word? As you say, it may be difficult to muster the coalition support, and indeed this operation, from its origin in '91, was based on coalition. Maybe you better say "difficult" or "impossible." I don't know on what basis --

GEN. ZINNI: Senator, I'm not sure. I would tell you that if we were serious, whatever that means, if there was reason to take military action that was going to remove this regime, in its ultimate end state and objective, I think that you could get the support to do that.

SEN. WARNER: It would require facts of provocation or potential --

GEN. ZINNI: Absolutely.

SEN. WARNER: -- that have not been brought forth yet.

GEN. ZINNI: Absolutely. I think you couldn't do it without a provocative action that gave reason for it to be conducted. But Saddam tends to give us plenty of reasons. Sometimes our reaction is maybe less than our friends in the region would like to see us take and results in bigger problems at the end than before.

Removing Saddam is not the issue; the issue is what kind of Iraq and what kind of a region do we end up with. There are many ways that Saddam could be removed. And again, I'm not going to go through all of them because I think the committee has heard many proposals. What's important is what comes out of this is a stable Iraq, one that's intact -- territorially intact, politically intact, and still a major influence in the region, but in the right direction.

If we continue on this track, my biggest fear is not the explosion of Saddam Hussein and Iraq striking out at neighbors, but the implosion and collapse of Iraq and what that may mean. That may be more difficult to muster interest and involvement, but would be

absolutely necessary so we don't create a failed or incapable state that ends up being another disaster in the region and is even more destabilizing than the situation we have now.

Let me touch on the two questions that you brought up about cost and risk, Senator. It's difficult to measure cost. It sounds like a simple thing, but do you deduct the pay of every soldier, sailor, airman and Marine there? We own no assigned forces in Central Command; these come from somewhere else. They'd exist and be operating somewhere else. Do we look at a unit like the Army Battalion Task Force in Kuwait and measure the cost of deploying them there and subtract the training value what they get? Many of those units don't need to go to the National Training Center once they've gone there. They will tell you that it's the finest training they get anywhere in the Army, arguably better than the NTC because of the range's maneuver space, and the combined arms that we have located there that we could use.

We have to measure the contributions that our friends in the region provide. When I was there, it got as high as \$500 million-plus to support our presence in one year. I think the last year I was there it was close to \$300 million. The \$500 million was during Desert Fox, Desert Thunder when there were added costs. This is support in-kind -- food, water, fuel. This is support in facilities; many special projects conducted, like the Saudis in building a \$200- million complex for the housing of our troops, that is amongst the finest troop housing that you would find anywhere that we have in the military.

We build confidence because of our presence. These forces also engage in coalition building, in allowing us to exercise our war plans. It encourages the forces in the area to "buy American", if you will, which is not only good economically for us, but the interoperability issue then, from a military point of view, is enhanced. I think the last time I totaled it up, in the last decade, over \$100 billion, well over \$100 billion worth of American defense items were purchased by countries in the Gulf, in this region.

So it's hard to compute those against the costs. Those things might not be there if we didn't have our presence there. And those things end up being benefits back here.

The Saudis and others invest heavily in our country. They certainly don't want to see us in a condition where the problems with gas and oil put our economy in recession, or worse. It affects them. I mean, they invest in America because they believe in us and they see us as a force of stability. So there's some come-back on what it costs us to operate there and what it costs us for fuel. They certainly don't want to see the price of oil up where it is. By all accounts, I know they want to see it down at a price that they can plan and program, but not one so low that it causes them to be unable to pay those bills, especially the ones that they owe to us, and some of which I mentioned.

I would just close my opening remarks, Mr. Chairman, in saying that this is a very, very complex problem. What concerns me most are short, little quickie strategies that people think we can execute and get this over very neatly. My biggest fear is we are going to inherit a failed state in Iraq that's going to require a tremendous amount of nation-building, and we might not be able to generate the international cooperation and interest,

the inter-governmental requirement here, because there'll be humanitarian problems, diplomatic problems, not just security problems, to deal with this condition. And we have to think about not letting this happen.

Thank you.

SEN. WARNER: Thank you very much for an excellent statement, General.

(Protestors interrupt hearing.)

SEN. WARNER: We'll suspend for just a minute, please.

(Protestors continue shouting.)

SEN. WARNER: I would say that the issue of the sorry state of the Iraqi people as a consequence of Saddam Hussein and his policies is very much in the mind of not only those of us here in this room, but the entire world. However, it's irrefutable that almost all of that suffering is a direct consequence of the intentional actions of Saddam Hussein. There exist adequate supplies of medicine and food, and indeed, the adjustment which the U.N. made yesterday, as stated by my distinguished colleague, is a reflection of the effort of the world to try and alleviate that suffering. At the same time, by necessity, we continue to facilitate this policy of containment. Ambassador Butler?

SEN. LEVIN: Mr. Chairman?

SEN. WARNER: Yes.

SEN. LEVIN: I wonder if I could just interrupt the ambassador for 10 seconds just to add to your thoughts here.

SEN. WARNER: Yes.

SEN. LEVIN: How I wish that message which we just heard could be heard by Saddam in a free Iraq with democratic elections. He wouldn't be there if there were democratic elections to hear the message. But in the meantime, how we will all wish that that feeling that we just heard expressed could be heard by that dictator who has used gas on his own people, much less deprived them of food and medicine. Ambassador?

SEN. WARNER: Thank you very much, Senator Levin. Ambassador?

MR. BUTLER: Thank you very much --

SEN. WARNER: Again, I would appreciate it if you would sketch your very long career of involvement. And you have dedicated so much of your life to the very thing that we just heard: the persecution of people in this region, whether it's those who were persecuted in Kuwait and elsewhere in the gulf, or the people in Iraq. Certainly, this policy is not directed toward people, it's directed towards a political regime.

Thank you. Would you sketch your career, sir?