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THE IMPACT OF 9/11 TEN YEARS ON

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NBC News

PANEL 1: THE LONG-TERM IMPACT OF 9/11 ON U.S. INTERESTS, NATIONAL SECURITY AND STANDING IN THE WORLD:

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PANEL 2: THE IMPACT OF 9/11 IN SOUTH ASIA, THE MIDDLE EAST AND BEYOND:

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. GREGORY: And now officially good morning to the Brookings Institution for another in a series of our Meet the Press-Brookings panel discussions on major areas of foreign policy and major policy for the administration.

This is an unusual doubleheader this morning, but it comes at a really important time as we approach the 10th anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks on this country, something that literally changed America and changed the world. We want to examine in this first hour just how it did those things, how it changed the United States, how it changed how we see the world, how we see the threats facing this country, and how the United States reacted, and what the results of all of that were.

So we'll get right to it. I'll introduce our panel. Daniel Byman is a senior fellow and director of research at the Saban Center for Middle East Policy. He is an expert in counterterrorism and Middle East security.

You also know very well Bruce Riedel, former CIA officer, also administration official in various administrations, including the Bush Administration, was in the White House the day of the 9/11 attacks, and, of course, an expert on al Qaeda terrorism and counterterror policy.

Robert Kagan, to my right, is also a senior fellow in foreign policy in the Center of the United States and Europe, an expert on U.S. security policy around the globe, and the role of the U.S. around the world.

Michael O'Hanlon is with us, as well, director of research and senior fellow in foreign policy in the 21st Century Defense Initiative. He's a senior author of the Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan Index Projects. And before joining Brookings, he was co-author of the book, *Toughing It Out In Afghanistan*, an expert on defense policy, and in our wars post-9/11.

Shibley Telhami is with us, as well, a nonresident senior fellow at the Saban Center for Mideast Policy, an expert, of course, on the Middle East, and has new polling that he will share with us this morning about attitudes toward the U.S. in the Middle East, as well as public opinions here.

Also Benjamin Wittes is with us, a senior fellow in the Governance Studies program at Brookings. He focuses on the Supreme Court and is going to speak this morning about some of the legal responses to 9/11 and how that got sorted out over the past decade.

This is a really broad topic, to look at where we are a decade after the 9/11 attacks, and there's so much expertise on the panel and it can take us in so many different directions. And we'll try to, you know, follow those lines of discussion as well as we can and leave some room for your questions, as well.

I want to begin, though, hearing from everyone, and, Bruce Riedel, I will start with you. The very simple question of this decade after 9/11 resulted in what?

MR. RIEDEL: Well, let me give you some very simple numbers. According to the 9/11 Commission Report, the attack on the United States cost al Qaeda less than a half a million dollars. The property damage in New York alone was over $100 billion. The best estimate is the total economic damage of 9/11 was $2 trillion. Brown University's Watson Center has estimated the cost of the two wars that flowed from 9/11 at $4 trillion. Let's have a rounding error, altogether it's only $5 trillion.

This is a global game changer that is one of the most remarkably cheap foreign policy adventures of all time, and that illustrates a big problem in the counterterrorism world. What the bad guys do is cheap and relatively easy to do with a few number of people. Our counterterrorism response is expensive and heavy. We may have made mistakes, we made have incurred losses we didn't need to, but we've incurred them.

MR. GREGORY: Bob Kagan, have we won what we set out to win?

MR. KAGAN: Well, I mean, I don't think there is a win here. I think we clearly have had much more success fighting terrorism than

anyone expected. I think -- if you all go back and read the stories that were written right after 9/11, within a year of 9/11, everyone predicted that there would be another major attack in 6 months, 18 months, 2 years. I don't know what Bruce's prediction was, I don't know what Dan's prediction was, but if you would have said to any of the people on this panel that we would be here in 2011 with no further serious attack, I think they would have said you're crazy.

So that -- and that's the only -- you know, if that's the measure, it's been expensive. A lot of things we do in the world are expensive. Maintaining our global position is expensive, and people can disrupt it more cheaply than we can maintain, but I'm not sure that's necessarily the right metric.

MR. GREGORY: Dan Byman, the big question is, al Qaeda perpetrated the attacks, have we beaten al Qaeda?

MR. BYMAN: Yes and no. I'd like to take both a September 10th perspective and a September 12th perspective. As Bob points out, I'll say I and many others on September 12th were extremely pessimistic about both al Qaeda's strength and America's ability to fight it effectively. And I think we can say 10 years later, with the relatively small number of attacks on the United States, and no catastrophic attacks, and the devastation that's been inflicted on the al Qaeda core, there's been tremendous success.

But from a September 10th perspective, it looks different. If you remember then, there was perhaps an overconfidence, but certainly a sense the world was going America's way. And now if you look at the Middle East, whether it's Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Yemen, the Maghreb, there's a real sense that they are strong anti-American movements, and whether that's violent jihadist movements or broader perceptions, and that sense is not there. So, to me, there's been a big success against al Qaeda, but there's been much less success against what al Qaeda stands for.

MR. GREGORY: Ben, what has this decade resulted in?

MR. WITTES: Well, I think the irony is that we've had a great deal more success operationally against al Qaeda than we've had success in sort of coming to any kind of agreement about what the legal structures that we're going to use to do that are. And, you know, we started out immediately after 9/11 arguing about what the framework would be for the detention, trial, interrogation, capture, kill off al Qaeda, and, you know, 10 years later, we are still arguing almost 2-to-1 about those same set of things.

Now, there has been certainly narrowing of the scope of the debate, there's been progress, I suppose. There have been a number of major acts of Congress, a number of major Supreme Court decisions that have sort of focused the conversation. But I think the remarkable thing is

actually how little progress we have made answering the central questions that the events posed, frankly.

MR. GREGORY: Shibley Telhami, talk a little bit about the results of your polling as you answer the same question, what's the result then?

MR. TELHAMI: Well, it's interesting because I'm talking about a poll that we just conducted with my colleague, Steve Kull, a program for international policy attitudes, and, you know, most Americans feel that American influence in the world has declined over the past decade, the majority of Americans feel that way, and that's highly correlated with the number of people who believe that we have over invested in aspects of our reaction to 9/11. They think we reacted correctly, they wanted to see a reaction to 9/11, but they think that we over invested, particularly in the Iraq War, to some extent, in the Afghanistan War, and even in building alliances for the war on terrorism.

So there is a sense that there is a relationship between this over investment and the decline of our influence. Now, with al Qaeda specifically, when you ask them, did the killing of Bin Laden have an impact, they say, yes, it weakened them a little bit, but they still have a sense that al Qaeda is still strong. And the public, the American public still has a feeling that certainly people in the Muslim world resent America and are angry with America. So the American public, while they think we had

to react, we reacted in the right way, they think we over-invested, and they see a relationship between that and the decline of American influence globally.

MR. GREGORY: Michael, your broad view?

MR. O'HANLON: My broad view, complementing some of these points with which I generally agree, is still a little more of a positive one than maybe the overall gist. Because what I would argue is, a lot of what we were concerned about 10 years ago is what kind of movements, what kind of societies gave rise to the terrorism that so damaged us on 9/11? What was it about not only our relationships with the broader Islamic world, but the nature of many of these Islamic societies and governments that produced the breeding ground for attack theory extremism?

And as I -- and I'm not the best expert on this panel to talk about the broader Islamic world, but I'll provoke the conversation and let other people challenge me. As I look around the world at the big Muslim majority countries, I think most of them, not all, certainly not Pakistan, but most of them have had a pretty good decade, mostly to their own credit: Indonesia, Turkey, Egypt, I hope, although, obviously, that's just beginning. And Saudi Arabia I think has at least made a little headway against its own internal terrorist threats.

So if you view the world in terms of the health of major Islamic states, and that being a big determinate of our future vulnerability of terrorism, I actually think, not so much because of our actions, but because of theirs, it's been an okay decade.

MR. GREGORY: Let me gender a little bit of debate here with a provocative proposition, and that is that history will view this past decade, and among the observations will be that the United States was gripped by fear, that it compromised what it stands for, its values, it compromised its liberties, and, in essence, fulfilled Osama Bin Laden's grand design, which was to allow it to draw itself in, to be drawn into bloody conflicts that will have uncertain results and to an outsized reaction to something that shouldn't have been deemed a war between civilizations. Take that on, Bob.

MR. KAGAN: I have to divide that into the first two and the third, if you don't mind.

MR. GREGORY: Okay, sure.

MR. KAGAN: The first two, I would say you just described the 1950s perfectly: a country gripped by fear, some degree of paranoia, with the result of some curtailment of civil liberties. You also described World War II with the internment. I mean, the United States has periodically gone through these periods, usually prompted by something genuine, but then maybe taking it to the extremes.

And so the good news about that is that we've also come out of those periods and become, again, who we think we are. But this is not -- this is a recurrent pattern.

As to the last, I have to say, and I want to pick up on what Mike said. I think historians -- you asked how historians are going to look at this, I think historians are going to look at what happened on 9/11. I also think they're going to look at what happened in the -- what's happening in the Arab Spring, and they're going to see this period as one of tremendous ferment in the Muslim world, one of -- one kind of ferment producing al Qaeda and the attack, another kind of ferment producing the revolutions that we've seen. And the real question I think historians are going to look at is the many ways in which the United States and the West grappled with this ferment. That's the issue right now, making mistakes, as we always do, overreacting, as we always do, but also getting some things right. And I think, unfortunately, it's too soon to know exactly how this is all going to turn out.

MR. GREGORY: I'm fascinated by the third point, and should we pick up on that, because you talk about polar extremes, the nihilism of al Qaeda, and the utter hope and optimism of the Arab Spring coming out of the same circumstances within the Islamic world.

MR. TELHAMI: Well, you know, up to a point I agree with Bob in the sense that the U.S. had to do what it had to do and there were

positive aspects of it. But, frankly, if you look at the choices that the Bush Administration had, there was choices of reacting, how you frame the issue.

They could have said our main enemy is al Qaeda and its allies, let's build coalitions, focus on that. They could have said what they did, which is this is an axis of evil, worldwide war on terrorism. It could have gone differently, and I think the public senses that. But on the Arab Spring specifically, I believe that the Iraq War delayed the Arab Spring. I think this is not a function of the way the U.S. reacted on 9/11. I think if you look back to the 1980s and the 1990s, all these forces were there in the Arab world. We've been measuring the anger long before, you know, 2001. And why did they now happen is more a function of being enabled by the information revolution that allowed people to organize without the need for political parties. This is something that happened only in the past five years, really with the expansion of the Internet.

So the fact is, the policy itself did not accelerate the emergence of the Arab Spring. If anything, it may have done it inadvertently in that it made people more angry with governments that were forced to support American policies that were highly unpopular and that increased the resentment.

MR. GREGORY: Getting on this point, which is history shows us that the United States will sometimes overreact to threats that it faces, is this different or consistent with what we've seen in the past?

MR. BYMAN: I think it's really worth separating the domestic level question, you know, have we betrayed our values from the international level question, have we embroiled ourselves in a series of overseas conflict that we got sort of drawn into, on which the latter I would defer to every other member of this panel on. I think it's actually very hard to argue that America is substantially less free than it was 10 years ago.

And, you know, I know it gets thrown around a lot, we've sort of compromised our values in pursuit of counterterrorism, but I think, you know, there are -- and there are certainly discreet places like airports where you are definitely subject to a, you know, to a much more probing -- no pun intended -- you know, scrutiny than you used to be. And there are certainly groups of people, for example, we detain people outside of the criminal justice system who are, you know, detained abroad in a military context. That was a problem we didn't confront prior to 9/11.

It's very easy to fixate on any of those specific areas and sort of conclude that the country is less free than it used to be. I think it's a great era, frankly. I think the country has confronted problems that it didn't previously confront, and those problems have required, you know,

engagements of liberty interests and security interests that are complicated and multi faceted, but they're --

MR. GREGORY: But they're complicated. Talk about complicated, Guantanamo Bay's prison is still open. We've still got fighters we picked up a decade ago who are still there. And this Democratic President is, frankly, content to let people remain in custody indefinitely.

MR. BYMAN: Well, this Democratic President made a grave mistake during a campaign implying, though never quite saying, that when he said he was going to close Guantanamo, what he meant was he was going to get rid of noncriminal detention. He let a lot of people believe that. I don't think he ever really meant that. He certainly should not have said that to the extent that he implied that, because the truth is we're still holding people because we're still fighting a war in which those people are participants in the combatant forces of the other side.

MR. GREGORY: And so let me go back to that side of it then, the international side, Bruce Riedel, which is Bin Laden's dream of dragging the United States into costly bloody wars. I'm reminded of President Bush who said, so early and so often, we're going to fight them over there so we don't have to fight them over here. He's been largely vindicated on that point, has he not?

MR. RIEDEL: Well, to your first point, Bin Laden certainly has been vindicated, he got two bleeding wars. Whether the $4 trillion is right or wrong, it's been incredibly expensive for the United States of America. And one of those wars I think historians will look back and, frankly, scratch their head and say, Iraq, why did we go to war in Iraq? It had nothing to do with 9/11, it had nothing to do with al Qaeda. That's the historical question I think historians will debate for years and years to come.

Have we prevented attacks here by going abroad? Certainly. The pressure we're putting on al Qaeda core in Pakistan today is unprecedented. And it's not just the killing of Bin Laden, it's the information that came out of his lair in Abbottabad, which is leading to these other kills that are coming pretty quickly in its quake.

Is it foolproof? Christmas Day, 2009, the young Nigerian panicked. If he hadn't panicked, an airplane would have been blown up over Detroit. It would have transformed the United States of America again, I'm pretty sure. It may not have been of the order of magnitude of 9/11, but an American aircraft being destroyed on Christmas Day, that would have been President Obama's worst nightmare of how to end his first term in office.

MR. GREGORY: Dan Byman, a similar point just to pick up on that, Doug Lewd of the administration has said, look, this is our

moment here. We killed Bin Laden. These guys are on the run. We're going to use these drones in fifth gear, and we're going to take them out. To what extent is al Qaeda close to becoming yesterday's news?

MR. BYMAN: You can divide al Qaeda into different circles or components. There's the core that was around Bin Laden that's now around his successor, Zawahiri, and that's been hit extremely hard. As Bruce mentioned, there's the drone attacks, there's the intelligence that's really kept -- forced it to keep its head down.

But then you think about the affiliate organizations and those who have received training, and there you have thousands of people, and they're the danger. It varies by country. In some countries they're getting stronger, in others getting weaker, but the danger remains quite real. And the Christmas Day attack Bruce mentioned, that was an affiliate organization, that wasn't directly by the al Qaeda core. And then there's the kind of wannabes, the people inspired by ideology, and there there's good and bad news. The good news is that there's been a decline in this ideology, especially, I would say, since the peak around 2006. But the bad news is, if you look at a 15-, 20-year perspective, it's much higher. So al Qaeda, the core, I think has been hit pretty hard. But what al Qaeda stands for and the groups it worked with I think is doing fine.

MR. TELHAMI: May I add another layer on this, which is the

public opinion? Remember, al Qaeda's real core followers -- even ideological followers -- are relatively small in Muslim countries and Arab countries. So, the fight has always been about the majority of Arabs and Muslims who have an opinion, who will either look the other way when al Qaeda is operating or root for them when they're facing the U.S. What we have seen in the past is that, by and large, they applauded their methods and what they were doing in large part because they saw the U.S. as the main enemy -- just as the enemy of America, not because they embraced their ideology. All the polls showed that.

What we see now because of the nature of the Arab Spring and the demonstrations that have succeeded so far that have been largely peaceful, it has put in play in the Arab world a different message, a different method, a different popularity for another inspiring mode. And they have -- their influence in the broad public has declined dramatically. And that is not to be underestimated, because that's far and beyond their core operational capacity.

MR. GREGORY: I mean, look, Bin Laden comes out looking like a real loser here. Like if this was the crowning moment of the coming of the caliphate is a guy with old TVs sitting in a room in suburban Islamabad? I mean, these are not the glory days of the Ottoman Empire. Fair to say?

MR. TELHAMI: He lived long enough to watch his nightmare come about in Egypt, when peaceful demonstrators brought down Mubarak,

which he couldn't do.

MR. GREGORY: Yeah.

MR. TELHAMI: And his -- Zawahiri couldn't do before in Egypt through arms and terrorism.

MR. GREGORY: That's a fascinating point. Guys, let's get Mike on this, which is -- and Bob, you may want to join in as well. How is the security equation changed as a result of our projection of U.S. power, first in Afghanistan and Iraq, which of course are ongoing commitments?

MR. O'HANLON: Well, we're tired as a nation. I think that's fair to say regardless of one's view on whether all the wars have been justifiable or smart or not.

And I certainly think that you combine the financial effects, the political effects with the budget crisis that we're in, and you're going to see a period of military retrenchment to the extent that the world lets us get away with that. And a point that Bob may or may not put in the exact same terms, but I think we both are reminded of the old, you know, Bolshevik saying: You may not have an interest in war, but war may have an interest in you. And this ain't over yet. And there may be places in the world where bad things happen that we don't feel like we can, you know, just decide it's a war of choice for us and choose not to get involved. Even if Iraq may have been.

And so, I'm thinking of everything from a possible worsening of civil strife that goes on for an extended period in Yemen, where you see an

al Qaeda sanctuary developing and you wonder if you can really sit by, to possible Indo-Pakistani conflict, where things get so bad that nuclear weapons are either threatened for use or used. And India and Pakistan, against their current druthers, invite the world in to do a stabilization mission in Kashmir because it's better than nuclear war. I can think of a number of other scenarios, too.

So, the preference is going to be to retrench. We'll see if the world let's us get away with that.

MR. GREGORY: Bob, you want to make a point?

MR. KAGAN: Well, I just -- you know, again I hate to keep bringing up history. But we've been tired before. After Vietnam, the period -- the country went through a wrenching period. And yet remarkably, five years later it was morning in America. And then the Soviet Union fell, and things have a way of changing.

And I would just say right now, I would say that the minute we're back at 4 percent growth the country's going to be in a better mood and a lot of these problems are going to dissipate. And I honestly think that as a purely structural matter, even given the draining wars in Iraq in Afghanistan, the United States is still in a very strong position in the world. Stronger than anyone else. There really remains no major competitor across the board in terms of power. And it's within our capacity to continue shaping the world.

We have to want to do that. We have to lead intelligently. We need good leadership. But it's totally within our capacity.

MR. GREGORY: You need to -- Tom Friedman's new book, *That Used To Be Us,* it includes the proposition that we've spent the last decade chasing the losers of globalization. And, too, that the fear that gripped the United States during the Cold War was also something that galvanized the country to seek to do great things and that that has not been the by-product of this past decade.

MR. RIEDEL: Well, every situation is different. I mean, he's thinking about *Sputnik* and, you know, because the Soviets put up a satellite and, therefore, we increased our math programs. I don't know what Bin Laden would have provoked us to do in particular. I don't know. Math programs didn't seem to be the answer.

I think that, you know, it is easy right now to write about us being in a low point as long as you don't think too hard about the past and as long as you can imagine us ever pulling ourselves out of it. And the nice thing about Tom is, he's an optimist. And I think if you read his book, we'll pull ourselves out of it.

MR. GREGORY: But what interests me, Bruce, about that -- and I know you wanted to make a point -- is that if on September 12th, as you alluded to, Dan, the question was, how did this happen? And how do we keep it from ever happening again? So what is our current reality?

You look at the state of al Qaeda. You look at Pakistan as a country that seems less stable, not more stable, as a result of this decade in terms of security concerns. You have Iran seems to be in a better position, not a worse position, and very threatening. So, what is -- what did we do in the defensive posture in the last decade that got us real gains?

MR. RIEDEL: Well, on the defensive side, our counterterrorism reorganization -- actually, more than reorganization -- creation, the number of institutions we've built -- Department of Homeland Security, National Counterterrorism Center, a dozen or so we never had before -- they are still in their maturation process, and they still have an awful lot of legal problems, as Ben has pointed out. But we have created an architecture that we didn't have on September 10. And it's working so far.

My caveat, al Qaeda state. Five years ago at this point, we had just foiled a massive al Qaeda plot which intended to blow up 10 jumbo jets mid-route over the North Atlantic to airports in the United States and Canada. When we unraveled that plot back to Pakistan, we discovered a whole architecture of al Qaeda that we had never heard of before, a complete echelon of groups that were completely new to us.

That's the problem in the intelligence business. You never know what you don't know, and usually what you don't know is the most important thing to know. I agree, we've put a lot of pressure on al Qaeda core. We've put a lot of pressure on the people around Osama Bin Laden.

We've learned a lot in Abbottabad. But you should also put in the back of your mind a healthy respect for the agility and resilience of this group.

Think about it this way. This is a relatively small number of people who have been chased around the world by virtually every intelligence service in the world now for over a decade. It started in 1998. They're still operating. We discovered in Abbottabad that Osama Bin Laden was the CEO of a global terrorist organization. Okay. Maybe he looked a little pathetic watching TV, but the reality was he was running a global terrorist organization. He was getting progress reports. He was making personnel decisions. That's pretty remarkable for an organization that's been hunted for so long by so many.

MR. GREGORY: Michael O'Hanlon, you want to make a point?

MR. O'HANLON: Well, I wanted to go back to the issue of looking at the last 10 years in modern historical perspective very briefly and just say, well, of course, Tom Friedman is a very young man and he may not remember that the Cold War was actually pretty bad and the last 10 years have been tough. But we shouldn't think that they are somehow the exception to most of what we've done in our modern history.

I mean, the 1950s had a war that we were totally unprepared for, Korea, followed by a period of McCarthyism and other division. Maybe there was a brief moment of the happy Norman Rockwell family and, you

know, maybe 1956 was perfect. I don't remember. But then we got to --

SPEAKER: You're right you don't remember.

MR. O'HANLON: Exactly. But then we got to the Bay of Pigs and the Cuban Missile Crisis. Then we got to Vietnam. Then we got to Watergate and stagflation and oil shocks and Mideast crises and the fall of the shah. Throughout it all, we had the fear of nuclear war.

I mean, who are we kidding? The last 10 years have been better than that. Now, maybe there was a moment in the 1980s, in Morning in America, when we tended to feel better on average. But the Cold War, for the most part, was a very tough period. And the last 10 years, as bad as they've been -- and certainly they haven't been perfect and they haven't been quite as good as some of the happier moments of the '80s or '90s -- on balance, over the last 70-year time period, not so rough.

MR. GREGORY: Benjamin, I want to end on this point before we turn to your questions. You know, there's the natural reaction -- and we had it this morning before we came out here -- which is, you know, where were you? What were you doing? How did you hear? Do you recall watching the coverage? Do you remember how you felt emotionally?

And on that level, on the level of our fear -- individual fear -- do you think that something was lost that day in terms of the American public's ability to trust government to protect them?

MR. WITTES: Oh, I think so. And I -- look, I think that that

aspect probably should be lost in the sense that, you know, we do in fact live in a world that Bruce just described where, you know, a guy who we all thought was in a cave -- it's a better metaphor, I suppose, than in a compound in Abbottabad -- but you know, a guy in a cave can run a global terrorist organization. And that's a very scary thing. And you know, the -- that you can have that person and that organization hunted for 10 years by every intelligence service in the world and still operational should make you concerned about the extent to which governments are capable of protecting you.

Now, you don't want to take that point too far. But I think one of the points that Bruce's description of modern al Qaeda raises is, is al Qaeda a sort of sui generis oddity, something that developed or that is unlike anything else in the world before it? It certainly is that, but also unlike anything that's going to come after it. Or is it a -- that sort of global networked terrorist organization that governments can't really do a very good job suppressing at huge expense? Is that sort of the future that we're dealing with and al Qaeda is simply the first example of that?

And I think if you -- when you consider that question, that's the very deep fear that is behind everybody's sort of great emotional reaction to 9/11. That oh, my god, there's this thing out there, this kind of structure of global, you know, terrorism that we are not fully capable of controlling or stopping. And I think that should erode people's confidence, at least a little

bit.

MR. GREGORY: Shibley, go ahead.

MR. TELHAMI: Maybe because of that, in the poll that we just conducted, one of the things that's clear is that two out of three Americans think that the war on terrorism cannot be won by military means alone. Still a majority of Americans think that you need to build alliances and you need to deal with root causes.

Now, I have to say one thing which we haven't really focused on in this discussion is the impact of this on our politics. Because in the polling, all the polling shows it divided America to this day. The -- what stands out to me when I look at the polling is how different the attitudes of Republicans on the one hand, Democrats and Independents on most of those issues. To this day, a majority of Republicans -- according to the poll -- believe that there was a link between Saddam Hussein and al Qaeda. A plurality of Republicans believe that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction before the war or at least a major program on weapons of mass destruction. And the majority of Republicans to this day believe that it was -- the war was justified.

Now, it's the opposite is true of Democrats and Independents, and you see that difference pervasive on most of these answers. And I think this is something -- we focus on congressional partisanship, but there is a grassroots division in America. Not even only about what we should do, but

even about the facts, even about the narrative. And that has been one of the outcomes, I think, of this.

MR. GREGORY: I want to turn to your questions --

SPEAKER: Shibley's point is, by the way, exactly right also with respect to the domestic civil liberties components that you were asking about before.

MR. GREGORY: Sure.

SPEAKER: There's a sort of --

MR. GREGORY: But it is striking. I think one of the big stories of the past decade is as divided and divisive as the response has been, the amount of continuity between a Republican to a Democratic administration has been striking.

SPEAKER: Yep.

MR. GREGORY: And you know, there are people who have written -- Andrew Sullivan wrote a piece in *Newsweek* this past week that I thought was quite good on how this administration has changed some things, refined some policies. It doesn't change that the core is really there in terms of response.

Let's open this up to you and take your questions. Sir. Microphones are arriving. There you go.

MR. ARIKAT: Good morning to you all. My name is Said Arikat from *Al Quds Daily* newspaper.

I remember right after September 11, to be exact in April 2002, the President of the United States, President Bush, came out and spoke of the urgency as a response to all these terrorist attacks to address the Middle East, to address the Palestinian issue, to resolve it, on the lawn of the White House. In fact, he ordered Mr. Sharon to pull back his tanks. He had just reoccupied the West Bank at the time. And here we are 10 years later, the situation still goes on. We don't see that, at least in that particular respect. There has been no influence, to answer Mr. Kagan, who says we still influence the world and so on, despite so many plans and so on.

So how do you see this thing evolving? How do you see this thing panning out now that the Palestinians are going to the U.S.?

MR. GREGORY: You know, it's interesting, Bob. This has always been used since 9/11 to say, well, this is the root cause. To Shibley's point, this is the root cause. If we don't get to this, we can't solve it. We haven't solved it, and it still seems like a more convenient cause for people who choose to use it, certainly in the Middle East.

MR. KAGAN: Well, I mean, first of all, we haven't solved it in the previous 10 years and I think we didn't solve it in the previous 30 years before that. I mean, so nothing has changed, including at times when America was allegedly the most powerful nation and could do whatever it wanted.

So in terms of it being the root cause, I mean, there are people

on this panel who are better experts than I am. I'm pretty confident that for Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda it was not the root cause. And you know, it -- we're talking about unintended consequences in Iraq. One of the unintended consequences of our first Persian Gulf war was the leaving of troops in Saudi Arabia, which infuriated Osama bin Laden. One of the unintended effects of arming the Afghan Mujahideen against the Soviets, which nobody thought was a bad idea at the time, was to arm these guys. And that's what gave rise to this.

So, I -- that's the way I see it.

MR. GREGORY: Shibley, I -- it seems to me the urgency has been there, but it doesn't get it across the finish line.

MR. TELHAMI: That's right. But before, I just want to address what Bob said on this, because I think it's important about sort of what motivated al Qaeda. And I think Bruce and Dan may have something to add to this, because it's important for us to think about sort of when you're going in, what motivated them. We have to reexamine that 10 years after.

Bob is right, the primary principle of al Qaeda emerged as a response to the American presence in the area. There's no question that was a major issue. And I think, though, it's incorrect to say that the Arab-Israeli issue is not one -- and I think Bruce may want to add to this -- because we have a lot of evidence that that is a motivating factor for them.

But the debate wasn't really about sort of what is the core

group. It's about what is the -- why is the rest of the public more angry with America than they are with al Qaeda? And all the polling in the Arab world showed over the past decade that the central source of anger with America has been the Arab-Israeli issue.

Now it may be true that what Bob said -- you know, so what? We can't do anything about it. Maybe we can't. The urgency has been there. But, you know, I have a forthcoming book with several colleagues on American diplomacy since 1989. One of the striking findings that even in the Clinton Administration when Bruce was in the White House, that we found, yes, there was the urgency. Clinton spent a lot on it. That, in fact, defined what was -- didn't want to -- why Bush didn't want to deal with it because he put a lot into it and failed.

But, frankly, the Clinton Administration never really defined it as a central issue to America's national interest. They thought they were doing some moral good, some political good, but they never defined it as a central issue. And that is really fascinating, because this -- in contrast, you had this President who defined it as a national interest of the U.S., but still didn't go get over the hump in resolving it.

MR. GREGORY: Bruce?

MR. RIEDEL: Well, to point to the issue of urgency, it was November 2001, less than two months after September 11, when President Bush at the United Nations General Assembly first endorsed the two-state

solution. He got it right then. He seems to have fallen off the wagon pretty quickly afterwards.

Is it a core issue for al Qaeda? Absolutely. Read what they say, read their life history. Certainly Ayman al-Zawahiri started his life in terrorism to murder Anwar al-Sadat. Why? Because of the Israeli-Egyptian Peace Treaty. This has been a wedge issue that al Qaeda exploits relentlessly to recruit people.

Look at people like the Nigerian. Why did he do it? Why does he say he does it? Anger about the Gaza war. Look at Faisal Shahzad, the Pakistani who tried to blow up Times Square. Why did he do it? Anger about the Gaza war. Over and over again, they will say in their own words -- and bin Laden said it repeatedly -- this war will continue as long as you support Israel.

Now our obvious response is not to abandon Israel and give them what he wants, but to try to take away the wedge issue from them. And it's hard to do. It's very, very hard to do. It's easy to say, it's extraordinary difficult to do. And no president has yet figured out how to do it.

And let's be honest, domestic politics is a huge part of this and it will continue to be a huge part of it. It will be very interesting to see what a re-elected -- if he is re-elected -- Barack Obama is willing to do on this issue when he no longer has to worry about domestic politics anymore.

MR. GREGORY: You know, I disagree. The concept of the wedge issue and the neighborhood in which you're operating is so important in terms of recruitment. And a friend of mine who does counterterrorism for the FBI would make the observation that, you know, it's tough for a lot of these, you know, would-be recruits when they come to the United States and they get a good job and they have their families here. It's a little tough, because life is pretty good here, to make the case that you should go kill yourself. And that's the great strength of the United States. It's easier when you're living in an environment where you've got that sort of pressing down on your existence every day.

Where else? Other questions. Yes.

MS. STEINER: Hi. I'm Ashley Steiner. I work with the *Washington Quarterly* over at CSIS. And I was just curious about what your guys' opinions are about America's image abroad and how dedicated we are to cleaning that up. And if so, what we can do to do that?

MR. GREGORY: Bob, do you subscribe to the idea that -- Dick Cheney was asked this, and he took exception to the notion that somehow America's image abroad was really compromised.

MR. KAGAN: Well, obviously our image abroad is compromised. The question is, how important is that? Because if -- again, I feel like a broken record here. It's not the first time our image has been compromised.

If you go back and look at 1968, just to pick a year almost at random, you've got the Vietnam war, you've got the assassinations of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy. In that '60s, you've had the Watts Riots. You're going to have Nixon and Watergate. When European students were protesting in the streets of Europe, they were not applauding American culture.

And so we've -- there have been many times. And there's not a direct correlation between the influence the United States wields in the world and the image of the United States in the world. Sometimes we have a great image, like in the early Kennedy years, and a very unsuccessful foreign policy; sometimes we have a terrible image and have a very successful foreign policy.

So of course our image has been damaged. But here's the key thing: When both Europeans and the Arab League wanted to get rid of Qaddafi, they turned to the United States and asked the United States to use its lethal military power to get that done. And at just a few years after the Iraq war, at a time of very low American standing in the Middle East.

I mean, the bottom line is it's true of people and nations, they like you when you're helping them. They don't like you when you're standing in their way. And if you can't do anything for them, they don't care about you one way or the other. I mean, there is a certain basic reality that I think image -- we get too caught up with image.

MR. GREGORY: And, Dan, yeah.

MR. BYMAN: Yeah. To me, one of the big changes in America's orientation after 9/11 was this question of people versus governments. I think Bob is absolutely right, government-to-government relations.

But before 9/11, looking at Saudi Arabia, I strongly cared about the opinion of 15 people, and they all happened to have the same last name. And if the other, you know, 15+ million people in the country didn't like America I felt bad, but it didn't really bother me.

After 9/11 when we had this question of terrorist recruitment, terrorist fundraising, and also from an intelligence point of view would these people cooperate with their government to shut down anti-American groups or did they see them as heroes. And to me, public opinion does matter in that way. And ironically, one of our greatest allies in this has been al Qaeda where people often don't like the United States, they don't like American policies.

But when al Qaeda goes out and kills, especially Muslim civilians, people see them as monsters and are willing to work with at least their governments who, in turn, as Bob suggests, work with the United States.

So, it's not a crystal clear issue one way or another. The thing I'd add on changing opinion of the United States is I don't think

there's really a good answer to this. We have this magic word or term we kept using 10 years ago, 5 years ago just called "public diplomacy," as if someone would get up and say, okay, now I'm going to do public diplomacy, and everyone would all of a sudden like America.

Most of this comes from a very complex view of American values and American policies, and most of which I don't want to change, and I'm willing to pay the price and dislike. And I think we can spin it a little better. But I think many of the changes that lead to dislike of America involve things that I happen to love about America and don't want to fix.

SPEAKER: Just a quick footnote. When al Qaeda was successfully recruiting the people who actually carried out 9/11, it was in the late 1990s under Bill Clinton when America's image was -- you know, some people were annoyed at the hyper power, but it was generally pretty good, and he was working very hard to get a peace agreement in the Middle East. That's when the guys were recruited who killed so many people in 9/11.

SPEAKER: Well, that -- I mean, you know, you can -- if you look at what happened in Pakistan, I mean, let's be serious, I mean, why has it taken 10 years to get Osama Bin Laden?

I mean, there's no question that there are a lot of people who are more angry with America than they were angry with al Qaeda. I'm not sure that the kind of cooperation that we're getting from the Pakistani

public or the Pakistani army or the Pakistani intelligence services was on the level that it should have been for us to have -- one reason we failed is that more people were angry with us that they would look the other way even if they didn't sympathize with al Qaeda.

So, I think it matters, and I don't agree that America's influence with governments has not declined. I think up to a point it hasn't. Anybody will not challenge America's interests. They know we're powerful and we're ready to go after them if they challenge primary America. Nobody is going to challenge America today directly.

But I think the perception of the American public is that America's influence declined. The perception around the world is that America's influence declined, and when we go to ask the Saudis to do this or that, they don't. I mean, look, we asked the Israelis to do something on the settlements. They didn't respond. We're asking the Palestinians not to go to the U.N. They're not responding. We used to go to Saudis and say we would like you to put $50 million into this program because it's too hard for us to get it out of Congress, so can you put that money in there so we can help. It's very hard to --

MR. BYMAN: When we asked the Saudi's not to bankrupt our economy in 1973, they didn't pay any attention to us.

SPEAKER: I just give the Saudis as an example. I think the truth of the matter is there is a decline of America's influence around the

world.

MR. GREGORY: Final moments here. Let's get -- yes, sir, question in the back. All the way in the back. Yes, sir, against the wall.

MR. LADUVIER: I project well.

MR. GREGORY: You are projecting.

MR. LADUVIER: Steve LaDuvier. In the interest of full disclosure, I was a producer for a number of years at NBC. David, Percy Arrington says hello.

MR. GREGORY: Ah, good.

MR. LADUVIER: It wouldn't be a *Meet the Press* event without breakout quotes, so let me throw this out and ask you guys to respond.

We also have to work sort of the dark side, if you will. We've got to spend time in the shadows in the intelligence world. A lot of what needs to be done here will have to be done quietly without any discussion using sources and methods that are available to our intelligence agencies if we're going to be successful. That's the world these folks operate in, so it's going to be vital for us to use any means at our disposal basically to achieve our objectives.

To what extent does then Vice President Cheney's quote remain an article of faith for the contemporary presidency and for future presidents?

MR. GREGORY: Bruce Riedel?

MR. RIEDEL: I think the notion that we're going to have to fight an intelligence war is obvious and we are doing it, and this President is doing it aggressively with Predators. Does that justify torture? No. That's the difference. Torture is not necessary in order to produce good intelligence. In fact, anyone who's ever done it in the intelligence business will tell you torture produces bad intelligence. It can lead to disastrous mistakes. That's a fundamental difference between the Bush/Cheney approach and the Obama approach.

MR. GREGORY: But, Bruce, it's easy for the Obama approach to happen 10 years later. Are you really saying that a Democratic administration would not have employed 95 to 100 percent of the measures put in place by the Bush Administration?

MR. RIEDEL: I think I would differ there, because I think one of the characteristics of the Bush/Cheney reaction was they pushed the intelligence community, a reluctant intelligence community, into the business of torture. The FBI and the rank and file of the CIA said we don't want to do this; this is a bad idea, not only a bad idea because we could get in trouble some day, but also a bad idea because it produces lousy intelligence. You needed a President -- and in this case a Vice President -- who was determined to make them do it whether or not -- and I'm not sure a Democrat or even another Republican would have done that.

MR. GREGORY: Yes, sir.

MR. MITCHELL: Thanks. I'm Garrett Mitchell from *The Mitchell Report*. And I want to take the issue that Shibley and Ben Wittes were dealing with just before you went to Q&A, and turn it around a little bit, and that is if we accept the proposition that America's prestige and influence has taken a hit during the first dozen years of the new century and the new millennium, which factor has had the greatest influence and which factor has the capacity to have the most sustaining influence on our power and prestige either in -- whether it's about perception or reality -- the sort of global Islamic jihad or our domestic political jihad.

MR. GREGORY: Go ahead.

SPEAKER: Oh, I don't really entirely -- I don't even know how to begin to answer that question. I mean, I think the -- you have a -- in the hit that the United States has taken over the past 10 years, you have a combination of, you know, one war that most people have serious second thoughts about or third thoughts about; a second war that a lot of people are committed to that hasn't gone as well as one would have wanted it to; a global economic decline/collapse; and a series of things that we did that a lot of people have real reservations about in retrospect or even at the time.

Now, how you weight those priorities in terms of what -- you know, which is the dominant one and which are the supporting ones, they

all kind of push in the same direction in terms of, you know, the impressions that people have, the sort of mood of the country. And I think -- you know, I think Bob's point earlier that all of this would look very different if we were back at 4 percent economic growth is undoubtedly true. And I think you can't really assess whether this is the beginning of the downward slope of the end of the great American, you know, period or whether it's a blip in a sine wave until you have a sense of the long-term trajectory of it.

MR. GREGORY: I'm going to make that last word. We're unfortunately out of time. Thank you all very much. Thank you to a terrific discussion from the panel.

Say again? I was just going to say that.

There's more to come. Part 2 of the doubleheaders where we'll have more of a focus on 9/11 10 years later and look at the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq as well as Pakistan, and also take stock of the Arab Spring and how the puzzles have changed in terms of our security interest and our involvement in the Middle East. So, that is to come in the second part of our discussion. Thanks very much. (Applause)

(Interruption)

MR. GREGORY: -- for Part 2 of our discussion, 10 years on after the 9/11 terrorist attacks on America. This panel is going to examine the impact of 9/11 on South Asia and throughout the Middle East. It has

been a momentous and eventful decade by virtue of the U.S. response but also a response to the forces of al Qaeda and its impact on the region in the world and then, of course, the Arab Spring.

With us to talk about it all is Michael Doran. He's a senior fellow with the Saban Center for Mideast Policy with a particular expertise in defense and security issues and will speak about Iraq.

Susan Maloney is with us as well, a senior fellow in foreign policy, also at Saban, studies around the political economy of the Gulf and Mideast energy policy, formerly of the State Department.

Shadi Hamid is here as well. Nice to have him in person here. He's a fellow in the Saban Center for Middle East Policy Study and the director of research for Brookings' Doha Center. Shadi focuses on Islamist political priorities and democratic reform in the Middle East, so he's been busy in the past many months.

Vanda Felbab-Brown is a fellow in foreign policy on the 21st Century Defense Initiative with particular expertise on previous panels concerning Pakistan.

Terry Schaffer is with us, the nonresident senior fellow, Foreign Policy, on the 21st Century Defense Initiative, who can talk with expertise about trends in South Asia, particularly India and Pakistan.

I want to begin, as I did in the last session -- and, Shadi, let me begin with you -- to simply ask the question of what has the result

been in the Middle East and in South Asia of the decades since 9/11 has passed?

MR. HAMID: Well, I think overall it hasn't gone well for the U.S., and if you look and you see even how the Obama Administration tried to correct the mistakes of the Bush Administration in terms of digressive response, U.S. favorability ratings in the Arab world are actually lower under Obama than they were under President Bush. I mean, for example, according to the recent Zogby Poll, it was 9 percent in 2008 in Egypt; now it's 5 percent under Obama. So, it was pretty bad, but it's gotten worse.

MR. GREGORY: Do you have a sense of why that is?

MR. HAMID: Well, I think with Obama there were incredible expectations. And I remember I was living in Jordan in 2008 during the campaign, and leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood would tell me privately that they were rooting for President Obama. But even they, the most kind of anti-American, were optimistic about what Obama could bring to the region. So, I think it's mostly a gap in expectations and reality. And, I mean, Obama really gave the impression that he was going to reorient for U.S. foreign policy as we know it, and that hasn't been the case.

And, of course, in the previous panel there was discussion about Israel and Palestine at the end of the day. That's going to continue to be a major issue. And I'm, quite frankly, frightened about the U.N. vote

in a couple of weeks, and if we veto any goodwill that we've gotten in the past seven months because the Arab Spring, forget about it.

MR. GREGORY: And we'll follow up on that as we go along.

Terry, what about your opening thoughts on what's resulted in the past decade?

MS. SCHAFFER: Well, you've had an interesting trajectory. In the case of Pakistan, the first impact of 9/11 on U.S./Pakistan relations was the reestablishment of a big relationship, which had been broken in 1990 and which was reestablished after a 20-year hiatus. What we're now going through is the classic life cycle of the big U.S./Pakistan relationship where the hopes that are established by Pakistan's ability or proximity to an issue external to Pakistan that's really important to the United States bump into the gaps between the strategic objectives of Pakistan and of the United States, and we are now in crisis, and the issues that are leading to the crisis are mainly centered on Afghanistan.

In India you've had a different trajectory in which 9/11 plays a smaller part. You had a major expansion of U.S.-India relations starting in about 2000. I think there was some hope in India that Pakistan's involvement with Islamic extremism would leave the United States to lose interest in Pakistan. That has not worked out. But the expansion in U.S.-India relations has continued and, of course, has also backwashed onto our relationship with (inaudible).

MR. GREGORY: Vanda, let me pick up on Pakistan if I can, because this is such a huge concern and we talked about it in the last hour, that one of the legacies of this past decade is that Pakistan, which is so crucial as a pillar of that part of the world, is now less stable -- not more stable -- as a result of U.S. actions after 9/11.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Well, I'm not sure that one could argue that Pakistan is less stable as a result of U.S. actions. Certainly the U.S.-Pakistan relations, as (inaudible) said, is very much in the crisis right now despite efforts to resurrect it. But Pakistan is, I would argue, more unstable than it has ever been with its institutions being deeply hollowed out internally, economic institutions, political institutions; the current politic leadership essentially abrogating responsibility for governing; for assisting problems with the military very particular view of its strategic objectives, of its friends; continuing difficulties in U.S.-Pakistan relations over Afghanistan and Pakistan, actions in Afghanistan, and the systematic morass of social and economic institutions with very ominous democratic trends for the country.

MR. GREGORY: Mike Doran, what is your answer to the question of what the result has been?

MR. DORAN: I think the major result is we really see in the Arab Spring or the Arab Awakening, whatever you want to call it, a focus that's been put on the governance in the region and the relations between

ruler and ruled throughout the Arab world certainly and I think even more broadly.

In that context, you can see al Qaeda is kind of a forerunner of groups rising up from below and challenging the authorities. We didn't see it like that on 9/11, but as you look at the trends since, you can see that they were really the first group. Now we have many representing many, many different points of view. But I think that's the major lesson, and it's thrown everything into disarray. I wouldn't put -- with regard to U.S. interests, I wouldn't put so much emphasis on the popularity of the United States in the region, because the United States has never been and never will be popular, and the people have allied with us for reasons other than popularity. And that's going to continue to be the case.

MR. GREGORY: Suzanne, the major effort of the United States in that part of the world had to do with wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. These are both unresolved conflicts. Where are we a decade later?

MS. MALONEY: Well, I think what's so interesting about the response to 9/11 has been the opening that it created for countries like Iran through this intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan. Iran's kind of opportunities in the region shifted dramatically. There was a moment in the aftermath and with the alignment suddenly of American and Iranian interests for some sort of a process of diplomacy to get started. And, in fact, we saw two years of talks between Iranian and American diplomats

over the issue of Afghanistan that had just started to get into the issue of Iraq before they ended in 2003, and, unfortunately, that produced, you know, no real progress for resolving our major differences and our major concerns about Iran's behavior in the region. And ironically 10 years later, 10 years after 9/11 created this unique historical moment when Iran was at least ceased by some reformist impulse for possibly some sort of a better trajectory between the U.S. and Iran, we are at an even worse place in a bilateral relationship and think we have an even more dangerous situation with Iran's influence across the region.

MR. GREGORY: With Iran's influence, and I want to pick up on that in just a second. But I want to stay with Pakistan and Afghanistan, because we are headed toward a potential stalemate where we're not that much farther than we were before, which is Pakistan's interest in keeping Afghanistan as some kind of buffer and still thinking a great deal about its security interest with India.

MS. MALONEY: Yeah, for Pakistan, India has always been looked on as the existential threat. This goes back to the first days of independent Pakistan. And that hasn't changed as the motor for Pakistan's security perceptions. It's also been true for many, many years that the Pakistanis have looked on Afghanistan, with which they have traditionally had bad relations, as the stalking horse for India and hence as themselves as being perpetually vulnerable to an Indian pincer movement.

So, that's what drives what I talked about a minute ago, the disconnect between U.S. and Pakistani strategic objectives, I mean, as we approach what the U.S. hopes will be the end game in Afghanistan.

The main strategic objective of Pakistan is to minimize India's influence. The main U.S. strategic objective is to minimize or eliminate the influence of al Qaeda. I believe that both would like to see a more governable and stable Afghanistan emerge. In the case of Pakistan, that's a distinctly secondary objective to their concern about India.

MR. GREGORY: And so that becomes the question for anybody who'd like to take it, which was what does Afghanistan look like when you ultimately have a U.S. drawdown and a much smaller presence?

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Well, it's a difficult question and a very complex environment. Clearly, the primary U.S. objective of degrading al Qaeda safe havens that Teresita raised has been accomplished. The question, however, is can this preventing of safe havens or eliminating safe havens in Afghanistan, be sustained beyond the drawdown. And the answer partially hinges on what the political outcome in Afghanistan will be. The Afghan security forces are improving, but there is a huge question mark whether they will have the capacity to step into the U.S. void. The political trends in Afghanistan are steadily deteriorating, and we are today probably at a point where the possibility of

an untenable war in Afghanistan once again is at its greatest during the decade.

And, of course, Pakistan is reading the political situation and very much fearing an unstable Afghanistan that India and others will be able to exploit for their own objectives. And Pakistan believes some of which will be the stabilizing of Pakistan.

MS. MALONEY: The problem that lurks behind that is that huge skepticism in Pakistan that whatever process the U.S. is now trying to get involved in that involves negotiations with elements of the Taliban and the Afghan government, that this process will fail. And, consequently, I think Pakistan is unwilling to make that its only bet. There is at least a Plan B, and some people would say a Plan A, that involves a direct Pakistani relationship with some of the parts of the Taliban that have been most troublesome to the United States. And this is being carried out in the shadows. It's something that is hovering over the U.S.-Pakistan relationship, but somehow can't be brought out into the open. But it's a real problem. It's where the strategic disconnect manifests itself.

MR. GREGORY: Let me just move the piece a little bit, and we'll come back and forth. Shadi, I want to bring you in, back to the question of Iran's influence, because the invasion of Iraq as well as the invasion of Afghanistan brought in the Iranians in different ways. And

here, ten years later, Iran is both in a very strong position while also in a potentially precarious position with regard to Syria. Assess that for me.

MR. HAMID: Well, I think Iran is actually in a more weakened position as a result of the Arab Spring, and I think their policy is self-evidently hypocritical. Where they were supposedly supportive of the Arab Spring when it happened in Egypt and Tunisia, but in Syria they're actually aiding very aggressively the Assad regime in killing its own citizens. So I think that's become much more obvious to the Arab world.

And I think also with the emergence of democracy in places like Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia, they're not looking to Iran as a model. So even if we're talking about the rise of groups like the Muslim Brotherhood, they never talk about the Iranian model. They talk about the Turkish model. And I think Turkey is one of those countries that was always sort of the bright spot in the Middle East years ago, but it's continued building that reputation. And I think if you compare Turkey's development to Iran's, you see how their fortunes have diverged.

MR. GREGORY: Mike, assess that in terms of Iran's influence as a result of what we're seeing in Iraq. I mean a potential pillar of U.S. strategic interests in the Middle East with a big question mark over its head, right?

MR. DORAN: Right, exactly. I agree with everything that Shadi said, but I'd put a slightly different coloring on it. If you think back

just a couple of years ago, the region looked like a contest between the United States and Iran. Iran had its security system -- Iran, Syria, Hezbollah, Hamas -- and we had our allies. And if you think about in terms of that game, well, we kind of lost Mubarak or at least Egypt. There's a question mark over Egypt. Our relations with Saudi Arabia have deteriorated, but as compensation Iran has gotten into deep trouble with Syria and it may yet lose Syria.

But in terms of that game, what Iran has, it's not popularity in the Arab world, but it has developed over the last couple of decades a really powerful, covert, action capability. So it can go into countries like Iraq, and it can pick up fragments. As these dictatorships weaken and the society -- groups form from below -- Iran can move in and pick up little fragments to work to its advantage like the Sadrists in Iraq or like elements of the Taliban. And what it's going to be doing now in Syria as Assad falls is it's going to be looking to pick up pieces of Syria that it can use to its advantage. So it's going to remain a really potent threat to us even though it's not a -- even just as Shadi said, it's not a really popular model.

MR. GREGORY: Suzanne, the impact on the Middle East is interesting, and the question came up in the last panel whether, in fact, the invasion of Iraq ultimately delayed the Arab Spring because there's been so much discussion about one did not inspire the other.

MS. MALONEY: Well, I think that there are two tectonic shifts in the balance of power in the region. And there's an interrelationship between them, but I don't see a causal relationship. And I think that Shibley Telhami in the prior panel was exactly right, that so much is related to the advent of technology and the ability of people across the region to really experience these revolutions as they began in Tunisia and then spread to Egypt firsthand, not just through Facebook which provided this organizational platform as well as other social media, not just through Twitter which enabled people in Doha and Dubai and elsewhere to comment and get comments back and contribute to a conversation, but, frankly, through Al Jazeera, which ironically was reviled in the aftermath of 9/11 by the Bush Administration as a tool for jihadist propaganda. In fact, it was Al Jazeera that was this sort of amazing medium for Arabs across the world to tune in and to really experience Tahrir Square in a very live and personal fashion.

So I think that, you know, they're both fundamentally important to the future of the region, to the future of American interests in the region, but I think they're distinct phenomena and ultimately the trajectory of change as a result of U.S. presence in the region as a result of 9/11 will produce some trends that are both positive but largely negative. The trajectory of the Arab Spring, I think, is one that is incredibly hopeful, but ultimately also precarious.

MR. GREGORY: What -- go ahead, Shadi.

MR. HAMID: Just to add to that, I mean, we all know that Iraq was a disaster, but I think the Bush Administration got certain things right. And I think we have to remember this isn't the first Arab Spring. This is actually the second Arab Spring that we're seeing today. The first one was in 2005. And you can say well, the Iraq War was part of that, but the Bush Administration was putting pressure on Arab regimes, and there was a time in '05 where Condi Rice would say, pretty much every other day, the status quo is untenable. And the Bush Administration understood that stability was losing -- it wasn't going to last forever this way. So I think in that sense, the Bush Administration, for all its faults, was a little bit ahead of its time. They messed up a lot of other things, but I think on the issue of democracy promotion, there was this realization.

MR. GREGORY: But -- that's fascinating.

MS. MALONEY: I think there's something else we need to say about the whole democracy phenomenon and this extending into South Asia. I've often been asked whether -- what kind of an impact the Arab Spring was going to have on Pakistan. The short answer is not a whole lot because in Pakistan, whatever its hideous problems of governance, they've had far more safety valves and far more experience of being able to elect their own government than have most countries in the Middle East.

But tension in the Middle East, and to some extent also in Pakistan, is between short-term stability and a hope for long-term stability at the cost of considerable short-term instability. And that's what we're currently looking at.

MR. GREGORY: But I want to pick up on Shadi's point about what the Bush Administration may have gotten right, Mike, because there was at least debate about if you are not just trying to go after al Qaeda and defeat al Qaeda after 9/11, if you're not just trying to eliminate safe havens, but if you're trying to address some root causes of what could give life to this kind of terrorist organization because you can't leave a Saddam Hussein on the chessboard -- which in effect was the Bush Administration's strategies, grab the whole area by the scruff of the neck, shake it up, and try to change it.

MR. DORAN: I actually think the Obama Administration has come full circle to a kind of strategic viewpoint that's much more similar to the Bush Administration's than anyone has recognized. I think the key issue is that if you think back right after 9/11, there was a fundamental question that the Bush Administration faced and that was do we define this as a narrow war against al Qaeda or do we go wider? And if we go wider, then what is the threat out there? And the Bush Administration defined the strategic threat as the nexus of terrorist groups, state sponsors

of terrorists, and WMD. And it was under that theory then that they went into Iraq.

Now, because of the difficulties of the war in Iraq discredited the concept politically, I don't think it ever did completely discredit it intellectually or operationally for that matter, which is to say that if you're sitting in the White House and you're looking at the problem of al Qaeda, well, you run into the problem that Iran is building a nuclear weapon and Iran is covertly supporting al Qaeda in some respects. Iran is supporting the Taliban and so on. So you run up against this issue of state sponsors and al Qaeda, and look where we found bin Laden. We didn't find bin Laden in a cave in Afghanistan. We found bin Laden next to one of the most prestigious defense academies in Pakistan.

So this whole question of the relationship between state sponsors and terrorist groups has really come back, and we're even talking now about a covert -- a significant escalation of our covert struggle against Iran in Iraq. So the way they're seeing the world in the White House today is very much similar to the way the Bush Administration did. The way they're perceiving the threat, I should say.

MS. MALONEY: But, you know, it's interesting --

MR. GREGORY: Vanda, first -- Vanda, you wanted to make a point in response to that. Go ahead.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: I would be very careful not to overstate Iran's role in the Taliban potency, and, in fact, the extent to which Iran is sponsoring Taliban. There are deep, long-term animosities. And this goes back to Teresita's critical point that much of the mess in Afghanistan and Pakistan is the result of the fact that no one believes or no one is certain what the future will be like, and so everyone is hedging on all possible directions. And, of course, this is undermining any possibility of achieving a political dispensation that is stable even though the individual hedging strategy of all actors is rational. And the Iran relationship with the Taliban, in my view, needs to be primarily viewed through that lens, understanding that there is as much hostility and animosity and that Iran is as much supporting anti-Taliban groups as they are Taliban.

One point I would make about the circle coming back or the Obama Administration to some extent reverting to the Bush years: In Afghanistan, at minimum it is, I think, significant scaling back of the issues addressed to root causes or whether we should narrowly focus on simply pounding the terrorists. And the Obama people came to an understanding that the very narrow focus of the Bush Administration brought Afghanistan to the brink of the crisis in 2008/2009 and said we want to do a far more expansive project. And now they have backed away from it and much of

the message from the White House is back to very narrow, let's pound the terrorists --

MR. GREGORY: But here's the issue that's so interesting to me, Terry, which is the proposition was, as Mike said, we take it to the next level. We don't just pound al Qaeda. We have to use our imagination to think about the next potential nexus. But, oh, by the way, if you're going to do that and you're going to depose leaders, you have to think about how to put these countries back together again, and that the administration misjudged that in both cases. And even where it hasn't misjudged in Afghanistan, it's just finding it so painfully difficult to accomplish.

MS. SCHAFFER: Well, first of all, it's a lot easier to diagnose than it is to prescribe, and it's easier to prescribe than to do. And what we're talking about is the doing part of it. It's fine to say you can't make an omelet without breaking eggs, but just because you've got a lot of broken eggs doesn't mean they're going to turn into an omelet. And it's particularly -- if you assume that by getting rid of Saddam Hussein or Mullah Omar you are solving the problem, you're going to come up short when what you've got left behind is an incoherent group of fighting entities, all of whom are quite hostile to U.S. interests. And that's more or less what we wound up with in Afghanistan with at the surface of that government headed by a man that the United States knew well and who

has turned out to learn some pretty clever politics on the way -- this is Hamid Karzai -- but who certainly hasn't been able to kind of galvanize a critical mass of support behind him and to become a national leader even in the limited sense in which Afghanistan has experienced with national leaders. This is, after all, a country that's never had a strong central government.

You could do another riff on the same theme on Iraq, but that might -- my basic problem is that where we've come is in moving from theory to prescription to action.

MR. GREGORY: Well, Suzanne, let me ask you this. So again our theme, we're 10 years out from 9/11. How have our security goals changed or been refined as we are winding down Iraq and trying desperately to wind down our involvement in Afghanistan, knowing that in both places the story doesn't end there?

MS. MALONEY: Well, you know, I think that some of the points that have been made in this discussion and in the prior panel about the sense of continuity between the Obama and second term particularly Bush Administrations are exactly right. Neither administration has found an easy solution to the big problems or to the war that they took ownership of. And I think in both cases we're going to be left with, you know, some continuing involvement, irrespective of what we describe as a withdrawal, and certainly continuing responsibility for what will be two incredibly

tumultuous countries in a period of tremendous flux in the region where some of our most reliable allies are either no longer present -- as in the case of Mubarak, sitting in a cage, standing trial on charges of corruption -- or are no longer moving as closely aligned with us.

And I think there is this issue that Mike raised earlier of the U.S.-Saudi relationship that really bears some consideration. Again, 10 years after 9/11 and the initial ripple of hostility that emerged here when it came out that so many of the hijackers were, in fact, Saudi nationals, the U.S.-Saudi relationship actually managed to get through that crisis fairly well because of the, I think, similarity of interests and longstanding relationship between the two leaderships. Today, I think, in the wake of the Arab Spring, the sense of betrayal that the Saudis have over our treatment of Mubarak and their concern about the prospect of continuing instability and Shia ascendance in a country like Bahrain and elsewhere across the region, we're going to find ourselves often on the opposite side with the Saudis, and I'm not sure we know how to navigate that.

MR. GREGORY: Shadi, this is -- there's a sense that's tossed around the West Wing, I know, which is that some of these issues are so fascinating if they weren't right in the middle of them. But on this particular point with all of this ferment and what Suzanne is alluding to within the Middle East, what do you do? What does the United States do and what's expected of us both from our friends and our foes?

MR. HAMID: Well, I mean, what's remarkable is that the Obama Administration has managed to alienate both sides of the divide in the Arab world so dictators think that Obama is pro-democracy and revolutionary. The Saudis, for example, think that because Obama threw Mubarak under the bus. But if you talk to protestors on the ground, they think that Obama is a friend of dictators. So this is, I think, a general problem we see with Obama's policies, not just in foreign policy but also domestic policy. You take two opposite positions and you split the middle. Now, I think in times of great ferment, like the ones we're in now, what you need is bold, decisive leadership. It's an oversimplification, but I think leading from behind is a somewhat accurate description of Obama's approach in the region. You can call the Bush Administration's approach leading from the front or whatever the opposite would be, but, you know, I think it's interesting that as much anti-Americanism as there is in the Middle East, there's still a desire for the U.S. to play a more constructive role. It's this kind of odd love-hate relationship that Arabs have with the U.S. So in one breath they'll say the U.S. is the worst thing in the world, but then they'll ask, why isn't the U.S. doing more to support our democratic aspirations?

So when people -- when the rebels were suffering in Libya or the protestors in Bahrain, they didn't turn to Russia or China for assistance. They said, we want the U.S. to do more. And I think that's

still an important point to remember, that there is something different about the U.S. in that respect.

MR. GREGORY: Why don't you answer that question, Mike?

MR. DORAN: I think it's -- the first thing you have to realize is that there's absolutely no principle that you can adopt and then apply uniformly across the region. If you do that, if you elevate a principle up and you say that this is what you stand for, then there are going to be lots of places where you're going to be seen to be very hypocritical.

I think the thing we have to do is really go back to basics and define our most vital interests and express them clearly and be consistent in pursuing them. The leading from behind model I don't think works at all because it leaves a vacuum and the assumption is that if we step back a little bit somebody else will step forward and we'll pursue interests that are largely the same as our own, but I don't think that's what happens.

It's kind of what happened in Libya, but Libya is just a case of luck. It's not that important of a country and we had allies in Europe that cared enough about the things that we cared about to see to it that things happened the way we wanted them to. But in a country like Syria or in a question like the Iranian nuclear program -- any of the things that really matter -- the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, things like that, if we don't

make it clear where we stand and how we want to resolve this and put pressure on our friends to align their policies with ours, then what we're going to get is a lot of chaos and confusion. I think a good example of that right now is what's happening between the Turks and the Israelis, is that here two of our closest friends are now in a bitter contest, which -- with even some saber rattling. And I think that if the United States had seen it as its job to be the one defining the agenda from the beginning, this never would have happened.

MR. GREGORY: Let me just follow up on a couple of one-offs here. Specifically with regard to Iraq, what's going to happen? Do you think there will be a residual U.S. force present and how are the politics going to wind their way through?

MR. DORAN: I don't think anybody can predict exactly what's going to happen. I can't see that the Iraqis will not want some kind of U.S. presence. The question, I think, is more a political one, under what rubric will they want to have that presence. I think politically it's going to be very hard for them to call for an overt troop presence, but, you know, perhaps in the context of training missions and so on, we can still have a significant presence. But there's a lot of -- there are so many variables there I think it's impossible for anybody to predict.

MR. GREGORY: Shadi, what about Egypt right now, this pillar of U.S. policy in the Middle East? And there's a lot of questions

about where Egypt's going.

MR. HAMID: Well, I mean, the problem now is that there's not a whole lot we can do because we're hated so much. I mean, anti-Americanism, the degree of it right now, is a surprise even to me, and everyone's accusing each other of foreign funding. These people are secret allies of the U.S. and even, for example, you know, loans that are offered by the IMF, which could be of benefit to Egypt, are being rejected out of this kind of -- this nationalism that we're seeing emerge. And we're also seeing the emergence of right wing populist parties. I mean, the Muslim Brotherhood is what we often think about when we're talking about the rise of Islamist groups, but they're really center right in the Egyptian political spectrum.

Now we're seeing far right Salafi groups that have really come out of nowhere after -- during the -- after the Arab Spring, so there's all these new sets of questions that the U.S. isn't really well equipped to deal with. And Obama offered in his big May speech a billion of debt forgiveness and a billion dollars in aid. That's nothing. Just in terms of what Egypt really needs at this point economically, I mean, the Saudis are offering $4 billion. The UAE is offering several billion. So, Egypt's number one donor is not stepping up to the plate. And the other question is, do people want our money in the first place?

So, I think we're in a very difficult position where we wish we

could do more, but because of the toxicity of our position, it's difficult.

MR. GREGORY: And how concerned are you about a conflagration surrounding the U.N. vote concerning statehood or what Israel may or may not do next?

MR. HAMID: Well, Egypt is entering election season now, so there's going to be a lot of posturing, so the presidential candidates are all competing to see who can be more anti-Israel, who can kind of wave the pro-Palestine flag more, and if you add the U.N. vote to that, which I think will be an absolute disaster in terms of U.S. public diplomacy, it's frightening to even think of what that will mean. So, I mean, as unpopular as we are now, I think it will get worse. And if we're talking about an actual conflict where we see an outbreak of violence between the Israelis and Palestinians, Egypt is going to feel pressure to come on the side of the Palestinians, and that's where popularity matters because these are democracies now, so the governments have to be responsive to public opinion. And if Egyptians hate Israel, the Egyptian government is going to have to think about that.

MR. GREGORY: Let's turn it out to you and get some of your questions. Yes, sir?

MR. WEINTRAUB: Hello, I'm Leon Weintraub, University of Wisconsin. I'd like to ask a question about the situation in Pakistan.

We heard about the democracy phenomenon about the

abdication of responsibility. I'd like to ask about civil society in Pakistan being so important, particularly about the lawyers' association, where a few years ago we were so excited about this group demonstrating against Musharraf and in support of the supreme court institutions of law. But yet flash forward a little bit and these same lawyers are demonstrating in support of the assassin who killed the governor who spoke out against the blasphemy laws. What hope is there -- how do we understand this kind of a phenomenon where we see what we think is a secular, kind of a modernizing of civil society behaving in such various ways?

MS. SCHAFFER: The beginning of wisdom is to realize how very diverse Pakistan civil society is. There is no civil society institution, which has huge power to mobilize. The lawyers came closer to that than anybody has in recent memory at the time that Musharraf tried to fire the chief justice. Their particular professional honor and dignity and institution had been skewered by the chief executive, they became symbols of something larger than themselves. It's not at all unusual for the lawyers to be, sort of, as a group, in opposition to the government.

The bigger surprise in a way was when so many of the lawyers also came out in support of Salmaan Taseer's assassin, but a lot of these people are personally religiously very conservative and have absorbed a lot of the anti-Americanism that is abroad in the land.

To me the important thing is, are these groups being heard

from? Are enough of them with different perspectives being heard from? In other words, if all the civil society stuff you hear is from the Islamic right, you worry. If some of it's from the Islamic right and some of it's from the other perspective, well, this is part of the maturation of that political society, which in principle is a good thing, but, unfortunately, our policy worries are on a faster timeline than that maturation is likely to be.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: And the one thing I would add is that one of the perhaps worrisome trends is the increasingly effective violent activity by the non-good civil society, by the bad civil society, linked to Salafi groups, linked to the Obandi groups, that is muzzling very effectively the voices of opposition, the secular voices, the pro-American voices, by assassinating people, by making life very difficult. And the warfare in Karachi is, to some extent, an example that is also much deeper, much more complicated, much more related to power struggle, that is really not linked to civil society, but the space for civil society to operate is tenuous and arguably more tenuous than it was during the Musharraf era as a result of the increasingly effective violent tactics by the broader jihadi groups and their supporters.

MR. GREGORY: Up front here.

MR. KARIM: Thank you very much. My name is Mehtab Karim, originally from Pakistan. I'm an (inaudible) at George Mason School of Public Policy. I tend to agree absolutely with Ambassador

Schaffer and also with Dr. Brown about what (inaudible) Pakistan.

I have a couple of comments if you don't mind, because I am from there and I've watched very closely what is happening in Pakistan. I'm also a demographer, a professor of demography, and so I follow population issues very closely in the Muslim world. Recently I completed a report for Pew Research Center and the future of the global Muslim population, so I will quote some figures.

MR. GREGORY: Good. But these are primarily for questions, so if you want to make a point, make just one point.

MR. KARIM: Okay. First of all, you know, looking at Pakistan, you go back, the country was huge, East Pakistan, West Pakistan, broken down into two, but at the moment it has a population of 185 million people. And what I read in the newspapers, whatever, that even it's broken, in 2020 it will still have 20 million people, that is Punjabistan, West Pakistan, would remain in some way or the other. Even Punjab has a population of 150 million. And what -- if you look at now, and I'm just quoting the figures from the report of Pew, that Pakistan's population today, as of 2010, is more than the population of -- combined population of all the six or seven North African countries, Arab countries, and more than -- much more than the entire Middle East, and combined population of Iran, Turkey, and the entire -- the six former Soviet Republics, and geopolitically it's located in a very important location, as

you know.

Now, coming back to the views of Pakistanis, and I was raised in Pakistan in 1960s and ’70s when I was a student there, Pakistanis are very pro-American. Suddenly things have changed in the 1990s and they have gone. And I have participated in several opinion polls, everybody is right, there are people, even highly educated people, educated in America, they are in top positions, 9 out of 10 they talk against U.S. The reason being that they feel that America has considered Pakistan literally -- and I’m sorry to use that word, because I’m a demographer I don’t mind saying that -- a condom. They use it, throw it away. And I think if there’s a feel that why they want to do what they are doing right now vis-à-vis Afghanistan, the thing that the moment U.S. abandons Afghanistan and withdraws from there, Pakistan will be a nonentity for the U.S. and as well as some of the (inaudible) countries vis-à-vis England and what have you. So, that’s very, very important that what sort of foreign policy U.S. pursues in the region, particularly in Pakistan, and I think that’s what is my question from those, especially those two persons who are Pakistani experts here. That how do you see that in 10 years from now, U.S. is going to pursue what kind of foreign policy in the region?

MR. GREGORY: Vanda, why don’t you comment and then let’s move it around to other questions.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: I think that the U.S. will clearly stay engaged with Pakistan. Pakistan is just too important, it matters too much in very, very different settings.

I would hope, but perhaps be surprised, if this was a relationship of a robust strategic partnership. The Obama Administration tried to move to that kind of relationship and found it very complex and arguably perhaps doesn't have the same ambition today. So, I don't doubt that we will be engaged, but it will be constant back and forth, explaining our objectives and trying to build toward some sort of improvement.

Now, if we managed, or if in the end Pakistan independently managed to significantly improve the bilateral relationship between the two countries, I think that would be highly advantageous to us and would enable our better cooperation, but in the absence of that, it will be tough engagement.

MR. GREGORY: Just a couple more questions. Yes, in the back, ma'am.

MS. BLUMENTHAL: I'm Ronnie Blumenthal. I'm an attorney in town. I'd like to know your assessment of the nuclear threat as a result of either Pakistan, because of the various turmoils in their area, and Israel, because of the things that you mentioned, being pushed to the wall. With all the nukes that they both have, I'd like your assessment of the threats.

MR. DORAN: Mike, you want to start on that? I'll do Israel, she'll do Pakistan. I don't see the -- an immediate Israeli nuclear -- threat of nuclear war with Israel. I mean, the longer-term threat -- I mean, the biggest threat on the horizon is really Iran, I think, and what happens when Iran gets a bomb. And I think the trajectory we're on right now is that Iran will get one unless there's some kind of dramatic change that takes place in our policy or in the region. And at that point, then, I think what we're going to see is, after Iran gets the bomb, we're going to see an immediate proliferation around the region. It's widely believed that Saudi Arabia has a bomb in escrow in Pakistan. The Turks are not going to want to be left out of the nuclear club. And I think -- Shadi can speak to this, I think the Egyptians as well are also going to -- are going to want one as well as others. So, what we're looking at, I think, is a proliferation around the region. That's a kind of a system that I don't think any of is very familiar with.

MS. SCHAFFER: As far as Pakistan is concerned, they have been increasing the size of their nuclear arsenal. The big question you have to ask is about Pakistan-India relations, and if it were left to the decision of the governments operating in sort of normal peaceful times, both governments, I think, in the 13 years since they had their twin nuclear tests, have become more cautious about the responsibilities that nuclear weaponry impose on them, have developed somewhat better habits of

communication.

There are two major uncertainties. One is miscalculation. You have another horrible incident in India and of course we had one just yesterday. Will the Indian government feel compelled to respond? If it responds, they are supremely confident that they can exactly calculate what they can do by way of a response without triggering a nuclear response from Pakistan. Will they calculate that correctly?

The second major uncertainty is loss of control of the nuclear assets by the army. At the moment, the army has every reason to want to keep them under very tight security and I believe is doing so. This could change with relatively little warning if the adverse trends in Pakistani governance and in the ability of the state to keep the hard wing of the Islamic militant movement under control, if that continues to deteriorate.

MR. GREGORY: Yes.

SPEAKER: Thank you. Again, my name is Said (inaudible) from (inaudible) Daily Newspaper, but I also spent five years in Iraq as the United Nations spokesman, and I can tell you that Iraq is a disaster. My job also took me to Tehran. We met with officials from Mahmoud Ahmadinejad on down. The jubilation was unrestrained, that the United States destroyed with one stroke both their enemies, Saddam Hussein and the Taliban.

Today the influence is really rooted in an organized effort

among the public. And my question to Shadi is what happens if and when the Arab Spring is caught in Iraq, let's say, or the Iraqis become infected with this Arab Spring? And what happens once the influence of Iran and Syria sort of ebbs? How will that affect their influence in Iraq?

MR. HAMID: Sorry, who is being infected with the Arab Spring? Is it --

SPEAKER: Right, what happens when the Arab Spring comes to Iraq? How will that affect Iran's influence?

MR. HAMID: Well, I mean, there have already been protests, so there has been some political movement. I mean, Iraq is a little bit different than the other countries because it's not a dictatorship. It's presumably some sort of democracy, so I think it doesn't really fit into the category of the Arab autocracies where people are -- don't have legitimate outlets for political expression. But, you know, dissatisfaction will undoubtedly increase, and it already is, and the Iraqi government has used excessive force against its own people in that regard, but I'm not sure what the goal -- I mean, what would the goal of such a protest movement in Iraq be? Because you're not asking for regime change, you know, so.

MS. MALONEY: I'll just jump in and suggest that I think everybody anticipates that over time the influence of Iran is going to diminish in Iraq. I mean, this is the lesson of the eight-year struggle

between Iran and Iraq, that these are two distinct countries with different identities and with nationalism that actually -- and different interests that pit them against one another as much as they may align them. That will not, I think, you know, wholly undercut Iran's influence across the region when and if that sort of a trend takes hold in Iraq simply because for the Iranians the major lesson of the aftermath of 9/11 and the regime changes that were undertaken by Washington was that they didn't need close allies, they didn't need to control their neighbors. What they needed was the elimination of old adversaries. That was sufficient for them. It gave them these opportunities that Mike described to begin to try to create new alliances and build their influence in other countries, and so I think for the Iranians the sense of strategic depth they have in Iraq is going to persist even when you see a more nationalist and more independent Iraqi government, simply because they now have this strategic depth.

MR. GREGORY: I'm going to leave it there. I'll make that the last word. Thank you all very much. Thank you for a terrific discussion. Have a good day. (Applause)

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