

**A Brookings Press Briefing**

**SHOWDOWN WITH IRAQ  
Inauguration of Weekly Brookings Iraq Briefing**

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## THIS IS AN UNCORRECTED TRANSCRIPT



**MR. JAMES B. STEINBERG:** Good afternoon and welcome to Brookings. This is our first of what will be a weekly series of briefings on Iraq as the situation unfolds and we move towards an as yet unspecified deadline. We'll have a chance to talk about whether there is a deadline in the minds of the Administration and others in the course of this afternoon. We thought it would be important to have a chance on a regular basis to share with you the expertise of people both here at Brookings and others that we're working with on the full range of political, military, diplomatic aspects, economic of the current crisis as we go forward.

This is a Brookings event. It's going to involve as I say scholars from across Brookings and from the outside. A fundamental role played by our Saban Center on Middle East Policy which not only has a strong core of individual leaders here at Brookings represented today by Ken Pollack, but also a high number of visiting scholars who I'll be introducing in just a moment.

Before I introduce our panel I just want to call your attention to an analysis that is out in the hall outside that Steve Hess has put together for us of an editorial response to Secretary Powell's speech. It's quite interesting. Steve's been tracking the editorial positions of the major newspapers in the United States. Interestingly he concludes, and you'll see from his piece of paper, that while seven papers moved towards the President's position, two actually moved away which I think is quite interesting and maybe our panelists will have something to say about that. But what's not in Steve's analysis is he doesn't do an analysis of columnists and the Mary McGrory factor of Secretary Powell's speech.

So to discuss Secretary Powell's speech, its content, its impact on Iraq on the international community and here at home we have a very distinguished panel this afternoon, several of whom are well known to you and I won't give elaborate introductions. Ken Pollack, the Director of Research at our Saban Center here; Mike O'Hanlon, Senior Fellow in Foreign Policy Studies; and Ivo Daalder, all well known to you. But I do want to introduce our two guests.

On my left Amatzia Baram who is a Professor of Middle East History at the University of Haifa and a Visiting Fellow here at the Saban Center. We're very fortunate to have Dr. Baram here at this time because he really is one of the world's leading experts on Iraq and if anybody has any insight into what's going on in Saddam Hussein's mind it's Amatzia. He's been previously at the Woodrow Wilson Center at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, the U.S. Institute for Peace and Georgetown University. He's advised Israeli and U.S. governments on Iraq. He's taught at St. Anthony's College at Oxford and the National Defense College in Israel. And he's written two books. One, *Culture, History and Ideology and the Formation of the Bathist Iraq*, and a second called *Building Toward Crisis, Saddam Hussein's Strategy of Survival*. So you can see that we really are fortunate to have him here with us.

Our second guest is David Kay who's become a fairly well known figure to you all for his longstanding involvement on issues involving Iraq. Dr. Kay is currently a Senior Fellow at the Potomac Institute for Policy Studies concentrating on counterterrorism and homeland security issues, but as you all know he was previously the UN Chief Nuclear Weapons Inspector and therefore has had firsthand experience with the problems that we're dealing with today. So we're really quite fortunate to have both with us.

I want to start out the discussion with David Kay talking a little bit about the substance of what Secretary Powell had to say. What did we learn that was new? How does this compare with your own experience of dealing with the Iraqi WMD program? What are the implications for putting this kind of intelligence out in public? David?



**MR. DAVID KAY:** Jim, thank you. I'm happy to do that. You realize that was an 80 minute presentation, and if you were sitting outside in the cold you knew it was 80 minutes waiting for him to finish, so I'm not going to give you an 80 minute critique of an 80 minute presentation.

Let me give you from my reading, having been in New York and talked to people afterwards, what made the major impression and deal with the evidence briefly.

The major impression, and it's true of most public performances and speeches, we often forget, particularly those who write speeches, who think it's their language that makes a difference, that the real impact of most communications comes from the reputation, integrity, dedication, and what the individual who is speaking actually puts into it. That was one of the finest performances I've ever see yesterday. And any of you who have ever tried to work with high tech presentations, power point slides that don't work or who you're off-message and there's a beautiful slide that has nothing to do with what you're saying, that was a complicated presentation. Secretary Powell had dedicated days to mastering it and to making it his. And a lot of people, even those who didn't agree with him afterwards, commented on how sincere and how much it really was an impressive performance. And that really made a difference in terms of its reception.

In terms of its content, take the first couple of components. There is, and I think we've gone over this several times, some of you individually, I know Ken and I have discussed it. There's a reading of 1441, the Security Council Resolution that clearly is different depending on whether you're talking to someone in the U.S. Administration or someone in France and Germany.

For the U.S. Administration, 1441 was a final last chance of the Iraqis. They would comply, they would cooperate, and if they did the inspectors would verify the voluntary disarmament. If they didn't, the inspectors were not in fact to go "Where in the world is Waldo?" hunting for a hidden weapon or hidden weapons throughout Iraq.

The Europeans and particularly it's true of the French and the Germans, although the Syrians and others as well, had the view that the inspectors are there to avoid conflict, prolong the effort, and continue to hunt for weapons. This is always, if you talk to them in private and you say to a French or a German diplomat, well what's going to happen the first time -- say the inspectors find 12 weapons. Are you going to say that proves the Iraqis are cheating and therefore it's time for coercive disarmament? The answer is no, we're going say do more of the same, keep hunting. That causes the divide.

Secretary Powell started with the American interpretation of what 1441 meant and went to the heart of the issue -- Iraqi non-cooperation while the inspectors were going into Iraq and carrying out inspections over the last 60-something days.

It was a powerful presentation because he was able to use declassified signal intercept communications. This is something that seldom sees, at least seldom intentionally sees the light of day in the United States. It's hard to give up. The agency principally responsible for it NSA, National Security Agency, is probably the most difficult to deal with, even when you're in the government to get access to it because they're deadly afraid that loss of content will lead to loss of collection capability.

Secretary Powell personally invested his own strength in breaking that particular Gordian knot and getting some interesting conversations.

Was it fresh and revealing? It was fresh to people who hadn't been in Iraq inspecting. It was fresh to people who were titillated by the ability of the U.S. government to really listen into conversations. Was it really new? For those of us who were there it wasn't new. In fact it was Yogi Berra's great term, "dejavous all over again" in which you recognize that what they were doing, what they were talking about doing was the things you had seen directly happen to you.

He then combined that by using satellite imagery in what I thought was an extremely effective way before after, in duration, showing sites where you had clear signals of Iraqi operations in the chemical area, you had the inspectors on their way there or the site had been acknowledged to the inspectors, and the Iraqis quickly cleaning it up, decontaminating it and moving everything out of there.

It was interesting that very few people actually, and it's a long speech it's hard to maintain your concentration, particularly if you're listening to it in a language other than English. A lot of people missed one of its major points and he didn't hammer it home because he didn't want to pick on the inspectors, but a couple of those sites had been in fact, the site location had been passed to the inspectors by U.S. intelligence. The actual Iraqi movement of material came after the inspectors had been notified of the site but prior to their being able to conduct the inspection. Was that new or unfamiliar? Not if you'd been there. We wrestled with that for eight years of leakages -- both good counter-intelligence work at the level of penetrating all the ancillary people around an inspection who know about where it's going, what it's doing; bugging of the rooms; bugging of the cars and all of that that occurs.

But he demonstrated it, I thought, in a very successful and compelling way. So successful that you didn't hear anyone afterwards in the other speeches that followed dare say that the Iraqis had been cooperating. In fact the strangest speech I heard yesterday, and it sounded the same -- I tried it in both languages -- was the French intervention. Clearly written before Secretary Powell spoke, and clearly written by someone who didn't know what he was going to say.

The logic of the French were, the Iraqis aren't cooperating, therefore our answer to them not cooperating is not to deal with their non-cooperation, but let's create a couple of new institutions and provide more people for it.

The thought that ran through my mind although I dared not say it on national television was the logic of the French is if over 13 years you have a cheating style, you get the physical evidence of it and every time, the behavior continues so what do you do? You add more private eyes. You don't deal with it, you just keep adding more on to it hoping that will deter or contain the behavior.

Secretary Powell's conclusion was at some point it's time to roll the bus out of the garage and get rid of the offending behavior.

The French ability to listen to it completely different. It sort of went over everyone. A number of people afterwards, and not just Americans commented it was a difficult intervention to understand.

Now on the evidence on the specific areas, anything new? By and large certainly not in chemical, biological, mostly going back to the gaps. And this was intentional, let me say.

A strategic decision was made that if you dealt with actual gaps of reporting that had been identified by the international community over seven years that Hans Blix had told the Iraqis they had an obligation to answer, that in fact it was harder for the Iraqis and others to deny their existence.

So he very carefully laid out, it was remarkable how many times he referred to UNSCOM. Actually how few times he referred to UNMOVIC because the UNSCOM data was out there, etc., and he kept going back to that.

There was a little bit of new data, if you hadn't been paying close attention to it, in the case of missiles. The Iraqis have been pursuing a missile program the diameter of which of the missile is beyond what they were told by UNSCOM they were permitted to, importing parts for it, and the photography which I don't think has been in the public domain before of the missile test stand which is clearly related to a much longer range missile, about a thousand miles. A little bit of new information which I hadn't seen in the public domain before with regard to UAVs with a range of over 500 miles and a test program by the Iraqis to verify it.

On the nuke area it was a relatively compressed presentation. They concentrated on one issue - the aluminum tubes. I think the reason for this is if you go back to Mohammed El Baredi's presentation reporting to the Council, Baredi in his oral report as opposed to the written report by the AIEA went out of his way to knock down with a certitude that's not in the written record that these aluminum tubes had to be for missiles, were not related to the nuclear program.

I'm told Secretary Powell took this task on very personally, explored the data, went across it, and became absolutely convinced that the IAEA was slipping back into a previous behavior pattern of declaring all too quickly that programs, whether they be in Iraq, Iran, or North Korea, are not weapons related and had not explored the evidence enough. So he took a considerable portion of his relatively, of the short time that could be devoted to substance, to dealing with the aluminum tube issue and I thought dealt with it in a very balanced and almost humorous way that actually had an impact far greater than I thought it might on others who were listening there and were not familiar with the technology.

For me, and I'll conclude here Jim. I'm sorry for going on so long. The most impressive part of the speech given by Secretary Powell other than the general sincerity of it was the last, really the last page of it. All of us who've dealt with the UN know -- it's true in the U.S. government too, very seldom do speeches change minds. Minds are closed, are made up for other reasons.

Secretary Powell I thought put the perfect diplomatic strategy. The danger that I've described

today is if you do not respond to your resolutions being flouted for 13 years, this institution, the Security Council, will slide into irrelevancy.

Now that, with regard to most of the members of the Council, where that is their only opportunity to challenge the global super power directly and challenge the U.S. to come to task, or to operate on a global scene, that is a threat that is a powerful diplomatic threat that you have to back in chancelleries think about. Do we want to see this institution decline into total irrelevancy so we're not able to hold the Americans to their feet? We're not able to operate on global issues and get all the benefits of that? And we become just another regional power with a regional brief? And that I thought was the absolute perfect conclusion to go from specifics to something that is likely to grab the French, the Germans and the non-permanent members of the Council and make them think that's a future I don't really like. I'm going to have to climb on board this train and be there when it reaches the station.

**MR. STEINBERG:** Thank you, David. We'll come back to that later in our discussion.

I'll turn to Amatzia now and ask how is Saddam going to respond to this? We've got this important meeting coming up with the inspectors coming to Baghdad. What's the view from Baghdad?



**MR. AMATZIA BARAM:** I think the Iraqis are now in a state of total denial and when it comes to the actual accusation of having given up this, having hidden that and so on, they will continue to deny it.

I reached the conclusion that Saddam cannot, well he can but he probably won't like to execute General [Hamir Asaddi], the guy who is making all these assertions, the guy who is the chief liaison officer between really Saddam and UNMVIC. He can execute him but I don't think it's a good idea from his viewpoint right now because that would be the only way to admit that actually we were cheating.

Hussein Kamil when he defected, you remember in 1995, the defection to Oman, then they could easily invent this chicken farm. You all remember the case. All these documents were found in the chicken farm and it was Hussein Kamil who decided to hide it in his own chicken farm and the regime didn't know about it and so on. By the way I was told by UNSCOM people that these were the most unique chickens in the world because they did not produce any manure at all. These documents were perfectly sanitized.

But no, this is not very practical now. So the Iraqi line right now is this. First of all the best defense is an offense. That's the approach. And perhaps the most interesting sentence which General [Hamir Assadi] expressed late last night, he said Secretary Powell's whole performance is in violation of Security Council Resolution 1441. So Powell is the one who abrogated, who broke all the rules, crossed all the red lines. He addressed each issue on its own merits and he said for example, when it comes to the photographs, those aerial photographs, well it's old material over which we had discussions with UNMVIC already and we explained to them everything about that. Nothing much to say.

About the U-2 flights, he said something which actually is very logical. There is a way around

that, but if you don't want to find a way around it then it's a problem. He said look, two-thirds of our country is being now out of our reach in terms of flights. These are the no-fly zones, the Northern no-fly zone and Southern no-fly zone. The Americans, the Brits are flying there all the time.

He didn't say that but he meant to say we are trying to shoot them down all the time, which of course we know is the case.

How do you expect us to try and shoot down F-15s, F-16s, and so on and when a U-2 is one notch higher, how can we guarantee that people won't be affected as well. By which he meant to say actually we are going to shoot down the U-2, claiming this is actually an F-16 or F-15 flying in the no-fly zone. So unless you stop the no-fly zone flights we cannot do that.

Well of course there are many ways around that, but he said that's the way it is.

Again, if the Security Council -- okay, I'll get to my idea, my suggestion. What can the Security Council do in that respect? But on the whole, that's the kind of things that Iraqis can give in on. That's the kind of issue over which they can give in. They don't have to admit that they lied, they don't have to admit that they obstructed, it's up front so they can say well, for the sake of peace we might do something about that one.

The rest of what Powell said was just lies about everything -- the missiles, our attempts to prevent our scientists from telling the truth or divulging information and so on. The way I see it what the Iraqis can do without the kind of loss of faith which I reach the conclusion they wouldn't like to suffer from, admitting they were lying. That's not good. They can make a few concessions on the technical issues, nothing to do with Secretary Powell's analysis. nothing to do with that. Which will all relate to Mohammed El Baredi's and to Hans Blix's complaints and they can meet some of these complaints with relative ease.

As I said, they can find a way around the U-2 issue and say all right, you can fly it. It won't be easy for them because it means again humiliation. You have to understand it. Humiliation for this regime like any other one, but especially for this one is a very difficult issue in the domestic context. And of course they say the Americans are violating our sovereignty, our national sovereign borders and so on so how can we go the extra mile in their direction. But that's the kind of thing they can resolve if it's really a matter of life and death.

When it comes, there is one more issue they can resolve I think even more easily. They deny it, of course, they denied that they warned their scientists against divulging information and it's very difficult to prove that they did threaten them with death if they betray information. In fact as far as I understand, I'm talking about a new source that will come out very soon on the television screen, but, well maybe I shouldn't mention that. [Laughter] No, because you'll know about it anyway in a few hours.

But I'll just say it seems to me that this American accusation is absolutely correct. This is the way this regime usually acts. The on the one hand will tell you you have to cooperate with the inspectors, you certainly have to do that. On the other hand they will tell you, but you must not divulge anything that might affect the national security. And of course weapons of mass destruction, if you

betray anything in that realm you will affect national security. So they don't have to tell you more, and if you do, if you betray national security you know what's going to become of you. So that kind of warning is perfectly standard. They can do that, it makes a lot of sense, and it's possible that they did it.

I would believe the report the Americans, the Administration put forward. But it's very difficult to prove it. That's the point. That would be a smoking gun, but go prove it. They don't have a record of that I'm sure. I mean recordings, videocassette or audiocassette they don't have that here in Washington. So the Iraqis can easily deny it and they will deny it, but what the Iraqis can do which will please the French, they can say from now on actually we shall instruct our scientists to meet your people on a one-to-one basis. No problem. No minders around. And there is no need for minders. Not because the place where the interview will take place is bugged, which probably it's not because there are a few places in Baghdad which are not yet bugged. But because Saddam's intelligence service will know exactly which scientist betrayed which information, divulged. Very easily. They know what everyone knows. The scientists know that. So even when the meeting is on a one-to-one basis the scientist and his family is in mortal danger. In a state like that, a suggestion like that, why should you tell the inspector anything?

So that's the kind of concessions the Iraqis can make and probably will make. Again, it's nothing to do with Powell's accusations, it's really to do with the complaints of the inspectors.

When will the Iraqi regime have to really think hard about the possibility of giving in much more? Much more. I don't think this moment will come before the next United Nations Security Council Resolution. If on the 12th the inspectors are again providing some information, complaining, whatever, making some more demands on Iraq, if this is not followed within a few days by another UN Resolution that says something like, and just sort of suggesting, Iraq has one more week to prove total cooperation or the Americans are getting what James Bond used to get from M, permission to kill, you know.

If and when there is such a resolution and it's really adopted by the Security Council, maybe the French will abstain. That's possible. Maybe the Russians will abstain. But no vetoes. If and when that happens, this will be the moment of truth. This is the first moment Saddam will take his people, his advisors, [Hamir Assadi], [Hamir Rashid], Tariq Aziz who is an expert on foreign relations and he knows America, Saddam Hamadi who has a PhD from the University of Pennsylvania, [Ali Hasanan Majid] who is his cousin but also his aide d'camp and his advisor on domestic security issues, Saddam's younger son, [Pusai]. He'll have of course also [Amid Hamud], the general who is the most important general in internal security and so on. Perhaps ten people. I suppose [Izak de Brahim] who is deputy chairman of the RTC and deputy commander in chief of the armed forces and a four star general and never served in the army even one day. People like that. But he trusts them because they are party old timers. And he needs their advice, he needs their backing, even though he is a dictator. [Dahaisin Ramadan] who is his vice president. Again, the party old timers.

He'll get these people, maybe 10, maybe 15, and he'll really want to hear their views. He really will.

One thing about Saddam Hussein's decisionmaking process is very crucial to understand. We all regard him as a loose canon and he is a loose canon under certain circumstances. I won't go into details.



But most of the time, and especially when he knows he's in deep trouble, when he knows there is clear and present danger and that American credibility is 100 percent and that they will go to war. When that happens he is making very irrational decisions and very well calculated and usually he managed to survive as a result of that. Had he been a loose canon all the time he would have been lost by now.

So he will convene these guys and he'll try to get together with some kind of a decision. It's very difficult, because this will be the most difficult decision of his life. After there is this kind of permission to kill, license to kill on the part of the United Nations he will know that he is practically looking into the abyss. What will he decide? I won't even try to tell you. I'm not sure he knows now. It's not so simple. But I tend to believe, and I'm saying it in a very careful fashion because there is no certainty about it. I tend to believe that they will be ready to give a little more. Sufficient to satisfy the French, the Russians, the Chinese, the Germans, to make it more difficult on America to go to war, and all I can say is that they can't give in very much. They can give in a little more but not very much because the weapons of mass destruction are crucial for, as they see it, for their survival.

But if something which is crucial for your survival in the next two or three or four years, and more than that of course. Your vision, your place in history and so on, but first of all your survival. It will be crucial in the next two or three years but not right now. And yet it's crucial for your survival to avoid a war, to avoid American occupation of Baghdad. That's where I am not so sure that they even now know what they'll decide.

So for me to say what they'll decide is presumptuous. I'll only say that this is the moment when they really will have to rethink the whole thing.

Again, I'm slightly inclined more towards believing that they will not divulge everything. They'll do whatever they can but they'll still keep a secret, what UNSCOM used to call, what Scott Ritter used to call, he believed it existed until now when he no longer does, but he believed that they did have in 1998 a seed stock of technology and blueprints with which they can very quickly resuscitate a non-conventional industry, and that's my feeling.

So I still think they won't divulge everything, but again I'm saying it with great trepidation because they will know that if America is not satisfied or reasonably unhappy, if America is not reasonably happy, if it's unreasonably unhappy, America will attack. So that is not going to be easy for them to make a decision.

**MR. STEINBERG:** Possibly the nightmare scenario for the Administration is that on the even of war, just as in November of 1998, they get another concession from Saddam. How is the Administration going to play it, Ken?



**MR. KENNETH M. POLLACK:** I think this is really the key issue out there, and to start with Colin Powell's speech there were really three audiences out there that Powell was looking towards. There was the Security Council, there was the American people, and there was the international community at large. Even though he's making the presentation to the Security Council, they were probably the least important of all the audiences because

the Security Council is not going to make its decision based on what evidence Colin Powell presents as Saddam Hussein's malfeasance.

In point of fact Security Council countries know damn well that Iraq has the stuff. I've never heard any official from France, Germany, China, you name it, suggest otherwise. They know he's got it, the debate is over what to do about it and there it's a policy decision.

The question for them is the political one. For the American people I actually think that Powell did a great job in terms of selling the approach to the American people. I think there were a lot of Americans who were deeply skeptical about the war, deeply skeptical in the sense that they didn't have the justification proven to them. I think that Powell's presentation yesterday went a long way for that audience and I think it was an important one for the American audience and I think that you will continue to see American popular opinion turn, assuming that the Administration keeps this effort up and that's something I want to come back to in terms of what they have to do.

That third audience, though, the international community, in some ways maybe the most important audience for the Administration, and in some ways may have been the least affected by Powell's speech. I don't think we have a real good feel for this yet but we're starting to already see mixed messages coming back. As best I can tell most of the Arab states seem to have just dismissed everything Powell said. They believe we are fully capable of making all of this stuff up. They don't have the same kind of respect for Powell that the American people do. And I think that in Europe as well the messages have been very mixed. I think that a lot of the things that Powell said were forceful and convincing to Americans because we believe that Colin Powell has tremendous integrity and would never betray us. I'm not certain that that necessarily translated for people beyond the United States.

I think that last audience may be critical for the Administration because at least my own feeling, I think there's pretty good evidence of this, the Administration has made up its mind. They are going to war. So the question now is not whether or not the Administration is going to war, it's how many countries come with us. And increasingly what you're seeing, and it's even getting played out in the press, but I'm certainly hearing it in private and I hear it from the Administration that they're hearing it constantly, is you are getting more and more countries who are coming to the Administration and saying all right, we know Saddam Hussein is evil, we know that he is doing all of this horrible stuff, we believe the world would be a better place without him and even though we're not wild about the idea of going to war we're willing to support you. But we have a problem in that our people have not reached the same conclusion and we need you, the United States, to make the case to our people. We need you to explain to our people why this is important to give us the political freedom to go ahead and sign up for this war especially after the second resolution. To go ahead and go and do this. I think that's where in some ways the Administration really needs to concentrate its fire.

Let me say a few things about where I think the Administration needs to go. First, as I said earlier, they've got to follow through. Powell's presentation was a great start but it was just a start. Too often in the past the Administration has not done the follow-through. They've had President Bush come out and give big speeches, and President Bush is great when he give one of these big speeches and it really has an impact, but it doesn't necessarily take because they don't do the follow-up. They don't have the senior Administration officials out there constantly making the case, laying out the details of the

argument, and in addition laying out more and more evidence.

There is a lot more out there and I know how painful it was for the Administration just to get a lot of this stuff out there. There is more that can and should be released. Again, my own sense is that foreign audiences may not necessarily be quite as convinced as our own. And in particular some of the English-speaking countries, Great Britain in particular, really needs that help. Tony Blair needs the Administration to make the case. There's already been I guess a 10 percent bounce in the British polls as a result of Powell's speech. That's good, but it's not going to get Tony Blair home. He needs the Bush Administration to be doing more. There is much more that should be released, much more that should be put out there.

I think two points along those lines. First was a point that David made earlier which is the history. One of the things I found that was lacking in Powell's presentation, as I say I think in general it was a terrific presentation, but one of the things that was lacking there was the history. The fact that this is a pattern for the Iraqis. that what they are doing now is identical to what they were doing to David and the other inspectors all throughout the 1990s.

And this gets to I think a broader point which is implicit in what Powell said but needs to be made much more explicit and it's the answer to the French charge. I think implicit in everything that Powell was doing yesterday was the charge that Saddam Hussein is not complying, has no intention of complying, and will not do so. That's the answer to the French charge. The French charge of give the inspectors more time, give the inspectors more time. The rebuttal to that is we have no evidence that this leopard is changing his spots. We've watched him for 12 years and what he is doing now is identical to what he was doing all throughout the 1990s. We've given him last message after last message and he doesn't seem to get it. I think that's a very critical message and the Administration needs to make that much more explicit. Again, they need to lay out more evidence to convince more of these countries to come on board.

They've got two problems out there. Two big ones. The first one is the Blix report on the 14th of February. On the 27th of January Hans Blix gave a very honest and objective assessment of where the Iraqis were and it played very much into the hands of the Administration. Everything that I'm seeing in the press, everything that Mr. Blix has done since then seems to suggest to me that Mr. Blix regrets having been quite so honest and objective in that last report. you're seeing him say things that really he has no brief to say. Whether or not there's a connection between Iraq and al Qaeda. I'm not going to argue that there necessarily is that connection, that's irrelevant to my point. It's just that the things that Mr. Blix isn't saying are much more political than the things that he said in that January 27th report, and I think the Administration has to be very careful that Mr. Blix doesn't make a more political assessment. I would characterize Mr. Baredi's assessment as much more political. There were a lot of spins involved in Mr. Baredi's assessment that made it very different from what Mr. Blix said. I think it's very important the Administration keep Blix on a technical track. Your job is to report on Iraqi cooperation and that's what we expect you to do. We don't expect you to usurp the prerogative of the Security Council by deciding whether or not the inspections should continue. Again, Blix had it right the last time. That's a decision for the Security Council. That's a political decision, it's not a technical decision.

The second problem that's lying out there is the one that Amatzia spoke to. It's the problem with

Saddam Hussein. And I think going into, leading up to the Powell presentation we were all completely fixated on the Powell presentation and we were seeing this as kind of a one-sided game. Can the U.S. make the case or not? This is a two-sided game. Saddam Hussein is playing also and we can never forget that. The Administration has to be very concerned about exactly the scenario that Amatzia laid out. That if they do make it clear that we are going to go to war, that he is going to start giving up additional pieces to create the impression that he is disarming and reinforce the French and German position and that is very dangerous.

And there I think what the Administration has to do is to go full bore for the second resolution. I actually would argue that rather than go for a resolution that has an ultimatum, they ought to make clear that February 14th is the ultimatum. If on February 14 if Blix doesn't basically declare the Iraqis as pure and clean, that that is going to become the basis for deciding whether or not there is a second resolution going to war, and make it almost a black or white. A one or a zero, a binary issue. Because otherwise Saddam Hussein is going to start throwing the stuff out there to try to create as much smoke as he possibly can and try to reinforce these French and German arguments that the Iraqis are disarming and we're making progress and just give it more time. Again, the Administration always has to keep in mind, and I think they are very mindful of this, the fact that we can't keep those forces in place for very long and Saddam knows this.

It's always important to remember the [Al Uzbui] interview that he gave just a couple of months ago where he said time is on my side. All I have to do is string this out for a few months longer and this effort will collapse because the British and American public opinion will not be able to support it. That's the game the Administration is in right now, and Jim, you're absolutely right. Not only do I feel the dejavous, I also feel the dejavous of 1991 where at some point the first Bush Administration basically came to the conclusion that Saddam was never going to comply, he was never going to leave Kuwait, and therefore they had to go to war, and at that particular moment, that's when things really got dicey because that's when they became terrified that Saddam would suddenly come forward with half a loaf and say all right, I'm willing to negotiate over Kuwait and try to string it out for six months or a year or with the North Koreans two or three years of negotiations over exactly what the withdrawal from Kuwait would look like and how much he would withdraw and basically derail the whole effort.

In 1991 the first Bush Administration got away with it. In 1998 we got hamstrung, at least a little bit, at least for a month. This time around the Bush Administration just doesn't have that luxury.

**MR. STEINBERG:** Well said. Amatzia's and Ken's presentations suggest a second resolution is important. Ivo, is there any chance we're going to get one and what would it take to get one? How are the other members of the Security Council responding?



**MR. IVO H. DAALDER:** Never say never, as the French Foreign Minister said when he was asked that question.

The initial reaction from the Europeans was as predictable as you can have thought. If Powell had given a speech or not you would have predicted that the Brits, the Spaniards and the Bulgarians would side with Powell and that the rest of the Security Council and the rest of the Europeans -- the Germans, the French, the Chinese,

and the Russians -- would say this just proves we need more time. Because we have so much evidence now that we need to uncover. And as David said, what has been the standard problem is that there are two very, very different views about what needs to be done. But Resolution 1441 took seven weeks to negotiate to make absolutely sure that both sets of views could be accommodated by that resolution and it is therefore not surprising that the same problems persist.

The United States believes that the inspections are about proving that Saddam is cooperating in its own disarmament. The French and others believe that it is about the inspectors being able to peacefully disarm rather than through force disarm Iraq.

So that's where we were before Powell's speech, that's where we are after the Powell speech. In Europe I don't think many minds were changed by what Powell had to say. It was a powerful speech. Powell has more credibility than anybody else in this Administration but in the end the fundamental conflict that was there prior to Powell's speech remains afterwards.

I have a slightly different view of the French statement which I also found very interesting but for different reasons than David indicated. And I do think that the French are key here, as they were indeed last October and November. If the French go for a resolution I believe the Russians will go for a resolution, the Chinese may even go or at least they will abstain from the resolution, and the Germans frankly are locked in so much that it makes no difference what anybody else does. The Germans will not vote for a resolution under any circumstances. But if the French do lots of things can change.

French Foreign Minister Villepin had a two-part statement. He said one, we know that Iraq has chemical weapons, that they have biological weapons, that they are engaged in the production of ballistic missiles with ranges exceeding that which they are allowed to have. We know if they continue to fail to cooperate and helping to answer the questions that Mr. Blix and Mr. Powell have raised that we will have to look for other options including the resort to force, which he repeated this morning when he said today France would vote against it, right now. But force will remain an option that is open. That is, the French have maintained the possibility, and consistently maintained the possibility, of going for a resolution that would authorize the use of force.

However, the French say that we need more time for inspectors to see if they can get more evidence to find out if the issue can't resolve this issue peacefully.

They believe that there is a way in which inspections can succeed in getting rid of the weapons of mass destruction that they believe are there. Therefore let's beef up the inspection process, Villepin said, let's get more inspectors, etc., etc. Those are the kinds of proposals he had.

In the end there is a difference between France—I would say there is a difference between much of the rest of the world—and the United States on the question of whether war is the right thing at this moment in time. If you will ask Mr. Chirac or anybody in France whether the costs of war outweigh the benefits the answer is yes. Frankly, I think most of Europe, most of the publics in Europe and most of the governments in Europe will argue that the costs of war outweigh the benefits.

But there are also costs if the United States does go to war to oppose it. In the end that is what

all European governments and the French government will have to weigh. If the United States in fact does go to war isn't it better then to join the inevitable, to make this a more legitimate possibility by having a UN Security Council Resolution? The question is at what point do the French have to make that decision? It may be as soon as next Friday, a week from tomorrow.

If Blix comes back from Baghdad without any answers to any of his questions, without any indication that there is more cooperation forthcoming and reports that to the Council, there is little doubt that the United States and/or Britain will say the candle is up. In fact Mr. Blix may indicate the candle is up. At that point France will have to make a decision. If there is wiggle room they'll try to wiggle out of it, but if there's no wiggle room, I think France is going to join its Western allies and vote reluctantly, but in the end to authorize military force.

The key here is whether Mr. Blix will provide enough wiggle room for the French to wiggle out. What they would like is to extend the inspection process for as long as possible. But if that door is closed and a real decision has to be made between joining the United States and voting for a UN Security Council resolution or standing quite frankly very much alone in Europe and in much of the rest of the world, because other countries are making similar calculations, the French are likely to do what they have done consistently in history which is when the chips are down they're with us when it comes to war.

**MR. STEINBERG:** While they were talking in New York Mike there was moving in other parts of the world. We've heard a lot about windows. When does the window open for war and how long can the U.S. put it off?



**MR. MICHAEL E. O'HANLON:** A very interesting story, Jim, in today's *Washington Post*, for those who kept going to page 18 of so, it's by Vernon Loeb saying the 101st Air Assault Division in Fort Campbell, Kentucky has begun to ship helicopters to Florida, from which point they would then load up on ships and head to the Persian Gulf. No formal deployment order, and this may be an incorrect report, but I think it's probably right and it's probably telling. This is beginning to be the end game in the deployment.

So far Ken and I have watched this deployment with great interest and wondered if the so-called rolling start concept would really be implemented by the military where you start with whatever forces you might have in theater and keep building up as you go. I think it's fair to say for Ken and also for myself certainly, we don't much like the idea because we prefer to go in with a big bang and try to intimidate, try to get the job done quickly, but there have been important parts of the U.S. military and perhaps even important parts of Secretary Rumsfeld's brain that have favored the rolling start. But I think Rumsfeld himself has always been a little divided on it and I think now we're seeing more and more evidence the military is going to be read to go in big when they start.

What that means is getting the 101st over there, and then for those of you who don't know the U.S. military let me try to confuse you by saying the other division we would probably look to see get over there pretty quickly is either the 1st, the 1st or the 1st. What I mean by that, the 1st Armored Cavalry, the 1st Mechanized Infantry, or the 1st Armored Division. The second two of those are based

in Germany and there have been some lead elements from what we can tell I think of the 1st Mechanized Infantry already headed to Turkey, if that's not incorrect. But for the most part the 1st, the 1st and the 1st have not yet begun to deploy. You don't necessarily need any one of them particularly. Their functions are all pretty similar. Their construction and their makeup is fairly similar even though they have such different names. But until we get those units, or one of those at least, plus the 101st, we're still looking at a force of 75,000 to 100,000, not big enough to do the job right.

So keep your eye on two things. The continued deployment of the 101st as well as something happening with either the 1st, the 1st or the 1st. Once those divisions have moved, and I think they're beginning to, then you're ready. You could theoretically do a mini rolling start and begin a week or two before the full force was in place. I think you have reasonable leeway to do some of that, but you would want to have most of that force well on the way if not already in theater before you initiate hostilities.

So to answer your question directly, I'd say roughly the new moon, in early March which I believe is March 3rd. That's roughly the beginning of the window opening.

People talk about the new moon as if that's the day you have to fight. Of course what we know about the new moon is that's the day there's no moon at all any time, and in the following week there's very little moon. So certainly through March 10th or so it's not a bad time for night time fighting. The middle of March is a relatively bad time because full moon means the moon's up all night and you would just as soon fight in the complete dark which means taking down Iraq's electricity grid and then waiting for moonless conditions.

Now Iraq's going to have the ability, unfortunately, to use some smaller generators to produce electricity and probably flood lights around some of the targets they know we'll have to attack, but for the most part I think we can operate in relative darkness if we choose either the first ten days of March or wait towards the latter third of March. So I would see the first window is the first ten days or so of March, and then the second window would be the last ten days of March. And I would very strongly expect war to begin in one of those times.

Just one final point of a non-military nature, to back up Ken's argument that the Administration has decided that it's going to war, was the link between al Qaeda and Saddam Hussein that Secretary Powell talked so much about yesterday. I'm going to do the same thing Ken did and not weigh into this in great detail, but there is a little more evidence there than I first thought. I'll at least concede that much. But the point is, Powell himself is now making this argument.

A year ago, if you read Bob Woodward's book, President Bush suspected Saddam might be behind 9/11 right away. That evidence doesn't seem to be there. But in the course of the summer it was only Rumsfeld and Cheney making the argument that Saddam was linked to al Qaeda and in fact Deputy Secretary Armitage essentially rebutted Cheney and Rumsfeld at one point in late August when he said the al Qaeda in Iraq are in the north in non-Saddam controlled parts of the country. It was almost a rebuttal. And thankfully to this Administration and its efforts to have a clear public face on things, Armitage's remarks got very little scrutiny or attention, but he basically was disagreeing with them.

Now you have Secretary Powell actually making this argument, going out of his way to make the argument in a speech that could have been kept to 60 minutes if he hadn't gone with this particular point. They didn't go so far as to say that Saddam is actually working with al Qaeda or likely to in the future in a way that would directly impinge upon U.S. security, but it seems pretty clear the Administration thinks we have an Article 51 self defense justification for going to war, even if Saddam disarms. And I believe that reflects the Administration's mentality at this point and for this reason as much as any other, they know they're going to war and in their minds I think there is virtually no uncertainty any more and almost nothing Saddam can do to change the situation.



**MR. STEINBERG:** That's a very powerful note to end on. I would just add, for events to watch, watch this weekend when Secretary Rumsfeld goes to the Verkunde Conference in Munich and on Friday morning you'll see Secretary Rumsfeld followed in succession by Foreign Ministers Fischer, and then the German Defense Minister and the French Defense Minister talking about these issues in the NATO and trans-Atlantic context.

So let's go to your questions now.

**QUESTION:** This is mostly for Michael. Otto [Kreis] with Copley News Service.

This war will be a little different than Gulf War I, apparently we're going to have ground troops in Turkey and we've got overflight rights in Jordan, so it looks like it's going to be a multi-front war. Mike, how do you analyze the way this is going to play out? Will they use Jordan overflight rights in any way? Does it make any difference? Do you see the European divisions going to Turkey or who else operates from the north?

**MR. O'HANLON:** Ken's probably better at this question than I am so I'll start and be brief. I would think that the forces in Turkey are still going to be relatively small and it's going to be more of giving Saddam something else to think about, pinning down his forces up there and helping the Kurds protect themselves as opposed to a genuine second land offensive. It remains to be seen just how much of one of the European divisions might wind up there so maybe I'll be proven wrong in the end.

But even if we could do what I just said, that would already be a major accomplishment so I think it's very good news that Turkey is now apparently supporting the idea of U.S. troops on its territory.

As for Jordan, I think the major advantage there is to be able to help deal with the SCUD problem early in the war with whatever kind of access we might need to let's say keep Iraqi aircraft from shooting at our UAVs, our unmanned aerial vehicles that may be operating in Southwestern Iraq. It may be convenient to do that from carrier aircraft operating out of the Mediterranean overflying Jordanian airspace. Apart from that I can't see any great benefit to Jordan being involved. There could be some combat search and rescue benefits as well, but I think it's a relatively secondary yet still useful capability and access for us to have.

**MR. POLLACK:** As Michael's suggesting the biggest thing about Jordan is the western desert



and the SCUD hunt to prevent the SCUDs from getting launched to Israel. That is going to be critical. We're going to need overflight of Jordan. We're going to need overflight of Saudi Arabia for that entire effort. And assuming that we've got troops stationed in the western desert, they also need resupply either out of Saudi Arabia or out of Jordan. A very important effort.

The war is going to look like a combination of Gulf War I, I guess it's a little presumptuous to call it Gulf War I, but the Persian Gulf War of 1990, 1991, and Afghanistan. In the sense that there will be a lot of razzle dazzle, a lot more razzle dazzle than there was in 1990-1991, but by the same token, I think it will be the ground forces that are going to decide this war and you are going to see some fairly traditional ground thrust. There the biggest issue and one of the reasons why you may see a multi-front operation, in addition to the reasons that Mike cited. I think those are right. Is logistics.

These are big forces that need lots of road to be able to support themselves, and the more road networks that you can use to support these kind of forces the faster the drive can be. If you've got to push four heavy divisions up one axis of advance with only a few major roads the drive can really stall. As a result, if you can alternatively spread out those heavy divisions, allow them to use multiple actions of advance, so you're using multiple roads, you're increasing the speed at which they can go because the supply flow will be greater.

There is of course a downside to that which is you've also got to protect those roads. This gets into a critical assumption. How much of Iraq actually fights? If the assumptions are proven right that not many Iraqis fight, then you want as many main supply routes as you can because you're not really worried about defending the supply routes.

On the other hand if you've got a lot of guys who are willing to fight for Saddam, that means you've actually got to defend those logistical chains and then you might want to limit it a bit more.

**QUESTION:** Gail Myers from Search for Common Ground.

All indications are that the Administration has made up its mind to go to war. Do you see any scenarios under which they'd accept a different outcome?

**MR. STEINBERG:** First I should make another point to follow on Mike's because it was a really good one and it's worth thinking of. One of the other things I'm keying on that's leading me to believe that we're doing it is also the fact that the President in the State of the Union launched a human rights argument. They've been very careful for the President not to make the human rights case against Iraq. You've heard Paul Wolfowitz make it, you've heard Don Rumsfeld make it, you've heard other people. The President never did. That's important because once you deploy the human rights argument, as you well know, you can't take that back and there is no possible outcome related to disarmament that solves the human rights case. So the moment you start to say that the reason we go to war is for human rights, that pushes the UN out the window. The inspectors can't possibly solve that problem. Which does get to your question.

I think it is probably a true statement that if Saddam Hussein packed up all of those guys that Amatzia listed earlier and all of their families and took them to Elbe or St. Helena or Syria or wherever it

may be, I think under those circumstances, I think the Administration would have to accept that because all of this would suddenly change. But first, and Amatzia and I are pretty much in agreement that we think that scenario is exceedingly unlikely, especially not before the tanks actually start rolling, and once they start rolling, I think the likelihood that we're suddenly going to stop short because Saddam suddenly decides to, or he'll be saying I'm willing to do this, at that point in time we're not going to stop it. So I really don't see anything realistically. In theory, yes. If Saddam abdicated with all these different people that would probably force the Administration to call a halt to this. As I said, I think that's exceedingly unlikely.

**MR. DAALDER:** I would think that if another chicken farm were found with not only documents but lots of other evidence it would become exceedingly difficult for the Administration, whether they like it or not, to then continue along the path that they are on. This is the danger of the inspection trap, to quote two of my colleagues, one of whom is sitting next to me, that has always been out there. But if in fact the scenario in which the screws are really on takes place and then Saddam not only shows some leg but he really starts undressing, at that point it becomes very difficult for the Administration to push all the way in part because they won't have anybody with them. In that case it will become impossible for Tony Blair to say it's too late. And Tony Blair, whether we like it or not, is a critical political factor in the U.S. decision on whether we can go to war or not. Which is why we should watch what Tony Blair does. If he goes for the second resolution, we'll follow him. If he says wait, it'll be difficult for us to say no, we're going to go.

**MR. STEINBERG:** I would just add I think the domestic political situation also would have an impact. I think there's still a lot of anxiety and uncertainty at home about this. I think the American people are moving in the direction the President wants to go, but I think if they saw an option short of war that would seem to have achieved the objectives on the disarmament front.

I don't think the Administration has made the case to go to war on the human rights ground and I think they'd have a hard time making that case.

**MR. BARAM:** If Saddam Hussein after there is a new UN Security Council Resolution that does allow America to open fire [inaudible], Saddam I'm sure is going to consult also with the French. The French have been consulting with Saddam since 1992-1993 and they usually give him very good advice. Sometimes he did not take their advice and succeeded. It's true too. Because he has more guts than they do. [Laughter] Also Saddam Hussein is very important to understand is an incurable optimist. And he always thinks that somehow he'll wiggle out of this mountain of trouble which very wisely he managed to pile up on himself.

So okay, he might still decide I'm not going to give in, but I think American Administration will have a problem, a real one, if he gives in -- I give it less than 50 percent chance but there is still a possibility that he, much more real than abdication. Because if you abdicate everything is lost. You are taking with you all these lieutenants of yours, all these guys, Tariq Aziz, [inaudible], your son A, your son B --

**VOICE:** Wife A, Wife B.

**MR. BARAM:** Really you take out everybody to -- I like Ken your example. And then really your chances of recuperating are almost zero. I wouldn't say zero, but almost zero. But if you stay, even if you are ready to go through some kind of humiliation and this and that, you're still out there, you're still in power, you still have a chance of resuscitating your arsenal. And you'll have your money back because the embargo will be off.

So I can still see him much more likely giving in on weapons rather than abdicating and going abroad. It's quite obvious. But again, if he does that he will I think place the Administration in a very awkward position.

All I can say is that judging by his track record, sometimes he is becoming very very stubborn, really stubborn. That was the case in 1991, having realized that the invasion of Kuwait was a wrong decision he still decided not to withdraw peacefully, you all remember that, but to stand firm and fight. He paid very dearly for it, and some to which people don't know.

Usually I would say throughout his whole career Saddam Hussein admitted mistakes once in his life, one. And that was about a month or six weeks after the Gulf War, after February 28th, after the end of the war when he went to Basrah and he made the remarkable speech and he said, it came out in the Iraqi press of course. He said we will never make the same mistake again. Meaning I'll never put the Iraqi armed forces again in the same position in which they had to lose half of their force in a war that had no chances of victory. So he did admit the mistake then so maybe he learned from it. But it's very difficult to tell.

So I still think that he won't open up and give everything. This to my mind because he's such an optimist. He always believes he can keep something and yet get away with it. But there is a possibility, not very good by the way. It's not like 70 percent chance. It's maybe 50.5 percent chance. It's uncertain. But there is that he will get advice from the French, advice from his own advisors who will be asked genuinely to tell him what they think. And then he'll say all right, it's not pleasant but let's give them a little more, enough to get more time. What Ken said is absolutely essential. More time. Let's get to May. Because in May for the Americans to fight wearing those protective suits is near suicide.

In summer, in August it gets something like 120, 155 degrees in the shade in Baghdad. To be wearing those things it's very very dangerous. Up to a point, after an hour or two there is no ventilation. It's really dangerous. So he will rely on that.

I'll just end by saying that my father, bless his soul, he's 92 years old. He knows what heat means because when he established the little kibbutz in southern Israel in 1939 it was sometimes 115, 120 degrees in the shade. So when I told him the Americans I don't think can fight after say late March and they'll have to postpone it if it's postponeable at all to October or November, he said why? I said because it's 125 or 120 degrees in the shade in Baghdad in August. So in a typical kibbutz sense of humor he said, so why are they sitting in the shade? [Laughter]

**MR. KAY:** ?? Jim, if I can just put my marker down, because it's a good question. I suspect there is someone out there on the web since you're doing this weekly that's going to rank your experts according to their predictive capacity. That's truth in advertising. Let me put a marker down and say I

think it's practically impossible at this point to avoid conflict.

The speech that not many people paid attention to, and I agree Tony Blair has the most difficult thing, keep your eye out. The Jack Straw speech was very interesting because he cast it in terms of the dilemma of democracies when faced with threats, and the temporizing nature until the threats get unmanageable.

And if you read that along with parts of Colin Powell's speech, I think you hear a clear message. We're not going to deal with promises any longer. We don't believe this individual. We don't believe him. We're going to act.

So I think the only thing that can still war is a bullet through Saddam's head or a mass departure of it. I think both of those would in fact still war. Short of that I don't think there's anything he can promise to do that would do it.

The Administration knows the inspection trap. I think they have a strategy to drive it to avoid it, whether they'll be successful, there are a lot of roadblocks and particularly French roadblocks that might be thrown in the way. I think they'll go right through them.

So when you're ranking on the web let me say I think my answer to your question is at this point nothing practically other than a bullet or a Travelocity ticket for a large number of the family.

**QUESTION:** [inaudible] Newspapers.

If the shooting starts what is your level of expectation as to whether the Iraqis are going to use some of these weapons of mass destruction against U.S. troops?

**MR. STEINBERG:** I'm glad you asked because I was going to ask Amatzia, how is he going to approach the problem of using WMD?

**MR. BARAM:** I won't go into all the options I think Saddam would have once war started. He has maybe three options, maybe a combination of two or three. One option is what I would call the Sampson option. Bringing down the temple on top of his head and everybody else's including the Americans, the Israelis, maybe the Kuwaitis, maybe the Shiites of Southern Iraq. And I think that he, there is a good chance, I won't say certainty, there's no certainty. But there's a good chance he will give the orders to his officers to use chemical weapons against Americans. He might even give the orders to some of his operators to use biological weapons against the Shiite population of Southern Iraq, of course blaming you for that.

The good news is that they have never done it before, and I'm told, maybe somebody knows more than I do, maybe we have some Japanese [inaudible] experts here who know what happened and whether this crazy, this group used also, they used chemical weapons we know that, but if they also used biological weapons. I heard from the Japanese diplomat, in Japan we think they did, and there were no casualties at all, not even one person needed hospitalization. Which means that it's not so simple to use those things and be successful. But in America we saw that it succeeded, the anthrax envelope.

So I can see also the possibility, the basic idea Saddam would have in such a case would be this. I am lost anyway. So if I can inflict on Israel a major blow. If it's not major, it's minor, at least I have done my best. But if I can inflict some damage on Israel, I will appear in all of history as a great hero, the only one who managed to inflict major damage on Israel. And his place in history is very important to him.

In terms of American soldiers, American forces, to delay their advance. In terms of the Shia, yes. He has a certain account to settle with these people, and it will certainly delay American offensive. Certainly.

So I can see all these possibilities. Again, the good news is that his chances of doing that are not very good, succeeding in doing that, because America already, American psychological warfare already is working on that, telling the Iraqi army general, and any officers at all, he who is found guilty of pushing non-conventional button will be facing trial, and if found guilty will pay the price. I would phrase it differently. This is a very American way of phrasing things and I think Americans understand very well what this means, but I'm not sure Iraqi officers get the point. And if you want to really scare an Iraqi officer you have to remember, he's very scared of Saddam Hussein. He has to be more scared of you than he is of Saddam Hussein. It's not easy to achieve that. [Laughter] But you have to think in a creative fashion, don't you dare touch those buttons. And you may have a reasonable chance that these guys won't touch those buttons for that reason.

**MR. STEINBERG:** I hate to think exactly what the details of that message are. [Laughter]

**QUESTION:** Bill Gibson of the Sun Sentinel.

My question has to do with the long term U.S. objectives assuming a military victory. Which side of the brain will prevail? Will it be a don't mess with Texas, is it an agent for a democratic change in the region? What are the long term objectives and how likely will they be achieved?

**MR. STEINBERG:** Ken, do you want to start?

**MR. POLLACK:** My answer is I don't think we know the answer to that just yet. I think there is something of a battle for the soul of the Administration over that question.

I think in the specific case of Iraq it's mostly been decided. They are at least on paper and at least among their own discussions, I think they are very committed to a long term reconstruction of Iraq. The details are still being worked out to some extent although they've come a huge distance since where they were over the summer. They've done a tremendous amount of work on the day after. And again, it's always possible that they could pull the punch and get in and decide we're not going to make the full effort. But all the planning is for a long term reconstruction.

For my mind, I think your question is an extremely important one and for me it goes beyond Iraq to ask what is our policy towards the region? There I think you see one approach laid out in Colin Powell's speech and Richard Haas' speech before that of helping change throughout the region through

a process of gradual change, assistance to people who are working for change throughout the region, cooperative efforts. All that I think would be a very positive way to approach things.

I think there is another approach out there in the Administration that basically says that regime change in Iraq is a good model for other places in the region, and it would take a much more let's say forceful approach to transformation across the region.

I think this is one of the most important issues for people in the region as well. When I talk to Arabs and Arab diplomats now that's what I'm hearing a lot of. What they're saying is a lot of this street opinion has changed. Everyone knows Saddam Hussein is evil, but what we're really nervous about is what you're going to do here. Are you going to go from a war with Saddam to making peace between Israel and the Palestinians the way that the first President Bush did and trying to help some kind of a broader program? Or is it going to be a program of we squash Saddam and then we squash Assad and then we squash Qadafi? I think that's the big question that's still out there and I don't think the Administration has really begun to grapple with it. But I think for my money the Powell and Haas approach is lay out a very positive way that you could take that if the Administration wants to.

**MR. STEINBERG:** Amatzia, how are the Iraqi people going to feel about a long term American presence? A significant military and political presence in Iraq?

**MR. BARAM:** Well of course I don't think anybody knows, but from the lessons of history one thing is very important to understand. The Iraqis are very nationalistic, they are very proud, and they are very difficult. They are proud of it.

Whenever I speak to my Iraqi friends they tell me, don't you forget Professor Baram that [Al Hadajaj] [inaudible], he was an admired governor of Kufa which is where Najef is today, Southern Iraq. In the early 8th Century AD. When he came to Kufa to rule over the Iraqis, he was appointed by the [inaudible], he told them, [in Arabic] which sounds very good in Arabic. [Laughter] Which means, he told them, he was Syrian. From Damascus. He told us oh, people of Iraq. You are the people of division, of hypocrisy, and of bad quality. He said that about us? Isn't that nice? Okay. So it's not easy.

But the main thing is this. The Americans will have, first of all they will have to my mind, the reception in most parts of Iraq will not be the same reception that the Israeli tanks in 1982 received from the Shiites of Southern Lebanon. They threw rice and flowers on the Israeli tanks. Well we know what they throw now because Israelis don't have a monopoly on stupidity, of course, and whatever, we made some big mistakes. But the Americans, I don't think they'll be received that way. People are very afraid of war. That I know. Very afraid of war. They are very unhappy with Saddam, vast majority, but nobody wants war.

But when you are there you will be a fait accomplis, they'll accept you with some kind of leaden sort of atmosphere. Let's see what you can do to help us. But you have to conduct your business very very intelligently and very sensitively.

I won't go into details because that would take really a lecture. But you have to be very sensitive, very sensible and very efficient and to prevent bloodshed, a lot of red blood in Iraq today, and

to try and bring things back on line. Everything back on line.

If you manage to do it quickly and you have the expertise to do that then you have to find a way of getting participation. Interestingly enough, Afghanistan is not Iraq. That's something we all know. Iraq is much more complicated. But the principle you adopted in Afghanistan in terms of finding a group of people that can serve as a representative government though not yet democratic. I mean not yet democratically elected. That's a correct approach. So you have to take some of the exiles, the opposition people, you certainly have to take them and use them and you have to take local people, community leaders who are not identified with the Bath regime, but also not fighting the Baths. If you fight the Baths you are dead, so all those would be dead. But those who are still alive simply didn't collaborate very closely, but didn't oppose the regime either. You have to find these people and, not very difficult, and to promote them and they represent community. And then build something that you can run, you can run the big show but these guys have to be your connection to the population.

If you manage to do that, and I think you can, it's not undoable. Good initial success.

how long will you have to stay there? I would say most of your soldiers I think should go home and will be able to go home fairly quickly. You will still need there many soldiers, but not 100,000. No way. Then you gradually give them more and more self-rule and it will be eventually their own rule. You will like to go as soon as you can.

So I think all this can be done, but you really have to be very sensitive, always -- One of the greatest mistakes the Brits did once they conquered [inaudible], is they were insensitive to local sentiment, local wishes. Certain wishes, sentiments, couldn't be met. Whatever. And it is still the case. But many can be met. Just listen to these guys. Have your ear all the time to the ground to listen to grievances, to complaints, to rumors, to conspiracy theories. The Iraqis are the champions of conspiracy theories. That's okay. You can't help that. But it tells you something about something, so be sensitive. That's all.

**MR. DAALDER:** Two points. One is we've talked a lot today and in the last couple of days since the President's State of the Union address about whether or not the United States, this Administration, has made the case for war. They may have made the case for war in terms of its justification. They have not made the case for why this is the right thing to do now.

Your question is one of the two critical questions that this Administration must answer before it starts down this road. What is it that we're doing there, once we have achieved the immediate objective of getting rid of Saddam and securing his weapons of mass destruction. What are we doing there? How long are we going to be there? What's it going to cost? Who's going to be with us? What's the long term strategy? How many troops do we need? What is our strategy with regard to the Iraqi opposition? What's our strategy in the region? What are we going to do with the Gulf nations? What are we going to do about Israel and Palestine?

Frankly this Administration is just completely and totally silent on this issue. And we cannot accept as a nation the notion that we go to war without any of these questions debated, let alone asked or answered by the Administration.

I'd note that I was part of an Administration that also went into a particular conflict zone with the belief that we would be out in one year. That was December 1995. We sent 60,000 troops into Bosnia. Today, in 2003, we still have 20,000 troops in total. This is a long-term commitment we're taking on and the American people need to be there at the takeoff if we have any guarantee that they're going to be there in the long run.

**MR. STEINBERG:** Our time is just about up. I just want to offer our other panelists, any concluding thoughts before we?

**MR. KAY:** Just a quick response on this one, because I actually think it is the question. But I note it became the question as a result of Colin Powell's success. Until that point they had not made the case to the American public.

There was a lot of work being done behind the scenes. It was amazing yesterday to me to watch Diane Feinstein cave exactly 15 nanoseconds after Powell gave his speech. She was on air saying I've changed my views completely. And you saw starting yesterday, Ted Kennedy and the others started coming, okay, now we've got to focus on that, and that in fact is the democratic line. It's not a [partial] line, it is the important question that needs to be addressed now, and I think you're going to see a lot more there.

I'm actually optimistic that there's a lot more work that has been done on this and it can be dealt with. I was optimistic, I must say, maybe I'm not any longer after this panel, when I heard the Iraqis are proud and difficult to deal with. I don't know anyone in the Middle East that isn't proud or difficult to deal with. [Laughter] And the Iraqis are the chief conspiracy theorists. I hate to tell you, there are lot of others out there.

It's not going to be easy. It's going to be extremely difficult. It is the real test of this Administration. I think they have benefited from seeing what happened in Bosnia, what happened in Kosovo, what's happening in Afghanistan, and I think it is a learning experience. We'll see if they get it right this time. They better. The stakes are a lot higher.

**MR. O'HANLON: ??** I'd very quickly add one point about when we have to be done with this or when the window closes for military action. I think it's generally true we would prefer strongly to fight in March but we don't have to. Because we can operate at night, for one thing, or do most of our concentrated offensives at night, we actually in theory can operate any time. But as a practical matter I think you have April as, I was on a radio show with Major General Bill Nash yesterday and he made the point that the moon does go through a cycle every 29 days. It was a very straightforward yet profound point because it does remind us we could actually start around April 1st, too, and we could probably even start at the end of April. But the question is why? What is the benefit of an additional few weeks of inspections really going to be? If it's just giving the French more time to find some way to feel good about this, that's not a good enough reason. There has to be a material reason on the ground why inspections are going to do that much more in one or two months. If you have that kind of a reason the U.S. military in theory could wait. It might increase risk but it's not out of the question.



**MR. POLLACK:** Just to follow up on Mike, I'll make a point, this is an important one.

Right now part of the problem the Administration has is managing the diplomatic and military tracks. you've heard Mike and myself and Amatzia talk about once again the military and diplomatic tracks are out of sync. Diplomatically, having made the decision to go to war, the Afghanistan needs to go as fast as they possibly can. They need to build the support but they need to go quickly because they need to head off Saddam and other people coming out and throwing spanners into the works. Saddam, the more time you give him the more concessions he will make. We've got to move quickly.

But as Mike was suggesting, militarily we're not there yet and ideally it would be nice to be able to wait until probably even mid March to go. I think there's going to be a real tension that you're going to see in the Administration over these next few weeks as they try to manage the pull between these two different forces.

**MR. STEINBERG:** Thank you all. Thanks for being our guests. We'll be back next week. It will be the day before the new report is due but after the visit of the inspectors to Baghdad so I'm sure we'll have lots to talk about.

Thank you all.

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