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PROCEEDINGS

MR. NIVOLA: Good morning and thank you for coming to Brookings on a nice Friday morning. I am Pietro Nivola, the Director of Governance Studies here.

And for the past couple of years, I've been heading up a major research project on the causes and the consequences of partisan polarization in U.S. politics. This is a joint venture we've been doing with the Hoover Institution at Stanford, and it's a project on which about 40 of the nation's top political scientists and journalists have participated, including contributors like Peter Beinart.

What we've found in a nutshell is that not everything about polarization is bad. And to some extent -- to a considerable extent, the severity of this alleged problem has been exaggerated. The nation was not always better off when there wasn't a dime's worth of difference between the parties than today when there's a considerable divide.

In fact, voters were sometimes so bored by Tweedle Dum and Tweedle Dee in national elections that they didn't bother to vote, whereas, in recent elections, voter turnouts are up considerably because there's greater voter interest and engagement with the parties more polarized. That's the upside.

But we've also found that there's a considerable downside to what's going on. And there are basically three negatives. On the domestic side, domestic policy front, it's pretty difficult to address long

term challenges this country faces, especially how to restructure entitlement spending and reorganize, in a sense, the welfare state, to modernize it. That requires considerable bipartisan cover because it entails inflicting considerable pain.

Another area that has been complicated by polarization is of course judicial confirmations and judicial selection in general, which has become an extremely acrimonious process, as everybody knows.

But the third and perhaps most important difficulty is in the foreign policy area. Because when politics no longer stops at the water's edge, which is the title of Peter Beinart's chapter in the second volume of our two-volume study, it becomes extremely difficult to carry on a resolute and steady foreign policy over the long haul.

Now, Peter has written a brilliant essay, which I hope you will read when our book gets out. I'm sorry we don't have it in front of you now -- outside to sell now. It would make a great gift under the Christmas tree. But, it is well worth ordering if you have a chance. It also has comments by two excellent commentators, James Q. Wilson and my colleague, Jonathan Rausch here at Brookings, who critique and comment on Peter's chapter.

Now, Peter's findings are that there is a deeper divide over foreign policy between the two parties than there's been in a generation, really. And this split is not only at the top of our political system, that is,

here in the hot house of Washington politics or the political class, but also to a considerable degree in terms of partisans in the mass electorate.

The origins of this discord between the parties goes back quite a way. Peter says it's rooted in what he calls traditions of the two parties or certainly at least in habits that they've acquired at least going back as far as Vietnam but even perhaps in some ways earlier than that.

And his conclusions stand up pretty well in surveys and data that postdate the writing of his chapter. Let me give you a couple of examples.

Last August when the surge was well underway, a Gallup poll found that three quarters of Democrats who were surveyed thought that sending in these additional troops was a big mistake and that it would probably make little or no difference. Only a fifth of Republicans surveyed felt that way.

After General David Petraeus and Ambassador Ryan Crocker gave their testimony -- I guess when was it? It was back in September, on what progress if any had been made by the surge, two-thirds of Republicans surveyed felt that indeed considerable progress had been made. Only 16 percent of Democrats agreed.

Now, that is quite a gap. And it underscores a basic insight that Peter makes, which is that what we've developed here between the two sides is not just differences of opinion but actual differences in

perceptions of reality. One side sees the glass half full, and the other side sees the glass half empty.

We have divergent world views, if you will, that go well beyond the Iraq war and encompass a lot of other aspects of America's role in the world, differing *weltom shouns* (?) if I can use the fancy German term for it.

One of the most interesting survey results that Peter discusses in his paper is that when you look at partisan rank and file and you ask the questions what are your three top foreign policy priorities, Republicans typically answer limiting or dealing with the problem of nuclear weapons getting into the hands of rogue states and groups hostile to the United States. That's priority number one; two, destroying Al Qaeda; and three, addressing the larger problem of nuclear proliferation in general.

When Democrats are asking to list their three top priorities, they're the following: first of all, withdrawing troops from Iraq, that's number one, secondly, stopping the spread of AIDS, and third, improving multilateral relations, especially with our allies and so forth.

That is quite a telling distinction. Now, we have a very distinguished panel this morning which is going to discuss questions like this, I hope. What are the implications of these chasms for sustaining a steady foreign policy over the long haul? And what does the future look like? Will the partisan divide persist? Will it endure or is it fragile?

What sorts of internal fissures and pressures within the party are likely to sustain or upend the current pattern? And finally, what if anything, could be done to restore some semblance of bipartisan consensus going forward?

Now, let me introduce the panelists and bear with me because I'm looking at some fancy résumés here and I don't have my reading glasses on.

Okay. First of all, Peter Beinart is a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations. He's also editor at large of *The New Republic*. He's a contributor to *Time Magazine* and a monthly columnist for the *Washington Post*. His recent book, The Good Fight, was published by Harper Collins in June of 2006.

Peter is a graduate of Yale University -- Peter Rodman and I won't hold that against him -- and a winner of both the Rhodes and Marshall Scholarships, and I gather you had to decline one of those Pete, but I don't remember which one it was at Oxford University. After graduating from Oxford, he became *The New Republic's* managing editor and then its senior editor in 1997.

Just to his right, is Peter Rodman, my colleague in the Foreign Policy Program here at Brookings. He's a senior fellow. Before coming to Brookings this past March, he had served for six years as Assistant Secretary of Defense for International and Security Affairs.

He has served in five presidential administrations, including such positions as the Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs and as Director of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff during the Reagan Administration or two years of the Regan Administration.

Peter Rodman is the author of a history of a Cold War in the third world, which is called *More Precious than Peace*. He has -- oh, here's an interesting little tidbit. Peter participated recently in an Oxford Union Debate on the question of "This House regrets the founding of the United States of America." And Peter managed to successfully win that debate by opposing the motion. I wonder how you managed to do that, Pete.

Peter is a graduate of Harvard. He has an MA from Oxford and a JD from Harvard Law School.

And finally, Michael Hirsh is the former foreign editor and chief diplomatic correspondent for *Newsweek*. He is currently a senior editor of the magazine's Washington bureau. He appears frequently as a commentator on Fox News, CNN, MSNBC, and national public radio.

Mike Hirsh was co-winner of the Overseas Press Club Award for Best Magazine Reporting from Abroad in 2001 for "presence in identifying the Al Qaeda threat half a year before September 11th" -- and I take my hat off to you, Michael, for that -- and also for *Newsweek's*

coverage of the War on Terror, which also won a national magazine award.

So with that, let me let Peter present his chapter and then we'll have some discussion. Thank you.

MR. BEINART: Thank you. It's a pleasure to be here and it was a real honor to be asked to participate in this book project. I was surprised they would allow a lowly journalist to be amongst such illustrious scholars.

I want to just divide my brief remarks into two parts, the first, a kind of a brief history of political polarization on foreign policy and then an argument about why things have become so polarized since 9/11 and why I think it's likely to stay that way.

It's really a myth I think to believe that the norm in American foreign policy is partisan consensus. I think the norm is division. If you look at the early years of the 20th century as America is emerging as a global power, you see deep divisions over foreign policy, not partisan divisions, but very clear ideological and sectional divisions between basically an Eastern internationalist, Wall Street affiliated, often imperialist foreign policy elite embodied by people like Theodore Roosevelt, Henry Cabot Lodge, Elihu Root, Henry Stimson, and a Midwestern and Western isolationist or at least anti-imperialist populist, often anti-Wall Street group embodied by people like Robert La Follette, George Nares, William Borah, Gerald Nye, Arthur Vandenberg that really -- that's the basic division that

you see from the Spanish American War through the fight of the League of Nations and it again crops up very powerfully in the 1930s.

I think the era of foreign policy bipartisanship, if you have to date it, I think that it begins in 1940. It begins in 1940, ends in 1968, I would argue. It begins in 1940 with two really remarkable things. First, perhaps the greatest display of presidential bipartisanship in American history when Franklin Roosevelt in the absolutely crucial election of 1940 chooses Henry Stimson, Hoover's Secretary of State as his Secretary of War and chooses Frank Knox, who was Alf Landon's running mate in 1936, two very prominent Republicans as his Secretary of War and Secretary of Navy. I mean, imagine George W. Bush essentially choosing John Edwards and Madeline Albright for two of his top national security positions.

And then in a way, the Republican party reciprocates in a surprise by nominating Wendell Willkie as their nominee in the very crucial election of 1940, who gives Franklin Roosevelt the political cover to make some very, very important decisions at that crucial time when America is trying to support Brittan in its moment of ultimate peril and then of course in December.

So, you have this kind of very powerful elite consensus in that -- that really forges in 1940. And then, of course, on December 7, 1941, the bottom drops out of the isolationist argument. And while there is a brief debate at the beginning of the Cold War, not so much between the

parties as within the parties, which is to say within both parties, you have a wing that argues against the idea that the Cold War should be the prism for American foreign policy and that containment should be its strategy. Henry Wallace's kind of insurgent campaign, first, inside the Democratic party and then as a third party candidate in 1948 and Robert Taft in both 1948 and 1952.

Both Taft and Wallace in different ways representing, you could argue, this Midwestern more isolationist or at least anti-imperialist, depending on how pejorative you want to be, strained, but they're really vanquished by 1952, and you have a period of the greatest, I think, bipartisanship in foreign policy of the 20th century, which continues to 1968.

But I think even within this period of relative bipartisan consensus, 1940, 1968, there are important caveats because there are important divisions under the surface that become exposed later.

The first is that even in that period there are -- when both Democrats and Republicans accept that what foreign policy is about is the Cold War and that our strategy in the Cold War is containment, there are what you would call Democratic and Republican styles of containment. Democrats like spending more money than Republicans do. Democrats, if you look at the Truman Administration, NSD '68, the Kennedy Administration Flexible Response want to spend more on the military. They want to spend more on foreign aid.

Republicans tend -- like Eisenhower, tend to look for a cheaper way of practicing containment more focused on nuclear deterrents, covert action because of a particularly -- hard to think about it this way now, but a peculiarly Republican fear of budget deficit.

The other thing which I think is important to remember about this period of bipartisanship is that the bipartisanship is much stronger when it comes to dealing with Europe than when it comes to dealing with Asia. Korea and the loss of China are very divisive issues that have clear partisan implications that are very important to the rise of McCarthyism in the early 1950s.

And there, you -- even somebody like Arthur Vandenberg, who we hold up to this model of bipartisan cooperation, while he was very crucial on things like the Marshall Plan and NATO in Europe, on Asia, attacked the Truman Administration bitterly.

So, you can see that as the Cold War moved beyond Europe, into the third world in particular, even in the late 1940s and 1950s, it becomes much more divisive. And this is, I think, in some ways is the harbinger of what happens with Vietnam and then later the Central America debates, which is to say there is a big contradiction or question at the heart of containment, which is to say -- which is a question of whether you're containing the Soviet Union or whether you're containing global communism.

And when you're dealing in Europe, that contradiction does not -- is not -- does not come out as clearly. But once you start to bring containment to the third world, it does. And of course, things really break apart in Vietnam.

I would argue that the break apart of the containment consensus that takes place during Vietnam does not start primarily as a bipartisan break. It starts as an ideological break in the mid to late 1950s and basically becomes a partisan divide by the Carter years, which is to say in even as late as 1976, you have someone like Scoop Jackson in the Democratic party winning the Democratic primary in Massachusetts and New York running on the argument that American foreign policy should be about the global containment of communism, running to the right of someone like Gerald Ford.

So, there is this ideological divide that takes place in the late sixties and early seventies, which is basically about whether containment is the right prism for dealing with nationalism in the third world, whether nationalism in the third world really threatens the United States, whether we can respond to it militarily, whether global communism really is monolithic, and the rise of a whole new series of issues that liberals become increasingly interested in as an alternative to the idea that the Cold War is the defining prism of foreign policy.

In the 1970s, you see liberals becoming much more concerned about the global environment, human rights, separate from the

Cold War, the threat of nuclear war, environment destruction, poverty. This is a -- so, you have an ideological divide that opens up in the late sixties and early seventies.

But I think it snaps into partisan alignment with Carter in '76. Carter is really when the neocons basically give up after seeing what the Carter Administration is like, give up on Democratic Party. So, the Scoop Jackson wing of the Democratic party after Carter gets elected basically move into the Republican party joining up with the conservative movement that it starts with national review in the 1950s and really manages to take hold with Ronald Reagan's election in 1980.

And Jimmy Carter essentially by moving away from global containment as the centerpiece of his foreign policy, really gives the -- this liberal critique of containment, this liberal post-Vietnam new emphasis in foreign policy, gives it a Democratic partisan polarization.

And so, Reagan's first term, which I think is the closest parallel we have to the post 9/11 environment is really a situation in which you can really map a kind of a hawk-dove divide along Democratic and Republican lines.

And the basic debate is, is containment the right strategy for America in the third world in places like Nicaragua and El Salvador with Republicans saying yes, it is, this is being directed by Moscow and Havana and we need to respond to it militarily and Democrats saying no, it's not a threat and we can't respond to it militarily without violating human

rights, and in Europe, with Ronald Reagan saying that questions like the purging and cruise missile deployments and Europe should be seen through the prism of the Cold War while Democrats saying no, they should be seen through the prism of the looming threat of a nuclear holocaust.

In the 1990s, of course, all this goes away and foreign policy becomes both muddled and pretty marginal in American politics. But you don't see a return to bipartisanship. What you see in the 1990s is really the foreign policy debates because they're so marginal become essentially colonized by domestic policy debate.

So, a lot of the fights in the 1990s are about trade, about issues like abortion and birth control, about environmental issues, essentially corollaries to divisive domestic issues.

The other thing which you see in the 1990s which I think is very significant and which the -- the effect of which we're still living with is the end of the Cold War gives a new lease on life to a whole series of international institutions, basically frozen in amber by the Cold War struggle.

And there is a lot of enthusiasm, particularly in Europe but among some, particularly in the Democratic party in the United States for making these institutions the focus of American foreign policy. The UN peacekeeping spreads across the world, the international criminal court, the Kyoto Treaty on the environment, the IMF becomes much more important. And so, Republicans were -- by and large respond very

negatively to this and make sovereignty, the protection of American sovereignty a more central part of Republican foreign policy than it was during the Cold War.

So, you see that in the 1990s, I -- the Democratic and Republican foreign policy divide, I think is less about hawk dove, militarist versus pacifist and more about a more globalist vision of international cooperation versus a more sovereignty focused limited vision of national interest that you see really taking hold. You can really see it in the campaigns of Pat Buchanan but even in the Contract for America and the -- what it talks about in terms of foreign policy or Bob Dole's campaign in 1996.

Since 9/11 -- I think one way of understanding what's happened since 9/11 is that this period -- the crackup of the Cold War consensus -- you have -- the bipartisan consensus that I suggest basically lasts for -- from 1940 to 1968 lasts after 9/11 for about a year. Just to say it takes a long time through World War I and the Cold War for this bipartisan consensus to crack. It cracks very, very quickly. The War on Terror consensus cracks very, very quickly. I think it -- there's a consensus for about a year, from the fall of 2001 until the fall of 2002.

And in some ways, there is a parallel to what happens with the Cold War because just as containment becomes a broader -- becomes broadened and therefore the bipartisan consensus cracks when you try to move containment to the third world, the War on Terror consensus cracks

when George W. Bush tries to broaden the War on Terror beyond a struggle against Al Qaeda or just -- or Sunni or put differently, you know, Sunni jihadi Salafist terrorists who are trying to attack the United States.

When George W. Bush starts defining the War on Terror as a struggle against terrorist groups that don't attack the United States but attack our allies, like Hamas and Hezbollah, as a struggle against terrorist supporting regimes that are not committing a lot of terror against the United States like Iran, and of course, against states that aren't committing much terrorism at all, like Iraq, but we think are trying to get nuclear weapons and are hostile to the United States, you see Democrats really starting to get off the bus in terms of their willingness to see the War on Terror as the right prism for American foreign policy.

I think the Iraq War vote in some ways is misleading in this regard. It's true that a lot of Democrats vote for the Iraq War, but in polling, there is a big divide between Democrats and Republicans in the fall of 2002 on Iraq. And most of the Democrats who vote yes are either in swing states or have national ambition. If you look at Democrats in safe seats in the house, for instance, you see that they overwhelmingly oppose the Iraq War. So, this partisan division on Iraq is there even before Iraq goes south. But then when Iraq does start to go south, you start to see it really emerging very clearly.

And so today, when Republicans think about foreign policy, they essentially think about the War on Terror. Take a look at Rudy

Giuliani's foreign affairs article that he wrote a couple of months ago. There's virtually nothing in it except for the War on Terror. You would think that America doesn't have any meaningful other foreign policy issues virtually at all.

For Democrats, however, the War on Terror is not the center of American foreign policy. In fact, in many ways, national security is not even the center of foreign policy as Democrats see it. Democrats are more likely to see foreign policy -- polling shows it as what you might call human security.

It's like -- in some ways, it's a throwback to the 1970s. They're much more concerned about economic issues, issues like trade. Remember the 2004 presidential primaries between Kerry and Edwards. When it got down to Kerry and Edwards near the late stages of the spring of 2004, they're weren't debating terrorism. They weren't even debating Iraq. The one foreign policy issue they were talking about day in and day out was trade, which says something about where the Democratic party base is.

Democrats are much, much more concerned about global environmental questions than Republicans are. They're much more concerned about questions of global public health. They're more concerned about questions about AIDS and global poverty.

Democrats do not see a world in which -- primarily of military threat and not surprisingly, don't see the instrument of American foreign

policy therefore, as primarily military. This is particularly true with the Democratic party base, where you can see these divisions more starkly than at the party's elite.

So, how to describe -- how do you describe the difference between the two parties on foreign policy today? I think it's a mistake to call the Democrats isolationists and the Republicans internationalists because while it's true the Republicans want to keep us in Iraq and may be more willing to support military intervention in other places, they're more concerned about American sovereignty than Democrats are.

Democrats are more willing to participate in international institutions than Republicans, so I don't think you can call Democrats isolationists and Republicans internationalists.

I don't even think you can call -- I even think it's a mistake to call Democrats doves and Republicans hawks, per se. It's certainly true that right now it looks that way, but if you change the prism a little bit -- remember, in the 1990s, Democrats were often more hawkish than Republicans. Think about the debates about Bosnia, Kosovo, Haiti, Somalia.

And if you ask in polling questions do you support American participation in international peacekeeping, Democrats say yes much more. Do you support intervention in Darfur or to stop genocide? You actually see Democrats saying yes at higher rates.

So, there is a -- I would say a hidden concealed Democratic humanitarian hawkishness that still exists under the surface and I would say a kind of hidden Republican realist doveishness that could be brought out again depending on a particular issue.

So, how would you describe -- what is the right way to describe the fundamental cleavage between Democrats and Republicans on foreign policy today? The way I would describe it would be this way. I think Democrats believe in collective security and Republicans believe in the balance of power.

What do I mean by that? I think Democrats are basically -- and liberal Democrats are the children of Woodrow Wilson. Woodrow Wilson was not simply about promoting democracy around the world. Woodrow Wilson's fundamental idea was collective security, the idea that after the destruction of World War I, you would create a global international institution, the league of nations in which all nations would band together and if any one nation violated the peace, they would all join together against them.

The league of -- the model of collective security is all for one and one for all. We're all in it together. That vision has been re-ignited very powerfully amongst Democrats since the end of the Cold War in a globalized age in which Democrats believe that there are a whole series of threats that threaten all nations and make us all in it together, be they

global warming, public health, the spread of nuclear technology, the non-state rogue -- non-state terrorist.

Republicans, I think really -- and this fundamentally goes back to the belief that Democrats are more optimistic than Republicans, liberals more than conservative about the possibility of international cooperation. It has to do with a fundamentally different vision of human nature.

Republicans, I think are the children of Henry Cabot Lodge. Henry Cabot Lodge has been defamed by history. He was not an isolationist. He simply didn't want a universal institution like the league of nations.

He wanted an alliance with France against Germany. His motto was us versus them. He didn't believe that you could have universal cooperation between all nations.

He wanted a balance of power between America and its allies against the countries that threaten us, a balance of power, I think we tend to think of wrongly in terms of an equilibrium, scales, you know, that people who want a balance of power want an equality of power between us and our foes. That's usually not the case.

What you want is a dis-equilibrium. That's what Henry Cabot Lodge wanted. That's what Dick Cheney wants. The right metaphor is not scales but a bank balance. You want a favorable balance of power. That's what Henry Cabot Lodge wanted against Germany.

That's, I think, the natural way that conservatives tend to think about foreign policy, creating positive favorable balance of power against the nations that threaten us.

So, when Republicans talk about terrorism, they're not likely to talk about it as a non-state threat that threatens all nations. They tend to think of terrorism as the byproduct of countries that are against us.

When they think about nuclear proliferation, Democrats say how can we create a global regime on nuclear proliferation to stop its spread everywhere. Republicans are more likely to say we're not concerned about its spread everywhere. We don't mind if India and Israel have it. We're concerned about its spread to countries that we don't like, that are against us.

I think the natural way for Democrats to think about China is for Democrats to think about bringing China in to universal rules of international behavior. I think that the default way for conservatives to think about China is to think about how you create a balance of power in East Asia against it.

And ultimately, I mean if you, you know -- I see Bill Galston here. If you read your John Dewey, I think it ultimate has to do with a fundamentally different view about the potential for cooperation, both between nations and ultimately between individuals.

And I think that basic difference, which as been exacerbated by George W. Bush but goes much deeper than him is likely to continue

no matter what happens in Iraq, no matter what happens with Iran. I wouldn't be surprised to see that crystallize in the debate over China in the next decade. It's deeper than any one political leader, and I think that's why it's likely to endure for a long time.

(Applause)

MR. RODMAN: Peter, I want to thank you for an excellent analysis, certainly an excellent analysis of America's historical experience and a stimulating analysis of the more recent period.

But, I'm not an expert on domestic politics, but I will venture a few perhaps provocative reactions to what Peter has said today and what he has written. I mean, again, as I -- as Pietro said, the chapter is fascinating discussion of American history and also it includes a lot of illuminating polling data of the last few generations.

And I congratulate him again on his piece and the analysts -- I also congratulate the analysts he cites who have done very interesting and interesting work. And a lot of it is counter intuitive. I mean, it's not always what you think was going on. And again, it's illuminating.

But my bottom line is I'm not as deterministic as I think he is about projecting these data and these conclusions into the future, into the -- even the next administration. I'm a little more optimistic.

Pietro mentioned that in the book there's also a commentary by Jonathan Roush among others and I agree with Jonathan's conclusion that there is -- in his view, there is a decent change for a convergence of

some degree, a bipartisan convergence or re-convergence in the coming period.

Now, foreign policy is what I claim to know about and I will venture here a prediction, a shocking prediction. I think reality will impose on the next administration whatever it is, whoever is running it, a foreign policy that is shockingly similar to the foreign policy of the present administration at the present time.

Our national interests are not going to change at noon when the clock strikes 12:00 on January 20th. With respect to Iraq, there is obviously a need for some controlled process of disengagement from Iraq in a way which doesn't wreck broader American interest in the Middle East, in a way which gives the Iraqis a chance to make some progress toward a stable and moderate state. That is the task that I think any president is going to face.

There will be a need for consistent and sovereign realistic policies toward China and Russia. And I would say right now with respect to China and Asia, our relations in the Asia Pacific region are rather good.

When I worked in the Pentagon, one of my jobs was to go around the region. You'd be surprised at the degree to which countries around the periphery of China are eager for defense relations with the United States.

The rise of China is a new phenomenon in Asia. This isn't just a conservative approach. This is how countries in the region view

their situation and why we have constructed relations with China including in the defense exchanges. The countries around China, Japan, India, Vietnam, Mongolia, Singapore, Indonesia are all moving closer to us just as reassurance and in the interest of an equilibrium in the region.

And that's good, and as I say, we -- it's in the service of a constructive approach towards China itself, but this is the present policy, and I think the next administration is going to want to follow the same policy.

Russia, there's now a Russia problem, and I think I was participating in Brookings a few weeks ago in talks with a number of Europeans who are over here, and I'm happy to say that this is an item, an important item on the agenda of our relations with our European allies.

Again, this is an -- and our relations with Europe have clearly improved in the last few years given changes of leadership in Germany and now France. So, our relations with our allies -- I think a lot of the great dramas and melodramas of a few years ago are behind us.

So again, the next administration is going to inherit a reasonably intelligent internationalist approach. And so, that is why I think that the principal -- I think international realities lead me to -- Jonathan Roush's conclusion that there's a good chance for some consensus here as well on this kind of approach.

I also will venture to say that the harder test of this may be on the Democratic side. It seems to be that, as an outsider, that the

divisions among Democrats on these issues are much sharper now than among Republicans.

Candidates are being pulled to the left on foreign policy. If there is a Democratic administration next time around, it'll be interesting to watch the divisions within it. There may be pressures from the left that will not be fulfillable given the realities, particularly in the Middle East.

If there's a Republican administration next time, which is not excluded, I suspect it will be a lot more unified and centrist in its conduct. But it will be up against -- if there is Republican administration, I think it will be up against a very unhappy, very bitter, and perhaps very divided Democratic contingent in the congress.

Now, if you spend a lot of time among conservatives, which I do and I think Peter does -- even Peter does sometimes, you may here the phrase Bush derangement syndrome, BDS. I think there should be a telethon to raise money for this. It's a sad affliction among people who are otherwise highly intelligent who find it difficult to discuss serious topics dispassionately because the mere thought of George W. Bush rattles their analytical faculties.

Now, I think the calendar will cure this in the next 14 months, I hope, and we'll see if calm discussion of foreign policy issues can -- or substantive issues can become possible again. I think there are some people who are a bit out of practice on this point.

Now, Peter -- again, I complimented Peter's chapter and his comments here, but I detect a mild case of this, which I hope is not too much and maybe it's enough to inoculate him against any serious problem, but part of what he's written in his chapter is that while the Democrats are moving in an isolationist direction, but it's George Bush's fault. The devil made me do it.

He's absolutely right about the polarization of the present debate and that is hard to dispute, but he -- in a few places in the chapter, he says well, George Bush used Iraq as a wedge issue. It's obvious that Iraq is a polarizing issue. That is not in dispute. What -- the question is where does it come from?

I don't buy the devil made me do it theory. I think the definition of an adult is that you are responsible for your own actions. That's the legal definition of being an adult and perhaps it should be a political definition. In Iraq policy or trade policy or any other policy, the Democrats make their own choices.

As Peter points out in his chapter, Iraq policy started out as fairly bipartisan, not just the resolution authorizing it, but when the war was going well, there was a certain degree of public support. Once it started not going well, the Democrats exercised their prerogative of going into opposition.

Now, that's absolutely legitimate and when there are difficulties in a policy, it makes it an absolutely legitimate issue for debate

on any -- whether partisan debate or congress opposing the executive branch. But I remember the ideological left gnashing its teeth quietly, even during the period when Iraq had a national consensus behind it and even when things were going well. But then, the left found its opportunity. It takes two to polarize.

And I would say the Democrats -- and again it's their absolute right to do this, chose -- the Democrats chose to go into opposition on the issue of Iraq. And again, no one can dispute the legitimacy of this, but right now they're very frustrated. But the Democrats' problem now is not George Bush but that perhaps they overestimated the American public's appetite for defeat.

I remember Speaker Pelosi and Senator Reid writing a letter to President Bush on January 5th of this year denouncing the surge, declaring it a failure five days before the president announced it.

As to the Republicans, I would say the Republicans are drifting back toward a less exuberant position on global intervention for obvious reasons and so is the Bush administration. I say drifting back toward a less ambitious and exuberant position about military intervention, again for obvious reasons.

Among the candidates for president, the tone of the Republican debate on foreign policy really is set by the likes of John McCain, not Ron Paul. But I can't tell who is setting the tone of the debate on the Democratic side on foreign policy.

Now, let me just come back to my original point. The next administration will have an opportunity for a fresh start by definition and so will the opposition. Whoever is in opposition will have an opportunity for a fresh start, a change of personalities. This is one of the great virtues of the American system, fresh blood, renewal, our endless capacity for self-renewal.

It'll be a new political context. The international context as I said won't change over night. A lot will depend on the quality of leadership in both congress and the white house, and the quality of leadership in both parties.

I too remember the 1990s and being on the opposition side. I remember the Republican congress harassed Bill Clinton on a number of things, but they also supported him on a number of big things, whether it was NATO enlargement or the trade bills, NAFTA, WTO. And I will stick my neck out and vouch for the Republicans the next time around, that whether they're in the white house or the congress, that the Republicans will be internationalists and be willing to support sensible policies if they were to be a Democratic administration.

So, again, like an American -- most Americans, I am an optimist. Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. HIRSH: Hi. Thanks for having me here. Not to pile on to Peter, but I think I will mainly agree with Peter's -- Peter Rodman's

assessment that there probably will be in the future more consensus than not though for slightly different reasons.

I do want to say that I think that Peter Beinart's history of foreign policy is extremely trenchant and worth reading. I largely agree with his view that divergence was the norm rather than consensus and that there was a period post Cold War -- World War II, Cold War period when you didn't reach an extraordinary degree of basically politics stopping at the water's edge as the phrase of the time had it and that there has been -- I mean, we're going all the way back to Jefferson and Adams really and their disputes over France roiling disagreement at high levels between the leading parties.

But nonetheless, first I want to deal with what's going to happen now in, I think, the next administration, whatever it is and then, make just a few points about where I think a larger degree of consensus has been achieved historically in American foreign policy than perhaps we have addressed so far.

I do -- and this is where I agree with Peter Rodman -- I do think that on a number of key issues, no matter who is elected in 2008, there is going to be a consensus that we already see being formed.

I mean, on Iraq, for example, you might have noted the disappearance of a very intense debate that culminated, I think, in September over withdrawal and various Democratic sponsored plans for early withdrawal.

A lot of that is the result of the intensive work that Robert Gates, the new Defense Secretary, has been doing to reach across the aisle and to placate Democrats over, you know, make the case that we want withdrawal as well and really very consciously to create a sustainable policy as he sees it that could -- that will endure into the next administration so you don't have the prospect of a Democratic president abruptly withdrawing.

Also, it has to do with the, you know, some of the obvious success that the surge has had. In fact, Gates was actually heard to remark, "My job is done in terms of placating the Democrats," on that recently.

On Iran, you don't hear a huge amount of descent obviously. It's interesting that on Iran -- both Iran and North Korea, another, you know, major issue that we face in terms of nuclear proliferation, the other member of the so-called axis of evil, the only real -- really serious descent that you hear is from a relatively small groups of ex-hardliners from the administration like John Bolton and Bob Joseph, which may or may not perhaps include Mr. Rodman about the North Korea deal in particular, which is seen as basically a cave in to Pyongyang by this group and also an increasingly -- an increasing amount of discontent over where diplomacy is going with Iran, which does appear to be nowhere.

But nonetheless, the administration appears to be pushing containment and diplomacy as its policy toward Iran, not least with this

Annapolis Conference, which was partly about aligning the Arab states and Israel against Iran. Again, you don't hear a lot of descent from the Democratic side about this.

So, in practice, what you're seeing is the formation of a consensus, where I agree with Peter Rodman that probably will endure no matter who the next president is. You certainly -- you see it, you know, with the Democratic frontrunner, Hillary Clinton really giving voice to this new consensus, alluding to perhaps a long term U.S. presence in Iraq, for example, which is precisely what the Bush Administration is planning.

And I just -- I mean, on the larger point, I think -- not to be too simplistic about it, but where post 9/11 -- the dispute, the basic disputes that Peter Beinart referred to really reached its height was in the obvious overreaching of the invasion of Iraq in 2003.

You know, it's difficult now to recall the hubris of that moment, the sense that we could change regimes at will, that we were great and powerful enough to do it wherever we pleased, you know, that's gone with the wind. And that really has been the key change.

No administration, Republican or Democrat is going to pursue such a regime change type policy. And that brings us back to this question of these sort of everlasting divides between say Democratic Wilsonianism versus what used to be, you know, pre-World War II Republican isolationism, which later took another form, I think,

unilateralism as we saw, I think in the approach to some degree of this administration but of other conservatives.

I think that what you're seeing is -- what is emerging is a new kind of consensus. The most extreme form of what has been loosely termed neoconservatism, which was really, you know, a kind of hard-line Wilsonianism to the extent that it meant the spreading, the promotion of American values, you know, is a, I think, a cardinal American view of foreign policy, one that goes way back, certainly goes at least back to Wilson.

George Kennan and others lamented it, but it nonetheless was there, no less a realist than Henry Kissinger in one of his books said that it basically had become the bedrock of American foreign policy is this Wilsonian impulse to spread values.

And I think we saw a very extreme sort of conservative version of that in the neocon thinking that we all wrote about and discussed in the first term of this administration that lead, I think to some degree to the invasion of Iraq.

I would argue that that's basically, as I said, gone with the wind, that the costs of the Iraq adventure have been so huge, a trillion to two trillion and mounting by various estimates, that no president is going to be doing that again anytime soon in the foreseeable future.

And what's left is -- I would suggest that that version of Wilsonian impulse has been basically, you know, trivialized back to a pragmatic sort of Wilsonianism, which is what FDR practiced, for example.

I don't think we should, you know, immediately return to the debates of the early part of the 20th century or the debate between Lodge and Wilson over collective security, because if you look at, for example, the formation of the United Nations by FDR and Truman and sort of second generation iteration of that idea of collective security was done in a much more pragmatic centrist way.

The four policemen concept that was at the heart of the security council for example, you know, this was the Democrat's own reaction to the unreality -- the impracticality, let's say, of Wilsonian collective security.

And I think that, you know, that's the kind of center where we found ourselves and where we find ourselves again today as this new consensus is emerging. I mean, I'll just cite one example because I don't want to go on and on about this. We certainly can in the discussion.

But I just recently finished a story, "Loose Nukes." There was an interesting incident that was reported yesterday in Slovakia involving several guys who were trying to sell a pound of Uranium and I looked into it, talked to the IAEA. And it turns out that, you know, sort of under the headlines, there's been an extraordinary degree of international

cooperation led by the United States, led by the Bush Administration toward interdicting these kinds of -- this kind of smuggling.

And it's this sort of, you know, beneath the radar international cooperation, making use of institutions -- I mean again, you see in the headlines, there are these vicious disputes going on between the IAEAs and Mohammed Al Bordi and the Bush Administration over Iran.

But nonetheless, all of this cooperation that is occurring, and you know, if you listen to some of the statements coming out of the Bush Administration, particularly Condi Rice, but also Robert Gates, who you know, just recently delivered a speech on nothing less than soft power, a Joe Nye concept which was embraced by the Clinton Administration, which I believe, if I recall correctly, Donald Rumsfeld claimed he hadn't -- didn't know what it was. He said something to the effect of I don't know what soft power is in his inimitable way. Here, you have the new defense secretary talking about it.

So, I do think that we are willy-nilly because of practical constraints, because there was this overreaching in Iraq, mistakes made, that we are ending up back at a -- we will end up at a new consensus position, which again brings me back to Peter Rodman's point, I think from a different perspective but nonetheless a very similar conclusion that the next administration will find itself trying to occupy this middle -- reengaging in a very serious way a process that's already begun in the second Bush

term with our European allies, reasserting the American role in Asia as a friend in ally.

There's no question as Mr. Rodman said that there are -- there is a great eagerness by a lot of these countries surrounding China to ally with the United States. Making more use of international institutions while retaining this age old American skepticism toward them, you know, particularly the United Nations, but nonetheless, you know, some of the more extreme reactions you saw in the 90s where, you know, certain groups of Republicans sponsored legislation to withdrawal from the United Nations or stop paying dues, I don't think you're going to see as much of that.

So, I do think -- while I accept Peter's analysis and I think it's a very valuable way of going at the issue, I do think that we are heading more towards consensus than not.

(Applause)

MR. NIVOLA: Thank you very much, Mike.

There are these little mikes on the sides -- on the left sides of your chairs, and if you would attach them -- to your necktie is probably the best place, so we can be heard in the back of the room.

Well, I -- I'm very uplifted by the two recent sets of remarks here and I'm curious to hear later from Peter about whether he thinks as much rebalancing will actually take place going forward as the next

administration comes in and whether in fact, we will attain the level of consensus that both Peter Rodman and Michael Hirsh are suggesting.

I'd like to take the prerogative of asking a question and then -- of actually of the entire panel and I don't mean to trip you up with this, Peter.

It's more just sort of at the heart of your essay, and I'm also interested to hear, you know, Peter Rodman and Michael Hirsh's reactions to this question as well because it goes to -- and by the way, afterwards, if you guys want to ask some questions of Peter or vice versa, go right ahead, and then we'll open it up to the floor and we'll have about 20 minutes of Q and A.

My question is this. Let me actually quote from a key part of your chapter, which goes to Peter Rodman's observation about sort of the devil made me do it or Bush derangement syndrome as you called it, quote, this is from Peter Beinart, "It was not inevitable that foreign policy would become the single most polarizing aspect of American politics. That must be laid primarily at the feet of George W. Bush and his decision to invade Iraq."

And then you go on later, "Had the United States never invaded Iraq, one can imagine the war on terror playing out somewhat as the early Cold War did, with a broad bipartisan consensus."

And what I'd like to do is see if we can unpack that thesis a little bit and perhaps the best way to do that is to -- or one way to do that is to pose the following thought experiment.

Let's supposed there was never an Iraq War, no decision to invade Iraq, only an Afghanistan War. And let's suppose that things in Afghanistan are not going well, it's not going great. There's a resurgent Taliban. It's using sanctuaries in Pakistan very effectively. It's on the rise.

There's a multilateral force in Afghanistan, but it really consists primarily in terms of willingness to fight, if you will, and die of the United States and to a lesser extent the British and the Canadians.

It goes on year after year, casualties are mounting, and the president wants to consider a possible surge to do something about this. And here's the question. How would the Democrats feel in this set of circumstances? What would the reaction be in the congress? How would Democratic presidential candidates position themselves?

MR. BEINART: It is a really interesting counterfactual. I think it's worth noting that Democrats are much more invested in Afghanistan from the beginning than they were in Iraq. I think it's true that there were a lot of Democrats who supported the Iraq War, but as I tried to suggest, even if you looked at the polling, Democratic support for the Iraq War out there in the country was thin to begin with.

And it was a strong sense inside the Democratic party that the people -- and you still hear this very strongly today, that the Democrats

who voted for the Iraq War were not doing it out of conviction. They were doing it for politic reasons.

That was not true for Afghanistan at all. Only one Democratic member of the house even abstained on the Afghan Resolution that was considered by Democrats a clear act of self-defense. We had multilateral support. It was considered by many to be really in the human rights, humanitarian intervention tradition of Bosnia and Kosovo.

And so I -- and of course, you know, you had John Kerry in 2004 attacking Bush from the right in Afghanistan, saying that he would have sent U.S. troops into Tora Bora. You can say well, Democrats were just doing this because they wanted to be for something because they were against Iraq. There's a little bit of that, but I think that the decomposition of the Democratic support for Afghanistan would have taken place at a much slower rate because Democrats were so invested in it from the beginning.

Occasionally, you do see stirrings of suggestions that perhaps it is waning a little bit. I was really -- I was a -- there is some polling which suggests Democrats are not as supportive of the war in Afghanistan as Republicans, although it's hard to know how much of that is just a referendum on George W. Bush.

I was quite struck by this -- if any of you had the misfortune of seeing the hideous new movie by Robert Redford called Lions and Lambs, one of the things that I thought was really striking about that movie

is that it actually is an anti-Afghanistan War movie. It's -- it fit all the tropes of an antiwar movie, but it's actually Afghanistan, not Iraq. And that I found a little bit shocking and perhaps a bad omen.

If you have the multilateral support collapse and you had visible signs that the Afghan people didn't want us there, anti-American riots in the streets, some kind of new leader who was much less American and so it didn't seem like we were doing it on behalf of the Afghan people but it seemed like we were there just fighting the terrorists against many of their will, then I think that would put more pressure on the Democratic party side.

But I still -- I think we are quite a long way from that, and I think that the support has a relative solidity to it because of the whole way in which the operation started.

MR. RODMAN: Let me come at it in a different way. We need to be precise here. What triggered the great national uproar over Iraq was not the invasion of Iraq. It was the fact that Iraq did not go well. If there had been a clean victory, you know, a moderate government put in place, a reasonable amount of stability in Iraq, we'd be having a totally different conversation.

Now, whenever a president does something very bold, he's - there's a great -- and controversial, there's a great debate, an issue put on the table, and the outcome is going to decide who's vindicated, whose argument is vindicated, whose argument is discredited.

If regime change had succeeded, as I do think it has gone reasonably well in Afghanistan, if it had succeeded in Iraq, obviously, the argument of the neocons and so on, this would be -- would have been given a boost. The fact that it has not gone well or easily obviously has created this mood of restraint that I think all of us or at least Michael and I think is upon us.

I actually think Iraq will turn out moderately well in the longer run, stable and moderate, but I think the price is hugely high and I think that has settled the issue. That is what has settled the issue at least for a time and I think no administration for a while is going to be in a position, either militarily or in terms of public support, to attempt something quite that ambitious.

MR. HIRSH: I mean, I just wanted to add I mostly agree with Peter Beinart that it would have -- the descents would have happened much more slowly because there was this extraordinary national unanimity obviously after 9/11.

We knew where the enemy was. It was in the mountains of Afghanistan. The Taliban were harboring them. There was no dispute about that. There was no dispute about that even around the world. There was a lot of consensus. Things turned really for the worst, I think, not so much because Iraq went badly, though that was part of it, but because the case for invading Iraq disappeared as the evidence -- it

became clear it was not there and that the reasons given by the president, by the administrations turned out to be somewhat trumped up.

And I think that's where you, you know, where things really entered this period of intense partisan rancor over Iraq, helped along obviously by the idea that Iraq was not going bad, that we were losing our young men and women there and that we couldn't seem to figure out a solution.

So, it's, you know, I think it's important to take note of that, that the case for making Iraq, invading Iraq as part of the war on terror was always somewhat tortured. There were any number of reasons given. Some of them didn't stand up, whereas, there was never any questions that Afghanistan was -- had to be a target. That's where Al Qaeda was.

So, I think to back up what Peter Beinart said, I think if we had just simply focused on Afghanistan, while there would no doubt be I'm sure a national debate between Democrats and Republicans over withdrawal sooner rather than later with Democrats probably taking the side of withdrawing sooner, I think it would be much, much less intense in rancor than what we have now.

MR. NIVOLA: Excellent. Why don't we open this up to the floor actually?

Yes?

SPEAKER: Well, I --

MR. NIVOLA: There's a -- we have mikes that come around and if you would identify yourself.

SPEAKER: Priscilla Fredersdorf, I'm with the *Sanibel Island Sun*. I just wanted to ask the panel really, are we not in Iraq or didn't we make the decision to go in Iraq because we were not successful in Afghanistan in finding Osama bin Laden.

I mean, it was a changing of position because we were -- of a failure. And I feel that the Republicans under Bush decided that they needed a definitive boogiemán to attack, and that's why we went into Iraq.

SPEAKER: The answer is no. it's not a secret that a lot of -- when the administration came into office, Iraq was a major issue in the American domestic debate. I mean, the Iraq Liberation Act was a bipartisan expression under -- in the Clinton Administration that Iraq was a menace and that regime change ought to be the objective.

President Clinton on February 17, 1998 went over to the Pentagon and delivered a very powerful speech about the menace of Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction. The administration came in with Iraq on its mind. 9/11 and Afghanistan came along, but that ended quickly.

And -- remember, that was considered a great success. You know, the Taliban were removed very quickly. And then after a period of time -- and that was an interruption, I think, of the discussion of Iraq. I

mean, rightly or wrongly, the administration came back to the Iraq issue after Afghanistan seemed to be, you know, on the right track.

And so, I mean, again, rightly or wrongly, that's what happened. And I just don't think it's quite for the psychological explanation that you gave.

MR. HIRSH: Yeah. I mean, just from reporting this, I don't think that there was a cause and effect there. Certainly, what you hear from critics of the move into Iraq is that much too quickly we began to shift resources and attention to Iraq after the defeat of the Taliban in December of 2001. And there is some dispute over whether Bin Laden escaped from places like Tora Bora as a result of that or whether he would have escaped anyway.

But I do think that it wasn't -- you know, hunting down Bin Laden was always going to be a long term prospect, so there wasn't some moment when anyone in the Bush Administration from anything I've ever heard, said oh, well we didn't get Bin Laden, let's go after Saddam. I don't think that occurred.

MR. ZALOFF: Thank you. I'm Akida Zaloff from the Brazilian Embassy. I'm interested in what Mr. --

MR. NIVOLA: I'm sorry. What did you say?

MR. ZALOFF: I'm Akida Zaloff from the Brazilian Embassy.

MR. NIVOLA: Uh-huh.

MR. ZALOFF: I'm interested in what Mr. Rodman called exuberance and Mr. Hirsh called hubris. What are the roots of it? How -- which lead to the invasion of Iraq, how did it happen and is it likely to reappear again?

And why is it that sectors of the Democratic party took part in this exuberance or hubris including sectors ideologically aligned with the Democratic party like *The New Republic* magazine, for instance?

How did it happen? Is it likely to happen again?

MR. BEINART: I actually am writing a book about this exact question, so I certainly cannot give a coherent answer. And it is true that *The New Republic* and I supported the Iraq War.

I think if I had to answer -- if I had to give a two sentence answer, which is -- it would probably be the best two sentence summation of the thesis of my book, I think the truth is that when Americans, particularly certain generations of Americans have seen what they perceive to be overwhelming success, militarily, ideological, economic, and have no primary experience of political tragedy, they fall prey to hubris.

I think this has happened several times, and I think that the Iraq -- the hubris has taken different forms, but I think it has always come out of the perception of success and the lack of the chastening effect of tragedy.

When -- if you go to Las Vegas and you keep winning, you likely start doubling down. And I think it would be -- and I think that explains some of what you saw, both on the Republican side, in which I think you can see an increasingly aggressive style emerging in terms of conservative foreign policy as you move from kind of first or second generation neoconservatives and first and second generation conservatives more generally, I think it's a generational story.

And I think it's a generational story on the Democratic party side too as you see the emergence of a group of younger Democratic party thinkers who have not experienced Vietnam, but who have experienced a series of wars that they perceive as sending the opposite lessons of Vietnam.

SPEAKER: Let me say a couple things. I think as I said before, in 2002, Afghanistan seemed like a success, and the idea of regime change was suddenly not as taboo as it might have been. And that, you know, may have contributed to the assumptions about Iraq.

But, you know, I'm -- thinking back to other periods in history, in August 1990, when Saddam invaded Kuwait, a lot of international leaders, you know, opened their newspaper or get their morning intelligence brief and say, oh dear, how deplorable. The president of the United States looked at that and said maybe we can undo this. And that -- you know, that's a kind of hubris, I suppose, but sometimes it's something the world should be grateful for.

I think again, December 8, 1941 and Franklin Roosevelt, you know, is getting ready let's undo what could easily have been assumed to be the new status quo in Europe that it was too hard to undo. Sometimes we stumble, sometimes we get it wrong, sometimes the assumptions are wrong. But I think it's -- the fact that the United States is in a position of overwhelming power, in a sense gives it a sense of responsibility.

Now again, you can be wrong and hubristic about it, but if something horrible has happened and we have the physical ability to do something about it and we choose not to, what is the argument for that? We are in this position willy-nilly, and we can use that power wisely or unwisely and often you don't know until the -- you don't until the end whether you were being smart or not.

But I do not regret the fact that we are in this position. It's just a test of all of us so-called experts to make sure we use that power wisely.

MR. NIVOLA: Way in the back?

MR. REYES: Pablo Reyes with the Center for Latin American Strategic Studies. Once we move beyond the primaries, many say that there will be a race for the center.

So, my question is where do you see both parties standing on issues such as national security, trade, and will any major decisions in terms of foreign policy will be made next year?

MR. BEINART: Well, I -- hearing no one's jumping in, I mean, there's a lot in that. The Bush Administration has some -- I mean, in terms of what's happening in 2008, the Bush Administration now is in its Middle East Peace Process, they are focusing on it, obviously Iran will be a major issue in 2008, and the continued prosecution of the War in Iraq and not to mention other things that one can't even predict now.

I think there will be some move to the center. I think as my paper expressed, I am more pessimistic about that moving to the center, and I think there is no doubt that as Peter and Michael say, the Bush Administration is -- has been chastened by the experience of the Iraq War and is not as hubristic as it was in 2000 and 2003. And you can see that in a whole range of ways.

I think, however, there are deeper forces that I think are going to prevent as much consensus as my two colleagues can suggest. The first is we do not have a bipartisan group of foreign policy elite as we did early on. I mean, there are no equivalents today to the Henry Stimson's and Robert Lovett's and even someone like John Foster Dulles, who was continually working for Democratic administrations.

I -- you mentioned John Henry, but I think that's really -- there are very few figures out there who one can imagine, you know, famously, you know -- George Bundy being a Republican, William Bundy being a Democrat, no one even being able to remember which was which. That world is gone.

Even amongst politicians, it's very hard to think of politicians who really command a lot of bipartisan respect on foreign policy. There may be someone like Richard Lugar, but not people who could actually win presidential races in their parties.

Now, I think the fate of John McCain is really illustrated here. I mean, remember, as recently as 2004, John Kerry thought he might have John McCain as his running mate. Imagine what would happen if a Democrat tried to do that now.

On trade and immigration, which are very powerful issues in American foreign policy, I think there's absolutely no consensus and there are bitter, bitter divisions which take quite partisan forms.

I think that as Peter said, if a Democrat stays in Iraq with large numbers of troops, unless the violence completely disappears, I think it will be deeply controversial. I think if a Democrat takes us out of Iraq faster than Republicans want, I think that will be deeply controversial.

And I think the Iran debate has the potential, not certain but the potential to re-ignite extreme foreign policy divisions even greater than we have now. Imagine that the Bush Administration does take -- or the future Republican does take military action. Or imagine that a Democrat presides over a nuclear Iran, which I think would be basically our era's equivalent of the -- of Harry Truman allowing the loss of China in the sense that it would ignite a -- the Republican right in the way that the Republican right was ignited in the early 1950s.

And I think over the longer term, I think it's very likely that China will emerge as a clear ideological and partisan schism, not exactly in the -- and that's why -- that's why, to take your opportunity to respond, that's why I'm more pessimistic.

MR. NIVOLA: I think that there's no question that if there's a premature or excessively rapid withdrawal from Iraq and the whole place just melts down and there is a total debacle, there will be a -- the temptation on the Republican side will be to claim that the war in Iraq was lost in Washington and not in Baghdad.

Yes, sir?

MR. SAY: My name is Jim Say, working for (inaudible) radio for the Turkish section there. My question is not about the general foreign policy but about the case of Turkey, but I think it's reasonable. This is a country which is neighboring Syria, Iraq, Iran, and which is a very important country for energy security as far as I understand.

And people watching U.S. and Turkish relations on a daily basis were saying since years that this problem would explode. And the administration ignored it until it really blew up.

Mr. Rodman, could you please explain how it can come to such an explosion in this problem? Even everybody knew that it would come to this point. Why can an administration not act before it comes to that point?

And perhaps you could also -- one of the experts could also answer the question if this could change in the -- with another administration and more particularly Republican if the next administration would learn something from this lesson.

MR. RODMAN: We're getting a little bit off the topic. Let me start with the second question. I think every administration for generations has been -- has supported Turkey.

It was -- there was a certain partisan debate -- it was a Democratic congress that put an arms embargo on Turkey in the 1970s. Then it was a Democratic president, Jimmy Carter, who got it lifted.

Most recently on the Armenian genocide business, it was Democrats who pushed it, but I think the Democrats are divided. I know a lot of Democrats who were involved in the effort to bottle that up.

So, I think every administration understands the strategic importance of Turkey as an ally. We have our domestic political debate, but I think the strategic reality is very clear. And I think now with the least new era, I think Turkey, if anything, has more strategic important to us.

Now, you're asking a very specific issue about the Kurdish problem. I have to say I mean even now, I don't think Turkey has a clear idea of how to solve this. A Turkish incursion into Northern Iraq wouldn't solve the problem either. And I think the reason Turkey has shown restraint up to now is that it too knows that this is a hard problem. Your chasing people in the mountains is not going to give you a conclusive

solution. And in fact, there was a time when Turkey used to come periodically into Northern Iraq and it -- that didn't solve the problem.

I think we -- the administration agrees with Turkey that the burden is on our Iraqi Kurdish friends to take responsibility. But -- and that they have not done. That's the missing piece, and I don't think we've yet solved it. But, I'm not -- there are some objective problems here.

You know, the American military are not eager to go chasing through the mountain and terrain they don't know anything about. I think Secretary Gates has put his finger on and he's talked publicly about the need for good intelligence and sharing intelligence. If we have good intelligence, I'm sure we'll figure out who should take action on the intelligence.

But, this is a hard problem physically, militarily hard problem and I don't think we've solved it. I don't think a new administration coming in is going to have -- is going to find they need a sort objective reality.

MR. HIRSH: I would just add briefly that I was with Condi Rice on her recent trip to Istanbul which was followed by the Turkish Prime Minister's visit to Washington. And you know, it does seem, at least for the president, they've managed to put a, you know, take the problem off the boil, so to speak.

It is a very, very difficult problem. The United State pledged intelligence sharing as well as other cooperation with the Turkish government, which seemed to have eased the tension for the present.

And there is a broad based consensus that pressure has to be put on the Iraqi Kurdish government.

So, you know, I would say that it's -- compared to some other issues out there, it's somewhat contained at the moment.

MR. NIVOLA: This lady here in the front.

MS. COLEBERG: Thank you. I'm Aud Kolberg from the Norwegian Embassy. I would like to hear the commentators' view on Peter Beinart's thesis on the sort of the different world views of the two parties, either collective security or us versus them and how you would see the next administration framing the -- will it still be framing its foreign policy in the terms of global war on terror?

Thank you.

MR. HIRSH: I think that there's always -- there are always going to be these tensions between the parties over, you know, the Democratic inclination to focus on multilaterally. Collective security, though, as I indicated in my remarks, I think that's somewhat exaggerated.

We've already moved beyond the sort of Wilsonian concept of collective security into more sort of (inaudible) peak view of it for both parties, whereas, Republicans are going to tend to take a more sovereignist view of protecting the U.S. sovereignty and feeling much more reluctant to cater to the whims of international organizations.

But, I mean, again, listen to the rhetoric coming out of the debates of both parties, Democrat and Republican. There is very much a

consensus view that we are going to try to use the United Nations, but we're certainly not going to ever allow ourselves to be dictated to by it. I mean, that's, you know, that is a basic view that you hear from both parties.

So, there are differences, but I would argue that there are more differences of nuance than fundamental differences, different approaches to the world affairs, most of the problems. Although, I do -- I mean, I agree with Peter Beinart that if, for example, the Bush Administration decides to attack Iran before it leaves office and that goes badly, that could re-ignite a lot of the same kind of rancor you saw over Iraq.

But for the moment, I think that it's more important to emphasize the commonalities in worldview than the differences which exist with our, I think, increasingly marginalized views.

MR. RODMAN: I basically agree with that, that Republicans tend to be more political minded, have less faith in the international institutions or at least in surrendering American sovereignty. The Democrats, they tend to be more Wilsonian, but I think this tension has existed in American foreign policy for a long time, as Peter was saying.

And I mean, George Bush, the father, you know, went to the UN, got security council resolutions before going into Iraq, but he also made it clear that if he didn't get the resolutions, he was going to do it anyway. And actually, under article 51, he had every reason to do that.

President Clinton is one of the many presidents who has said thing like we should always act multilaterally if we can, but if we really have to, we sometimes do have to act unilaterally. Bill Clinton said that. And I think that's likely to be the parameters of how an American president looks at the situation.

I think you can see the Bush Administration being very multilateral. They're doing -- pursuing the multilateral diplomacy over Iran, the six party talks with North Korea, a lot of -- you know, doing a lot of things in -- I think our relations with our allies are much better.

NATO is in Afghanistan, so a lot of things happening, but they say a lot -- there are always going to be issues that present the American president with a tough choice about whether we should act, whether we have, you know, unanimity in the security council or not.

MR. NIVOLA: If I could just add a footnote to these two reactions. You know, both parties have an internationalist streak in them somewhere, but what's interesting is it's fraught with internal inconsistencies.

On the Democratic side, much of the internationalism centers around human rights issues as Peter stresses, but curiously, without attaching to that the importance of democracy promotion. James Q. Wilson, actually, in his comments to Peter's paper notes that how can one be consistent if one is insisting on expanding human rights without

insisting on exporting democracy, which his essential to securing those rights.

The other part of the -- the other difficulty the Democrats have is over trade. In other words, open trade being sort of the, you know, the most fundamental of human rights or one of them anyway, which is the right to a better living standard, and Democratic discomfort over trade, open trade is -- complicates their internationalism.

On the Republican side, there's plenty of -- there has been up until now plenty of democracy promotion, but sometimes a very cramped view, sort narrow national security, national interest view of human rights violations, for example, resistance to intervention in Kosovo, reluctance to do anything about Darfur and so on, but even more importantly, an inclination toward a liberal stance on immigration policy.

Gary?

MR. MITCHELL: Thanks. Gary Mitchell from the Mitchell Report. I want to -- I have a question for Peter, and I want preface it with a comment about -- for Peter Rodman and that is that I thought you said earlier in your comments that it takes two to polarize. And I would argue that it takes two to create partisanship, but polarization is something that can be created unilaterally.

And I think that's been a remarkable hallmark of this administration and accounts for what you describe as Bush derangement syndrome. And I'm not sure it's derangement, but anyway.

The question that I have for Peter Beinart is in your study of polarization and foreign policy, to what extent do you think polarization and sort of acute periods of polarization are issue or event driven, personality driven, and sort of sign of the times driven.

MR. BEINART: That's a really interesting question, probably one that I would need to think about a lot more before I could come up with even a semblance of an answer.

Clearly, one can think of events that are highly, you know, partisan and if war is going badly, are very, very divisive. Vietnam was very divisive. And Peter Rodman was right, Iraq would have been much less divisive had it gone badly. Korea was quite divisive -- sorry, Iraq, had it gone well, it would have been much less divisive. Korea had gone -- was quite divisive because it didn't go well.

But I think what's important to remember is and I think this is where I would -- that our wisest presidents have tried to take -- get us into war in ways that inoculate to some degree the potential for the division to break out if it goes bad.

If you look at the way that Franklin Roosevelt brings America into World War II, the fact that he waits and waits and waits, is not willing to take the country into war even when he probably does have a national majority, even when he probably could get it through congress in the summer of 1941, even after German subs are shooting down U.S. boats over the Atlantic pretty consistently, but waits for Pearl Harbor, precisely

because he thinks that things may go badly and he wants the country absolutely unified in the eventuality so we can get through it.

I think you see a difference of -- a difference in the way that he has acted from other American presidents. So, I think it's clearly event driven. I think that there are other cultural realities that impact on foreign policy.

As I was saying earlier, the sectional division in the United States, which was also a division -- it was very profoundly a division about economics and economic policy in the early part of the 20th century expressed itself in foreign policy.

And I think to some degree you see some of that today, that there are regional and cultural divisions. I think that you find, for instance, church attendance is tracking quite closely, for instance, with certain views on foreign policy in the post Bush era.

So, there are cultural -- there are domestic and cultural roots of this. But I also think and here, I would probably disagree a bit with Peter Rodman, I think that there are things that the Bush Administration did that really were not even inevitable even if you had gone into Iraq.

I mean, George W. Bush went out of his way in 2002 to create a fight over homeland security that he did not need at all. It was really a Democratic idea. I think it would have been very easy to get a consensus on homeland security. He did not need to have the Iraq War vote in 2002 before the election, even though Carl Robe is now saying

bizarrely that in fact it was Democrats who wanted it and Republicans wanted it afterwards.

And they did not have to continually misrepresent the position of his opponent, suggesting over and over again that what Democrats really wanted to do was bring Osama bin Laden into a therapist's office on the Upper Westside of Manhattan.

That kind of stuff and the Democrats somehow didn't --

MR. RODMAN: Oh, come on.

MR. BEINART: That was -- the line -- the therapy, you know, Michael, I think those lines were actually used by Carl Rove and Dick Cheney. And I'm not saying Democrats are pure, but I think there was --

MR. RODMAN: Well, you're so delicate and gee, the Democrats are so unused to political debate and oh my, I feel sorry for you guys. You're so fragile.

MR. BEINART: No. I mean, that's not what I'm saying. But I think that -- I mean, I think the irony is that actually, that Bush would've been far better off running for reelection in 2004 had he been even less polarized. And I think that given the fact -- I think Bush's single biggest strength in the 2004 election was that America had not been hit again.

I think that was the biggest reason that people trusted him on terrorism, and I think a lot of the efforts of polarization they made, actually, I think they would have been better served had they not. I think

Bush could have won a big victory in 2004 had he made less of an effort of polarize.

So anyway, this is a near clearly an area where we've gone into a partisan ticket, but that is my own view.

MR. NIVOLA: Do we have time for one more question from this lady in front here?

SPEAKER: Hi, (inaudible) of the World Journal. The question is on China for Mr. Rodman, but everybody is welcome to chime in.

I'd like to have your take on the recent disputes over the two minesweepers and Jayhawk Feather Group denied access to Hong Kong and what kind of implications to the military and the world relationship and what to expect over the upcoming DCT with China?

MR. RODMAN: Well, I saw in the paper today that the Chinese are saying it had to do with the Dali Lama, so I mean, this is just petty polarization and -- but I think the Chinese made a mistake. I mean, port visits by American Naval ships to Hong Kong have been, you know, going on for generations. And since the turnover of Hong Kong, I think we have considered it very important that there be continuity.

And for the Chinese to start using this to, you know, manipulating this for foreign policy reasons is very disturbing, and I personally think there ought to be some consequences in mill to mill relations, I mean, if the Chinese are starting to play this game.

You mentioned the DCT, defense consultative talks, which is just -- I don't see any -- it's just the undersecretary level talks between the defense ministries and these have been revived and going on for a number of years and I think it's healthy for our military establishments to have ongoing exchanges, but I think both sides are quite sober and realistic as they go into this.

I mean, there is a potential for rivalry in the military area, and both sides, I think, are trying to keep things -- keep relationships very constructive as I was saying before. I think we're getting off our topic here.

But I think -- I mean, I think I said before that -- well, we talked about is there a national consensus on China policy. Maybe that's worth discussing for a moment. Republicans tend to think more about the geopolitical issues of China. The Democrats are concerned about trade problems with China.

It's interesting. I was on a -- did some testimony with Nick Burns a few years ago. There was a combined hearing of the house on services committee, house international relations committee about -- it was about the Europeans lifting the -- European effort to lift their arms embargo against China.

And I was talking to one of the chairman or the senior people before the hearing, and I said look, the Europeans seem to be backing off this idea of lifting embargos, so I'm not going to be too hard on them. And

actually, it was Tom Lantos, and he glared at me and he said, "Speak for yourself."

And what we got was a -- and so the witnesses, administration witnesses were all fairly careful and not saying inflammatory things about China, but we were assaulted from both committees, both parties for being too soft on China.

And they were scathing about the Europeans that they would even think of lifting an arms embargo with respect to China. The Democrats did tend to focus more about trade. I mean, members said, oh, I have, you know, a factory in my district that's closing because of the textile factory. Republicans tended to ask more about the strategic issues.

I suppose this is an element of consensus but I -- and I think there are elements in both parties that obviously want to maintain a sensible long-term relationship with China.

If there were to be a crisis over Taiwan, I think you'd have a huge debate in this country, and I don't know whether it would be a partisan debate, a debate about, you know, should we intervene or not.

Anyway, that's -- I'm not sure that's a partisan debate or a philosophical issue in American politics.

MR. NIVOLA: Well, listen, we're running over time here, so thank you very much for coming. And thank you to the panel for this very stimulating conversation. Thank you.

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