

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION
THE CHICAGO COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
THE HOOVER INSTITUTION

RELEASE OF THE CHICAGO COUNCIL'S
2004 GLOBAL VIEWS STUDY

The Global U.S. Role - Policy Implications

Tuesday, September 28, 2004
9:00 a.m.

Willard InterContinental Hotel Ballroom
1401 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C.

(TRANSCRIPT PREPARED FROM A TAPE RECORDING.)

Findings:

Marshall Bouton, President, The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations

Comments:

Thomas Mann, Brookings Institution

Tod Lindberg, Hoover Institution

THIS IS AN UNCORRECTED TRANSCRIPT.

MR. BOUTON: By introducing our very valued partner in Mexico, the Mexican Council on Foreign Relations, COMEXI, and its president, Andres Rosenthal, the comparative study that we and CIDE joined together to do in Mexico was Andres's idea. He first approached me and my colleagues at the Chicago Council and asked whether we were going to do a study in 2004, and we said, well, we'd sort of been thinking about it though it was not on our normal schedule. And frankly speaking, as I mentioned at the very outset today, a major reason for our making the effort to carry out this special biennial study was the opportunity to work with Andres Rosenthal and his team in Mexico and to be part of what is a ground-breaking study there.

So let me ask Andres to come to the podium and say a few words about the Mexican study and point you to tomorrow's session.

MR. ROSENTHAL: Thank you very much, Marshall, and thank you for allowing me to say a few words, first of all, in appreciation of this wonderful collaboration that we have established between the Chicago Council and the Mexican Council on Foreign Relations. We are a very young institution, barely three years old. Chicago is a very venerable, old institution, but we were able, notwithstanding our age gaps, to be able to do what we've done together.

In the case of Mexico, the Mexican public opinion survey and the comparative survey on U.S.-Mexico public opinion regarding international issues was a first for my country. We have results which we'll be presenting tomorrow at the Woodrow Wilson Center during all of the morning, in a similar session as here today. And there are some surprising results as well--disconnects between leadership and public opinion, points of view of Mexican public opinion that are very much in contrast to

conventional wisdom, and a lot of myths that have been debunked with the results of the study. In the case of the Mexican study, it was done with household visits to 1,500 people representative of the entire population, as well as a smaller leadership study similar to the one that the Chicago Council has done.

So I urge those of you who are interested in the Mexican side of the story to join us tomorrow at the Woodrow Wilson Center starting at 9 o'clock, where we will have similar panel discussions as the ones you've had here on the results of the Mexican study and the comparative U.S.-Mexican study, which I think is particularly important for policymakers in both our countries as they look toward implementing the bilateral relationship between Mexico and the United States.

So once again, Marshall, thank you very much. And I'd like to recognize my colleagues from CIDE--CIDE is the Centro de Investigacion y Docencia Economicas--Guadalupe Gonzalez, Susan Minushkin, and all of the people who worked very hard on doing something which in Mexico had never been done. And so thank you for that, and we'll listen with interest to the rest of your presentations this morning.

Thank you.

MR. BOUTON: Thank you, Andres.

We hope that among the priorities of the next administration will be to refocus some attention of our government in the United States on its very vital relationship with Mexico. The Chicago Council has been privileged to join with COMEXI and CIDE in this study and hopes it will be a spur and a source of information and insight as the next administration does look more intently, we hope, at the relationship with Mexico. As would be, I would hope, the study that the Chicago

Council did under the leadership of Doris Meisner, who I think is still with us. I don't know if Doris is in the room still. Where are you, Doris? Right here, thank you.

Doris Meisner, as you all know, former commissioner of immigration and Governor Jim Edgar, former governor of Illinois, and Alejandro Silva co-chaired a study the Chicago Council completed in June on immigration policy, which of course bears heavily on the U.S.-Mexico relationship.

Well, I want to get us started on a discussion which will then turn rapidly to our colleagues from Brookings and from the Hoover Institution on some policy implications--in particular focusing on the next administration--of the data. We've really already begun this exercise, of course, with many of the very thoughtful comments made this morning by participants in the first two panels.

Let me say at the outset that, in my opinion, the survey does reveal an Iraq effect. It's my view that the general pattern of responses that's been observed by many, by both the members of our team and the commentators this morning--the preference for a more restrained use of force, certainly a more selective use of force, the willingness to act decisively against terrorist targets, but in general a desire to use economic and diplomatic tools more effectively, the search for collective decision-making, for the legitimacy and burden-sharing that comes from work with our allies and the involvement of international institutions--all these, it seems to me, all these attitudes, all these dispositions or predispositions on the part of Americans reflect in some part ongoing attitudes that we can trace back through the years, but also a caution that arises out of the concerns they have over the success or lack thereof of Iraq. And of course, the ultimate success we do not know about yet.

It also amounts to a concern about overreach, about overextension of the United States, a wariness of getting committed in places that we will find ourselves stuck in. I suspect that will continue to be a concern about Iraq; in fact, will grow, if you will, to dredge up a term from another era, a quagmire effect.

So this would be, you know, my overall take on the pattern of responses and attitudes we found.

Well, against that background, what are, in my opinion, the factors in this structure of public opinion that will shape policy options for the next administration?

First, it seems quite clear to me--and here, I'm just drawing on some data you've seen already and pulling it together in slightly different ways--the next administration, however you cut it, is going to be more constrained in the use of force, especially when it's confronted with the necessity of using force unilaterally. Of course, the converse of that is that it will also be pressed to find multilateral international sanction, legitimacy, burden-sharing to the extent it wishes to use force.

We have seen a very clear pattern of preference for restraint in the use of force, whether the questions have been very broadly asked, as these two were, or whether the questions get focused on more specific scenarios, with the very important proviso that, as I think Norm said, terrorism, even just the use of the term regardless of how it's used, elicits a response from the American public and even, to some extent, from American leaders of it changes the context almost automatically. How long that will continue to be the case, how long terrorism will be a hot button that an administration can press whenever it wants the U.S. public to respond supportively is another matter.

However, what we also see here is a much greater reticence, particularly among the public, in what we're calling traditional situations, threat situations, such as the various invasion scenarios that we've described. We did not use the term "terrorism" in this first item, as you see, regarding Pakistan, but it's clearly implied when we describe helping the government of Pakistan in the event of a radical Islamic revolution.

And we've heard a lot, of course, about the lack of support in the public and, to a considerable extent, among leaders as well for installing democracy. So if we look backwards and sort of see the evolution of the administration's explanations to the American public as to why going into Iraq was a good thing, you know, we've saw a progression from the connection to the war on terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, stability in the Middle East, and then ultimately democratizing the Middle East. And that was the rationale that really came to dominate the administration's discussion of Iraq right before the war and then, of course, after. I don't think that's going to hold much water next time around. I think there will be--that will not work even in the aftermath of a conflict, and so the next administration is going to have to be very cautious in drawing on democratic values as a reason for using force or for the U.S. getting involved militarily in various scenarios around the world.

Now, I want to turn to what I regard as a sort of sleeper issue in the data--it's been alluded to several times this morning--and that is the economic security scenario. Ben Page has written extensively about these issues and public attitudes on these issues. And historically, whenever foreign threats and problems tend to subside, we've seen in the Chicago Council studies over the years that American economic concerns just bob right to the top, and pretty quickly. And we're seeing that already in

the desire of the American public to see protecting American jobs at the top of the foreign policy agenda--where it's been several times in past Chicago Council studies.

And here we are, only three years after 9/11, only a year and a half after the Iraq conflict, with, you know, yellow, orange, and red alerts bobbing around in people's heads, and still there's this concern about jobs. As well as a very high level of concern about immigration. And a very low level of support for helping to improve standards of living in democratic countries.

Now, what we also see here, most strikingly among all the public-leader gaps that we find in the study, are those gaps relating to economic issues, to what I would call economic security issues. They have to do with job security, they have to do with the use of resources, they have to do with the state of the American economy. Whether it's on globalization, on NAFTA, on outsourcing, on immigration, we see very large gaps between leaders and the public. So we really have a disconnect not only potentially between an administration. but between leadership in the United States that's concerned with foreign policy and the public on these issues.

So if we are unfortunate enough in the years ahead, in the next four years, to have a difficult economic situation internationally and domestically, to have at best a sluggish U.S. economy, at worst a return to zero or negative growth, whether it constitutes a recession or not, my contention would be, my prediction would be that the economic security issues are going to rise rapidly to the top of the agenda--barring a competing physical security threat, such as another attack--and that our leadership is ill-prepared to respond to this because it's way out in front of the public on these issues. This means that the next administration is going to have to invest heavily in devising policies that can continue what has been a pretty consistent overall stance of U.S. past

administrations on continued world trade opening, general support for the process of globalization. There's going to have to be a more proactive effort to bring the public along with that view.

The final thing I want to say, and it's not something that I can point to any single question to document, but it is that when I first looked at this data--and I know some of my colleagues on our team had at least a similar response--the first question that came to my mind was is this isolationist? And I came to the conclusion in talking about it with my fellow team members, I think we came together to the conclusion that it is not. I've gone back over the data several times, and I have to say to you that I look at it as what I'm calling now pre-pre-isolationist; that is, that there's a general pattern of a kind of pull-back pattern, a less kind of dukes up we're going to take on the world, we're going to go out and find the bad guys and beat them up and everything will be fine. There's greater skepticism about our ability to impose our will. There's more importance being placed on domestic concerns.

That said, of course, there's still a high level of desire to engage actively with the world and a whole host of other indicators that argue against any finding of even nascent isolationism. But I would suggest that if the next administration finds itself, one, mired in a still-deteriorating, worsening Iraq situation; two, facing an equally or even more devilish challenge in Iran and North Korea, and especially if its response to one or both of those situations fails; and, of course, three, if there's another major terrorist attack on the United States, there is in this overall pattern of responses we're seeing in 2004 the potential for a kind of fortress-America response. I'm not predicting it, but I'm saying that it's my view that there is that alternative for Americans to say, well, if we can't solve these problems by going out and working our will in the world, if

we can't get even our historically best friends to go along with us, if we can't get these institutions like the U.N. to see the light of day and do the right thing, if we can't protect ourselves by finding the bad guys and killing them, then what choice do we have?

So I think as a new administration comes in, it's going to have to think about how to bring the American public mind along with it in continuing what has been in the Chicago Council's case 30 years, but clearly since World War II almost 60 years of continued American support for an active role in the world.

Now I'd like to ask my colleague from Brookings, Tom--you're first.

MR. MANN: Marshall, thank you very much. I'm a long-time consumer of the Chicago Council studies and I'm very pleased to be a part of the event today. I sat through this morning's discussion. I found it rich and informative. In fact, I'm led to conclude that everything's been said, but not everyone has yet said it. So there's still a role for me here.

Actually, what I'd like to do is follow up on some observations made by Ivo and Norm about the political and electoral significance of the findings of the study. You have these riveting findings before you now. There's no point for me to repeat them. But it seems to me it's still worth asking the broader question of the linkage of the findings to the world of politics and elections and democratic accountability.

How does public opinion constrain its leaders in foreign policy and hold them accountable? That, it seems to me, is an important question and the answer is not self-evident. We've begun to have a discussion about the limits of democratic control of its leaders in the arena of foreign policy. It's good to present broad public views and sentiments, but it isn't obvious how that in turn shapes politics and policy making.

As others have said, presidents are in a very strong position to lead and shape public opinion. I believe by pure force of will President Bush built the support he needed in the country and in the Congress to go to war in Iraq absent any public desire for doing so. I believe presidents can frame important foreign policy, national security choices in ways that will elicit public support if not broad change in public opinion. And after all, support is what it's about in the world of democracies.

And I think that's very significant. As someone pointed out this morning, in most cases of the use of force, of major investments in a national security operation, leadership precedes public consensus or support. One needs also, as some of my colleagues have, to ask how real is public opinion on foreign policy; what does it mean? We're encouraged by the stability of many of the underlying attitudes and values, the responses to questions over a long period of time, but there are questions of intensity, of salience, of genuine levels of information. Ben and I might agree on a lot and disagree on some, but I still find public opinion on questions about particular international institutions, like the WTO, must be based on the slenderest of information about what such an institution is and does. So I think one needs to be wary about that.

Then there's simply the matter, again, of who votes on these issues and under what circumstances. It's worth keeping in mind that our electorate is now characterized by extraordinary partisan polarization, that we see the world through our partisan lenses. It shapes so much of what is politically and electorally relevant. And whatever yesterday's polls said about the defection rates among Democrats and Republicans, I guarantee you, by election day, it will be single digit. And the struggle will be among those loosely attached voters, many of whom have very low levels of information and much more fragmentary views on many of these broad questions of

foreign policy than some of the committed partisans. But those committed partisans might in fact take positions on, say, multilateralism that is at odds with their favored candidate and their party--in this case, George Bush and the Republican Party--but that will be swept aside in the exuberance of supporting their president.

So that it's just well worth asking the question, under what circumstances can public opinion be relevant in elections; how can it shape in any way policymaking? In what way to leaders feel constrained? And how confident are they that they have within their means to reshape the public views of the very matters on which we think they have sort of stable sentiments?

Now, we can explore that in part by looking at Iraq, because Iraq is the 800-pound gorilla of this election season. I went through the exercise of doing a historical counter-factual, which is always risky but is always fun. What if George W. Bush had decided against moving into Iraq to depose Saddam Hussein's regime and had taken steps to use the consensus and sympathy in the world instead to tighten, at least for the short term, the sanctions regime and deterrence and inspections and basically put Saddam on the back burner until some later point in time when broader support may have developed, and focused like a laser on the job in Afghanistan and the other terrorist organizations?

Well, you never know how these things would play out. But after running through a thousand or two thousand words, I concluded that George Bush would be sailing to reelection right now, that the difficulties, the polarization, the world's turning against America, and now signs of continuing chaos and bloodshed in Iraq have colored broader public views about how the country's doing and how the economy's doing and other questions that have clearly shaped this election. So that the president's

decision was fateful. He may get reelected, but if he gets reelected, it will be by a much, much narrower margin and it will be in spite of, because he was able to overcome what has become, in my view, directly and indirectly a huge liability in this election.

So in that sense, if you think more broadly about public opinion and its influence, it's already made a difference. But to think about it in the more immediate and direct electoral context, we first of all have to understand that partisan lenses are there and it's shaping the world view. I mean, you didn't report many findings, except among leaders, by partisanship, and I would urge you, given this environment, in the follow-up studies to look more carefully at that. Because we know from other polling that there is a completely different perception of reality between Republicans and Democrats in the country, in the public. Republicans think things are going well in Iraq and Democrats think it's going to hell in a handbag.

[Tape change.]

--apart from what I've already suggested was setting the broader context, one much less hospitable to the reelection of the president that it would have been had he chosen not to go into Iraq.

The first, of course, is the success of the president in linking the Iraq war to the broader campaign against terrorism, versus John Kerry's success in selling the argument that Iraq has made us more vulnerable, not less vulnerable, to terrorism. It seems to me that is an absolutely critical debate. The public is slightly on the side of Kerry, although it sort of--it varies somewhat over time. I suppose the expert community is largely on the side of Kerry, but there are fundamental partisan differences on this point.

The second, of course, is the public's calculation of benefits versus costs. We've seen this has changed over time in response to reports from Iraq. Whether it's on the front page or the back pages, it seems to me--I think it was Ivo talking about, or maybe it was Jim Steinberg talking about the public's tolerance for casualties--it's all caught up in whether or not the public thinks we're going to achieve our objectives, whether we're going to win: Whether it's a noble cause and whether we're going to win. If they think the cause isn't so noble and/or we don't really have a plan for succeeding, then it reminds them symbolically of the line that Kerry used in Vietnam, who wants to be the last man or woman to die for a failed cause? So that assessment of benefits versus costs is one that will be made in the context of the likelihood of success.

The third way in which it relates to the campaign is, is Iraq mainly a retrospective judgment on the president on his strength, his boldness, his resolve on the one hand, and his wisdom, his judgment, and his competence on the other? That is, how do mass publics hold their governments accountable? I think most political scientists believe that the best way to do it is to see things as they have gone under a political regime and, if they've gone well, give them the benefit of the doubt and reelect them; if they haven't, try someone else.

But of course the trying someone else requires a comfort level that the alternative is someone one can live with. And of course my judgment is that the Bush campaign quickly came to the view last year, last fall, that the referendum was not going to be positive and therefore they had two choices. One, turn it into a prospective policy choice and argue that there's no real difference between what Kerry and what Bush would do in the future; and two, you probably don't even know what Kerry would do in the future because he's had so many positions--that is, to discredit him as an alternative.

And, at least at this stage of the campaign, it's worked quite well. The real question now is whether the issue can be reframed in its traditional form; that is, a retrospective judgment, a referendum on the president whose decisions on Iraq were fateful.

Now, the final way in which this works--and again, others have alluded to this--is Iraq is a window for the public to view the candidates' character, their leadership style, how they might perform in the future. That becomes immensely important in a time of war. As Norm said, the benefit of the doubt usually goes to the incumbent president. But Kerry made a choice to, in effect, challenge the president on his strength, to use foreign policy as the central means of changing the campaign dialogue back away from John Kerry to a referendum on how the country is doing under George Bush on both Iraq and then eventually the economy, which will, importantly, deal with the very economic insecurity that Marshall talked about.

For publics to have influence on elections, to constitute some form of democratic accountability, you need more than one side. You need a sort of real competition of framing of choices, of arguments. It's something we hadn't seen much of for a number of months. We're now in the middle of it. I suspect we will see a good deal of that in the debate on Thursday and in the weeks that follow. If the election is so framed, then in fact we will look back on this and conclude that in spite of all of the constraints on public opinion shaping the foreign policy behavior of leaders, that in this case it may well have been definitive.

Thank you.

MR. BOUTON: Thank you very much, Tom.

Tod Lindberg, Hoover Institution and editor of the Policy Review.

MR. LINDBERG: Thank you, Marshall.

I'm just looking through my notes to see, really, if there is anything left to say or we should go directly to the discussion.

I wanted to say a couple of things about opinion polling, issues surveys, and elections generally. Then I wanted to look a little bit at the data in order to talk a little bit about what I take to be not only the constraints that the data suggest are operating on political leaders, but also the opportunities that may be suggested in the data for them. And then finally, I wanted to talk a little bit about the campaign. I think I might have a couple of points to add to that discussion.

Ordinarily when you think about issues surveys, and particularly issues surveys on the question of foreign policy issues against a backdrop of a political campaign, these questions are very much background kinds of questions. They're the things that are kind of going on out there in general in people's minds. And then the issues that candidates select and run on are different and more highly focused, et cetera.

This campaign is different, and it is indeed different because of Iraq. All of a sudden, I think, the foreign policy questions are absolutely matters of the foreground. They're the top issues on people's minds. I think what's going on in Iraq is something that people do wrestle with, think about, worry about on a daily. And I think the circumstances require a very complex judgments from people--was it worth it; would it have been worth it if; having gone, what do we do; are we in danger of saying that because certain things have not gone as well as we thought that therefore everything has gone as badly as we feared? Et cetera. These kinds of things. And it's different, I think, from our typical presidential campaign. Obviously there is a need for people to have a comfort level with candidates, but here it really is much more salient, much more foreground than that.

Second point on polling. All poll questions, survey questions of the sort that are--this is no disparagement; this is just a fact--all these questions are abstract questions. They take a general case and present it to people and ask people's views of the general case. And that is a perfectly legitimate thing to do. It gives you, I think, some very important indications of where people are and where they want to be. But as a matter of fact, when political leaders look at the world in which they have to operate, they are not confronted in general with things that require abstract judgment, but rather with particular judgments, consequentialist judgments on what happens if I do and what happens if I don't? And that is the basis on which they decide.

The more categorical judgments offer a certain measure of guidance in certain circumstances. But at the same time I don't think, confronted with particular cases--whether that's the question of whether or not to topple the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, whether or not to act against Saddam Hussein--you know, you can frame those issues as the question of whether or not the United States should topple a government which supports terrorist groups, allows them to operate within its territory, but--and that is a good question, but it is also a question of, well, can we win in Afghanistan; if so, how; what do we do; what would the procedure be; what about the fact of the history of armies disappearing trying to subdue this very difficult place?

Similarly, the case of Iraq: Shall we prevent governments from acquiring weapons of mass destruction, prevent them from maintaining stocks of weapons of mass destruction? Well, again, a very good question, a very important question, but not precisely the question the administration confronted, which was specifically in relation to Iraq.

Now, it is of course necessary to at this point add a footnote, and the footnote is the administration has indeed tried to talk in more general terms about matters--the National Security Strategy of 2002 being an important example of that. The question I would pose is whether or not the act of producing the National Security Strategy--a document, by the way, with which I am fundamentally in sympathy--the act of producing it did not in fact suggest to people that these were more general questions than even the administration had in mind having people look at.

Then we get to the question of reading survey results. And to be blunt, we all bring our baggage to them. The essence of the problem is that the people are wise when they're in agreement with me and rather foolish when they don't agree with me. You need, I think, to try to be very careful in untangling those matters.

For example, and just to pick an example that isn't entirely relevant to this survey, but at the time of the sentencing of Timothy McVeigh, the Oklahoma City bomber, support for the death penalty in the United States had fallen from its higher levels and was, I think, roughly in the low 60s by about that point. But the question of should Timothy McVeigh be executed for the Oklahoma City bombing yielded results, as I recall, in the mid- to upper 70s. Which is to say, there was a significant percentage of Americans who were opposed to the death penalty but nevertheless in favor of this execution. Now, you could say that's foolish or inconsistent or any one of a number of things, but it's not obvious to me that that is entirely irrational, in the sense that you might want to say, In general, no, we don't want the death penalty, but in a particularly abhorrent case, we might want to reserve the option. Those kinds of things. So it's important to be aware of those things in reading the polls.

Now, to the data a little bit and just what I take to be the constraints and opportunities presented. Let's talk first a little bit about the constraints. That's a theme that some people have been picking up on.

I think the first clear indication from the survey data is that unilateralism as a doctrine is not on. It is not an approach that is favored by Americans who would prefer to see their country engaged in the world in accordance with others. Now, I believe that it is fair to characterize the early Bush administration as unilateralist, which is to say, having possessed a certain doctrine of the superiority of acting alone in certain circumstances. And I think the abrupt withdrawal from the Kyoto Protocol and also the International Criminal Court were more or less indications of that.

But I don't think that unilateralism, that doctrinal unilateralism with the willingness and indeed eagerness to say that it is not necessary to have others engaged, now characterizes the Bush administration. What's more, I think that this is an important point when we look to what's going on in relation to the election.

I think if you look back, you should try to do a phenomenology of it from the point of view of the policymakers within the Bush administration or the administration as a whole, which is of course always a somewhat risky thing to do and involves a certain measure of mind reading. But I think that, you know, looking back now on, for example, the decision to act in Afghanistan outside the context of NATO, which had, after all, invoked Article V for the first time in its history, was now widely viewed as a mistake, a bad policy decision--notwithstanding that, in the first place, there were no obvious answers to the question of precisely how we would act to topple the Taliban.

It is amusing for those of us who were writing about this at the time to perceive in the current discussion of that subject a kind of givenness to the quality that one could just go in and knock out the Taliban. It was not a given at the time. It was a matter of great complexity. You know, you should go back and read the Woodward book, "Bush At War," in order to see exactly how difficult that decision was and the military options, how poor they were at the time. But nevertheless, even given these difficulties, I think, as I said, there is by now a sense that this was a mistake, that the solidarity expressed over Afghanistan was something that should have been taken to heart and taken more advantage of and then that would have improved the United States' position diplomatically going forward.

That said, one mustn't go too far the other way. I certainly think that my first priority if I were facing the decision of what to do about the relationship between al Qaeda and the Taliban from the point of view of a policymaker, I would approach that decision very much from the point of view of what is my most effective option. And my concerns, which would be serious concerns--and in fact, at the time, I fully shared the concerns expressed by others that it was indeed a mistake not to use NATO, but nevertheless I don't regard the decision to take this matter directly to hand unilaterally, as it were, to be an irrational decision.

There's also, I think, a necessity at this point to draw a distinction between unilateralism, which is to say the doctrine that one should act alone, and unilateral action, which is the act of acting alone, as it were. One is a matter of policy and choice and, as I said, I think has been rejected; but unilateral action, I think, has not and nor do I think it is likely to be by any future American administration that we are apt to see. The security issues that confront the United States do not pose a set of questions

that necessarily can be answered in either of two ways, unilaterally or multilaterally. I think the indication from the data that we have here is that a president would indeed be very foolish not to seek whatever support and assistance from the international community that he could find. In that sense, the unilateralism, the doctrinal unilateral action, has, I think, been swept away.

However, there may be instances in which you seek the support and it is not forthcoming. And I think that poses another interesting set of questions, namely the extent to which the United States will be able, in particular circumstances as they occur down the line, to win the kind of support that I think any future administration will indeed seek. It's interesting--70 percent of Americans, from the survey data, wish to work with others.

We need to look at also, however--and this is important, because, as always in Washington, the tendency is to forget about what others think--but there's very interesting survey data that's just been released by the German Marshall Fund of the United States. It's their Transatlantic Trends survey. I would certainly urge you to look at it. You can find the results at gmfus.org, which compare and contrast the attitudes in the United States on working with others and perhaps the attitudes among some of our European allies about working with the United States. What you'll find is this recurring 70 percent figure on the American side, of wanting to work with others. You'll see something a little different on the European side. You'll see a lower number--but still, I think, in most cases, a majority number--on wanting to work with the United States. But also a significant minority number, in the 20s, 30s, on the need to distance European countries from the U.S. position in relation to--well, actually, not in relation--in general and abstract questions. Of course, in actual fact, notwithstanding the Iraq situation,

across a range of subjects the cooperation between the United States and Europe has been very good and in fact has been growing.

What about the opportunities presented in the data? Well, I think what you see--and I take Marshall's point about the pre-pre-isolationist implications in certain respects, but I think the headline here is that this is a portrait of a population that wants to remain engaged in and with the world. There is, I think, no current sense of an urge to retreat, to abandon key components of the United States security agenda with its global reach, et cetera. So I think that worries about the extent of American support for the U.S. security agenda, and therefore for a broader security agenda, are somewhat exaggerated.

Second, I think if you look at the military intervention numbers across the variety of scenarios that are posed in the survey, I think the only reasonable way to characterize American support for the use of its military is that that support across these scenarios is quite high. Which is not to say that Americans are a necessarily extraordinarily bellicose people, but nevertheless that there are clearly instances in which, because we have this capacity to act militarily, the American people in general are willing to use this capacity in the advancement of certain kinds of good ends. Obviously, the genocide numbers are quite striking an indication, I think, of a certain altruistic spirit that still governs American public opinion. But also, you know, across the range of other contingencies, security and otherwise.

I think the democracy data are, frankly--and here one is at the risk of merely finding foolish the American people when they're in disagreement with one, as I warned you of earlier--I think that is somewhat misleading. Because I don't think the policy agenda has ever been or is ever going to be let us go topple a dictator in order to

put in a democratic government simply. I think the policy agenda would be much more circumscribed than that. There would have to be a security dimension to the question before anyone would think about it.

And I also think that this runs the risk of confusing two very different elements of Iraq policy. "Regime change" is a complicated term and, I think, one that suggests that something is one thing when actually it's two different things. The first question is whether or not you should topple Saddam Hussein. And the second question is, having toppled Saddam Hussein, what next?

Now there is a way of answering the first question in the affirmative without concluding that you have an obligation therefore to provide a democratic Iraq. One could turn to the next Baathist thug and put him in power in the aftermath. We chose not to do that. The reason I think we chose not to do that is for good--excellent, in fact--liberal reasons, which is to say, you know, we also think that in the situation in which we find ourselves, the Iraqi people deserve a chance at a decent, indeed democratic, government and we are willing to help. Again, the specific level of competence associated with this help is a separate question, one to which we can return if you like. But the general impulse on the second question is liberal. We did not look to a strongman for the aftermath.

So I think that--I would be surprised if what Americans were saying was go back to the old days. If you have a security problem with a leader, take him down and put in the next strongman with the proviso that if he misbehaves he gets the fate of the first guy. I don't think that's how I'm going to interpret the survey. Which is to say, while one would not want necessarily to take up arms in order to start toppling dictators, if there are circumstances in which one has toppled a dictator, I think you would find

actually--and in the case of Iraq, do find--support for robust action in promotion of a decent society.

Before we completely lose time, a couple of people have asked in various forms the question, well, if all this is true--which is to say, if the survey says what it says--why isn't John Kerry winning? And I think that is a good and interesting question.

Now, if Kerry does win the election, I think that there is no doubt that a number of people who are close to Kerry will portray his victory as, in the end, a repudiation of the Bush administration and central concerns on foreign policy. That being the case, perhaps we should also say that if Bush wins, it will indeed constitute a kind of vindication of his administration, not necessarily in all of its particulars but in general, and in particular, I suppose, in response to the extreme challenge posed in the 9/11 aftermath.

I think the Democratic strategists thinking about this began from the conviction or the theory of this election that most voters had decided long ago that the Bush policies were in principle unacceptable. And I think that what we're seeing now is that that theory of the election has been proven to be erroneous. If indeed Kerry pulls this out, it will not be because voters long ago decided that Bush policies were unacceptable. It will be because Kerry has put a better alternative on the table from what Bush is offering. And to the extent that one can see a different result, that this is a Bush victory, I think that that, too, will be a question of people's balanced judgment about what the better course for the United States going forward is.

So at the end of the day, I'm going to stick with my conviction that I think the American people in general are rather wiser than not. And again, thanks to the Council for an excellent survey which does, I think, demonstrate that.

Thank you.

MR. BOUTON: Thank you very much, Tod. We now have a limited amount of time for some questions and comments from all of you. Again, as this morning, please wait for the microphone to get to you. If you wish, direct a comment or question to either person or to both and they can both take it or not.

QUESTION: Dave Fitzgerald, a public affairs consultant.

I want to go back to the question of this sort of disconnect between some of the opinions expressed in the survey about the direction of the country and the Bush administration's policies in Iraq and our relationships with most of our allies. I was just wondering where the--it seems the missing ingredient here, one way to close the gap between these two would be a greater role in Congress. I know Mr. Mann in the past has been very much focused on the Congress. It seems that this time around there has been no congressional role in this debate about Iraq. There haven't been the kinds of hearings you saw in the late '60s at the Foreign Relations Committee. You don't seem to see in the congressional elections, either in the 2002 or the cycle we're entering now, Iraq being a debating point or a key point in congressional or senatorial races.

I was wondering if you could comment on that, whether this is a sign of another sort of deterioration of this institution.

MR. MANN: Yes. You're quite correct to point out that Congress has not been the major institutional player in either the pre-war debate or in the oversight of the conduct of the war that I think is anticipated by its place as the first branch of government in the Constitution and with its formidable arsenal of tools and resources to try to shape public opinion and to constrain or empower presidents in the conduct of foreign policy.

What you have to understand is that the election of the first unified Republican government since the Eisenhower years produced an extraordinary sense of shared mission, shared fate that led the speaker of the House, Denny Hastert, to say in a conference on the speakership, that his primary responsibility was to be the president's agent, and the leadership in the House has delivered on that mission. I also think that the president himself was skillful in building the support for Iraq and using the approaching 2002 mid-term elections as a way of getting Congress to pass the authorization for him to proceed with the U.N. and then, if in his judgment necessary, to proceed with military action.

Similarly, once the war was under way and even after the initial military engagement, there was a reluctance by the majority party leadership in Congress to second-guess. Because there is this sense in this era of partisan parity and deeply ideologically polarized parties that for one party to question the performance of its own party's president is to potentially do harm to him and to the party more generally. So that the only voices raising questions before and after the war on the Republican side in Congress were on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee--Dick Lugar, Chuck Hagel. Occasionally, McCain has raised questions about the management of the operation in Iraq, but he is strongly supportive of the broader initiative.

So I think in fact, until this year, in fact until Howard Dean managed to capture some sentiment in the broader public about the war, the Congress has been very timorous on this issue, and so too had been John Kerry as the putative Democratic nominee, and now the nominee, until about a week ago.

MR. BOUTON: Tod, do you have a thought on this?

MR. LINDBERG: Yeah, I actually think--I mainly agree with Tom. However, I don't entirely think--I think it would be good to have an active Congress questioning the administration. But you simply don't get that when you have this unity of control. For some reason, it seems genuinely not to be in the cards. And I think that's risky. You know, it raises the possibility that the hard questions that there ought to be answers to will be skipped over.

I would like to suggest to our European friends in the room, do not underestimate the influence that European opposition to the war in Iraq has had going forward. Because if you were looking for the sharpest, most focused questions about what exactly the United States had undertaken, that's where you would find them being asked. Now, in the end, this did not manifest itself in the power to stop the United States from going forward in Iraq--nor, by the way, in my judgment, should it have. But nevertheless I think it did focus the argument. And what's more, it focuses the argument going forward in the aftermath. I don't think anybody in the United States government, either political or professional, would care to see the diplomacy surrounding the Security Council and the decision to go to war repeated. I think we'll be looking for ways not to do that.

QUESTION: I'm Mary Mullen.

I was wondering what is it you intend to accomplish with all of these meetings? What do you feel actually could be accomplished--not only do you want to, but do you feel you could accomplish by making these presentations and letting us know what the people believe in, what policies they support? And do we really have a democratic government? I mean, are we a government of the people, by the people, and for the people, or what are we, actually?

MR. BOUTON: Well, I don't think I'll try to answer that last question. But our purpose--the Chicago Council is, like Brookings and Hoover, although in somewhat different mode, essentially dedicated to the proposition that understanding based on a knowledge and reasonably objective analysis informed by points of view is a good thing for the policy process, for the public discourse, and that the public discourse is a good thing for the policy process. Chicago Council is a non-advocacy organization. We do not take positions on any issues. We do not, certainly, take partisan positions, nor do we really as an institution take positions on issues. We do make it possible for groups of individuals to take positions on issues, as we did with our Immigration Task Force earlier this year.

But in this case we are putting out--we are trying to do a service to the cause of informed, constructive public discourse about policy choices facing our nation by putting out this study and providing the kind of data, if you will, on how Americans are thinking about the underlying and overriding questions regarding our role in the world.

I think we really should draw this to a close. It's right about our closing time. I did not mean to have the last word here, but I thank you for the opportunity to reaffirm what we are trying to accomplish here.

I want first to thank Tom and Tod for their very thoughtful comments and attempt to get beneath the data and see what it really means. I want again to thank Hoover and Brookings for their collaboration in organizing this meeting. I want to remind all of you that this is the beginning. We have another session tomorrow at the Wilson Center from 9 to 2 p.m., in which the U.S.-Mexican data will be released and discussed. That's at the Wilson Center at 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue. Then on

Thursday, a release of the U.S.-South Korea data at the Korea Economic Institute, 1201 F Street. That's from 9 to 11.

And on Friday, a very important aspect of this which unfortunately we could not get at today and, as was mentioned to you earlier, is really novel for the Chicago Council study, and that is an effort to understand how leaders perceive public attitudes and the public perceive leader attitudes, which may be useful in understanding this apparent disjoint that we spent a lot of this morning discussing. That's at 8:45 to 10:30 a.m. on Friday, October 1st, taking place at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1779 Massachusetts Ave.

I want to thank all of you for coming today, for sticking with us, and would invite you, if you wish further information about the study, to go to the Chicago Council Web site, www.ccr.org, and you will find on the home page there a reference to our publications and in turn to the study. And not only are the data that you have in front of you available on that site, but also the so-called top line, the raw data, on which all these tables were based.

Thank you again. Good afternoon.

[Applause.]

- - -