

**OVERSIGHT: HARD LESSONS LEARNED IN IRAQ  
AND BENCHMARKS FOR FUTURE  
RECONSTRUCTION EFFORTS**

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**HEARING**  
BEFORE THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL  
ORGANIZATIONS, HUMAN RIGHTS AND OVERSIGHT  
OF THE  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS  
SECOND SESSION

—————  
FEBRUARY 24, 2010  
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**Serial No. 111-82**  
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Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Affairs



Available via the World Wide Web: <http://www.foreignaffairs.house.gov/>

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U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

55-125PDF

WASHINGTON : 2010

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## **OVERSIGHT: HARD LESSONS LEARNED IN IRAQ AND BENCHMARKS FOR FUTURE RE- CONSTRUCTION EFFORTS**

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2010**

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS,  
HUMAN RIGHTS AND OVERSIGHT,  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:35 a.m. in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Russ Carnahan (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. CARNAHAN. The International Organizations Subcommittee will come to order. I want to thank Stuart Bowen, the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, for testifying here today. He has undertaken an enormous task, and I really want to thank him for his service.

With over \$50 billion in U.S. taxpayer funds spent for Iraq reconstruction—the largest reconstruction ever since the Marshall Plan—through Fiscal Year 2010, there are a number of lessons to be learned. I believe if we fail to learn these lessons we are doomed to repeat many of these mistakes. Some money was spent properly, but far too much has been wasted, misspent or wholly mismanaged. There have been numerous examples of poor accountability and inadequate procurement processes, just to name a few of the problems.

With reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan, Haiti and others sure to take place, we need to ensure we take the lessons learned in Iraq and turn the corner. While there is certainly no one size fits all, we need to make sure there is a process in place that meets not only our goals of reconstruction, oversight and accountability, but also one that ensures we are meeting our development and diplomacy goals as well.

Mr. Bowen has put forward a proposal that seeks to answer the question of who should be accountable for planning, managing and executing stabilization and reconstruction operations that are part of an overseas contingency operation. The question is being asked because there was not a coordinated U.S. Government approach to reconstruction operations, which has resulted in, among other things, mismanagement of U.S. taxpayer funds.

I am very interested in hearing you testify about your proposal today. I am especially interested in hearing how your proposed U.S. Office for Contingency Operations would increase effectiveness and

accountability while dramatically decreasing instances of waste, fraud and abuse. I am also interested in hearing how this proposal would enhance our diplomacy and development goals.

When Secretary Clinton announced the inaugural QDDR this past July, she indicated that it would provide a “comprehensive assessment for organizational reform and improvements to our policy, strategy and planning processes” with respect to diplomacy and development; our “smart power,” specifically. Diplomacy and development are essential to any reconstruction operations, so I am interested to also hear how these goals can be met with your proposal.

Again, Mr. Bowen, I want to thank you for your work on these issues and for your willingness to testify. I would now like to invite the ranking member, Mr. Rohrabacher from California, to give his opening remarks.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Carnahan follows:]

Chairman Russ Carnahan  
Subcommittee on International Organizations, Human Rights and Oversight

Opening Statement

“Oversight: Hard Lessons Learned in Iraq and Benchmarks for Future Reconstruction Efforts”

February 24, 2010

The International Organizations Subcommittee will come to order. I want to thank Stuart Bowen, the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, for testifying. He has undertaken an enormous task, and I thank him for his service.

With over \$50 billion in U.S. taxpayer funds spent for Iraq reconstruction through FY 2010, there are a number of lessons learned. Some money was spent properly, but far too much was wasted, misspent, or wholly mismanaged. There have been numerous examples of poor accountability and inadequate procurement processes, just to name a few of the problems.

With reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan, Haiti, and others sure to take place, we need to ensure that we take the lessons learned in Iraq, and turn the corner. While there is certainly no “one size fits all,” we need to make sure that there is a process in place that meets not only our goals of reconstruction, oversight, and accountability, but also one that ensures we are meeting our development and diplomacy goals, as well.

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Again, Mr. Bowen, I want to thank you for your work on these issues, and for your willingness to testify. I would now like to invite the ranking member, Mr. Rohrabacher from California, to give his opening remarks.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. My first duty this morning is to welcome you to the subcommittee and congratulate you on ascending to this spot. I hope you will enjoy your time here as much as I enjoyed with your predecessor, Mr. Delahunt, and we were able to utilize this position both ranking member and chairman to look into issues that were really important and we enjoyed broad areas of disagreement, but we also found a lot of areas of agreement, and I hope that we have that same type of very positive relationship that will serve our country and will make sure that we are not just wasting our time; we are getting something done. That is what Stuart Bowen is all about: Getting something done.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. ROHRABACHER. I certainly will.

Mr. CARNAHAN. I just want to thank you for those remarks. You know, our colleague, Mr. Delahunt, has not left us. He is still a member of the committee and I know he looks forward to continuing here, but you and I have talked privately and I also very much look forward to a really strong and positive working relationship with you and all the members of the committee. Thank you.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you. As I was saying, Mr. Bowen and I have known each other many years, and he has been here as a person who is really dedicated his life to trying to make sure that we accomplish our goals in some very trying circumstances and trying to do it with the American taxpayer in mind and it has been—he has met the ultimate challenges and he has got some ultimate insights as to maybe the way we can do these things in the future in a better, more efficient manner. I have, of course, long been frustrated by our reconstruction efforts in Iraq, there is a lot of goodwill that has been there but we have wasted some of that goodwill; before that we have wasted a lot of money too.

We need to figure out ways of how we can do this more effectively in the future, when we meet future challenges. I will—let me note—when I say that we have wasted some money, certainly things could have been done better. Let me just add to that I am very proud that the people of the United States have helped free the people of Iraq from a brutal tyrant, Saddam Hussein, who murdered their people by the hundreds of thousands and created a reign of terror among his people. We should never forget when we are analyzing what is going on here that that monster, that Hitler of the Middle East has been eliminated and the world will be better for it and certainly the people of Iraq; not only will be, but are better for it today.

So let us not forget when we criticize and we try to figure out better ways of doing things that while the critical eye is there we also are recognizing the good things that have been accomplished even though at a high cost. Between defense spending and reconstruction spending we see that Iraq has cost us almost \$1 trillion, and that is an enormous amount of money to be spent on the part of the United States especially considering that we are borrowing a significant amount of money each year in order to pay for that type of operation.

Mr. Chairman, you were not here when this vote happened, but there was a proposal by my Democratic colleagues early on in the

Iraqi operation that the Iraqi Government should be expected to pay for the expenses of our operations to free them from Saddam Hussein from future oil revenues.

I don't know what was wrong with the last administration. I don't know why George Bush decided that oh, that is a terrible idea, but the fact is that I was one of only three Republicans that voted in favor of that Democratic proposal, and I would suggest that right now that we reaffirm to people that America will not spend one more penny in Iraq until it is agreed to that the American people are going to be reimbursed.

We can't afford to do this anymore. I mean, yes, we can be proud that we eliminated Saddam Hussein, but we cannot afford to go around the world and spend this kind of money when our own people are in terrible need right now, so I would hope that is one thing we could be thinking about in this committee of moving forward that type of proposal, as well as the specific structural changes that Mr. Bowen has in mind.

I would like to remind everybody about that particular issue that I just mentioned because if that would have passed at that time it would have saved America a lot of money and American people at a time when we needed it the most, but it didn't pass because people were afraid to be saying well, this war is about oil. It is blood for oil. You heard that, blood for oil.

Well, who has won the oil contracts now that the war against Saddam Hussein is over and the situation is stabilized in Iraq? Who is winning those oil contracts? Not the United States, but the Chinese. So here we are. We have borrowed money from the Chinese in order to repay them with interest of course in order to free Iraq so that they can give contracts to the Chinese.

This certainly isn't representing the best interests of the people of the United States, and we need to make sure that we dedicate ourselves, that we are not going to get into this mess again and that we are going to have some structural changes, as Mr. Bowen is suggesting to us today, but also some solid, fundamental policy standards that we will have to meet before we commit ourselves to these type of operations.

Let us note that even as it has stabilized, even as we have spent so much money and blood in Iraq, some of the fundamentals have still not been dealt with there. For example, if you trace this back all the way to the beginning of when our trouble started with Iraq it was an Iraq conflict with Kuwait that started this whole dynamic that led to all of this expenditure of blood and money.

Well, Iraq is still dealing and has not brought up and not compensated Kuwait for the damages that it inflicted on Kuwait. I mean, it still has U.N. sanctions that it still has to deal with. Iraq still owes Kuwait billions of dollars of compensation.

Now, let me just note that the Ambassador from Kuwait has notified me that Kuwait is willing to reach out to Iraq and any amount of money that is repaid of those billions of dollars for the damages for the destruction that the Iraqis did on Kuwait, they are willing to invest that directly back into Iraq. That is a wonderful compromise, and yet Iraq has not been willing to step forward and deal with that specific fundamental issue.

We also haven't seen, for example, there hasn't been an Ambassador sent by Iraq to Kuwait. Again, a fundamental issue. It needs to be resolved. Is there going to be peace between Kuwait and Iraq or is there not? Get that done. We need to make sure that gets done or otherwise everything we have spent, all the lives that have been lost, are for nothing.

Let us note there was a border dispute between Kuwait and Iraq. These are things that can be resolved politically. These are doable, and we should, as we are looking at reforms and the way we handle ourselves, we should look to make sure what are the fundamental things that need to happen so we can close this book on the Iraqi involvement of American troops and so much massive presence there.

Let me just note that includes the fact that Iraq must pass a carbon law and must get their own back together so that they can become a prosperous and free and secure country. We can't do that for them forever. So they haven't even got themselves organized to the point where that issue is solved as to where the profits will be channeled and the revenue from oil resources in their country.

So let us remember that we can't do everything for Iraq. Let us try to push them in the right direction, but we can set standards for ourselves in future operations, which is what this hearing is about. Let us make sure the Iraqis know that these opportunities they have to solve these problems themselves were paid for dearly with American treasure and American blood.

Again, I rarely hear a thank you from our Iraqis that come to visit us, and I think that we, the American people, deserve that. And today I thank you for hosting this hearing, and let us see if we can get some valuable insights out of it.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Thank you. And I would now like to introduce our witness for today's hearing, Mr. Stuart W. Bowen, Jr. Mr. Bowen is currently the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, a position he has held since October 2004, where he is responsible for ensuring effective oversight of \$52 billion appropriated for the reconstruction of Iraq.

Just prior to assuming this position, in January 2004, Mr. Bowen was appointed as the Inspector General for the Coalition Provisional Authority. Previously, Mr. Bowen was a partner at Patton Boggs, LLP, and has held various positions in the George W. Bush administration as Deputy Assistant to the President, Deputy Staff Secretary and Special Assistant to the President, and Associate Counsel.

He also served on the Bush-Cheney transition team and prior to that held several positions as counsel to then-Governor Bush in Texas, where he was also an Assistant Attorney General from 1992 to 1994. Additionally, Mr. Bowen spent 4 years as an intelligence officer in the U.S. Air Force, achieving the rank of Captain. He holds a B.A. from the University of the South and a J.D. from St. Mary's Law School.

Welcome, and thank you for joining the subcommittee today for this important hearing. We now turn to Mr. Bowen for his opening remarks.

**STATEMENT OF MR. STUART W. BOWEN, JR., SPECIAL INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR IRAQ RECONSTRUCTION, OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR IRAQ RECONSTRUCTION**

Mr. BOWEN. Thank you, Chairman Carnahan, Ranking Member Rohrabacher, for the opportunity to appear before you this morning on this important topic. I am especially honored, Mr. Chairman, to appear at your first hearing of your chairmanship.

I think that the issue that you have taken on is highly relevant to ongoing stabilization and reconstruction operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and very applicable to an issue that must be resolved; that is, how the United States should approach managing, executing, planning for stabilization and reconstruction operations. There is no clear answer for that and that, sadly, is one of the hardest lessons from Iraq.

A year ago my office put out Hard Lessons, a comprehensive review of all that has happened in the reconstruction program over the last 7 years. We had some tough stories to tell, but I think perhaps the toughest is that we simply did not have a structure in place adequate to the mission that we took on in 2003.

As you rightly pointed out in your opening statement, Mr. Chairman, this program was undertaken at great cost and, because of that lack of organization, great waste; as we pointed out before, upwards of \$4 billion in waste, wasted taxpayer dollars, the consequences of failing to properly prepare.

The issue that we have addressed this week, this hard lesson in our latest lessons learned report, Applying Iraq's Hard Lessons to the Reform of Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations, is the need for a new office to bring together the disparate elements that are scattered across the government now among several departments to plan and execute stabilization and reconstruction operations.

As we say in the opening of this report, the question of who is in charge is not clearly answered. The United States has taken steps to address this matter over the last 10 years, and we spell that out in Part 1 of the report, but those steps have not yielded a coherent response. Those steps produced a series of ad hoc organizations in Iraq, most of which no longer exist, so the accountability issue is lost.

Those responsible for that waste were parts of organizations that have ceased to be. A more permanent solution is necessary, we firmly believe, to ensure that there is accountability, for results and that there is clarity on the responsibility for planning and execution.

We have also pointed out in this report that there are 10 things that the United States could do now to improve stabilization and reconstruction operations. They best be undertaken by a new office, the U.S. Office of Contingency Operations, but those 10 straightforward, targeted reforms are still relevant today—reflective of the fact that our lessons have not been sufficiently learned to date from Iraq.

For example, there is not coherently implemented policy for stabilization and reconstruction operations (SORs) by the NSC yet, and we recommend that the NSC develop a more concrete and im-

plemented process for overseeing these important missions—missions that are not development, not diplomacy, not defense, but elements of all three; thus they are unique and fundamentally inter-agency with respect to protecting U.S. interests abroad.

There is a system in place that was adopted 3 years ago, the Interagency Management System. It is fairly complex. It has a Country Reconstruction Stabilization group that oversees these operations. It has an interagency planning cell that is supposed to help resolve conflicts and it proposes active response teams. The problem is it is not implemented. Three years down the road and it is a dead letter right now.

Other reforms include developing sensible budgets in advance, understanding what the obligations of the taxpayers are going to be in future scenarios, developing contingency contracting regulations of the kind that we repeatedly argued for, developing more effective oversight, permanent oversight that ensures that from the start of a stabilization and reconstruction operation that there is an IG presence, developing IT systems that ensure that we can track the projects we are doing.

We only know 70 percent of what we have built in Iraq because there was no system developed until our audits identified that problem and one was developed. We still haven't been able to capture all the data. That is an enormous weakness. How can you make good decisions with a 70 percent picture?

These are existing problems, well documented by our work and all supportive of our core recommendation: The need to bring together the disparate elements that now have parts of the mission of stabilization and reconstruction operations into one office, the U.S. Office for Contingency Operations (USOCO).

USOCO would capture what I think is perhaps the most revolutionary development at the Department of Defense in years, the Stabilization and Operations Branch, a huge capacity that has been developed in Iraq and applied in Afghanistan, but not well coordinated by any means, by any analysis.

The lack of coordination is obvious to those that are involved in this. I hear it on the ground at the embassy when I visit with U.S. Forces-Iraq individuals. I hear again and again the challenges in coordination at the operational level, and it is because of a lack of an integrated system.

At the Department of State, as you know, over \$100 million has been appropriated and invested in developing the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, a 5-year old organization that is now shaping a Civilian Response Corps. They have about 89 on board now, split between U.S. Agency for International Development and SCRS, about 16 on the ground in Afghanistan, three in Haiti, so it is not terribly robust, but, more importantly, it is not well integrated with the Department of Defense for operations that are fundamentally civil military operations.

U.S. Agency for International Development, Office of Transition Initiatives and also part of the Civilian Response Corps, but again another agency with part of a mission, but with no purview, with no authority, with no capacity to carry out this essential process, this essential kind of operation to protect our interests abroad.

What is the consequence, besides waste, of failing to have a coordinated planning system? The consequence is the lack of unity of command. The hundreds of people I interviewed for Hard Lessons and those that we discussed for this latest report and frankly virtually every trip—I am going on my 26th trip to Iraq in the near future, and I hear on every visit recognition that there is a lack of unity of command.

Lack of unity of command yields a lack of unity of effort exemplified, interestingly, most recently by two audits, one by my office, one jointly by the DoD and State IGs, addressing the same issue, police training. Two and a half billion, the largest contract in State Department history, in Iraq, and a contract in excess of \$1 billion in Afghanistan, reaching the same conclusion: There was a lack of capacity to oversee and properly protect taxpayer interests with regard to the training of police in Iraq and Afghanistan.

How important is that issue? General McChrystal says it is number one, so the urgency of this reform is evident I think at the ground level in these latest reports. Indeed, the State-DoD IG report said the Chief of Mission in Afghanistan thought the lack of unity of command was what was responsible for the failure of this contract.

USOCO is a new idea. Some have criticized it as perhaps a layering of bureaucracy or unnecessary. To the contrary. It is a reorganization. The government, when it is confronted with systemic problems, has responded in recent years to meaningful reform that has improved the United States approach to critical problems. The Department of Homeland Security is one example. The Director of National Intelligence is another example.

Those are new offices, but they really are ways that have brought together unity of effort, unity of command, to critical issues of national security interest. This is another perfect example that needs such reform, and those with experience on the ground in Iraq and on this issue recognize it.

General Scowcroft, perhaps the godfather of contingency operations, recognizes this issue as well as anyone on the planet and believes this is the right answer. Ambassador Ryan Crocker 2 years in Iraq lived with this issue, worked with me daily on helping set the course right, sees this as the right solution. Spike Stevens, on the ground at the beginning as Director for the U.S. Agency for International Development, sees this as a plausible approach.

So this is the product of 6 years of careful study, an issue that we identified 3 years ago that we vetted heavily on the ground, through the departments, through experts and thus firmly believe that some reform is necessary. We think this is the right reform. Though not a panacea, it is a positive step forward.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Rohrabacher, for this opportunity, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Bowen follows:]

Testimony of

Stuart W. Bowen, Jr.,  
Inspector General,

Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction

At a Hearing on

“Oversight: Hard Lessons Learned in Iraq and Benchmarks for Future Reconstruction Efforts”

Before the

Subcommittee on International Organizations, Human Rights, and Oversight  
of the

Committee on Foreign Affairs,  
United States House of Representatives

February 24, 2010

Chairman Carnahan, Ranking Member Rohrabacher, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for inviting me to appear again before this Subcommittee. Particular thanks to you, Chairman Carnahan, for taking on the important issue raised by this hearing early in your stewardship of the Subcommittee, as you succeed my friend Mr. Delahunt.

The topic of today’s hearing recognizes an important goal: the need to prevent repeating past errors of the Iraq reconstruction program in present and future stabilization and reconstruction operations (SROs). This issue is relevant to Afghanistan and future SROs; but it is also still very applicable to ongoing operations in Iraq. Up to \$9 billion dollars in new SRO money is being applied or has been requested to support the U.S. program in Iraq through 2012, this on top of the more than \$51 billion already appropriated for the mission since 2003. Adding the already-appropriated Iraq funds to those for Afghanistan pushes the total U.S. investment of taxpayer dollars in stabilization and reconstruction operations over the past eight years to in excess of \$100 billion, an unprecedented figure. Indeed, Iraq and Afghanistan are by far the two largest SROs in U.S. history.

The key issues that need to be addressed is who should be accountable for planning and executing SROs and what needs to be done to ensure that the necessary systems and resources are in place to achieve desired results. The stewardship of the Iraq program’s money was less than optimal, to put it diplomatically. Reforms are necessary to prevent future waste. Thus, the Congress should consider implementing comprehensive reform of the U.S. approach to SROs so as to provide clear responsibility for planning and execution and clear accountability for outcomes. The current system provides neither.

Six years of SIGIR oversight work has produced a body of evidence that supports the argument for reforming the U.S. approach to SROs. SIGIR just released our latest lessons-learned report addressing this issue, entitled *Applying Iraq’s Hard Lessons to the Reform of Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations*, a companion report to *Hard Lessons*, our book-length study of the Iraq reconstruction experience presented a year ago. *Applying Hard Lessons* proposes concrete solutions for this Subcommittee and the Congress to consider, solutions that could tactically

improve current operations and strategically strengthen how the United States prepares and executes future SROs.

Before I detail our reform proposals, Mr. Chairman, let me address several matters you have asked about.

You asked what are “the most effective metrics for oversight, which may include civilians trained, laws passed, voter turnout, levels of corruption and/or other indicators.” Stabilization and reconstruction operations present unique challenges. Their activities differ from the traditional development model, due to their emphasis on resolving conflict and maintaining security. Evaluating SRO outcomes and effects is inherently difficult. But evaluation of stabilization and reconstruction operations must move beyond the measurement of inputs, processes, and outputs (such as funds expended, laws passed, and soldiers trained) to the assessment of outcomes and effects on strategic objectives (such as security, governance, and economic development). SIGIR recently established a new Evaluations Directorate that will produce a series of assessment reports over the next two years, reviewing the reconstruction program in Iraq. We look forward to providing you, the Congress, and the Administration with the first of these reports later this spring.

In the area of police training, prudent practice should require all programs to be closely linked to a comprehensive Rule of Law (RoL) strategic plan. Handing out guns, building new facilities, and putting people through several weeks of basic training, outside the purview of a coherent RoL strategy, will not bring sustainable stability. This axiom militates in favor of a unified management system so that the expertise of the Department of Justice, the State Department’s International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Bureau, and Defense’s recently developed stabilization capacity are brought to bear in an integrated fashion that embraces the building of capacity in court systems, laws, prisons, and police forces. Piecemeal approaches will not solve systemic problems. Programs should be designed in a way that can achieve results within SRO environments— based on an understanding of the culture, capabilities, and capacity of the host country.

Inadequate management oversight translates into waste. In Iraq, the lack of a coherent and continuing SRO management structure contributed to the loss of billions of dollars in waste. As I have previously testified, an estimated \$4 billion in waste occurred during the Iraq program because of weak planning, repeated shifts in program direction, poor management oversight, incomplete outcomes, and an inadequate asset transfer process. SRO programs do not lend themselves to exact quantifications of waste. And it is certainly understood that, in these highly volatile situations, some waste will occur. But stronger internal controls, more integrated institutional structures, and better training could improve outcomes and reduce waste. This is why SIGIR is advocating today a new organizational structure that could provide better safeguards against waste.

SIGIR’s recent review of the Department of State’s oversight of the DynCorp International police training contract, released in late January, is a case on point. Our review of this \$2.5 billion contract, the largest yet managed by the State Department, found that State managed the contract while Defense implemented the program (because, in 2004, State happened to have a contract vehicle that could be used for the program). This produced a situation where Defense was implementing the requirements of the contract, while State was in charge of contract oversight. This bifurcation of closely linked responsibilities was the fruit of the *ad hoc*

management systems in place, which led to poor outcomes and put at risk over \$2 billion in taxpayer money. The bottom line is that no one person or entity controlled the resources, the contracts, and the requirements for Iraq police training.

Last week, the Inspectors General of State and Defense released an excellent audit reviewing the civil police training contract in Afghanistan and arriving at virtually the same conclusions as SIGIR's audit. Notably, this report found that the U.S. Chief of Mission in Afghanistan complained that "*the lack of a single, unified chain of command*" was a core problem leading to weak management oversight. Further resonant of the discontinuities in SRO management, State has agreed, in Afghanistan, to turn the entire civil police training enterprise over to Defense, while, in Iraq, the entire civil police training enterprise is now being turned over to State.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, SIGIR's new report, *Applying Hard Lessons*, provides specific recommendations addressing a core finding identified in our previous studies, a lesson especially applicable to the issue of today's hearing—that is, the need for an "executive authority below the President ... to ensure the effectiveness of contingency relief and reconstruction operations."

Our new report provides background on the reform of SROs, identifies ten targeted reforms necessary to improving the current approach to SROs, and proposes a new structural solution that could more comprehensively remedy existing weaknesses in SRO planning and management — namely, the U.S. Office for Contingency Operations (USOCO).

I firmly believe that the USOCO proposal squarely answers the question "how do we get better results from SRO dollars?" If one institution is responsible for SRO management from beginning to end, one office held accountable for results, then the likelihood of good preparation and successful outcomes will increase. There is widespread agreement on the weak integration problem; current SRO structures have led to poor coordination and weak unity of effort.

My experience as Inspector General in Iraq has led me to conclude that the lack of unity of command and its consequent effect on unity of effort have been chiefly responsible for the failure to realize our ambitious reconstruction goals. I believe that the Congress and the Administration must act to address the current SRO problem — namely, the lack of a clear point of accountability and responsibility for the preparation and execution of SROs.

No single agency now has purview over the full spectrum of civilian-military stabilization and reconstruction operations, and thus meaningful accountability is missing. Rule of Law programs are divided among Defense, State, and Justice. Governance is handled by USAID, State, and Defense. Economic development is divided among State, Commerce, USAID, Agriculture, and even DOD, which has a special program to promote economic development.

This is not to say that things have not improved at all over the past eight years. The Department of Defense has responded to the new challenges by developing a significant new policy, doctrine, and capacity, and establishing stability operations as a core military mission on par with offensive and defensive operations. Similarly, the Department of State established the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, which is now working hard to develop a civilian SRO capacity. However, despite these actions, fundamental structural problems remain in both Iraq and Afghanistan that impede success.

*Applying Iraq's Hard Lessons* suggests implementing concrete changes to the way the U.S. government conducts SROs. It provides ten recommendations for reform that could tactically improve current SRO operations:

- The National Security Council (NSC) should lead SRO doctrine and policy development
- Integrative SRO planning processes should be developed
- New SRO budgeting processes should be developed
- Federal personnel laws should be strengthened to support SROs
- SRO training should be integrated and enhanced
- Uniform contingency contracting practices should be adopted
- Permanent oversight for SROs should be created
- Uniform SRO information systems should be developed
- International organizations should be integrated into SRO planning
- Uniform geopolitical boundaries should be implemented

Notwithstanding their applicable merit, these reforms do not resolve the core management challenge inherent in the existing SRO system. USOCO could resolve those institutional weaknesses, which continues to impede current SROs. The Congress realized a similar need when examining the “whole of government” approach to domestic contingencies, creating the Federal Emergency Management Agency and centralizing planning for interdepartmental disaster relief operations. Similarly, the Congress recognized the need for a new office to provide better SRO accountability by establishing the Special Inspectors General for Iraq and Afghanistan. But this latter change was a temporary fix to a continuing problem and only related to oversight. Thus, the Congress should consider creating an office with cross-jurisdictional powers responsible for planning and executing SROs, which have missions that are part defense, part diplomacy, part development, but not exclusively any of them.

Creating USOCO could catalyze several important new dynamics: the development of a new culture of civilian-military expertise, the integrated application of best practices, and the concentration of a new capacity to tackle SROs — which have occurred about 15 times since World War II, which are ongoing in Iraq and Afghanistan, and which will certainly occur in the future.

I regularly have asked colleagues at the Embassy in Baghdad and military leaders in Iraq how interagency coordination is working. The answers have always been mixed, but usually tended to the negative. I found that important progress on coordination occurred through the excellent working relationship between Ambassador Crocker and General Petraeus. Today, that good relationship continues under Ambassador Hill and General Odierno. In addition, there have been other advances, some arising from our audit work, such as improved coordination in allocating Defense's Commander's Emergency Response Program so that it avoids conflicting with State's efforts. But below senior levels, there continue to exist bureaucratic stovepipes and duplicative efforts, resulting in wasted time and money and, more importantly, limited effectiveness of our strategies and policies.

Former National Security Advisor to two presidents Lieutenant General Brent Scowcroft stated that he believed USOCO could work. Former Ambassador to Iraq Ryan Crocker similarly observed that coordination is an extremely difficult task, and that USOCO could be the necessary

solution. Notably, General Stanley McChrystal, last August, concluded that, “We must significantly modify organizational structures to achieve better unity of effort.”

Creating USOCO would significantly modify U.S. government structures for SROs, answering the question of who is in charge of preparing for and executing stabilization and reconstruction operations. It would create a clear point of accountability for the success or failure of SROs. It would be an institution within which a core cadre of professionals could develop and refine the skills and expertise necessary for the U.S. government to plan and manage SROs effectively. And, most importantly, it would improve mission coherence, management integration, unity of command, and unity of effort. Creating USOCO would increase the likelihood of an SRO’s success, which must be the principal touchstone of any proposed SRO reform.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for your time, and I look forward to your questions.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Thank you, Mr. Bowen. Again, I think your remarks here this morning really reflect those hundreds of interviews and years of work and expertise, experience, listening, and learning on the ground from people that are trying to achieve our goals in Iraq and seeing how we can move forward in a better way. So I really appreciate you being here today, and this is very timely as we look at other operations going forward.

These reports that have been prepared I think are very instructive and your ideas are very instructive. I guess I want to start with a question about the estimated \$4-plus billion that you have indicated has been wasted in Iraq.

Can you break that down in terms of where you think that has come from and also simply how can we prevent that going forward because in an era where we have limited resources? We need to be sure the dollars that we are putting forth here are getting where they need to be. Obviously some of that is overlap, lack of coordination at best and at worst mismanagement, fraud and beyond. So give us an idea of where that is coming from.

Mr. BOWEN. Yes. I can give sort of the macro picture of why it happened and specific examples. In 2003, specifically March 2003, the vision for Iraq reconstruction was about \$2 billion. It is now 25 times that. How did we get there? A significant change in policy for which there was no structure undergirding it to implement.

That policy change occurred in the summer of 2003 that produced the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund, \$18.4 billion, and then following upon that the Commander's Emergency Response Program, \$3.5 billion spent, the Iraq Security Forces Fund, another \$18.5 billion. These numbers boggle the mind, eventually—how much we ultimately put into an effort that was anticipated to be very short and very modest.

The fact that there was no structure in place to carry out these missions meant that ad hoc structures were all created and ad hoc evolved in Iraq and a series of acronyms that people have forgotten: PCO, CPA, ERMO, ITAO, MNSTC-I. All of these are temporary agencies that have gone away, but they spent billions and they spent billions on the fly figuring out how to do it, addressing problems that were there without sufficient contingency contracting capacity, without quality assurance.

And that gets to our audits. Three hundred inspections and audits yield some important lessons of the causes of this waste. We sort of exposed, frankly, the massive drop in the U.S. Government contract capacity. For whatever reason in the 1990s, perhaps as part of the Cold War dividend and the outsourcing movement, the contracting corps at DoD was dramatically cut. The consequences of that were severely realized in Iraq because there weren't enough warranted officers there to oversee.

Second, the lack of capacity to ensure quality assurance. Quality assurance means the government makes sure contracts do what they are supposed to do. We didn't have enough people going out and visiting projects. A lot of times my inspectors would arrive at a project and we were the first Americans that the contractors had seen in a long time. That obviously is a grave weakness.

It results in things like Kahn Bani Saad Prison, \$40 million spent for a monument to failure in the desert an hour north of

Baghdad. It will never house an Iraqi prisoner I don't think because not much was accomplished. Money was poured into failure after failure because of poor oversight, just one example of projects that simply did not get completed.

The other significant waste areas included asset transfer, projects that didn't get finished but we declared concluded and just unilaterally handed over to the Iraqis. It happened hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of times where they refused to accept it and so the Corps of Engineers would just sign a unilateral transfer, hand it to them and that is it. It is a project again not accomplishing anything.

These various elements, the macro weaknesses, the failure to have a system in place of the kind I have discussed in my opening statement, the fact that an ad hococracy of now nonexistent agencies spent billions, 50 times more than expected, and the fact that the oversight on the ground and the aptitude, the expertise, was not present to ensure that projects got done and that money was properly spent yielded this waste.

We are here today with really that hardest lesson before us on the table essentially saying never again, and never again means preventing it from happening, which means improving how the United States tackles planning and executing these kinds of operations.

Mr. CARNAHAN. It is not only a hard lesson, but a colossally expensive lesson.

Mr. BOWEN. Yes.

Mr. CARNAHAN. The problem with throwing so much money at a problem and to so many entities that are now gone—

Mr. BOWEN. Yes.

Mr. CARNAHAN [continuing]. Seems to me very difficult, and we may never figure out where some of that money went.

Mr. BOWEN. That is exactly right.

Mr. CARNAHAN. I guess my next question has to do with really quantitative and qualitative metrics that can be used in determining today progress in Iraq.

I mean, obviously there is the look back in terms of what went wrong with some of the money and lack of systems and coordination. But going forward, what are some of the measurements that we can use in terms of number of civilians trained, police trained, election reforms, economic development statistics? Where are we in terms of that snapshot to measure progress?

Mr. BOWEN. Great question, and we are going to provide snapshots of that to you over the next year. I have established an Evaluations Branch, an element of oversight that is critical to answering exactly the question you are raising.

What are the results? Ultimately that is the core question of any stabilization and reconstruction operation. What did you achieve? What difference did you make? And that, I assure you, we will provide you over the next 12–18 months. We are going to produce our first report later this spring that assesses the various evaluative reports that have already been accomplished.

So what do we know now? I think that is the first question, and then we are going to get into some evaluative studies of infrastructure projects. What were the outcomes, the results of all that

money spent on hard infrastructure? You know, I have told you the bad news, but what potential good news is there from it?

We know from our quarterly reports that electricity is and has been now for 1½ years above pre-war levels, so there is outcome evidence of progress there, but I need to tell you how did our investment achieve that? That is the question you are asking.

And then the next report after that will be looking at ministry capacity development, an important matter that has been focused on heavily the last 3 years under the State Department's aegis, and it is certainly a laudable goal. What results have we achieved? That is what we will be getting to. I think it is time now to make these evaluations and to provide the Congress with concrete evidence of what was accomplished.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Thank you. I am now going to turn it over to the ranking member, Mr. Rohrabacher.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and thank you again, Mr. Bowen, for your long and very dedicated service to our country.

Mr. BOWEN. Thank you.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. The things we are talking about are of great significance to so many people. I mean, we have to realize that thousands of lives have been lost, American lives have been lost, and there are people who will never have a father in their lives because their father is dead in Iraq now and wives who will never have a husband for the rest of their lives.

I grew up in a military family and I know about those sacrifices, so it is our job to make sure that at the very least we try to be as effective as we can if we are going to be involved in these kind of operations, and I would suggest the very first reform that needs to take place is for us to be aware that we are making these decisions and how significant it is to the thousands of our fellow citizens that we will not go into situations.

I don't think there are many of us who supported the call that we were called upon by President Bush to support this invasion of Iraq. I don't think there are many of us who would in retrospect have gone along with that had we known the price that was being paid for what we have gotten out of it and what the world has gotten out of this.

Let me just note that World War II, if I remember—what was that book? Catch-22. When you look at World War II and you take a look at what really happened if you look down at that level, there was an enormous amount of corruption. An enormous amount of corruption.

And in Vietnam—I just have to say I spent a little time in Vietnam in 1967 when I was 19, and while I was not a soldier I was out with the Montagnards and various places in Vietnam, but I was totally dismayed after I left knowing that the level of corruption that I thought indicated to me that we would never be able to win and all the lives and all the gore that was going on was going to be for nothing, and that is how it turned out, of course.

So here we are now again, and Vietnam had a horrible impact on our country economically, as well as every other way. Let us hope that what is happening now in Iraq and Afghanistan do not leave America in that same retreatist mindset that plagued us

after Vietnam. That did not do well for our country and I think brought on some of the problems we face today.

But World War II and Vietnam were noble causes, even though the corruption level in both of those were things that led us to perhaps not succeed as we should have succeeded, or in the case of World War II we lost 300,000 people there and it was a very costly war and perhaps we could have had some idea of how to prevent it from the beginning by standing up to Hitler. Who knows.

Let us get back to some of the basic points you are making. I like that ad hoc racy. That was an excellent way to put it because what you are saying is we just weren't prepared for how to handle this part of the conflict. In order to be successful, that part had to be handled and it wasn't.

Is it true that billions of dollars were handed out from the Central Bank of Iraq? Once we captured Iraq that there were billions of dollars there that American military personnel then utilized right off the bat to make sure that things didn't totally collapse and it was just basically handed out? That wasn't our money. That was Saddam Hussein's stash.

Mr. BOWEN. You are right. Those were called seized funds, and that is how the Commander's Emergency Response Program begin, speaking of ad hoc developments.

You put your finger exactly on one of the most significant things that, ironically, has turned into a new institutionalized program within DoD that has accomplished thousands and thousands of projects funded at \$3.5 billion now in Iraq by the Congress.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. This is fascinating. This might even be a little bit higher than micro loans you might say directly to the people there.

Mr. BOWEN. Well, and you put your finger on another important point that the program expanded beyond its regulatory limits and has had to be reined in by the Congress and that it was supposed to be for small projects, \$50,000 to \$500,000 at the top.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Right.

Mr. BOWEN. And now in order for a \$1 million project to go forward the Secretary of Defense has to sign off.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. The Office of Contingency Operations that you are suggesting. Would this help in problems like that?

Mr. BOWEN. Yes, because it would provide clarity where there is only ambiguity now. It would provide coherence where there is only diffusion now. It would provide organization where we have disorganization.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Okay. Let me challenge this for you here. So you are making that as a suggestion. You have told us, for example, that you have a Civilian Response Corps, which is in place.

Mr. BOWEN. Yes.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. What is the budget again for that?

Mr. BOWEN. They have received about \$130 million—

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Okay.

Mr. BOWEN [continuing]. To date with more coming.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Okay. Civilian Response Corps, \$130 million, yet we only have 16 people in Afghanistan and three in Haiti.

Mr. BOWEN. Yes.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. And \$130 million doesn't sound like a very effective use of money. If our highest priorities are Haiti and Afghanistan, would what you are suggesting, would that make this operation more efficient?

Mr. BOWEN. Yes. USOCO would coordinate or integrate this operation with everything else that is going on in government. Indeed, the Civilian Response Corps you are referring to itself is bifurcated between the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Department of State so that the program itself is suffering from a lack of integration.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. And the \$2.5 billion in police training that we are talking about. Now, are you telling us today that that \$2.5 billion expenditure for police training in Iraq has been a failure?

Mr. BOWEN. No. We are carrying out an audit of the executing of the contract. Our review was of the management of the contract; in other words, contract oversight.

Were invoices getting reviewed? No, they weren't. Does that create a huge weakness and vulnerability to fraud and waste? Yes. And those are the findings of our audit and also the audit of Afghanistan.

This is another example of the lack of unity of command. It was DoD money going through a state contract then back to DoD to execute. That sort of division of duties would be solved by USOCO.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. When I was 19 years old I was trying to find out the dynamics of how we were going to win the war in Vietnam politically at that level, and I was taken by some people about a hundred miles north of Saigon, some doctors, American doctors who were trying to win the hearts and souls of the people there—that was our idea, hearts and minds—by setting up clinics and helping them.

When we went to these clinics it was a horrible mess. It is unbelievable the stench and the fact that everything had been looted frankly. It had been looted, and these doctors were just—here they were dealing with young Americans, people from my area who I remember this surfer who was shot and it was really horrible.

They were crying. They were just crying to me. What are we going to do? This is a \$1 million investment here and look at it. It is nothing. The problem was, of course, we were sending aid into that area via the Vietnamese, who were our allies, and they were stealing everything.

Now, where do we do this? This board that you are talking about. Is it going to be responsible? Are you suggesting as you are over-viewing what we have done in Iraq and in the past, should we be channeling it directly in to local people or should we have direct control over every expenditure?

If we have direct control over every expenditure, do we then not leave ourselves in a situation that we are assuming work that we would like the people on the ground to be doing for themselves?

Mr. BOWEN. Well, it shouldn't be exclusively either approach. It is conditions-based, and that is essential for effective oversight.

You have to have controls in place that ensure that there is sufficient oversight of the money that is going forward, but again it is conditions-based. If you know that those with whom you are dealing are rife with corruption then that is a signal for more controls.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Okay. Let me give you specifically in Iraq a case I know about. They wanted to build schools for the kids of Iraq. They needed school desks. There was a company that happens to be in my district—I know about this; that is one of the reasons I know about this specifically—that builds school desks and wanted to send these desks over, okay? They want to do that now for Haiti. Their school desks are superior. They will last forever. No matter what happens, they last for 20 years.

They couldn't get the contract, Mr. Chairman, to provide the school desks because they wanted to make sure that the local people had the contract to build the school desks, but all the school desks that were being built there in Iraq—I saw examples of it—fell apart after a few weeks. It looked good for about a week and then they all fell apart, so a wasted expenditure.

What do we do? Are we going to give the money to some company here to build the school desks and send it there or does our aid program focus on building enterprise in the country?

Mr. BOWEN. Well, I think both aspects have to figure in to a stabilization and reconstruction operation. It should be neither one nor the other exclusively.

I think that certainly there have been and we have documented many, many failures by Iraqi contractors. At the same time they have improved, partly because we have gradually empowered them. The Joint Contracting Command Iraq implemented about 3½ years ago, something called Iraqi First, and that is where I think this is coming from. In other words, preference to Iraqi contractors on continuing projects.

That was difficult at first for reasons you are alluding to, but I think that the contractors have improved over time, so building capacity through contracting has certainly been part of our mission.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Just one last thought, and that is if we are to succeed we must have Americans who take this job very seriously, as we need to take our job of oversight seriously. You, sir, have taken your job seriously.

There is not just an easy answer to any of the questions that I asked, but the real answer is making sure that we have people with good hearts who are diligent and responsible trying to make sure these programs succeed with the best judgment they can put forth. So thank you very much, and thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Next I am going to recognize Judge Poe from Texas.

Mr. POE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate you being here. Setting up a new agency, Office for Contingency Operations. How much is that going to cost? How much is it going to cost to set up this agency?

Mr. BOWEN. That would be determined by the scope of it, but it would take the existing money that is out there now, and there is significant money for stabilization and reconstruction operations that is spread at S/CRS costing \$140 million, at DoD hundreds of millions being spent on stabilization operations there, as well as money at AID and other agencies.

And so as a practical matter, while there is an incremental cost, this would be a cost saver over time because right now, as I point-

ed out, these responsibilities are not clearly allocated. They are dif-fused among the agencies, and there is not a clear point of account-ability, which is about saving money, or clear point of responsi-bility, which is about effective execution, in the current system.

Instead it is stovepiped, to use the term of art, within the agen-cies and that leads to waste. Frankly, the waste that occurred in Iraq, billions of dollars in waste, was symptomatic of not having an established structure. Indeed, the leadership that I interviewed for Hard Lessons, our report on what happened in Iraq, reiterated this point over and over again. They were shocked that there wasn't a structure.

Mr. POE. Excuse me. Excuse me, Mr. Bowen.

Mr. BOWEN. Sure.

Mr. POE. Do you see this agency being permanent?

Mr. BOWEN. Yes.

Mr. POE. Eventually in our lifetime we will leave Iraq probably.

Mr. BOWEN. Yes.

Mr. POE. But do you see this agency staying around for other type situations like this?

Mr. BOWEN. Yes. Yes, sir, because this is not about Iraq only, and certainly I think its effect would be well beyond Iraq. It could help Afghanistan, but it is about preparing for stabilization and re-construction operations in the future.

This is a relatively new kind of operation. In the last 30 years we have had about 15. The two largest are Afghanistan and Iraq, but we had several in the 1990s. Indeed, President Clinton issued Presidential Directive 56 to try and get some control of the kind we are talking about today around these kinds of operations.

It didn't succeed, and as a result over the last 8 years in Iraq and Afghanistan through Presidential directives and other direc-tives we have had to create more temporary agencies to try and tackle the problem. That resulted in waste.

Those temporary agencies are gone. There is no accountability. Creating an entity that plans for these before they begin, that takes a look at the 10 reforms we talk about in the report like ensur-ing there is a policy. As a matter of fact, the Interagency Man-agement System, the policy that is in place 3 years now, is a dead letter. It has never been implemented, and that is just another ele-ment of weak integration. We have to go beyond coordination to in-tegration, beyond temporary execution to permanent accountability to avoid waste.

Mr. POE. You say that \$4 billion approximately, 10 percent—I be-lieve that is 10 percent—of our funding of Iraq has been unac-counted for, wasted. Do we know where that \$8 billion went?

Mr. BOWEN. The \$4 billion?

Mr. POE. Excuse me. I am sorry.

Mr. BOWEN. Yes.

Mr. POE. The 10 percent.

Mr. BOWEN. Yes.

Mr. POE. The \$4 billion that you mentioned. I am sorry.

Mr. BOWEN. We do. We have done 300 audits and inspections, and we have looked at the causes of it. There are macro causes and there are micro examples. As I alluded to earlier, the reality is this was a situation in 2003 that expected to spend \$2 billion.

March 10 the decision was made for a very narrow program. The first Iraq Relief Reconstruction Fund was about \$2 billion, a very limited infrastructure program. It is now \$52 billion, and that is because in May and June of that year it went to \$18.5 billion additional, as well as—

Mr. POE. Excuse me, Mr. Bowen. My time is limited. Cut to the chase.

Mr. BOWEN. Yes.

Mr. POE. Did the bad guys get any of this money? Did al-Qaeda get some of this money? Is it possible? Do we know?

Mr. BOWEN. It is possible. It is possible. Indeed, we did an audit in 2006, to cut to the chase on this point about lack of accountability over weapons. As a matter of fact, it was the first review. I think you remember that one. It was 14,000 missing Glocks.

But more importantly, that audit pointed out that the Multi-National Security Transition Command wasn't doing serial number tracking of weapons it was distributing. It began after that audit came out, but what happened before? We found part of the issue, but the troubling points you are making is evident and supported by that.

Mr. POE. All right. Thank you very much. Well timed.

Mr. BOWEN. Thank you.

Mr. POE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. BOWEN. Thank you, Judge Poe.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Thank you, Judge. Mr. Bowen, I wanted to get back and ask a few other questions here and in particular talk about your reference to Secretary Gates and that he observed earlier "contracting in Iraq was done willy-nilly."

Mr. BOWEN. Yes.

Mr. CARNAHAN. What can be done to institutionalize these contracting procedures in this ad hococracy that just seems to have no standards whatsoever? Later, I want to get to the whole matter of the police contracts that you have talked about, but talk to me about the sort of overall system going forward.

Mr. BOWEN. It is a critical area for needed reform right now. Some steps have been taken by the Department of Defense, significant steps, since the issuance of the Gansler Commission report which identified huge weaknesses in Army contracting capacity.

But still we don't have a coherent system of agreed upon approaches, contracting approaches, principles, regulations for stabilization and reconstruction operations. We first identified this 4 years ago in our contracting lessons learned report that there needs to be some coherence and simplification of the approach to contracting. We reiterated it in Hard Lessons a year ago, and we reiterated it again in Applying Hard Lessons this week. What it means is achieving efficiencies in how the United States goes about contracting.

Right now there are several versions of the Federal Acquisition Regulation, the regulation covering contracting in Iraq and Afghanistan operatives on the ground, and they each have their own permutations and they make complex in a conflict situation what must be simple, so as to ensure that policies that happen at a much faster pace are effectively executed.

As a matter of fact, at the Wartime Contracting Commission hearing on Monday it was mentioned that a contract protest under existing regulations was potentially impeding critical military progress for 6 to 9 months. That is exactly the kind of legal reform that should be addressed by meaningful contracting improvements that are there to be executed, in my opinion, for stabilization and reconstruction operations.

Mr. CARNAHAN. I want to move on to talk about the issue of the police training. When I traveled to Iraq back in early 2005. I had a tour of a police training facility and there was much fanfare about this as one of the highest priorities for success in the country and substantial funding had been provided to it, and there were glowing numbers about how quickly they were going to get the numbers of police trained up to where they needed to be. You know, even today, as you mentioned, General McChrystal is saying that one of the number one priorities is to get our police trained.

You know, between 2005 and now we haven't seen anywhere near the progress that we need to have seen, and I guess with the planned withdrawal of United States troops from Iraq by December 31, 2011, what challenges do you foresee? I guess my first question, what challenges in terms of the transition and responsibility from the military to State, and do you believe State will be able to successfully take over that training program in October 2011?

Mr. BOWEN. First of all, a great question, because I think it is the critical issue to ensure improved security in Iraq going forward. We are going to go down to 50,000 troops in 4 months, so that is going to obviously mean that the Iraqis have to shoulder the complete security burden moving forward.

We have trained hundreds of thousand of police and equipped them over the last 5 years, and we are doing an audit now to provide you the particulars of how the military executed the police training contract. That will be out later this year.

But the transition issue I think that is paramount is the fact that the contract and the management of the contract that we criticized in this most recent audit, the DynCorp contract, is up for bid right now in Iraq. No surprise, DynCorp is one of the bidders for that, and I think it is a contract that has to be managed by the State Department.

The core of our criticism was the lack of in-country oversight, the failure to review invoices, the questions raised about the vulnerability to fraud and waste regarding billions of taxpayer dollars. Those weaknesses have not been remedied yet.

Now, Deputy Secretary Lew, when I met with him on this a month ago, assured me that he is going to take a personal interest and ensure that there is adequate oversight, but that promise needs to be fulfilled and thus here is the issue, the number one issue: Ensuring contract management of this continually very expensive oversight package for Iraq.

Mr. CARNAHAN. So the question of this transition. How do you see that happening?

Mr. BOWEN. Well, I have visited with the State Department individual in charge of management. It is going to be radical reform I think of the approach simply because of the limited assets the State Department has vis-à-vis the Department of Defense and so

it is going to move, as he described it, up to 30,000 feet from 5,000 feet.

It is going to be about macro improvements to ministry capacity, and there will be a reduction in staffing. There will not be the individual police training at the level that is going on now.

Mr. CARNAHAN. And to the specific contract, you indicated we have put \$2.5 billion into police training? That is correct?

Mr. BOWEN. Yes, sir.

Mr. CARNAHAN. And that this is the largest single contract—

Mr. BOWEN. Yes.

Mr. CARNAHAN [continuing]. In all of the Iraq reconstruction?

Mr. BOWEN. In the State Department.

Mr. CARNAHAN. In State.

Mr. BOWEN. The State Department has ever managed.

Mr. CARNAHAN. In State Department history?

Mr. BOWEN. Yes.

Mr. CARNAHAN. And how many U.S. Government officials were overseeing this contract?

Mr. BOWEN. In-country officer representatives? Three. This is the tough story here, Chairman Carnahan. We looked at this 4 years ago, and the problem we identified 4 years ago was lack of contract management raised in our first audit issued in the first month of 2007.

Then we got into the whole contract and found that it was inauditable and so we issued a review in October saying the State Department asked for 3–5 years to get their records in order because it was a mess. Then we went in in 2008 to see if there were remedial measures, and there were, but then we go in last summer and find the same problem: Three people in-country overseeing a contract that is spending hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars.

And more disturbing, the lack of clarity about who was supposed to do what. The in-country contracting officer representatives my officers interviewed said well, invoice accountability is being done back in Washington. We went back to Washington and asked them. They said it is being done in Iraq. A huge vulnerability.

Mr. CARNAHAN. And with regard to the contractor, DynCorp, describe how that contract was initially awarded.

Mr. BOWEN. It was an existing contract that was held by the State Department that was used—I don't have the specific facts of the bidding process, but it was in existence in 2004 and used to apply to this program at the level of \$2.5 billion.

Again, as I said, it was DoD money that went into it so I think DoD was looking for a vehicle that it could use to spend this money and it did so. I think there are some questions about that process, but it certainly shows how bifurcated or disjointed both the source of the money, the contract management of the money and then the execution of the contract, all different places. It shows I think just the lack of clarity in stabilization and reconstruction contracting.

Mr. CARNAHAN. And in your reviews, to what extent can you account for how that money has been spent?

Mr. BOWEN. As I said, we are looking at the execution of it now. My auditors in Iraq are today reviewing that matter and the outcomes, which are an important question for you, we will answer later this year.

Mr. CARNAHAN. And you expect that report out when?

Mr. BOWEN. By July. No later than July.

Mr. CARNAHAN. I am going to yield to Judge Poe.

Mr. POE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have just one question. Which of our Government agencies in your opinion was the most irresponsible about money? DoD? State Department? USAID?

Mr. BOWEN. I think that the State Department did not carry out its contract oversight responsibilities sufficiently enough, and this particular contract we are discussing is the most egregious example of that. The disturbing point is it hasn't remediated that weakness sufficiently today.

Mr. POE. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Thank you, Judge Poe. Yes. I don't know anything about police training, but if I had a \$2.5 billion contract, I think I could figure out a way to train police. I mean, that is outrageous.

Mr. BOWEN. Yes, sir.

Mr. CARNAHAN. I guess continuing on with some of my questions about the oversight role, can you address the quality of oversight and effectiveness of Inspector Generals connected with international organizations such as U.N. or NATO? That is my first question, and then the other is, what oversight role has the Iraqi Government itself has played in these reviews?

Mr. BOWEN. I can't address to what extent the U.N. or international organizations are doing oversight, but I haven't seen any evidence in Iraq of any such oversight. I have engaged very regularly since the beginning of my work in-country in February 2004 with the oversight entities in Iraq. That includes the Inspector Generals—that we created, by the way.

The Coalition Provisional Authority issued an order and established that system, and also the Commission on Integrity, formerly the Commission on Public Integrity, that we created in Iraq, somewhat parallel to the FBI and finally there is the existing Board of Supreme Audit, which has been in Iraq for many, many decades.

I think the Board of Supreme Audit is the most reliable of those three and has issued some important audits, and we have in fact done some work with them in carrying out oversight of certain projects. Dr. Abdul Basit, its head, I meet with every trip. I will see him soon, in the next couple of weeks. I have confidence that he is a man of integrity and that he has done his best in a situation that he acknowledges to me is rife with corruption.

Indeed, that is not really a point very much in dispute any more when I meet with Iraqi officials. The Minister of Finance, Bayan Jabr, who I met with two trips ago or last trip, said it is outrageous corruption. It is everywhere present, and he doesn't know what to do about it except privatize was his suggestion.

Others have said—Ali Baban, the Minister of Planning says—it is worse than ever. The Chief Justice of their Supreme Court says it is an out of control problem. Obviously those statements indicate to me that the progress or success of the oversight entities in Iraq, in the Iraqi Government, is very limited.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Next. This is an unusual way to ask a question, but I tweeted the news about today's hearing yesterday and asked anyone interested to send some questions. We got several, but I

picked out one that I thought was particularly good from a Michael Grady.

His question was, "Is there any accounting for private contractors' effectiveness in nation building in Iraq? Are we getting our money's worth?" Mr. Bowen, how would you answer this question for Michael?

Mr. BOWEN. That is a great question and a huge question because a study a couple years ago found that there were over 180,000 private contractors in Iraq carrying out virtually every conceivable kind of task in-country and so it is difficult I think to make, A, a judgment about the success of any particular area or, B, to get our arms around the scope of expense and the return, so to speak, on that investment.

What is clear is that the Iraqi and Afghanistan stabilization and reconstruction operations have used private contractors in an unprecedented fashion and the cost has been at historic highs. Have we managed them well? I think the answer is generally no.

Why? Because there wasn't adequate preparation, planning, structure, oversight in place before these operations began to ensure that there were clear regulatory limits and oversight of an army of contractors bigger than our Army in-country, and that is something that USOCO would squarely address.

Mr. CARNAHAN. And really, I guess it was a function of our lack of civil capacity that we basically had to go buy it and threw a lot of money at it—

Mr. BOWEN. Yes.

Mr. CARNAHAN [continuing]. And did not have the structure in place to create it or to properly oversee it and have accountability.

Mr. BOWEN. That is correct. That is correct, and the security problem aggravated every aspect of that. I think an example is you say it is presence. They have a relatively small footprint of government employees, about 35, and then they have thousands of contractors that are carrying out their programs.

Mr. CARNAHAN. And of those 100,000 contractors in Iraq, can you describe—are those mostly U.S. contractors? Local contractors? Describe sort of the variety of things that they are doing.

Mr. BOWEN. I think they are predominantly non-U.S. contractors as far as nationality goes, and they are carrying out everything from supporting food, fuel, and billeting to the troops in the field under the LOGCAP contract, to helping build local capacity in provincial governments, to building schools and health clinics.

Mr. CARNAHAN. One of the things that you have very, I think, eloquently described is this problem with the silos of effort out there, and your proposal for the U.S. Office of Contingency Operations I think is a great way to begin this conversation, how to really break down those walls, but also to prevent overlap: Waste that is created by people being stuck in those silos and not coordinating that effort so we can get a better bang for our buck here.

Mr. BOWEN. Yes.

Mr. CARNAHAN. And I guess I really wanted to get you to talk about how you see those elements from Defense, State, and USAID coming together in a more functional way; in a practical way on the ground for delivering what we are trying to achieve.

Mr. BOWEN. The functional execution is the key. Right now the responsibilities are diffused with limited coordination, frankly, and that is what I am told. Even today in Iraq when I talk to embassy personnel, USF-I personnel, there is good coordination at the senior, very senior levels, but in executing programs it is much more limited.

That is not a new problem, and it is not a problem of lack of resources and it is not a problem of lack of leadership. It is a problem of institutional structure or inadequate structure in place.

And so what USOCO would do would be before you even begin a stabilization and reconstruction outreach—this isn't an issue that should be taken on in-country. This ought to be worked out ahead of time—the staffing, the contracting, the funding, the oversight, the information systems.

These are matters that touch all of these agencies, but they ought not to be independently managed when it is a single mission and therefore this proposal would integrate. I think the word is integration versus coordination. We need to move beyond coordination to integration to execution, of planning and execution of stabilization and reconstruction operations.

Mr. CARNAHAN. I guess beyond your proposal I would like you to talk about other alternative ideas that get to this issue. Talk to me about some of those alternative ideas that are out there and why you think your proposal is the best way to address these issues.

Mr. BOWEN. Well, we proposed some alternatives, the targeted reforms in our report; in other words, ensuring that the NSC executes and implements a set of stabilization and reconstruction operation policies and procedures. It doesn't appear that the Inter-agency Management System is the one since it is not being used, so reconvene and redevelop and implement.

There would be ways to develop and independent Inspector General oversight that could be standing and ensure that there is, from the start of an SRO, oversight. I think one of the challenges in Iraq is my office was developed 8 months, 9 months after the operation began and we didn't get on the ground until 3 months before the CPA went out of business, so a lot of financial water under the bridge, waste under the bridge by that point. It ought to be there from the start.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Actually, if you could yield, that gets to another point I had that your operation, being there pretty much from the beginning, has saved millions of dollars by identifying these issues. Many people have been held accountable for mismanagement and fraud, but by contrast no IG was created for Afghanistan until early 2008. How do we be sure that those kinds of things are again part of the structure of ongoing operations?

Mr. BOWEN. Well, USOCO would do that. I mean, creating USOCO would. Obviously because it impinges upon this existing turf it draws natural resistance. Absent creating an integrated office that plans, resources and executes and is held accountable—I think that is the other thing. The job here, after an SRO you would have the USOCO Director sitting here and you would be holding him or her accountable for the outcomes.

Who do you call now? Is State in charge? No. Is AID in charge? No. Is DoD in charge? No. I mean, you have to fill this table up

and try and discern what is missing between the various gaps and do gap filling.

Mr. CARNAHAN. They are all in charge, and nobody is in charge.

Mr. BOWEN. If everyone is in charge, no one is in charge. You are exactly right. And so that is the core issue.

We talk about it in our report, *Applying Hard Lessons*, the lead agency dilemma. We quote an NSC official saying exactly that. When you have a lead agency you only have one agency because it imbues upon the process its own culture, structure and biases.

USOCO would be free from those particular institutional biases while drawing significantly upon the capacities of those respective agencies. NSC gives the policy. DoD has capacity. State, AID and the other agencies have expertise. What is filling the middle? Nothing right now. It is still diffused in the stovepipes. USOCO would fill that vacant space.

Mr. CARNAHAN. I guess I want to wrap up with maybe a historical perspective that I wanted to ask you about because you have identified—you actually have a table in your February report that lists the U.S. assistance for stability and reconstruction operations from Iraq, Germany, Afghanistan, Japan, Bosnia, Kosovo, Dominican Republic, Panama, Haiti, Lebanon, Somalia, Grenada, Cambodia.

Are there common themes in all these operations that you have identified to help you make the conclusions that you have?

Mr. BOWEN. I think the most common theme from these operations is we haven't applied our lessons from them to the next operation. Each one is *sui generis*. Each one evolves on its own without a sufficient structure in place because there is no structure in place to carry it out. They begin. They are carried out. They are over. They are forgotten. Their lessons aren't applied.

There were lessons I believe from Bosnia and Kosovo, certainly those who have lived them. General Nash, who worked with us on our lessons learned report, said hey, I did the lessons learned report and you are repeating a lot of what I have found in Bosnia.

That is one of the reasons we pursued this entire lessons learned initiative to help apply lessons learned. A lesson learned that is not applied is a lesson lost, and that certainly is the commonality of the previous stabilization and reconstruction operations.

Mr. CARNAHAN. It seems to be lessons learned reports that we are not learning from.

Mr. BOWEN. Not sufficiently. That is clear.

Mr. CARNAHAN. I am going to yield to my colleague, Mr. Delahunt from Massachusetts. I am so glad that he could join us, particularly for this first hearing that I have had with the subcommittee.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. You were an outstanding vice chairman, and you will I am sure more than adequately fill the shoes of the individual who preceded you in that capacity.

And I want to say this. I think this is such an appropriate topic for the first hearing under your leadership because what is being discussed here really is the core responsibility of the Congress, which is to oversee the effectiveness of the Executive Branch, and to take that information that we glean and put forth recommenda-

tions and proposals that make sense, that enhance the security of the country, that avoid waste and at some point in time are acknowledged for their value and for their worth.

There has been in my judgment far too long where that role has been abdicated by Congress, and I want to say this: Mr. Rohrabacher, who continues to serve as ranking member, during my tenure in the chair was a terrific ally, and I know he will do well working with you to make oversight a truly bipartisan effort.

We hear a lot about partisanship and bipartisanship and the lack thereof, but this committee—and I know at times it was difficult—really took a hard look at what went wrong in Iraq and what has gone wrong, but Dana Rohrabacher was there despite the fact that during much of that time or really during all that time it was a Republican administration.

I really want to acknowledge the great work of Stuart Bowen, who I understand is also a member of the Republican Party, but nobody in government could ask for anyone to better handle this particularly sensitive role in such a nonpartisan fashion. He just simply called them as he saw them. It was tough. I mean, what a colossal waste.

I can remember reading the reports in the newspapers. Nine billion dollars was somehow lost. Nine billion. We forget about that now. Nine billions that was lost by the CPA, Coalition Provisional Authority, was in fact I think some five times as much as Saddam Hussein stole from the Oil-for-Food Program that was administered by the United Nations.

In any event, I want to say to Mr. Bowen and to his outstanding team that these lessons that were so painfully learned in Iraq as far as future contingency planning are so important. You know, I am very impressed with your proposal to create a new Office for Contingency Operations. I hear the criticism that this is another layer of bureaucracy.

I don't believe it is, but if this question hasn't been addressed, Stu, I would like you to take it because I am absolutely confident that if this function that this office has created, that the savings—simply the cost—to the American taxpayer are going to be phenomenal. Put aside the fact that the United States will be fully prepared for crises that continue to plague the globe. Mr. Bowen?

Mr. BOWEN. Thank you, Mr. Delahunt. A question very applicable to whether to create USOCO is, is it a new agency that simply adds to what exists or is it a meaningful reform that improves the efficiencies of how we approach stabilization and reconstruction operations? The answer is it is the latter.

The United States has shown a remarkable willingness, a proper disposition to address challenges in the National Security arena within the structure of government, challenges of weak integration by implementing reforms. Creating the Department of Homeland Security is one example. Creating the Director of National Intelligence is another, both in reaction to the challenges experienced over the last decade regarding these important issues.

This is another one. This is a unique one, though. This isn't defense. This isn't development. This isn't diplomacy, which is why it shouldn't be assigned to DoD or State or AID exclusively, but it

needs to find one place because if you assign it to all of them, as we were talking about, no one is in charge.

So there has to be a place where we can bring all of these elements together that will ensure that we don't repeat the ad hococracy, that we don't improve with temporary agencies whose acronyms we have forgotten, that we don't answer into significant stabilization and reconstruction operations and have to figure out what the contracting regs are. What is the IT system? Who should staff it? What is the oversight? All matters that were picked up on the fly in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The lesson learned, the hardest lesson from Iraq and certainly I think Afghanistan—Richard Holbrooke said in December \$39 billion; we are starting from scratch because it was uncoordinated—is that no structure was in place to carry this out. There were no plans in place to execute it. There were no systems ready to deploy that could ensure that taxpayer dollar are protected. Billions were lost as a result.

Three hundred audits and inspections later don't paint a pretty picture. Some successes, sure, developed over time as we learned our lesson, but why do we have to learn the hard way when we can learn now the hardest lesson from Iraq and I think Afghanistan, and that is the need to concentrate, integrate planning, preparation, resources, capacity in one place where you have that accountability.

You know who to call. You don't have to call five or six agencies and say well, what was your role in this breakdown. You have one person to call and to find out, A, whether you are prepared—I guess that is the most important question—for the next one, but then, B, explain the outcomes.

So it is not only not a layering of bureaucracy. It is an efficiency that perfectly fits within how the United States Government has responded to crises in national security areas, reforming government to strengthen our capacity to protect our interests. That is very squarely what this is, but it also has a huge fiscal component. It will save money.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Thank you, Mr. Bowen. Mr. Chairman, I have to excuse myself. The Russians are coming. They have arrived. Since I now chair the Subcommittee on Europe I have to meet with our colleagues from the Russian Duma, but thank you again for your service.

Mr. BOWEN. Thank you, Mr. Delahunt.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Thank you, Mr. Delahunt, and again congratulations on your new chairmanship of the Europe Subcommittee and for your continued service on this subcommittee.

You know, I was pleased that Mr. Delahunt mentioned this committee working together in a bipartisan way and the spirit in which Mr. Rohrabacher has been engaged here and really look forward to that continuing. These issues are ones that should bring people together in a very focused way.

You know, I often think about the history of our favorite son, Harry Truman, when he chaired that famous Truman Commission during his time in the Senate. He described it as one of the most bipartisan and patriotic committees in the Congress at that time.

It was a democratically controlled Congress and a Democratic administration, but they were going after waste, fraud and abuse in a way that respected the taxpayers' dollars, but also was focused on the mission supporting the troops, and results, and holding those contractors that were gaming the system accountable.

So there are some great parallels in history here, but we do have to learn. We just can't keep doing reports about how we should learn. We actually need to learn. So this is very helpful, and I think there are opportunities to have less waste, more savings, better results and for people in this Congress to really work together.

I don't know if you have invented the term of ad hococracy, but if you did I think it is a great invention and it is a great way to describe this problem. But you have also laid out some ways to really move forward better, stronger, and smarter, for us to get where we need to go in these stability and reconstruction operations.

So thank you for your service. We look forward to continuing to work with you, and I think you have provided some very valuable tools for policymakers to take up going forward, so thank you.

Mr. BOWEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CARNAHAN. All right.

[Whereupon, at 11:07 a.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]



# A P P E N D I X



MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING RECORD

## **SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING NOTICE**

**COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

### **Subcommittee on International Organizations, Human Rights and Oversight**

Russ Carnahan (D-MO), Chairman

**February 17, 2010**

**TO: MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

You are respectfully requested to attend the following **OPEN** hearing of the Subcommittee on International Organizations, Human Rights and Oversight to be held in **Room 2172 of the Rayburn House Office Building**:

**DATE:** Wednesday, February 24, 2010

**TIME:** 9:30 a.m.

**SUBJECT:** Oversight: Hard Lessons Learned in Iraq and Benchmarks for Future Reconstruction Efforts

**WITNESS:** Mr. Stuart W. Bowen, Jr.  
Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction  
Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction

**By Direction of the Chairman**

The Committee on Foreign Affairs seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations please call 202-225-5021 at least four business days in advance of the event, whenever practicable. Questions with regard to special accommodations in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats and assistive listening devices) may be directed to the Committee as noted above.

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### COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

MINUTES OF SUBCOMMITTEE ON IOHRO MEETING

Day Wednesday Date 02-24-10 Room 2172

Starting Time 9:34 a.m. Ending Time 11:07 a.m.

Recesses  (\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_)

Presiding Member(s) Chairman Carnahan, Ranking Member Rohrabacher

CHECK ALL OF THE FOLLOWING THAT APPLY:

- Open Session
- Electronically Recorded (taped)
- Executive (closed) Session
- Stenographic Record
- Televised

TITLE OF HEARING or BILLS FOR MARKUP: *(Include bill number(s) and title(s) of legislation.)*  
Oversight: Hard Lessons Learned in Iraq and Benchmarks for Future Reconstruction Efforts

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:  
Carnahan, Rohrabacher, Poe, Delahunt

NON-SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: *(Mark with an \* if they are not Members of HIRC.)*  
\_\_\_\_\_

HEARING WITNESSES: Same as meeting notice attached? Yes  No   
*(If "no", please list below and include title, agency, department, or organization.)*  
\_\_\_\_\_

STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD: *(List any statements submitted for the record.)*  
\_\_\_\_\_

ACTIONS TAKEN DURING THE MARKUP: *(Attach copies of legislation and amendments.)*  
\_\_\_\_\_

RECORDED VOTES TAKEN (FOR MARKUP): *(Attach final vote tally sheet listing each member.)*

Subject	Yeas	Nays	Present	Not Voting

TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE \_\_\_\_\_  
or  
TIME ADJOURNED 11:07 ■

  
Subcommittee Staff Director