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NATO'S BIG MISSION: THE UNITED STATES, EUROPE AND THE
CHALLENGE OF AFGHANISTAN

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PROCEEDINGS

MR. GORDON: (In progress) -- better panel to treat this dual set of issues this afternoon, and I would like to just introduce the speakers all at once and then give them a chance to give you their perspectives on the issue.

To the farthest left, we're delighted to have Rory Stewart here in town. He's actually come from Afghanistan, based in Kabul at the Turquoise Mountain Foundation, and maybe he'll even begin by telling us a little bit about that. He is also, of course, the author of a terrific book on Afghanistan, called *The Places In Between*.

To my direct left is Peter Rudolph, based in Berlin at the *Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik*, which is relevant not only I think because of Peter's expertise on NATO and these issues, but because Germany is one of the big questions about the future of NATO's commitment to Afghanistan, to this mission, and we're going to ask Peter to share with us perspectives on that.

To my immediate right is Jim Dobbins. Jim was the -- he's currently at the Rand Corporation, but was the Bush administration's first special envoy to Afghanistan, and has also served as Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, so again on both elements of our discussion has great expertise and experience.

And then finally Kori Schake, who is currently at the Hoover Institution, also teaching at West Point, and a former director for strategy and

defense requirements, if I got the exact title right, on the Bush administration National Security Council staff.

So again, I don't think we could have a better group of people to brief and lead the discussion on these issues.

We'll begin I think with Rory, who, again, joins us from Kabul, and we'll start with the Afghanistan piece. And, Rory, the floor is yours if you want to step up to the podium.

MR. STEWART: Thank you very, very much, and I apologize if I'm a little bit strangely jet lagged, but fortunately, I'm going to be back on a plane to Kabul in three days, so I don't have to adjust. It's all good.

I first came to Afghanistan at the end of 2001 and walked from Herat to Kabul in the winter of 2001-2002, and then was posted to Iraq. I was a British diplomat for 10 years, where I served in the provinces of Misan and Dekar, the towns of Alamara and Nassyria, working for Ambassador Bremer and the Coalition Provisional Authority, and returned to Afghanistan just over two years ago, where I was working and have been working trying to regenerate the center of the old city of Kabul.

We have about 350 employees. We've cleared about 5,000 trucks of garbage by hand out of the old city and restored about 50 buildings, and we have a large center for traditional Afghan arts and architecture and work to export

those very beautiful products -- woodwork, ceramics and calligraphy -- internationally.

I, therefore, am a little bit out of my depth here on this panel, because I'm being asked to step back from clearing garbage and worrying about woodwork to thinking about bigger policy issues. And I am a little bit confused in general about the question of why we are in Afghanistan, and I'm very much looking forward today to hearing an answer to that question.

My experience on the ground is that we're having a lot of difficulty defining the mission, partly because of the multiplicity of actors, each of whom seems to have a different agenda.

For example, I was in Estonia about seven weeks ago at a NATO conference. There were about 300 people at the conference talking about Afghanistan, and, of those, three were Afghans, and they were the -- almost the only native English speakers in the room, because all of them had grown up in Virginia and California.

Estonia is an interesting example of people's presence in Afghanistan, because, of course, Afghanistan does not pose a direct or obvious threat to the security of Estonia, nor does Estonia serve to benefit a great deal from Afghanistan.

Estonia is, of course, in Afghanistan largely because the United States is in Afghanistan, and Estonia wants to make sure for its own position in relation to NATO and Russia that it remains good friends with the United States.

I've sat next to the Luxembourg Defense Minister at dinner in Kabul about a month ago now. Luxembourg currently has nine troops in Afghanistan at the airport.

But when you look at some of the bigger players, you begin to get even more confused. Canada, and I've just been in Canada and seen people from the parliament in Canada, appears to be in Afghanistan for the issue of gender and women's rights sometimes, and other times they talk about Juno Beach and Bimi Ridge and the great traditions of the Canadian military.

The Dutch talk about state building. There are other very major and influential actors there. Human Rights Watch, which managed to get the Governor of Herat, Ismail Khan, toppled on the grounds of a report that they produced accusing him of kicking a prisoner in October 2001, and associating him with the activities of a commander called Raiz Salamahan in a place called Batahan; Raiz Salamahan, in fact, being one of his enemies. But anyway, the report was effective enough to get him fired.

Other people seem to be engaged in very different activities. Of course, the Pakistani government has a large presence there, and exactly what the

Pakistani government thinks it's doing in relation to the Taliban and the borders remains to be seen.

The Indian government primarily is there in order to pursue probably its interests in relationship to Pakistan.

My own government, the British government, is really most perplexing. We talk about democratization. We talk about development. We talk about counter-narcotics. We talk about counter-terrorism. We talk about counter-insurgency. And we present these things as though they were a single package.

Somehow it would be impossible to get a razor blade between these different issues. You can't have one without the other, and we need to have them all, immediately, so any suggestion that rebuilding Afghanistan might resemble the rebuilding of Korea, in which security might precede democracy is off the table at the moment.

So that's the first problem, and there are, in fact, over 60 countries with significant troops or resources in Afghanistan at the moment, all of whom reserve the right to walk in and see President Karzai whenever the mood takes them to tell him what they think he should be doing.

The second problem that we face, of course, is the problem of the complexity of Afghanistan itself. Mansture Elfenson in 1805 in the first great seminal book on Afghanistan compares it to a thousand small republics, and

indeed the absence of a government for 30 years has really meant that valley by valley you see huge differentials.

When I was walking across the country, I could go in a single day's walk from a village controlled by a mullah to a village controlled by a semi-nomadic tribal chief, to a village controlled by an ex-communist official, to a village controlled by a man who had risen up through the jihad from a very poor position in the village on the back of his weapons and money provided by the west.

Then, to add to the complexity and the multiplicity of missions provided by our parliament, is the question of who we actually are as actors on the ground. You know, what is the actual effort which NATO is engaged in.

So we hear a lot at the moment about, and I noticed this in Estonia - people who have spent very little time in Afghanistan can talk very fluently at the moment about the three D's and the comprehensive approach, and the JCMB of the ANDS, which is I'm sure all of you know are, of course, the three D's are democracy -- sorry -- development, defense, and diplomacy, and the JCMB is the Joint Coordinating Monitoring Board of the Interim Afghan National Development Strategy.

165-page documents are produced all the time to try to coordinate this. I was looking at one recently which was the 2004 document, Sustaining Afghanistan's Future, which was the basis of the donor agreements at Berlin in

2004. A hundred and sixty-five pages. Beautifully written. If you searched the document, there is not a single mention of the word Islam, not a single mention of the word ethnicity or indeed the terms Pashtun or Hazara. In fact, it's a document where you could do a replace all and put in Botswana and struggle to tell which country you were dealing with.

And, of course, our people on the ground are not ideal state builders. They tend to be either soldiers or diplomats or development workers, and having been two of those things, in fact, three of those things come to think of it, I can assure you none of them is really engaged in the task quite in the way that you might think.

People in the military tend, of course, to be recruited and trained primarily to fight wars, and certainly in the British Army -- I can't speak for anybody else's army, but I was a British Infantry officer -- we are very suspicious of politicians, politicians at home and particularly politicians on the ground in Afghanistan.

Again and again, I have British colleagues say to me I'm not going to deal with this guy. He's completely corrupt. He's utterly discredited.

Development workers, of course, are trying to alleviate poverty, and diplomats -- and certainly when I was in the foreign office -- seemed to be more interested in drafting resolutions in the United Nations, and none of these

people are necessarily concerned with the central task on the ground, which resembles that of a Chicago ward politician of the 1920s.

So then to conclude, because I must allow other people to talk about this, and I'd be delighted to hear your views, I think we face a serious challenge in Afghanistan.

The first challenge is to recognize our own impotence, the limits of our knowledge, the limits of our power; to recognize perhaps that it is unlikely, at least on the basis of the textbooks so far produced, that we have the wherewithal to win a counter-insurgency strategy against the Taliban. It's unlikely that we have the commitment, the will, or the resources to pursue such a 25-year policy.

It's also extremely unlikely that we're going to make much progress in relation to civil society, governments or the rule of law or at least we haven't made much progress on those things over the last five years.

This is not, however, a council of despair. There are many things that the international community can do and does well, and I think we should focus on those things.

One of those things, of course, is certain kinds of technical assistance, not in civil society or governance, but in very technical issues like central banking and currency exchange. We've been quite successful. Infrastructure construction we've done quite well. Traditional development projects in those areas of the country where people actually want aggressively and

actively to work alongside us. For example, in Bamiyan, where a very, very small amount of international resources has resulted in a complete transformation of the Hazara areas as opposed to southern Afghanistan where a very large amount of resources has had minimal impact.

And finally I think there's a great deal we can do to try to slim down the Afghan government, get rid of a lot of unnecessary legislation, and just, for example, there are 13 different customs duties currently between the border and the capital in Kabul, and exporting products out of Afghanistan is almost impossible under the weights of socialist-style paperwork.

There's an enormous amount we can do to create community employment projects, to create infrastructure, and to win back some of the confidence of Afghans and rebuild a narrative of national identity after 25 years of war. Those things we can do.

The other things we may believe we ought to do, but I don't believe that "ought" implies "can." We don't have a moral obligation to do what we cannot do. Thank you all very much.

(Applause)

MR. GORDON: And thank you, Rory. There are lots of things we'll no doubt want to come back to and press you on, but let's turn to Jim Dobbins.

MR. DOBBINS: You want me to go up there or do you want me to talk from here?

MR. GORDON: Whatever you prefer.

MR. DOBBINS: I'll just stay here I think.

Well, I think a lot of what Rory described quite articulately amusingly is somewhat generic to nation building type operations; that is, the large number of donors and troop contributors who are falling all over themselves who are there for different reasons, who are pursuing programs and activities. I'm not sure --

MR. GORDON: Are we trying to turn this -- that's what I'm trying to turn this off.

MR. DOBBINS: And the weakness of coordinating mechanisms. That's not to say that these things can't be improved with respect to Afghanistan, and I'll come back to that.

But I am -- I do recall attending conferences like this for several years in the '90s on the Balkans and there was a general feeling that the reconstruction program in Bosnia was a mess; that it was rife with corruption, incompetence, confusion, and there were organizations like the International Crisis Group were publishing reports describing an international effort that was in crisis.

And yet, looking back on it, we find that Bosnia had the highest growth rate in southeastern Europe throughout the 1990s and has had the highest growth rate in the current decade even after the assistance essentially dried up.

So the fact that there are lots of donors and they have different programs and they have different objectives, and they don't always mesh is not optimal, but it's better than there not being lots of donors.

And they're not having lots of objections -- objectives. So I think some of this has to be put in perspective.

I think the difficulties we face in Afghanistan today and the rather disappointing situation we face as compared to what we had hoped for back in 2001, late 2001, can be attributed to two basic causes, which I characterize as sins of omission and commission.

The sins of omission were basically the lost period between 2002 and 2004 when the international community made minimal efforts to assist the government of Afghanistan in projecting governance and providing public services to the population outside Kabul.

And this, of course, was largely attributable to the strategy adopted by the -- by Washington, which was the small footprint, low profile nation building on the cheap, a considered and calculated reaction to the Clinton administration's approach in the Balkans. The argument was that we had made these Balkan societies overly dependent on the international community by

pouring in huge numbers of troops and money and we were going to avoid that problem in Afghanistan. This was sort of an internationalized version of welfare reform.

And the result was that Afghanistan was, and to some degree remains, the least resourced nation building operation in American history, the least resourced American-led nation building operation in the last 60 years.

In 2002, the year after the war, the average Afghan got assistance from the United States amounting to about \$20 per Afghan. You don't buy a lot of reconstruction for \$20. If you count the entire international community's assistance in that period, it was \$50 per Afghan. In Bosnia, it was \$800.

And the amount of security assistance provided through the deployment of international forces was 50 times higher in Bosnia and also in Kosovo than it was in Afghanistan. That is, the number of international peacekeepers as a proportion of the population as a whole was 50 times higher in the Balkans.

And the basic lesson one can draw from this is low input, low output. If you apply low levels of military manpower and economic assistance in a post-conflict environment what you get are low levels of security and economic growth.

And that's what we saw in 2002, 2003, 2004 that levels of troops and economic assistance went up, and they continue to go up.

Next year, the administration is proposing \$10 billion worth of assistance for Afghanistan, which is 20 times more than it put into Afghanistan in 2002.

This is the exact opposite of the strategy the international community chose in the Balkans, which was to put in more troops and more money than anybody could possibly use, and then withdraw them as they were demonstrated to be unnecessary rather than make a minimal commitment, find yourself challenged, and then having to reinforce defeat in effect rather than withdraw.

So that's one of the reasons that when the insurgency reemerged, you didn't have a population that was strongly committed to its government that felt strongly beholden to its government and was prepared to take risks for its government.

But that doesn't really explain in my judgment why the insurgency reemerged. It simply explained why it found somewhat fallow ground. To explain why the insurgency reemerged, you really have to examine events in Pakistan.

And here you have the sins of commission rather than omission.

The Taliban insurgency is a Pashtun insurgency. Now that doesn't mean all Pashtuns are insurgents. It simply means all insurgents are Pashtuns more or less.

And most Pashtuns don't live in Afghanistan. They've never lived in Afghanistan. The majority of Pashtuns live in Pakistan. They've always lived in Pakistan.

And we can win the hearts and minds of every single Pashtun in Afghanistan, and we're still going to have an insurgency that we're not going to be able to eradicate as long as we have a larger population of similar ethnicity across a border they don't recognize continuing to project power and influence into Afghanistan.

And so one needs to understand the dynamics in Pakistan and the reasons why the insurgency reemerged based largely I think on events and developments there.

And this is really where I think the United States lost, you know, didn't keep its eye on the ball. There's a long discussion about whether the central front and the War on Terror should be Afghanistan and Iraq, but more clearly it should be Pakistan. I mean, Pakistan is where Mullah Omar lives. Pakistan is where Bin Laden lives. Pakistan is where the Taliban recruits, gets funded, trains, organizes, is directed from. Pakistan is the source of nuclear technology in both Iran and North Korea, which is not to say we should invade Pakistan. That's clearly not a feasible option.

But we should have been more heavily focused than we have been on helping the Pakistani government project governance and public services into

the least served part of its society, which are the Pashtun populations in these border regions, which get a lower per capita -- lower proportion on a per capita basis of Pakistani GDP than any other group in the country, and who are disaffected and who the Pakistani government would just as soon see externalized their aspirations than internalize them. They'd rather have them fighting for influence in Afghanistan than fighting for influence in Pakistan.

And so whether that particular motivation, along with their competition with India and their fear of having enemies on two fronts was enough to actually lead the Pakistani government to actively incite the insurgency and support it, it certainly explains why they haven't been adequately motivated to help suppress it.

And so I think that this is the -- these are the sins of commission in effect that also explain the difficulties we have in Afghanistan.

That said, Afghanistan isn't Iraq. Most of the population continue to support the presence of NATO and the United States. Most of the population continue to value and support the government they have. All of those numbers are falling, but they're still pretty healthy. George Bush would love to have the popularity ratings that Hamid Karzai has, as would almost all of European politicians.

So it's not an entirely negative picture, but the United States and NATO are going to be patrolling the wrong side of the northwest frontier for

another generation if something isn't done about the situation in Pakistan. The most that one is going to be accomplished -- one is one is going to be able to accomplish militarily in Afghanistan is to prevent the situation from getting worse.

But to make it better, one is going to have to recompose the regional compact which successfully at the Bonn conference joined in support of the emergence of the Karzai government and the democratic process, which has subsequently legitimized that government and created representative structures that continue to function rather better than one might expect given Afghanistan's history and given the experience in other societies, including Iraq where things are a lot more negative.

In terms of Afghanistan itself, I think there are two reforms which can address some of the problems that Rory has correctly cited.

On the military side, you've got two different command structures now that are operating forces within the same zone. You've got an American command, which has about half the troops, and you have a NATO command, which has about half the troops, and they're both operating in the same areas. And this is an invitation for fratricide, failure to render timely support, and other difficulties that arise from a lack of unity of command.

And the confusion is even worse than that because the NATO command is responding -- is under the authority and responding to orders from an

American four-star general in Belgium, and the U.S. command is under the authority and responding to orders from an American four-star general in Tampa.

And so you have a command chain in Afghanistan that doesn't meet until you get to the President of the United States. This is not -- this is not the most efficient way of running a war and eventually consolidating those two commands into a single one is highly desirable.

Similarly, on the civil side, there's a lack of adequate coordination, which has already been referred to, which in many ways grew out of the low profile, small footprint approach in 2001-2002, when the lead nation system was established rather than appointing a high representative or empowering the U.N. representative to oversee not just the Iraq -- Afghanistan's political development, which the U.N. has done quite successfully, but to also oversee its reconstruction and the reform of the security sector.

Instead these responsibilities were doled out to a number of different countries, none of which performed adequately or mobilized resources adequate to the purpose, and that includes the United States.

And so somehow creating a single voice to bring the international community together, not to direct countries as to what to do; that's never going to work. But at least to try to create a single strategy and then hold countries to it through moral pressure and other means would be desirable whether by empowering the U.N. representative, giving him a higher profile, more

responsibilities, including responsibilities for dealing with neighboring countries, or creating a high representative on the Balkan-Bosnian model to do the same task. I think either one of those approaches is also desirable.

MR. GORDON: Excellent. Jim, thank you, again. A lot we want to come back to, but I want to get all the perspectives on the table, so let's turn to Kori.

MS. SCHAKE: I want to pick up on Jim's point about the NATO and U.S. chains of command, which is I think the only point you made that I don't agree with.

I actually don't think that's the problem. The problem is of bigger dimensions than that, and is more dangerous than the potential of NATO and NATO fratricide, which is we don't have a common NATO approach to the use of force in Afghanistan, and that's because we don't have a common transatlantic approach about what military force is supposed to accomplish in Afghanistan, and which of us are going to run the risk to do it.

I'll give you a nightmare scenario. If I were a Taliban bad guy, I would set 150 snipers up outside one of the German or Swedish PRTs and shoot everybody who came through the front gate; because I bet you could precipitate a German withdrawal out of Afghanistan.

I bet you could precipitate a broader European withdrawal out of Afghanistan for the same reason that you saw the U.S. beat a hasty retreat out of

Somalia, namely the political leadership has not prepared the public for the fact that their soldiers are not merely involved in reconstruction. They're fighting there. After all, that's why you send soldiers there as opposed to just good, earnest journalists, NGOs, and the United Nations.

NATO sent military troops to Afghanistan for a reason, because there's not security in Afghanistan, and, as Rory said, we can't expect the rest of what we want to make possible for Afghanistan possible unless you get security there.

And you're not going to get security there simply by reconstruction. You're going to get security there by patrolling, killing bad guys, by training the Afghan police and security forces, by giving people confidence that they can trust Afghan security forces as well as us.

The reason there are two NATO chains of command was because most NATO countries were not willing to sign up for the kinds of fighting that the British, Canadians, Dutch, Danish, and Americans are doing in the south. And the United States, to be honest, wasn't quite sure we wanted them to. Both for the practical reason that the nuts and bolts of fighting in this kind of environment are extraordinarily difficult. Many NATO forces didn't have the ability to do it. As the ridiculous discussion we are having in NATO about whether we can get three helicopters to carry troops around places demonstrates.

I mean this is a difficult environment for military operations. You have to have very good equipment. The United States is short on that very good equipment. And most Europeans don't have the equipment to enable the kinds of operations, but much more importantly, they don't have the political commitment to do it.

I think we're seeing it in the conversations the Germans are having about renewing their mandate. I think we are seeing it in the difficulties that the Dutch are having. To their great credit, the Dutch have done a lot of very hard, very dangerous work in Afghanistan. But I think public support for that is eroding.

And that will leave British, Canadians, and Americans and begin to show genuine strain to the solidarity of NATO operations. And to crib Carlos Pascual on this subject, I mean if we can't make the west work here, if we can't make a NATO Article V mandate produce military forces here, if we can't with the U.N. Security Council mandate with U.N. missions going on in the country, with attacks having emanated on the United States from here, if we can't on that basis build a functional and longstanding international operation in Afghanistan, I despair about where we are going to have the political solidarity and willingness to do this kind of work.

I think, in fact, that what we are looking at in Afghanistan is, and I mean it with real foreboding, not just more in sorrow than in anger, but this is

going to be a lot more dangerous to international order if the lesson people take away from Afghanistan is that the world's wealthiest countries, the most capable militaries with the support of the United Nations and the NATO alliance cannot piece together a successful international intervention. What does that tell the rebels in Darfur? What does that tell bad guys in Somalia? What does that tell people who want Kosovo to go up in flames this fall?

It tells them that there's not an international community; that you can peel off the countries that don't -- where the political leadership didn't make a good enough case to their public that what German soldiers are doing in Afghanistan is important to Germany. It's not just a good and a virtuous thing to do in Afghanistan.

We all need to do a lot better job at that fact, and we need to help the Germans get through this. We need to help the Dutch get through this. We need to help NATO allies to understand that really, really if we fail in Afghanistan, there would be real doubts about whether there's an international community, and whether there's a west that cares about shaping the international order in a positive way. Maybe I'll stop there.

MR. GORDON: Please, because we're all going to get too gloomy if you go on for much longer. But no, thank you for that gloomy, but realistic and very serious and important perspective, which I think sets up Peter very nicely, a scenario of German casualties in Afghanistan, lack of political support for

Germany, and what implications that has for international order and for our commitment to NATO. That's a very serious scenario that coming from Berlin, Peter, you're well placed to address.

MR. RUDOLPH: Thank you. Thank you for the invitation. It's a pleasure to be here.

I'm presenting a German perspective, not the German perspective. It's certainly not an official German perspective, maybe the perspective of a realist, a realistic perspective and picking up on what Kori Schake has said. I will focus on the German approach in dealing with the Afghan issue, on German policymakers' attempt at balancing and reconciling external requirements and domestic constraints. I think it's a balancing act.

For the last couple of years, the German policy has consisted of several core components. First, military participation in the Afghan mission for reasons of vital security interests, and it's my feeling to a very large extent because of Alliance considerations, because of keeping the multilateral framework intact, and keeping NATO intact.

Second, a military presence in Afghanistan of more than 3,000 troops with a close eye on minimizing German casualties, of course. And third is the focus on police training now done as part of an EU mission may be more successful than in the past, and fourth, a domestic framing, a domestic interpretation of the mission as stabilization, reconstruction, development aid, and

not -- definitely not as counter-insurgency war fighting. And finally, a domestic debate in Germany, of which a good component, namely stabilization – the ISAF mission - tends to be clearly distinguished from the problematic component of Operation Enduring Freedom, which for many critics of the German debate is too much linked with American military action. But, of course, German soldiers have participated and really are participating in Operation Enduring Freedom.

And the last two years, with the change in the mission from stabilization into counter-insurgency, of course this goes hand in hand, has been a real challenge for Germany policymakers and for the German public.

On the one hand, LI is demanding to give up national caveats and to go south. On the other hand, the domestic context in which support for NATO's big mission in Afghanistan has eroded and poses real problems for the grand coalition which currently governs Germany.

It's a real problem. There might be experts in the foreign policy community who keep repeating that in Afghanistan in the future of neighbors at stake and vital security interests are affected, but this argument does not resonate with German politicians. It does not resonate with the German public. Hardly any politician would speak out in favor doing more militarily in Afghanistan and the predominating view in the German debate, even among those who support the mission is we have to continue the current mission because under ISAF's mandate, the Bundeswehr of the federal army should continue to focus on the

northern part of Afghanistan. Forces are needed there to train the Afghan army. Forces are needed there to prevent the security situation from deteriorating in this region.

And if you look at opinion polls in Germany, it becomes all too clear why nobody wants to rock the boat and why forceful political leadership and further commitments for further engagement is not, in my view, not on the horizon.

Only four percent of German voters favor an increased commitment in Afghanistan. A clear majority wants to withdraw German troops and thinks that the deployment of German troops has been rather wrong.

And this sentiment that's important cuts across party lines. Of course, it's widespread, most widespread among the Left party but even among the Christian Democrats, a more conservative party, if there is not a majority support for the mission.

And this sentiment, if you look at the German debate, reflects a heavy dose of doubt about the purposes of NATO's mission. What are we in Afghanistan for? What is our mission? The people are little bit confused. And why does the domestic situation, public opinion, and so forth matter in Germany?

As you know or as you might know, it's because the German parliament has to authorize the deployment of German troops.

Currently, there are three authorizations or we call it mandates for deployment of German troops. It's rather confusing and these mandates have to be extended every year we had a debate last month. Two mandates were extended. This week there will be another debate in the German Bundestag about extending the mandate for the German contribution to Operation Enduring Freedom, and these are not easy debates. Up to now there has been a huge majority for extending the mandates because unilateral withdrawal is not on the minds of the people. It's politically impossible, but still, it's a tricky situation for any politician, for any policymaker.

And to keep public support from further eroding and in order to appease critics of the German parliament, the German government has, of course, stressed the civilian reconstruction component. And the reasons we published the Afghanistan concept strategy paper, and has argued within NATO that the rules of engagement changed in order to minimize civilian casualties. There's a lot of concern about civilian casualties fueling the insurgency in the German debate. And that's a situation, though my guess would be there will not be leadership, Afghanistan might be a vital issue, but you have to consider that the use of force is still a very problematic notion in the German debate. There's support for development aid. Compared to what the United States can contribute, it's not that much, but still there is some consensus and a lot of support for doing the job in Afghanistan at the civil level and the civilian component is not disputed among

German policymakers. It's only a military component. I think there's now way of pushing the German government any more.

But what are the lessons we have talked about maybe -- what are the lessons for NATO if you look at the problems of burden and risk sharing with respect to the German debate, with respect to the Italian debate, and the debate in other European countries.

I think there are, in my view, three lessons. The formulation and execution of an integrated common strategy for counter-insurgency in state or nation building. It seems to be beyond the reach of NATO. I don't know whether institutional innovations will help. I think it's beyond the reach of NATO, because second point different strategic cultures first with respect to the legitimacy of the use of force and second with respect to the parliamentary and democratic control of force impair such a common approach. I think there's not much prospect for a common approach. I sound rather sober or I guess maybe realistic.

And the third point I think one of the points is that NATO is ill suited, ill equipped to address the right of regional and strategic contexts with the mission. Pakistan has been mentioned, but everybody, of course, everybody knows that Pakistan is the key to any solution in Afghanistan, but Pakistan up to now has not been on the transatlantic agenda, will change. Hopefully, it will change, but NATO as institution is not equipped to discuss the wider political

strategic issues. So whether Afghanistan will in the end be a success story or a failure, I think the mission has already exhibited -- exposed the limits of NATO as a global alliance, a global counter-insurgency alliance or whatever you might call it. I think less ambition in the future may be necessary to preserve NATO as still valuable and security service institution. Thank you.

MR. GORDON: Well, thank you, Peter. Those were all terrific presentations. I see you've already provoked Kori into a desired response immediately?

MS. SCHAKE: Absolutely. I just want to add one more lesson from that, which is if those first three are true, it's not at all clear why NATO is of enormous value to the United States, why Europeans are the preferred partners in these kinds of things, how you square European desire for political influence over American choices, and for a United States that goes through institutions like NATO and the United Nations if they don't prove capable of helping us solve the problems that we are most worried about.

MR. GORDON: Well, that's clearly one of the big issues we want to tackle in the next half an hour or 40 minutes or so, but I'd like to propose again thanking the speakers for really excellent presentations. Maybe some of you can respond to a couple of questions from me and then we will open the floor to questions from the audience.

And I would like to begin, if I might, with a question for Rory and Jim, because it sounded like there was certainly a different emphasis in the two opening presentations.

Where Rory talked about recognizing our impotence or at least our limits, which are different things, but still, clearly implying that there are strong limits on what we can get done.

Jim, on the other hand, focused on what we didn't do. So I mean it's not my job to pit speakers against each other, but I would like to reconcile that tension.

Rory, is Jim wrong by implying, as he did, that had we done much more at the beginning like we did in other nation building exercises, we would have had a chance to contribute more.

And, Jim, on the same vein, you know, is Rory too pessimistic about what we might get done or have gotten done with the devotion of more resources? And one specific twist for Rory, fair enough if you are -- I mean I think we all need a dose of reality from Afghanistan and you can bring it well, but when you talked about what we could do, you didn't even talk about security at all.

Now how can we even contribute on the other things where you think we can at least contribute on the margin if we're not -- and, you know, your basic question was what is -- why are we there? What is NATO doing there? I

thought the answer to that question was preventing insurgents and Taliban and Al Qaeda from taking over the country as they once did. So maybe each of you can start with that, and we'll go from there.

MR. STEWART: I mean I think obviously listening to the speakers in general, the missing dimension in all of this, and this is perhaps because of the way we phrased it, but it's, of course, the issue of consent. It's the issues of the Afghans themselves.

There is at some level in the entire international discourse a hydraulic assumption that somehow if you just push enough troops and enough resources down the pipe, you're going to get a state out the other end.

And there is, of course, some reference to opinion poll data on Afghanistan. But I think that's extremely misleading.

The future of the Afghan state and the future of the insurgency are not going to depend on whether or not, according to the latest Canadian opinion poll, 51 percent of Afghans support the foreign troop presence. This is not a first past the post elections. The future of the insurgency is dependent on whether a powerful affected minority, and it might be even a small minority is prepared to work against the government and whether the majority are going to sit on the fence and not do very much, which seems to be case in a lot of southern Afghanistan at the moment, because primarily our problem here is that Afghanistan is in my view considerably, particularly in the rural areas of the

southeast, more conservative, more anti-foreigner, more Islamist than we want to acknowledge.

Many villages in southern Afghanistan may be sitting on the fence and may not be doing very much, but they will be mildly more sympathetic towards a conservative Islamic ideology than they are towards foreign troops, which is one of the reasons why when we've experimented in doing the kinds of things which the speakers have been discussing -- for example, in Helmand Province, which is test case of this theory, where we've increased the troop numbers from 200, which is what we had in 2005, to over 7,000 at the present day, we have seen no improvement in economic development, no improvement in governance, no improvement in security, and indeed a record poppy crop. Helmand is now producing over 50 percent of Europe's heroin on its own, the real reason for this is we have entirely failed to catch the consent or the imagination of the people in Helmand, and I don't think we have the wherewithal to do that.

I think what we have the wherewithal to do, through these kinds of searches, is to impose a temporary suppression. We are able to round the bases in Lashkar Gar to achieve some kind of temporary improvement, which we then represent in statistics on number of attacks on foreign troops.

But I do not think if you were to talk to a villager in northern Helmand, they believe their lives have improved at all over the last two years. Rather the reverse.

In fact, most of the strength of the Taliban insurgency coincides with the beginning of our building bases in those areas in 2002, 2003, 2004, when the now much decried light footprint was in place, it is much safer for people such as myself to travel in those areas than it is today, because the best selling point the Taliban has is it can set itself up as fighting for Afghanistan and Islam against a foreign military occupation.

So to just finish on the security point, which was raised, I do not think that we are in a position to win a counter-insurgency campaign against the Taliban. I don't think we have the troop numbers. We clearly don't control the borders. There are no credible state institutions in Afghanistan on which we can rely. The Afghan police are corrupt and almost entirely discredited.

In that situation, our best hope from a security point of view is containment. Our best hope is to try to contain this country to prevent the Taliban from ever being in a position to seize the city. I don't think they have a conventional option, and I think that we can ensure that they never develop a conventional option. They gather in large groups as they roll the tanks up the main roads, if they put artilleries above the hills of Kabul, we can deal with that. We have a capacity to deal with that in a way that we can't deal with the current insurgency.

And the second thing we can do, and I think this would require a light troop footprint, is to deal with terrorist training camps if and when they

emerge while bearing in mind that the nature of terrorism has changed over the last six years. It no longer seems to me that the most straightforward, practical and cost effective way of defending ourselves against terrorist attacks is to attempt to put tens of thousands of troops and onto the ground in rural villages in Afghanistan.

These attacks can clearly now be planned from other countries. They can be planned from apartment blocks in Hamburg.

I would imagine that we need now over the next 20 to 30 years to think seriously about the counter-terrorism strategy, which can be applied to Somalia or Sudan or Pakistan and which does not require the level of troop investment and the level of ambition to state building which we're currently trying to apply to Afghanistan. Thank you.

MR. GORDON: Jim?

MR. DOBBINS: I mean I'm not sure to what degree we disagree. I think I also made clear that we weren't likely to defeat the insurgency. We were simply likely, provided we tried hard enough, to prevent the insurgency from defeating the government, but that any long term diminution in the insurgency was going to arise from causes other than direct military action.

I do think that -- so again, I'm not sure that there's more than a difference in emphasis here. I think it is the development of Afghan institutions, including security institutions -- the police, the army -- but also the rest of the

government structure over time that will offer some possibility of a strengthened indigenous capacity and the ability for the international community to diminish its commitment.

The -- I do think on the issue that Kori was going on about and Peter -- that there's a bit of exaggeration on both sides, at least in my view. I think, you know, Germany has been dragged along kicking and screaming for 20 years in terms of accepting greater commitments, deploying troops abroad, engaging those troops in dangerous and difficult circumstances. One red line after another has been crossed. They weren't going to deploy outside NATO. They weren't going to deploy into countries that had previously been occupied by Nazi Germany. They weren't going to deploy outside of Europe. They weren't going to engage in counter-insurgency, and every one of those red lines has been breached. And they've always been breached against the overwhelming attitude of the German people, who opposed each of those expansions.

So I continue to think that Germany's view of its role in the world will continue to evolve and that we can continue to promote that process among other things by lecturing the way Kori does occasionally.

But I'm more optimistic. I also don't know that this is, you know that -- I don't think that one should be unrealistic about what we can expect from NATO. NATO has never done economic reconstruction, security sector reform. They're simply not going to do those things. Other institutions are going to do

them. They didn't do them in the Balkans. They haven't done them anywhere else.

NATO is a military organization. It deploys and employs military force, and other aspects of the nation building spectrum are going to have to be filled in my judgment by other institutions and it is trying to fill that institutional gap that I was talking about earlier.

But I don't think that we can expect NATO to meet those particular aspirations. So I think that to some extent more is being piled onto NATO than it's realistically likely to be able to accept.

MR. GORDON: Kori, do you want to weigh in on this? Are we doing too much or too little? Or shall I ask you a different question?

MS. SCHAKE: How about a different question?

MR.GORDON: Okay. We can then -- by all means to all of you jump in when you do have something you want to say on the ongoing discussion. I have a question for our two Americans about Pakistan.

Both of you have served in the White House. We have a real policy decision to make. Jim Dobbins made a forceful case that as important as Afghanistan is in terrorism and other issues, there's actually a greater one next door.

And the question is, you know, we're faced right now with this Musharraf dilemma. On one hand, we need him to make sure we continue to do

what we can on that side of the border. On the other hand, the very same administration that says how much we need him has also very eloquently explained how getting on the wrong side of the issue of democracy leads to repression and fuels terrorism.

So thinking about this from an American policy point of view, how do -- where do you, you know, fall on that difficult balance to strike?

MS. SCHAKE: One taxpayer's opinion: I very much wish we had spent the last 10 years nurturing and creating opportunities and helping foster alternatives to Musharraf, and it looks to me like in Afghanistan right now we have the possibility to reprise this on the Afghan side of the border, namely we have put it seems to me quite a lot of eggs in the Hamid Karzai basket instead of encouraging, fostering junior ministers, people who have local legitimacy, mayors of towns, creating a broader base of political possibilities so that you don't get into a situation like I think we -- I'm not a Pakistan expert; other folks know better than I -- but it seems to me that anytime you say we only have one choice, it's probably not true, and it's always bad strategy.

The question is what price you pay for the other alternatives. And we're clearly going to pay a pretty high price for the alternatives, but we're paying a mighty high price for the Musharraf alternative now. And it's not clear to me given the choices that he is making about ruling Pakistan whether we ought to continue to back him; moreover, whether he continues to have the ability to do

the kinds of things in the tribal areas, in controlling the Pakistani military, and controlling Pakistan's nuclear program, in being a bulwark against terrorism instead of an incentive to it.

Again, I'm not a Pakistan expert, but this one looks dicey to me, and we are probably over invested in Musharraf.

MR. GORDON: Jim?

MR. DOBBINS: I think actually Biden has come up with a pretty attractive set of proposals for Pakistan recently, which essentially are sort of counter intuitively that this is now the time to increase development assistance to Pakistan as opposed to security assistance; that is, assistance that's designed to improve the Pakistani educational system, Pakistani social services, economic development -- other non-military needs.

And we haven't provided very much assistance of this sort to Pakistan. Most of the assistance that's gone to Pakistan has been security assistance, which is intended to fund their military, both procurement and operations. And then on the other hand, our military assistance, our security assistance, should be heavily conditioned on specific performance goals and specific objectives rather than unconditioned, as it has been to date.

So I mean I think generally that's right. But I agree that the United States has to position itself in Afghanistan in a way that doesn't appear to be backing what now is clearly, you know, a military dictatorship, and needs to put

itself in a position of supporting, as the administration is doing perhaps more gingerly and limitedly than some people feel comfortable, supporting a move toward civilian and democratic rule.

MR. GORDON: Thank you. Peter, maybe one for you before we'll open up the floor to questions from the audience, which is in a way a response to what others have said.

I also -- I got back from Berlin myself just a couple of days ago, and can certainly confirm that the debate about Germany's presence in Afghanistan there is different from our debate about Germany's presence, which is to say our debate about their presence is are they going to come to the south. Are they going to send more forces? And that's not what they're talking about.

They're talking about are they going to stay at all. So I think that's, you know, that's something we need to understand.

I guess the question I have for you is a response to something Jim said. Jim described the trend in German use of force abroad over the past decade or 15 years or so, and I think that's right. It has always been towards more -- people talk about the normalization of German security policy, participating -- I mean who would have thought that there would be thousands of troops in Afghanistan at all. And 10 years ago, when just flying over Bosnia and looking at a radar screen was pushing the envelope. Who would have guessed that?

But I wonder if the trend is now not going in the other direction and whether the Iraq War has pushed it that way. So after more than a decade of Germany getting more and more used to the idea of using force and participating in NATO, now it's starting to rethink that whole thing.

And then just lastly on that, if you care to comment, maybe it would help our audience to understand why doesn't Germany get the case that Kori Schake outlined? That okay we understand you don't want to participate in the Iraq War. You thought it was a bad idea. It looks like you were right.

But Afghanistan was backed by the U.N., supported by Germany, legitimate, hugely important, you know, help Americans understand why Germany -- and our failure there could lead to the end of NATO, dangerous for the international security situation.

What do we need to understand about the way the Germans think about this?

MR. RUDOLPH: Okay. Thanks for the chance to clarify the German position. And, Jim, you're certainly right that the German position and policies on the use of force have evolved over the last 17 or actually 15 years, but the main vehicle for that kind of change in my view was humanitarian intervention, a lot of interventions were framed as humanitarian intervention, were humanitarian interventions starting with Somalia, Kosovo, of course, and Afghanistan was seen as a reconstruction, stability, aiding people, so it's not

about -- it was not too much about anti-terrorist operations, although German special forces, at least 100 soldiers or so, participated - to what extent, I don't know, because it's publicly not known in Operation Enduring Freedom. But it's - - the use of force has been seen differently. I think German -- the German public supported the use of force if it was a humanitarian -- that is, a catastrophe or whatever.

So I think there is some support in opinion polls actually - it's different. And I think participation and going to -- you shouldn't forget the chance that Schroeder aligned with Bush administration after September 11th, and ran pretty heavy political risks in doing so. I guess -- I think supporting a military action at least is a function of two things. And maybe the first two are the wisdom or the interest in aligning with the United States. And, of course, the wisdom, the belief in the strategic risks of this administration is not so high in Europe I can at least say and maybe this is going to change, and the wisdom -- that we trust in the wisdom of the policy.

And the second factor is the calculation of whether you can influence American policy decisions through aligning with the United States, through participating in the military action. This was the case in the Kosovo intervention. It was the German rationale that you have to participate as though you can influence what's going on after the war ends and you can influence the peace process.

I think these two factors have to come into play, and I don't know whether they are currently effective or whether they are on the minds of the people. It might change, but still the German and your -- there is some support for the use of force and there's a lot of support for NATO. And I don't want to be misunderstood. I'm very much in favor I think you should not overstretch NATO. You should keep NATO. I think NATO will be important as a service institution, as a pool of countries willing to cooperate. Maybe Rumsfeld was right. You have to rely on actual coalitions of the willing or the wrong idea I guess.

But NATO offers the possibility that there's some interoperability, we get used to each other. So NATO has a value and I guess it's still about -- it's about overextending, overstretching NATO. This is a problem at least in the German debate.

MR. GORDON: Well, thank you. Let's open up to the floor. There should be some microphones. To give enough people a chance, let's gather several questions at once. Just state who you are. We'll start to here. State who you are and if your question is directed to anyone in particular.

MR. PIERRE: Thank you, Phil. Andrew Pierre.

I'd like to pick up, Phil, on the question that you asked which didn't get fully answered and also a remark by Professor Rudolf.

One gets the sense that the United States is increasingly alone in the world in terms of pursuing what could be thought of as a common western agenda.

We are alone in Pakistan, although there seems to be a common agreement right now that Pakistan is perhaps the most important area in this arc of crisis that we have because of the potential role of Islam and terrorism and so on.

We are alone in Iraq for reasons I don't need to rehearse, but we are not alone completely in believing that the outcome in Iraq remains a key question or problem for countries other than the United States as well.

And Afghanistan my sense is a lot of the European countries are participating in Afghanistan are doing it somewhat against their will, but because Afghanistan is a good mission, whereas Iraq was a bad mission, and it was sort of a way to show cohesiveness and commonality with the United States.

Now if I'm correct, the United States is really alone, this is a very serious issue for the decades ahead. And the question this raises in my mind is are we alone principally because of the Bush administration and its, you know, its particular point of view, in which case you can argue that perhaps a change in administration in this country towards a more multilateral approach would bring a lot of international support, or in some ways I find this more worrying are we alone because the rest of the world doesn't get it. That is to say I'm not the most fervent decrier at Islamic growth and all that, but there is an Islamic fanaticism

problem. There is a terrorism problem. And it extends far beyond American interests. It reaches to Hamburg and almost every major European country. There seems to be a disconnect between real, valid European concerns about various types of homegrown and not homegrown terrorism in Europe, and thinking about a place like in Pakistan whereas, in fact, there's a direct connection, because some of the British born in Britain went to Pakistan to train to be terrorists.

So isn't also a question that the rest of the world doesn't get it? And the United States gets it too well? And secondly, could that be sort of modified somewhat by a change of administration in the United States? Anybody who wants to respond to that's welcome to.

MR. GORDON: Thank you. I'm sure they all will. Kori has just published her -- is about to publish a Center on European Reform pamphlet on transatlantic relations after the next administration. So I'm sure she will have a comment. But let's gather a couple of more. Go to the fourth row here on the right.

MS. DOMENACH: I'm Muriel Domenach. I am the deputy head of the Policy Planning staff in Paris, actually coming back from the French delegation to NATO, where I served the last three years as the Defense Counselor.

And so we heard about, of course, at the NATO debate, and I must say pretty much in non-strategic terms, quite surprisingly, and I think there was a lack -- Mr. Dobbins mentioned the ambivalence of our initial engagement, but I think there was a lack of transatlantic understanding on what we were to do in Afghanistan together from the outset, starting with not the legal basis, but at least the motivation and in this respect it must be said that it is not an Article V mission. And it can't support, but the fact that it is seen as an Article V mission by Kori tells a lot on the misunderstanding between Americans and Europeans.

I think there was also misunderstandings in respect to two missions through some countries starting with France and Germany were not too keen to merit OEF and ISAF, but it also has to be said that the American military were very reluctant to commit. The Pentagon was very reluctant to commit forces under NATO command. So at no point, there was -- it was considered that, you know, all American troops might be placed under NATO command. So it was some sense of, you know, consensus between the two sides of the ocean that we might keep the two and most of all not discuss the motivations too much of keeping the two missions.

So again, my experience is that there was a lack. I think it's getting better, but there was a lack of transatlantic understanding, transatlantic consensus on what we were doing in Afghanistan and to what end.

Now my question to all of you, and I thank you for your presentations, is as it seems that we're getting closer to a common understanding that there is a need for such transatlantic NATO strategy on what we are doing in Afghanistan, I understand it from the recent defense ministers meetings, and it seems that the American administration is getting more open to the idea that, you know, we need to catch up to a certain extent.

So all of you, what would you expect from such a strategy? And what would be the end state of our presence in Afghanistan in other terms, you know, as the military puts its -- when do we state that, you know, the -- I wouldn't say the mission is accomplished but we're reaching a point where, you know, the marginal utility is getting less significant.

MR. GORDON: Thank you very much. Let's take two more briefly if we could. The gentleman here in the middle on this side, and the woman just in front of him.

MR. BRAITHWAITE: Hi. Gene Braithwaite from the British Embassy. Jim, you mentioned the -- that there was a case for an international high representative of the -- on the Bosnian model for Afghanistan. I was wondering if you could say what you think such an Afghan high representative would look like and how one would go about achieving consent for that? Thank you.

MR. GORDON: Thank you. Why don't you pass the mike to the woman? Just -- there we go.

MS. MILLERSON: Hi. My name is Kristin Millerson . I'm an editor of the Washington Monthly magazine. I had a question for everyone, but primarily for Jim and for Rory.

You talked about the importance of institution building in Afghanistan, and I wondered if you could talk a little bit in practical terms about how any of the forces that we've talked about might actually go about taking steps to do that. And as a related question, as I understand it, the conference in January of 2006 in London in which the Afghanistan Compact was drafted talked a lot about -- or it mentioned in part further support for the Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund.

And I wonder one, if you think that's an advisable thing and two, is I just have a sheet of amounts that different countries have given, and I notice that after the meeting in London, the contributions from both Canada and Germany went up and contributions from the United States went down. And I wondered if you had a sense of why that might be the case and what any of the implications are. Thanks.

MR. GORDON: Thank you. Why don't we see if our panelists briefly want to respond to whichever questions they want? Kori, do you want to start? We'll just go right down the line.

MS. SCHAKE: Sure. First, on the end state in Afghanistan, somewhere secretly hidden in this country there's a mission accomplished banner that if you can find, before you even get to hang it over Afghanistan, the Democratic Party wants to get it from you, I assure you.

The -- we're in Afghanistan for a long time. This is going to be hard. It's going to be hard for a long time. And yet, it's going to be hard for a long time.

I agree with your judgment that we didn't have nearly a strong enough sense of commonality about what the military mission was and making sure everybody that sent forces signed up to that. I think to some extent this is the shadow of Kosovo. I remember General Clark saying after the Kosovo War that his political guidance had been get started, and then everything else will work itself out. I think there are -- that perhaps we had an optimistic belief since NATO had invoked Article V after the attacks on the United States emanating from Afghanistan that there would be a stronger sense of cohesiveness as to the military mission of fighting the Taliban, stabilizing the country, creating security.

I think you're right that has not proved to be the case, and it's really extraordinarily damaging to the Alliance to have the broad expectation that some countries with troops there will not help other countries and troops there in duress.

I take your point about national caveats, namely the United States being the award winner on national caveats, and yet there are actually sometimes good reasons for it. And I think our record is pretty good about helping out allies in distress, and the national caveats being used -- being whittled away in a manner that respects the political restrictions that countries rightly put on it, but gives the military latitude to do the military job.

Where I fear we are at in Afghanistan is a Somalia type circumstance where many European publics are not prepared for the way the fight has changed and that the political leaderships aren't doing their job of helping the public understand just how much fighting is going on there and how much risk their troops are at. And as somebody who was in government during the aftermath of Somalia, it was extraordinarily damaging to the United States, to the United Nations, and to Somalia that we hadn't prepared my parents for what we were actually doing there.

We need to build a stronger political basis under all of our military missions there, because, as you say, we're going to be there for quite a long time.

On Andrew Pierre's question, thank you so much for giving me the chance to pitch my Center for European Reform pamphlet. I actually think that as much cheering as will be done when the Bush administration departs office that European expectations that American attitudes about fighting terrorism, about the

nature of the international order, about the role that military force plays in shaping that order are not going to change nearly as much as Europeans expect.

Moreover, the United States misplaced expectation that once it's not the Bush administration, Europeans will be more help to us I think is also misplaced.

The -- President Sarkozy's visit, as welcome as it was, as wonderful as it was, and as enthusiastically as Americans are happy to see a French president that isn't instinctively anti-American, it's also illustrative what he did not say, which is what you just said. We all have a common security interest in Iraq's success. We all have a common security interest in not leaving the British, Canadians, and Americans alone fighting in the south of Afghanistan.

I think the differences are more deep seated and that's before we even get to Pakistan. Yeah, of course, you're right.

So I think that the nature of transatlantic disagreement is more deep seated and the Bush administration has, in fact, made it easier on Europeans not to be of more help, that when Phil Gordon's running the country, Europeans are going to have a harder time saying no.

MR. GORDON: Jim.

MR. DOBBINS: Well, I'll start with Andrew's question as well. I mean the American administration is even more isolated than you suggest, because most Americans don't agree with it either.

Now unlike Kori, I happen to think there will be some changes, although I think she's right to diminish European expectations that these will be as sweeping as some of them would like.

But I think if the administration -- if the next administration is going to lead where others will follow, it is going to have to judge a lot more closely how far it can likely bring them. And I think there is going to have to be a change in the rhetoric and a change in the manner in which the problems of terrorism are phrased, one that avoids the sort of martial terminology, the War on Terror, Islamo-fascists. We're going to have to adopt a concept and a terminology and way of phrasing this that puts a greater emphasis on the non-military solutions to these problems, particularly if Pakistan becomes the centerpiece of our strategy.

It's going to have to be a strategy which is articulated in something other than purely military or martial terms.

And I hope -- I don't know -- but I hope that the next administration is going to move in that direction and that it will be sufficiently skillful to bring the American people along with it.

On the issue of what a high representative in Afghanistan might look like, my preference incidentally is to rest those greater powers and more prestige in the U.N. rather than create yet another institution, largely because we've got enough institutions. There's just nobody in charge.

But if that proved impossible because you couldn't get agreement, then the model would essentially be the major donors would agree to appoint somebody to represent all of them in establishing a strategy for the disbursement of their funds. And that person would not necessarily be resident in Kabul, but would spend a lot of time there -- would also spend its time going around raising money -- but would have some authority, at least some moral authority to determine how those funds were spent and, you know, whether we're going to do aerial spraying or some other form of eradication or put our focus on counter-narcotics and something else. I mean that's something that shouldn't be determined on a purely national basis, as it is at the moment. We haven't talked about that yet, but we're in the rather bizarre situation in which apparently the Afghans don't want aerial eradication, the U.S. military don't want aerial eradication, the Allies don't want aerial eradication, and yet we're going to do aerial eradication, which demonstrates that the State Department is really a lot more powerful than any of us thought, but I mean this is the kind of thing where you need somebody who's setting an overall strategy and then putting these policies in context.

And whoever asked about trust funds, and I think that our objective ought to be to build to the extent and as quickly as we can Afghan institutions capable of dealing with Afghanistan's problems and not only the police and the military, although those are obviously priorities, but a lot of other institutions.

And one of the best ways of doing that is actually providing budget support; that is, not giving our money to American contractors who go over there and advise the Afghans about how to do this or that, but actually putting more money into the Afghan budget, building in a reasonable degree of oversight and accountability, but not having unrealistic expectations.

And so I would give a higher priority than we or any of the other donors have to direct budget support.

MR. GORDON: Thanks, Jim. Peter?

MR. RUDOLPH: I agree with Kori that Europeans, at least Germans, will have a harder time saying no when the Brookings people show up asking us to do more under a Democratic administration.

But I think the expectation among German observers is not that anything is going to change. You are right that there are structural differences, strategic divergences, that will not go away with a new administration, but Europeans -- Germans will be hard pressed to say no, but I think the new administration has some chance to restore confidence. But we haven't talked about the Iran issue so it depends on how the Iran problem is going to evolve or that whether it will be Bush's last war or Hillary Clinton's first war, or whatever, so very much will depend on this issue I guess.

But going back to Afghanistan, I think the most important thing is I don't know whether there is a set of criteria. I think we need some agreed on

criteria for success in Afghanistan, realistic criteria. The criteria cannot be that the last Taliban has been killed. That cannot be the criteria for success. So helping the government to control the country or the govern to effectively -- I don't know whether there are -- there's a list of criteria I think would help the transatlantic debate if we had that kind of realistic set of criteria. But maybe it's there. I don't know about it.

MR. GORDON: Thanks, Peter. Rory, we'll turn to you to wrap up and answer whichever the questions you want, but I can't help but wonder what you're thinking having listened to this debate. I mean you began -- you brought us a perspective from Afghanistan, and I wonder -- and all of these questions about NATO and coordinating aid, and us. It's all about us. And does it leave you -- I don't want to put words in your mouth -- but so I'll just ask it as a question.

What do you make of the things that we're focused on here and what we can do in Afghanistan?

MR. STEWART: Well, my sense has always been that there's a surreal gap between the rhetoric and the reality. I remember having just spent quite a lot of time in rural areas of Afghanistan and living in village houses, turning up in the beginning of 2002 to a conference about this size and hearing the United Nations special envoy first articulate with the Afghan minister of finance

the notion that every Afghan was committed to a genesis of a multiethnic, centralized state based on democracy, human rights and law.

And I have, of course, observed an extraordinary series of shifts in the kinds of agendas and statements. I mean the things we're saying today would have been total anathema three years ago. And it may be even because the tours are only a six month sum that it changes as quickly as that.

It began with us all believing in the light footprint, I think for some very promising reasons. In fact al-Ibrahimi argued strongly that this was a country where throughout the 1980s we'd encouraged people to fight jihad against foreign military occupation – it would be very dangerous to try to set up some form of military occupation in this country, you would turn Afghanistan into Iraq if you brought 150,000 troops in.

Now we all believe oh, that was a terrible catastrophe. We should have had much heavier footprint.

In 2002, we believed it was all about centralization and the central government. Now everybody agrees it's all about decentralization and local autonomy. I was talking to a senior ambassador two weeks ago, who said to me, of course, what we need to do is we need to support the community policing, local tribal forces. Now that, of course, a year and a half ago we were told was supporting war lords and fragmentation and loss of authority and the legitimate

monopoly on the use of violence. People talk a lot about Max Weber eighteen months ago.

Throughout all of this, to then whip 'round the question and the statements that had been given, to the first gentleman I would say it is indeed true that Europe has a lot to be ashamed of, and I think there's a great deal of instinctive pacifism and cowardice in the European response to this challenge.

But this does not mean that like a broken clock they can't be right occasionally because in fact, I fail to see here in the United States a clearly articulated mission or policy. And this then shifts through the questions about the ARTF and what kind of institutions building we can do.

Well, it's quite clear that we are not making progress on a number of the elements of state building which we've tried to make progress in. We've done well on the army. We've done extremely badly on the police. In fact, you look at the fundamental security pillars, security sector reform, we appear to have failed on about four out of five of them for whatever reason.

One the question on the high representative, I am a little bit uneasy about this, because I think that if there was a time for that, that time has passed; that we have continued to micromanage and interfere in the operations of the Afghan state. Enough already. We went in there at the end of 2001. It is now time to actually trust the elected leader of this sovereign state and let him get on

and make his own decisions, instead of which every time he appoints a police chief at the moment, we say you can't have that guy. He's a human rights abuser.

We go into the province of Helmand in 2005 and we say Shar Mohammed Akhunzada, the governor, is no good, because he's a warlord and a criminal, which he was. We push to bring in Mohammad Daoud, who's a nice English speaking technocrat. Then we conclude after six months that he's too scared to leave his office, so we bring in Governor Wafa. Now everybody is saying Governor Wafa is too old and tired and people are talking about bringing Chairman Ameer Al Kazari again.

But I kid you not. Watch this space. Right.

So the question on the end state is not what do we want, but what is actually like to emerge from all of this? Well, my guess is that Afghanistan is starting from a very low base. I mean the United Nations put its third from the bottom in the human development index. That puts it down there with Niger and Chad. This is a country that is about 30 years behind Pakistan in terms of police, its civil service, its military, its rule of law, its government structures.

You would be very lucky if 20 years of consolidated investment to turn Afghanistan in terms of Pakistan in 20 years time. And you're not very happy with Pakistan at the moment.

So what on earth is the point in doing that? Why exactly -- I guess that in 20 years time if we're sitting here again, if you force me to bet, we would

be looking at an Afghanistan which will be still a poor developing country, probably with a very unstable conservative Islamist fringe in the south and east of the country, which had the relationship to the Kabul that the tribal areas of Pakistan have to Lahore or Islamabad.

So what is our end state? What are we pushing for? Is it not time to be a bit more honest with our own electorate and bit more honest with the Afghans? And if I'm going to be really radical and push for the end state, I'd say we can probably do it with the likes of troop presence we have at the moment, and we present a very simple deal. We say we are here because of terrorism. We are going to keep the kind of intelligence and Special Forces presence that we require to ensure that terrorists training camps don't emerge again.

And secondarily, for charitable purposes, we are going to do some development projects in Afghanistan. We're going to build some roads. We're going to provide some technical assistance to your finance ministry. We're not going to claim that we're going to be able to rebuild your nation. That is something connected to history, culture, tradition, which is well beyond this. It's going to require extraordinary political leadership on the part of the Afghans. It's going to require a whole global economic and social change. It's going to be heavily influenced, not by the closed system of Afghanistan, but what happens in the entire region. That's beyond this.

But we will provide some concrete things and things that we can do well and in exchange, we're going to take some measures in Afghanistan to protect our security.

That's the most I can offer. Thank you very much indeed.

And if I can just finish by saying and this is an obvious point, one of the perplexities here is, of course, I don't know very much about Afghanistan. I don't really know, and I've been living there on and off for five or six years really what is going on in northern Oruzgan . I don't have much sense of what exactly is happening in Zadrans tribal politics at the moment. I think we need to be considerably more modest in our objectives and our statements about somebody else's country. I think to quote a great American, T.S. Eliot, in this case the only wisdom is the wisdom of humility. Humility is endless. Thank you very much indeed.

(Applause)

MR. GORDON: Rory, thank you. It's a really nice message to end on. Before everyone jumps up and runs out, I want to be sure to thank the Daimler Corporation, which sponsored this public forum, which is part of a regular transatlantic official and semi-official dialogue for which some of these people are in town.

I want to thank you all for coming, and I especially want to thank all of our panelists for what I thought was really a very interesting discussion. Thank you very much.

(Applause)

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