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Introduction and Moderator:

MARTIN S. INDYK, Senior Fellow;
Director, Saban Center for Middle East Policy
The Brookings Institution

Panelists:

KENNETH POLLACK, Senior Fellow
Saban Center for Middle East Policy
The Brookings Institution

DAVID BROOKS, Columnist
The New York Times

MARWAN MUASHER, Former Foreign Minister
Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. INDYK: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.

Welcome back from your summers. I hope they were enjoyable. We are delighted to have you here at the Saban Center for Middle East Policy at Brookings for our first event of the fall season. It is going to be a season of book publications for the Saban Center. We are obviously starting today with Ken's book, *A Path Out of the Desert: A Grand Strategy for America and the Middle East*. In a few weeks' time we will be doing a similar event with Bruce Riedel's book, *Search for Al Qaeda*. Of course some of you have been here for the discussion we had which was not a Saban Center book but have been, Marwan Muasher's book *The Arab Center: The Promise of Moderation*. And later in the year we will of course publishing the Saban/Center Council on Foreign Relations book recommending a new strategy for the Middle East for the next president for restoring the balance. And once again in January my book will be coming out. So we hope to see you back often for these discussions.

But today as I said we're here to discuss Ken's latest book. Ken is extraordinarily prolific and absolutely intimidating in terms of the way he manages to do such profound work in such a short period of time. To quote from *The Economist*: "His latest book is a powerful argument for continued and perhaps even greater American involvement in the Middle

East." *The Economist* says that "he binds the strands together deftly and imparts a good deal of learning and wisdom along the way." Ken's book is a *New York Times* editor's pick, and as you will hear from him today, it is a very important argument for how the United States should approach the many difficulties that the Middle East poses for our interests. Building on lessons from past efforts and failures, Ken's grand strategy is a very compelling argument. I don't wish to preempt his presentation or discussion.

We are very glad to have Marwan Muasher back here to be one of the discussants. Marwan is former foreign minister and deputy prime minister of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. He is on leave at the moment in his position as Vice President at the World Bank, a Senior Vice President for External Affairs. He is on leave because he is promoting his own book *The Arab Center* which is a fascinating part memoir, part analysis of the problems of the Arab world and a prescription for how to promote a moderate approach for the region's problems. He therefore is a very good person to be a discussant on Ken's grand strategy.

The empty chair is for David Brooks who last we heard at 10:30 this morning was departing from Minneapolis-St. Paul on an aircraft and he may well turn up, hopefully he'll turn up in the midst of our discussions here. David Brooks I think is known to you all as an extremely

articulate columnist on the op-ed page of the *New York Times* and as a political analyst on the "NewsHour with Jim Lehrer." He also has written two books of his own, *Bobos in Paradise: The New Upper Class and How They Got There*, and *On Paradise Drive: How We Live Now (And Always Have) in the Future Tense*. David is going to hopefully in his flight from Minneapolis-St. Paul make the transition from observing elections here to observing (inaudible) that we are going to deal with today.

Without further ado, I'm going to call on Ken to present the argument or to present his grand strategy for a path out of the desert.

MR. POLLACK: Thank you, Martin. I thank all of you for coming out here today. I'm afraid that I must start by immediately disappointing you because I can't possibly lay out the entirety of the grand strategy -- to quote again from *The Economist*, that "a simple summary of Mr. Pollack's main ideas does scant justice to this thoughtful and informative book." So instead what I thought I would do is describe it a little bit and at least give you some sense of what it does contain in the hope that it will at the very least spark a discussion, perhaps some interesting ideas from Marwan and (inaudible) from David, and compel you to go run out and buy the book, which by the way Martin failed to point out is on sale in the Brookings bookstore along with Marwan's book. So

you can get a two-fer and I promise you we will both be delighted to sign them for you.

When I was thinking about how I wanted to begin the talk today, I ran through a whole variety of different ways. I actually decided I would do something a little bit unusual for us, something that I knew would annoy Martin which of course meant that I had to do it, which was actually to read a little bit from the book because I actually think that it is a nice way to start to present the ideas to get into some of the deeper points that I did want to try to at least sketch for you today.

This book is about recognizing both the nature of America's vital interests in the Middle East and how those vital interests are threatened by the anger and frustration of the people of the region caused by an interlocking set of crippling societal problems. It's also about how the United States must stop trying to run away from the problems of the region and adopt a balanced, long-term approach to its problems if it is to secure its interests. Only when we have done that will it be safe for us to diminish our engagement with this troublesome part of the world. Personally I would love to be able to tell other Americans that we can just forget about the Middle East, that it's really not that important, that we really don't face meaningful threats from the region, and that those that we do face threaten us only because we've tried to do too much there. Such

an argument would be especially popular after our tragic experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan which seem to have reinforced many Americans' desires to just forget about the Middle East. The problem is that turning our backs on the Middle East now is neither possible nor wise.

One of the main reasons why America's problems in region seem to get worse and worse is that our inclination has always been to try to have as little to do with this confused and confusing part of the world as we could. As a result, we have consistently tried to do things on the cheap. Even when we have taken on Herculean tasks like invading, occupying, and rebuilding Iraq, Washington's inclination has been to try to do it with too few troops, too few resources, too few allies, and too little time. As in Iraq, the result of this shortsighted approach has always been to prolong our involvement and make it more costly than it needed to be even if it were always going to be more costly than we wanted to admit. Consequently, the principal theme of this book is that to secure America's interests in the Middle East over the long term, the United States must embrace a long-term commitment to encourage and enable the countries of the Middle East to pursue a gradual process of political, economic, and social reform; one that grows from within rather than being imposed from without, one that reflects the values, traditions, history, and aspirations of the people of the region themselves, not a Western guess at them; one

that recognizes that reform and stability are not mutually exclusive, but mutually reinforcing and ultimately mutually essential. As I readily and acknowledge and discuss at some length, this is a difficult undertaking but I believe it is ultimately the only good path that we can follow.

I think that kind of sets up pretty nicely what it is that this book is about. It is about a great many things. It's a big book. It's an ambitious book. It begins by laying out America's interests in the Middle East in a way that no other book that I know of has tried to in recent memory. It then goes on to talk about the various problems of the Middle East, the political, the economic, educational, legal, social, cultural, et cetera, and the problems, the threats that those problems are creating for America's interests. I do go on to lay out at some length what I feel the solution to those problems is, how the United States needs to help the Middle East to deal with those underlying problems to eliminate the threats that we face from the region. And finally, I have a last section which looks at each of what I call the subregional policies, the specific strategies that we're pursuing toward Iraq and Iran, toward the Israel-Palestinian confrontation, toward Syria, Lebanon, Sudan, and a variety of other countries. And I talk about how each policy needs to be crafted with an eye toward obviously dealing with the issues inherent in the problem itself, but also with an eye toward rationalizing those policies so that they work in

accord with one another, so that they're no longer running at cross-purposes the way that they have far too often done over the last 7 years, and so that they are also in accordance with this overarching set of themes, with this larger effort that I think we need to undertake in the Middle East.

One of the most-important points that I make, one of the principal themes of the book and one of the core elements in talking about what it is that the United States ought to be trying to do in the Middle East is the argument that the war on terror proclaimed by the Bush administration in 2001 is misguided, that it was misguided because it focuses on a symptom and not on the problem itself, and that no matter how effectively prosecuted it is, it will ultimately never succeed because it is only about eradicating a symptom and not about treating the underlying maladies. The real cause, the real problems in the region, are these underlying political, economic, and social problems which have left far too many people of the region deeply angry and unhappy and frustrated and desirous of change in their lives and all too often the United States has unfortunately crept into the problem because we take part of the blame because we are seen as reinforcing a status quo which maintains the anger and the frustration of the region because we are seen as standing

behind the regimes which themselves have become the object of so much of this frustration.

I think everyone in the room is familiar with one of the great myths of the war on terror out there. It's a very important myth. This is the myth that because all of the 9/11 hijackers were wealthy and well educated that therefore terrorism can't have anything to do with socioeconomic problems. This is a myth both in its specifics and its generalities. In its specifics, it's simply not the case that all 19 of the 9/11 hijackers were wealthy and well educated; only six of them were. The other 13 were actually relatively poor and poorly educated, and most experts expect that they probably didn't even know that they were on suicide missions. This is in fact very common among the terrorist organizations of the region, and in fact throughout history and throughout the world. They tend to combine an elite and leadership and cadre which tends to be middle- or even upper-class and well educated, but a lot of foot soldiers, a lot of younger, less-well-educated, less-well-off people, who do often come from the slums, from the backwaters, from the areas where is the greatest desperation, and that has proven true in the Middle East as well.

What this speaks to is one of the principal themes of the book at least in terms of the problems, and that is that one of the things

that we have failed to recognize and to understand since 9/11 is that ultimately the Salafi terrorists of the Middle East are revolutionaries, and in fact, they are simply a manifestation of a larger revolutionary phenomenon throughout the region, Islamism. The Islamists are revolutionaries. They say it all the time. They're not hiding their agenda, bin Laden, Zawahiri, whomever you want to listen to, they will say it right out there, their goal is to overthrow the governments of the region and place it with one more to their liking. They've been around in some fashion or another since the 1920s, but they've gained a tremendous amount of momentum in the past 30 years both because of the failure of other ideologies which also promised change and prosperity and other virtues to the people of the region and were demonstrated to be unable to fulfill those goals, and also because of the deepening problems of the region caused by demographics, caused by the failure of the Arab economies, caused by political problems which have made all of the economic and social and legal problems that much worse, all of which have mixed together to create a tremendous amount of frustration and have caused a great many people of the Middle East to begin to clamor for change. They tend to want change peacefully if they can get it, but many of them have become so desperate that they will accept violence if that is the only way to change the status quo and to change their lives.

The terrorists, the revolutionaries, the Islamists, they have something to offer these people as revolutionaries always do. They come along and they provide a seemingly logical explanation for their circumstances and a plan of action, a program to try to build a better society in which the people of the region can get that which they deserve, that which they seek, and again, this is a very common phenomenon all throughout history. Terrorism comes in when the revolutionaries fail. And let's remember, most revolutions do fail. They few revolutions succeed. But often when the revolutions fail, there is some strand, some fringe element, that is not satisfied and they take up arms. And again, this is a very common pattern throughout history and if you look in particular at the terrorist phenomenon in Russia in the 19th century, it was born of the same phenomenon, revolutionaries, whether anarchist or Marxist, tried desperately to overthrow the government recognizing the unhappiness of the people and when they failed they turned to terrorist instead. Interestingly, a point I make in the book, when Israeli counterterrorism experts and psychologists have gotten to interview many of the terrorists in the region, they will say flat out not only that they are revolutionaries, but that their idols are people like Che Guevara and Fidel Castro because that is the same mold that they see themselves in.

So saying economics has nothing to do with socioeconomic conditions, has nothing to do with terrorism in the Middle East, is a lot like saying that the French Revolution had nothing to do with economics or social conditions because Danton and Robespierre were middle-class, or that the Russian Revolution had nothing to do with economic conditions and underlying socioeconomic problems because Lenin and Trotsky were middle-class. Both of those are equally false, and the same is true in the Middle East.

This is obviously not a stable situation when all across the Middle East there are people who are beginning to clamor for revolution, who want change and are willing to support a whole variety of groups who are willing to use all kinds of different measures to overturn the status quo. For that reason it's not terribly surprising that the Middle East has been as unstable as it is over the past 20 to 30 years. Just one quick statistic for you. Since 1980, and that's after the Iranian Revolution, of the 18 states of the Muslim Middle East, six of them have experienced major civil wars of revolutions, four have had lesser civil wars or rebellion, and virtually all of the rest have had unrest of one kind or another and terrorist campaigns. That's not a very stable region. That's not the kind of region that we would like to see possessing two-thirds of the world's oil reserves on which as we all are so painfully reminded every time that we go to the gas station,

the world is unfortunately completely addicted. And of course, the problem is likely to get worse before it gets better, if it gets better.

I won't go into too much detail, I have a lot of it in the book, but I'll just give you a couple. One is that a massive study that was undertaken just a few years ago of 182 countries between 1970 and 2000 found that one-third of all countries with a youth population, 40 percent or more experienced major civil war. Probably you're not going to be surprised here that every single country in the Muslim Middle East except for the UAE or Qatar has a youth population of over 40 percent, and that statistic is likely to obtain and to get worse. The ILO predicts that by 2025, 45 percent of the region's entire population will be under the age of 25.

Some people in the region are pointing to the massive influx of oil wealth there as a way of saying things are actually not that bad and they're getting better, regimes of the region are actually thinking a little bit harder about this and they understand the problems and they're trying to take care of it in investing. And it certainly is true that the regimes of the region do understand that they misspent the oil wealth of the 1970s and that they are trying to do a better job of investing in their own futures. The problem is that so far they're not doing a very good job. So far most of their own investment has not been in the areas where it most needs to be. In particular they've not done a very good job with education, they've not

done a very good job with unemployment, they've not doing a very good job with underemployment, they've not done a very good job with worker productivity, the really critical elements that have lent themselves to creating the greatest socioeconomic problems in the Arab world that have made so many people in the region most angry about the political circumstances that they face because they blame their governments, and in many cases rightly, for creating the circumstances in which they have problems in all of those areas. Unemployment hasn't changed barely at all in most of the region. In fact, a lot of the investment and a lot of the construction that is going on throughout the Middle East is being fueled by its patriot workers who are being imported despite the fact that almost every country in the region has double-digit unemployment if not unemployment over or even 30 percent.

What's more, all this oil wealth pouring into the region is creating a new problem, one that they didn't have before, which is inflation and much of under-classes, the lower-classes, and the middle-classes of the Middle East are actually suffering because of the oil boom because of this inflation because their savings are being wiped out, because their salaries are being reduced in value even if at the same time they are not more able to find easier and better employment. This may change in the future, but so far we've not yet seen the patterns of investment that would

actually make it likely that they would do so. What all of this suggests is that the Middle East is not likely to get more stable in the future, not under current patterns, not under current trends. It's likely to get worse.

I've raised the threat of revolution and I also caution revolutions are rare occurrences. I wouldn't bet that there will be a revolution somewhere in the Middle East tomorrow. But by the same token, I also wouldn't bet that there won't be a revolution in the Middle East somewhere in the next 10 years. What's more, what we have seen in the Middle East is that there are lots of failed revolutions and failed revolutions are often just as dangerous as successful ones. Failed revolutions typically turn into civil wars, into insurgences, into terrorist campaigns, into other forms of instability all across the region. And for us Americans, we need to keep in mind that civil wars, insurgencies, terrorist campaigns, other forms of civil unrest, have a bad habit of mutating into anti-American terrorist, and worst still, into disruptions of the global supply of oil.

So what do we do about all of this? Obviously, a lot of the book is about that, and I'm only again going to give you a little bit. For me though it starts by going back to this point about revolutions. It starts by going back to the history. Just as the answer to the question what could the czar have done to prevent the Russian Revolution was embark on a

comprehensive program of political, economic, and social reform, just as the answer to the question what could Louis XVI have done to stave off the French Revolution was embark on a comprehensive program of political, economic, and social reform, so too is that the only solution that humanity has devised to deal with the deep-seeded underlying and pervasive problems of the Middle East that are creating similar types of unrest and unhappiness throughout the Muslim Middle East. As I said, this is not going to be an easy or quick task, but neither is it impossible. This is exactly what the United States and its allies helped to do in Europe after the Second World War, in East Asia during the similar period of time, and even more recently in Latin America since the 1980s and so. You can date it when you will. In all of those places, we've had tremendous success. Every one of those regions is definitely better than it once was, and Europe and to a certain extent East Asia are infinitely better than they once were.

I also resist comparisons with the Marshall Plan. Too many people have tried to caricature my ideas of being a Marshall Plan for the Middle East. It is not. The Marshall Plan was something completely different because Europe was completely different. But there is at least one similarity, there are two perhaps. The first one was that when the idea was first tried out, everyone believed it was impossible because as

bad as the Middle East is today, Europe was infinitely worse. Just remember that for 1,500 years, Europe was the worst continent on Earth with wars and slaughter and genocide and starvation and disease and mass murder on a scale that the Middle East has never known. And the second similarity is of course that it also took a very long time and required a generations-long commitment on the part of not just the United States of America, but also the people of the region themselves. And one thing that I talk about at length and one reason why I'm delighted to be sharing the stage with my friend and my inspiration Marwan Muasher is that Marwan is one of the people who has taken up this charge from inside the region who is demonstrating that this is exactly the sort of change the region itself wants and needs and understands that it needs.

Over the course of the book I actually lay out any number of different themes and ideas and specific strategies and specific policies of what the United States ought to try to do to start this program, start it moving forward, and work with our allies to do so. I'm not going to get into too much of that now, but one point that I do want to make is that as much as I did try to be specific, the truth of the matter is it's impossible to lay out a detailed plan, and if what you want is some kind of a blueprint for what the U.S. and the Arab world and the Europeans and the East Asians and everyone else who needs to contribute to this effort does over the next 40

or 50 years, you're not going to find it in here. You're not going to find it in here because only a moron would try. Not just because it's not possible for one person to lay all of this out, that's certainly true, but because it's simply not possible to do now. It's unknowable. It would be like going to Dean Acheson or Secretary Marshall or Willi Brandt or Conrad Adenauer or any of the other people conceived of the idea of rebuilding Europe and containing the Soviet Union and saying to them in 1948 or 1949 please lay out for me all of the concrete steps that you plan to take over the next 40 years. They couldn't possible do it. They didn't know what they were. And of course many of the things that they probably would have tried out would have proven to be wrong because the best that you can do at a time like now is to make the case that the strategy is necessary, that the change is feasible, that there are partners to do it, and that it is possible to make the effort over the long term, and that's what I've tried to do in this book. And beyond that of course you do want to toss out at least some specifics to say here is where you can start, and I do that as well. But that's about the best you can do because a strategy like this that is going to take 30, 40, 50 years is going to be an iterative and an evolutionary process that is only going to grow out of discussions and a lot of thinking and conversations and debates and trial and error, finding things that work and finding things that don't, and evolving over time.

I lay out in the book 11 different principles that I think are useful for the United States and its allies in the region and elsewhere to think about and to apply in trying to devise the specific strategies. I'm not going to lay out all of them out for you, but I did want to mention at least three of them because I think they're very important, and they're very important to keep in mind when we as Americans think about this because it does seem so daunting and because we have gotten it wrong so many times at least over the last 7 years. The first one is that we need to make the regimes of the region our partners and not treat them as our adversaries. There are going to be times when we're going to have to push the regimes of the region to do some things that they don't want to do, but again we need to keep the historic examples in mind. We didn't bully the Europeans into changing, nor the East Asians, now the Latin Americans. We did some pushing in Latin America a lot more than in the other places. What we did was we found people in those parts of the world who wanted to make the changes themselves and we gave them the tools to do so. The regimes in the Middle East are too powerful for the United States to simply sit and scold them and threaten them especially when we are so dependent on their oil. It's just not going to work. But one of the things that you see all across the region is that more and more people within the regimes themselves recognize that change is coming.

They understand that their people want something different and the question mark in their mind is how they get from where they are to know where they know that they have to be without losing power completely or worse without losing their grip completely and ushering in chaos or revolution or something else even worse. And again, that's where the United States can come in, and that's my second principle, at least the second one that I want to mention here, which is that the reform movement needs to be indigenously driven, not American forced. Far too often when we have sat and thought about this, and give credit to the Bush administration for at least recognizing the desire for change in the region and understanding that they needed to do something more than just try to kill terrorists, but what they did very poorly in many cases was to actually go and talk to the people of the region themselves and instead they tried to come up with their own ideas and they go to the region and say do this. We didn't tell the Europeans how to reform their countries, we didn't tell the East Asians, we have not told the Latin Americans. We've given them advice. We've said this worked in this country. In many cases we just put them together with other people who did it in their own countries, but they came up with their own paths themselves and that was the only way that this process could be legitimate, it was the only that it could work.

The last point I wanted to make which is the need for gradualism and patience, the hardest thing for any American audience to ever hear, the hardest thing for the American government to do. When it comes to reform, speed kills. Just look at the way that the Bush administration handled the elections in Palestine and Iraq. We pushed for elections when the Iraqis knew that the conditions weren't right them in Iraq, we pushed for elections in Palestine and the Palestinians, the Israelis, and many of our other friends in the region came to us and said do not do this, you will just put Hamas in power, and we insisted on doing it and we got Hamas in power and we got the militias in power in Iraq. The form works best when it moves slowly and it can be indigenously driven when it can be something organic that develops out of the region and if you do it slowly and you're willing to have patience, it's more likely that if you see problems emerging you can take actions to correct them.

As a final point, there's a lot in this book as I said about a whole variety of different things, but one theme that I do return to on a number of occasions that's actually beyond the scope of this book is the need for the United States to simultaneously embark not only on this kind of a grand strategy to deal with the Middle East over the long term, but simultaneously to embark on another similar grand strategy to deal with its consumption of fossil fuels and to start weaning itself off of the oil

addiction which even now President Bush has admitted to. In my mind, when you think about the problems that the Middle East creates for the United States and for the rest of the world, so much of it is driven by the region's oil that it makes it ridiculous to imagine going to the American people or going to our allies many of whom understand this better than we do and have been waiting for us to come around and adopt this kind of a policy, it's ridiculous for us to go to them and say we are going to embark on this kind of a policy and not say and by the same token we're also going to embark on a major policy to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels, reduce our dependence on Middle Eastern oil and help to diminish the threat to the world created by the problems of the Middle East in the same way. In my mind, this is what both candidates ought to be talking about every time they get up there. The great national-security problems that the United States faces today are being created in the Middle East, they're created by the threat of terrorism which consumes the candidates probably more than it ought to, and the potential for major disruptions of oil of which it is said we've only gotten the taste of as a result of the increase in the oil prices over the last 3 or 4 years. We need to tackle those problems. We need to deal with them rationally and maturely. We need to recognize that these are deep-seeded, long-term problems that will not be solved easily that can only be addressed by a long-term effort to try to

help the people of the region to form their own societies in a way that a great many of the people of the region would like to see their societies reformed.

Let me going to stop there and turn it over to one of the men who is trying exactly that. Thank you.

MR. INDYK: Thank you, Ken. First of all let me welcome David. Thank you for making it. I've already introduced you and said all sorts of nice things about you in your absence, but we're delighted you could make it and we understand your circumstances. Marwan, will you please respond first and then we'll call on David?

MR. MUASHER: First of all, Ken, I actually read your book and I must say that if I am ever to write a second book, it would be out reform in our region and I would not have been able to write a better one. I truly mean that. I enjoyed Ken's book tremendously because I think he offered a comprehensive and thorough diagnosis of the wide area of challenges that the Middle East faces today and will continue to face, particularly if the reformers lose momentum and if the United States does not change its approach to the region. I wholeheartedly agree with your conclusion that there must be a greater and more qualitative engagement by the United States over a long period of time, but there are no shortcuts and we cannot do it on the cheap.

Many of the issues that Ken identified are known to us all, but I still would like to focus on three main challenges that Ken mentioned in his book and that I believe should be underscored, challenges that I also talk about but I believe that Ken addressed in quite some detail, the quality of education coupled with the widening youth bulge in the Middle East, the evolutionary nature of reform which Ken just mentioned and I would like even to read my notes so you see how much we are in alignment over this issue, and the lingering Arab-Israeli conflict that continues to fuel radical thinking across the region.

On the first which in my opinion is one of the major challenges facing the Middle East today and which Ken addresses so beautifully in the book is that of educational reform which today should not focus in the Middle East on the increasing number of computers in the classroom or closing the gender gap which are things that have already been done, but should emphasize improving the quality of education, instilling the values of acceptance of culture and diversity, encouraging creativity, critical and independent thinking, and improving communication skills. This I believe is a priority in order to secure the region's future whose future leaders, politicians, journalists, lawyers, businessmen and - women are today's youth who comprise more than 60 percent of the Arab population and who are soft targets for radical elements in our society.

Second, Ken stresses the notion that he just talked about that we Arab reformers or centrists have tried to explain so many times to American decision makers, that reform is an evolutionary and homegrown process that the region must go through. We should assume ownership of this process and I will be the first to admit that reformers in the region and centrists in the region have often been slow to do that. But as Ken argued, it is after the region develops a homegrown process that the United States can support the indigenous reform effort because quite simply, what is in the best interests of the region is also in the best interests of the United States. The results will not emerge in a fortnight and the U.S. should not expect that. Today we have a situation in the Arab world where you only have two options, a political elite with no system of checks and balances, and a radical religious ideology which threatens the political and cultural diversity of society, and to create third and fourth options is not something that can be done overnight, but must be done and we must start if we are to reverse the trend of radicalization in the area. Also reform cannot be measured only by the number of elections held or the number of women appointed ministers in a given government. The scorecard has to be as comprehensive as the list of challenges that the region faces and Ken lists all these challenges very, very well.

The one point I would like to emphasize and one that I had hoped Ken would have dealt with earlier in his book, although he did deal with it, is the Arab-Israeli conflict and its centrality in the region. The Arab-Israeli conflict is linked to the other problems the region faces not because we Arabs say there is a link but because there is a logical link on at least three fronts. One, the conflict continues to be an endless source of frustration in the Arab world and the Palestinian cause continues to resonate across the board thereby fueling anger, a sense of hopelessness, and contributing to the radicalization of the Arab population. The conflict certainly is not the only source of frustration, but coupled with the myriad challenges on the political, social, and economic fronts that Ken identifies, its prominence cannot be ignored.

Two, most Arabs view America today through the prism of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and more importantly, they see America applying double-standards, preaching democracy but ignoring Palestinian aspirations, pushing for reform but hesitant to embrace its outcome and address it when it comes to the Palestinian arena; stressing independence, freedom, and justice, but applying these values loosely or selectively when it comes to the Palestinians. America has lost its credibility in the region on reform largely because of this notion of applying double-standards.

And three, because the conflict is the prism through which the United States is perceived and because it's a major source of frustration, America's engagement in the Middle East should largely focus on resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict and not be limited as it seems to be these days with the issue of Iraq and Iran. Ken is right on the money in his observation that America can and must want peace more than the parties themselves. It's funny, but I used almost the exact same words in my book. If it is to cut the lifeline of radical elements that strive to prove that violence yields results, and if it wants, and this to me is a major point, to see the secular moderate reformist groups succeed in moving this region toward pluralism, toward inclusion, toward diversity, there is nothing that America can do better than help resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict by giving the reformers and the moderates ammunition to move on the other fronts in the region.

Resolving the conflict is no panacea as I said for the region's problems and it will not miraculously empower the secular moderates overnight. There are many steps that the moderates themselves have to take and assume responsibility for in pursuit of reform. But resolving the conflict will strengthen the cause for moderation on other fronts and will provide an alternative to violence.

I believe Ken's book is as comprehensive a book as I have ever seen on identifying the challenges of the region, identifying a course of action, and on lecturing and preaching the need for a greater involvement by America in the region, but one that is different from the kind of involvement that is there today. Thank you so much.

MR. INDYK: Thank you very much, Marwan. David?

MR. BROOKS: Firstly I'd like to apologize for being late. When I sent Ken an email this morning saying my travel plans had gotten screwed up, he sent an email suggesting it wouldn't have occurred to him why any political pundit might not be in Washington today or these last 2 weeks which is the great thing about Ken, if six terrorists gather somewhere in Yemen he's aware of it, but things happen in Denver and Minneapolis. I know Al Jazeera was there. I'm surprised he didn't see it covered. And a thing I should mention to you, Ken, the grand strategy you have described in this excellent book is maybe implemented by pistol-packing hockey mom from Alaska which might change things a little. I wouldn't be on that.

I am not qualified to talk about the Middle East but I have been covering the political debate about the Middle East here and I was just going to quickly talk about this fits into where American politics is and where the American foreign-policy community is. And I think of the

political evolution and the intellectual evolution about how Americans think about the Middle East as the evolution from Bush to Burke. What I mean by that is George Bush gave a series of speeches most famously in his Second Inaugural laying out a whole series of universalistic truths that the U.S. should be in the business of implementing, notably that all people are endowed by the creator with inalienable rights and we should implement those to all regions and especially the Middle East. And that came along with an assumption which is that if we change the political institutions of society, then you change the society. I've had a long-running argument with a senior Bush administration official, and I can't tell you her name because the conversations were off the record, but I always argue, You didn't get the culture of Iraq wrong? And the argument is, No, I don't believe culture, it's a vague concept, but if you change institutions then you can change the culture. And that was the supposition I think of regime change, that if you change the political institutions, all sorts of things will happen.

The war and the events over the past few years have dented that and I think we have all become Burkeans, and by that I mean seeing social change as a much more thorny affair, seeing societies organically really created from the bottom up and understanding first our epistemological modesty, how little we can know about other societies,

how modest we have to be in trying to reshape them in any dramatic way, and I think these lessons have been absorbed and I think the debate has shifted, and I think Ken's book is part of that shift because he emphasizes really the fundamental situations in these societies not just whether there are elections and all of that and I think he does it in a more sophisticated way, but I think the entire body politic has moved in that direction. I saw a World Values survey a couple years after the first invasion of Iraq where people all around the world are asked, Would you mind if a particular neighbor was foreigner? and in the United States, 9 percent of Americans would mind if a foreigner moved next door to them and globally it's about 16 percent would mind. In Iraq when they asked this question, I think it was 92 percent would mind, and that would have been helpful to know before we went in.

So Tom Wolfe was once asked, What's the most-important thing that's ever happened in your lifetime? and he said, That's easy. Co-ed forms. What he meant by that was the most-important changes are not things that happen from the top down, they're the spontaneous decisions by millions of people that change the way people live in radical ways, so Ken has really described the fundamentals of this society and how that leads to change. But Ken's interpretation is not the only Burkean version out there or crude Burkean version out there. It seems to me in the body

politic there are at least two others. The one is sort of a dumbed-down Huntingtonism and that is that there is not only a clash of civilizations, but there's a gap between civilizations, we will understand those people, let's not even get involved, and I think that is the dominant belief system in the American populace. That has a more polite form which is found more in this country which is that if we can end our dependence on foreign oil, we never have to deal with those people again, and I think we see that in John McCain and Barack Obama's campaign, but that's the subliminal promise there.

Then finally there's the caution which goes after a country goes through a national trauma which is related to a Burkean philosopher named Michael Oakeshott who said, "The purpose of government is not to solve problems, not to have grand strategies. As you sail on a ship and it's stormy out there, just keep the ship upright today. Don't worry about tomorrow. Just keep it upright today." And I think that's our de facto policy right now in the Middle East. But Ken I'm glad to say doesn't accept that because the long-term storms are brewing and you have to think about those long-term storms. So what he tries to do is get us to think long term to get more engaged and more ambitious in a climate that I think is hostile to doing that. This is the challenge. Ken faces various challenges. One of them is we screwed up political reform, so you want

us to reform the economy, the society, the subconscious, the psychology. Good luck with that. So that's one challenge. The second is how exactly are we supposed to do this in societies we've already screwed up? We can say that culture matters, but how exactly do we change all these fundamental things? One of my favorite quotations is from Daniel Patrick Moynihan who said, The central conservative truth is that culture matters most, the central liberal truth is that government can change culture. But doing that turns out to be quite problematic. And sometimes when I was looking through argument I was thinking never send a liberal to do a Burkean job because he gets a little too ambitious, a little too programmatic, and a Burkean would say, A grand strategy? We do not want a grand strategy. We want to evolve in organic ways, adapt to discrete circumstances. We do not want to think big about this, that grand strategies are too abstract and will lead us astray.

The second thing I think a Burkean would say, Remember the centrality of evil in all societies. You may want to have long-term development and all this touchy-feely stuff like education, but the reality is you're going to be fighting enemies often and your first priority is going to be combating enemies sometimes in rough ways and that will screw up your soft stuff because you will put the soft, happy stuff, the friendly stuff, down because you have the immediate need to combat evil.

Then finally there's just the difficulty of social change. We don't do this very well. Believe me, I'm all for education, and someone who just came back from China and who goes there, one of the things I really believe the importance of in keeping China from being a reasonably decent regime is the tremendous importance of standardized tests. In China, everybody at age 18 takes the same test and the top 1 percent get to go to the elite universities and the top 1 percent of those people get to go into the government. And so China is screwed up in many ways, but the people in the government are super impressive. And that standardized test a way to cut through the clans, cut through corruption, and they've been now for a thousand years so it sort of helps, but I sometimes think if we could just impose an SAT test around the world, that would give us some lever to create at least smart people in government instead of thugs. Nonetheless, we've tried education reform in this country and 30 percent of American kids drop out of high school, so it's hard. You can predict by age 3 with 77-percent accuracy who is going to drop out of high school and who isn't because the patterns of early childrearing are really very important in shaping that. If we have trouble reshaping those early childhood patterns in this country, good luck in all those other countries far away. So really what I'm trying to say is I completely agree with the need to do this, but I'm trying to pour some

conservative cold water. And to be honest, I'm not telling Ken anything. He just talked about the gradualists, but it's going to be hard.

Then finally let me end by talking a little about the campaigns since I have had a 2-week torture session. When McCain was thinking about being alone in a little tiger cage, I was thinking of only. No. If that was off-color, I apologize. This is something just on the two campaigns. They have both pulled back from Bush doctrine. The Obama campaign, and I think Martin knows this better than I, I interviewed Obama about Lebanon about a month ago now, and being Obama, I had some subtle questions designed to get him to elucidate a broad strategy just talking about the specific Lebanese situation. So I asked my carefully crafted questions, and about three questions in he said, David, let me tell you what you're really trying to get at, and he completely understood what I was trying to get that. He has that ability. But the first part of our conversation was Pollackean if that makes sense. It was about the fundamental structure of society and need to preserve civil societies, the economy, and political institutions. The last half was about his tremendous admiration for George H. W. Bush's foreign policy which was largely who could care less about those things. So I left that conversation not knowing where Barack Obama really lies. I think he's more the Burkean if you look at his whole world view. I think he would be very

happy with this approach, but he's in some way talked himself up to being a tough-talking Scowcroftean realist which I think will fade away once he wins. Then there's the McCain approach which again I think is much more subtle than you would think from some of the bluster, but I do think it is fair unlike Obama to say that McCain does see the world essentially of discrete nation-states and would be more hesitant to embrace naturally this sort of stuff described in the book. So anyway I wish you good luck. Maybe that's where I should end. Thank you.

MR. INDYK: Thank you very much, David, also for telling us who's going to win the election along the way. Ladies and gentlemen, you've been treated to I think three really interesting and provocative presentations. I want to give Ken an opportunity to respond if you want to perhaps by answering the following question which is let's say (inaudible) the next president whether it's Barack Obama or John McCain (inaudible) you underestimate (inaudible) you're going in with your grand strategy to the next president who's focused on what is he supposed to do not over 50 years, but is he supposed to do within his first term or even within his first year. How do you set him on the right course for this evolutionary process? What does he need to do up front?

MR. POLLACK: That's a very fair and really important question and let me just make a very quick reaction to David. I agree that

this is real hard. As you saw from the book as all of you will see when you pick it up, I say again and again and again that this is hard. I have big sections that say here is a specific thing that's going to be hard and talk you through how we ought to go about treating it. This is not easy stuff, and especially it's not easy before you've done it. There are histories being written now about transformation in Europe that make it all sound very easy, and in retrospect it seems a lot easier than it was. There were things that people hadn't foreseen that turned out to be problems. There were other problems that they saw but just didn't know how to deal with and only found the answers as they went along the way. That is even more true in East Asia, that is even more true in Latin America, so I am the first one to recognize that it is very difficult.

But part of my own thinking about this, in fact if I brought it I could have finished off The Economist review exactly where they came out, which is, What's the alternative? To go back to David's three schools of thought, those other two schools of thought don't have an answer, the problems that the United States faces, the threats that the United States faces in the Middle East. One is run away, ignore the problem and hopefully it won't bother you again. That's actually the policy that mostly they've been pursuing with regard to the Middle East over the last 60 years and it hasn't worked out very well. The problems get worse and

worse and the crises that they create for us get worse and worse as well, and the threats get worse and worse. Then there is the kind of just manage it day to day and we've had some successes with that. There's no question about it. We've also had a lot of failures though. Again, it doesn't produce a stable, long-term outcome. That's what I'm looking for and that is what this approach is all about. It is the only approach that does suggest that there may be a long-term outcome, a long-term way to deal with, to resolve, and to mitigate the problems of the region.

Now on to Martin's question, What do I tell the president?

The first is, Mister President, you got a lot of problems on your hand. You have a half-dozen crises that you need to solve or at least start to solve right quick, and you need to address each one of them on its own merits. Again, that's what the last section of this book is about. It looks at all of the different specific crises of the region. And Mister President, as you're going about trying to figure out what to do in each of these specific crises, you need to keep this bigger picture in mind. And I'd say now very specifically, all your policies toward the Middle East need to pass the Hippocratic Oath test, they can do no harm to the broader goals of the efforts. If you're doing no harm, everything else is allowed. I'll keep the languages out of this because I'll go on too long if I want to be politically correct to all of the different languages of the region. But the simple fact is

you can do no harm, and in fact, in some cases there are going to be things that you can do that will actually make this easier. I agree with the point that Marwan made earlier about the importance of the Middle East peace process in moving this process forward because everything gets a little bit easier when there is a Middle East peace process that Arabs and Israelis both feel is likely to lead at some point in time to greater peace, prosperity, and stability for both sides. That's a critical element. That's one of the most-important elements of why the next president needs to take up the cause of Arab-Israeli peacemaking.

What's more, as president I think that you need to make it clear that this is something that you want to pursue. Maybe I'd have a conversation with him about making a big speech early on laying it out, making clear that this is something that the United States is going to be committed to, but we're not going to try to ram it down people's throats, we don't think it's going to happen overnight, and it is going to be a partnership with the people of the region and the people of Europe and East Asia and elsewhere around the world where as I've said before have all figured this out years ago and have been waiting for us to get around to it. I love to quote Churchill, You can always trust Americans to do the right thing, but only after they've exhausted all of the other possibilities. And as

far as the rest of the world is concerned, they're still waiting for us to do the right thing after we've exhausted all the other possibilities.

But another thing that the United States really ought to do as part of this next president's first term is start those conversations. Just go to the governments of the region and start to embark on conversations with the people of the region about how we do this. And as I said earlier and I say at length in the book, we can't possibly know how to do this. That is the Burkean aspect of this. We just can't know how to do this. But there are absolutely things that the United States can do to make this more possible. There are things that we can provide resources to enable people to do in the region. There are things that the United States can do to remove factors that inhibit people in the region from doing these things. All of that is important. There are economic things we can do, political, social, even military things that we can do to make all of that more possible, but it starts with a conversations, conversations that ought to give us some ideas about at least where to start doing some things in this direction and that ought to start to convince the region that for the first time an American president is serious about starting this process and about doing it with them, not against them, and not despite them, and that we're actually going to listen and to follow their lead rather than seizing the

initiative ourselves and like a bull in a china shop going where we think best.

MR. MUASHER: I'm not an adviser for either campaign. If I am to give advice on the two issues that I think form the pillars of a stable Middle East in the future are peace and reform. I would go with Ken's approach gradually, except on peace I will argue that we've already done the gradual approach, that we don't need to reinvent the wheel, and the last 20 years have been spent doing a gradual approach. The last 20 years have been spent in negotiating what already is a framework for a solution that has already been negotiated among the parties themselves. So my advice to the next administration is to take on this framework or set of frameworks that have already been done and to implement them because any more time that is given on the question of peace it's time given to the opponents of peace who have repeatedly and effectively derailed the peace process. On reform I totally agree with Ken, because the process has not even started, a series of conversations must start. We must understand that this is a long-term process, but we must understand also that it has to be a serious one. And I will take responsibility here for Arab reformers and say if Arab regimes, if Arab moderates, if Arab governments want to keep their power, they need to share it. The option of keeping an absolute power is no longer there, if it

ever was, and we cannot keep the Middle East hostage to two schools as I thought, as I said, either a political elite with no system of checks and balance, or a radical ideology that threatens political diversity. Unless that process starts, and it will be a 40- to 50-year process, it's not going to happen overnight, but it must start and if it doesn't start then all of us will have to deal with the radicals for the foreseeable future.

MR. INDYK: David, as you said about Ken's approach, is that it's ambitious and Ken says there will be six crises in the Middle East (inaudible) we've got at least six other crises that I can think of like the auto industry going belly-up and the economy still in recession. One of the crises that is going to have to be (inaudible) so from your perspective, is there going to be political support out there in America for making the Middle East a priority again? We had Clinton trying to transform it through peacemaking, Bush through war-making and regime change. Is the next president going to say now we're going to try an evolutionary approach and we're going to engage in this kind of activity and we're going to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict? Is that going to be something that's supported by the country?

MR. BROOKS: I think we'll be able to measure public support by whether Ken's book hits the bestseller list. My gut answer is, no, that just coming back from the two conventions, the Middle East didn't

come up that much, barely at all. Iran did, and I'm especially struck by in the Democratic Party the number of people, you may be one of them, I'm not sure, who served in the Carter Administration.

MR. POLLACK: No.

MR. BROOKS: No (inaudible) but who feel that Iran undermined one Democratic administration and they cannot let that happen again and I hear that from various people who served in that administration. So there is a sense of seriousness about it, but given all the other issues, I find that there is very little willingness to devote serious presidential attention let alone public mobilization to this. So if I were talking to the president on this subject, I'd say you're probably not going to spend a lot of time on this in the first couple of years but it's too important, frankly, to leave to the professionals in the institutions that we have now at the State Department because their professional instinct is they're in charge of relations with the established powers and they're just not going to pursue it. So I'd say create some institution that can do this kind of stuff that can chug along on its own while you're thinking of other things. I really think some sort of new institutional framework, and then I'd try to make it sexy by talking about NGOs or something like that. But I find it hard to believe that the next president is going to spend much time in the

first 2 years on any other subject in the Middle East except Iran including unfortunately the peace process.

MR. INDYK: Thank you. Let's go to the audience for questions. Please make sure you ask a question and please identify yourself when you ask a question.

MR. STERN: Steven Stern, the Washington, D.C. Jewish Community Center. Ken, in light of applying in a more limited sense some of the Pollackean grand strategy, principles, partnership with governments, indigenous-driven reform movements, patience and slowness, in one area keeping the ship afloat in the storms of this decade into the next, what would you advise in a few areas about going into partnership with governments realizing that reform movements are in part inside some of the governments, outside some of the governments pushing them, outside of the governments in really adversarial relationships? Are there some principles in discrete areas that stretch from North Africa up to Central Asia -- emblematically those that could bring in a lot of turmoil, let's say Egypt, Israel, Palestine, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, are there some principles of actions to get started on those partnerships that you could talk about over the next few years?

MR. POLLACK: Thank you, Steven. First, I'd just say that I'm deeply uncomfortable being an adjective. I've barely gotten used to

being a noun. That said, certainly there are a lot of different ways to handle this and the book goes into some detail about all of them. One thing that I've love to do right now is put in a plug for another work of another colleague of mine and that's Tamara Wittes -- done some superb work on exactly these sorts of questions and a lot of my own book at least when it came to what are the specific mechanics and what should we try first, I confess that I was standing on the shoulders of giants. I rely very heavily on the work of the folks over at Carnegie who have done some terrific stuff, people here like (inaudible) Lord, other people around town, whether it's Marwan or others. And in this area in particular I think that Tamara Wittes has a very powerful argument about the importance of pushing for individual rights and how important this can be to create, to usher in a long-term organic process of bottom-up reform exactly the way that David was talking about and exactly as I argue for in the book. This is something that the regimes ought to be amenable to. In many ways it's easier to deal with the individual and giving some (inaudible) to create some political space for the individual than for other parties and for brand-new elections and things like that. So if you want to talk about a gradual process of creating that kind of space, starting with the individual is a good way to do it.

It also makes a lot of sense because of course so much of what -- Marwan talked about how I have this great emphasis on education. He's right. I think it is critically important as I know that he does as well. But of course part of that education is also political education and a lot of what needs to happen is having the people of the region themselves truly understand the directions that they need to move in. So again carving out that space for the individual so that the individual can begin to grow and express themselves, and pardon the touchy-feely terms, David that they're the only ones that are coming to mind at the moment, can actually be a very useful way to start this process. And again I think it's something that a number of the different leaders of the region would actually recognize, and even some of the things that King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia has done are in some ways about empowering the individual more than they are about other institutions or other potential rival power centers, and it is not just a good place to start but it's actually the right place to start.

MR. JASHAN: Khalid Jashan, Pepperdine University. First I would like to endorse David wishing you good luck with your enterprise. I think you're going to need it with such recommendations to the next administration. My question is regarding the bridge, and this is not the bridge we've been hearing about for the last week or so, the bridge to nowhere. In the first part of our book you discuss in no uncertain terms in

a very comprehensive way U.S. interests in the region and then you propose what Marwan just described as a 30- maybe to 50-year process in the region. Considering the limitation span of our foreign-policy-making in this country historically on a bipartisan basis, how are you going to convince the next administration to invest so heavily in human resources and material resources and what have you, in an enterprise or a project that might not be guaranteed to serve those interests? Do you see those interests served by this reform plan you proposed?

MR. POLLACK: First let me start by saying in a point I think that David was effectively making, I wouldn't necessarily tell the next president you need to pour a huge number of resources into this. A, if I try to say that, they're not going to listen. B, which has the virtue of actually being true, there's nothing to pour resources into at the moment. It does need to start with stuff that's in many cases cheap, talk. It does need to start with planning, with building some institutions, and I agree with David that right now the institutional structure of the U.S. government is simply not designed to advance this kind of an overarching approach, certainly not those on the Middle East side. In Europe that framework exists. That framework was there and it did actually support all of this. It is also there in East Asia. It's being developed for Latin America, has been so, and that needs to go on on the U.S. side as well. None of this stuff is terribly

expensive, and that is effectively what I was saying in answer to Martin's question which is you need to embrace this. You need to recognize what you're doing is going to have an impact on this and you need to start doing these things with an eye toward this and you need to make it clear to people that you believe the country needs to do this, but you don't need to suddenly make a massive investment or this or that or completely reorient this or let alone invade this country or that country. None of that would be necessary, none of that would make sense at this point in time.

Your question also gets at another issue, Khalid, which is how do you institutionalize this in a psychological sense over the course of time? And there I think that the argument is that that is something that this president could do which is to simply make the case for why this is necessary as I've tried to do in this book, and other people have as well. I'm not the only person who is out there trying to make this argument. I may have done it in the most-comprehensive fashion and I think I may have added some things to it, but there are a lot of other people who have tried to advance pieces of this argument or the entirety of the argument in a somewhat more curtailed form. But the president could do it, to lay it out to begin to build those institutions and to lay a framework that says to the American policy elite this is something that you need to do, it is feasible, and it is going to take time. I don't think that it is at all impossible. Again,

it is something that the American people and the specific communities of experts and elites and the government did embrace when it came to Europe, East Asia, and Latin America, and it's about starting the same process for the Middle East.

MR. INDYK: I'll ask Marwan (inaudible) how are the autocrats of the region going to respond if the principle were to pursue this approach (inaudible) one of the first things he would do is go to them and say, guys, you're going to have to do this. Let's do it together. Let's talk about how we can do it together.

MR. MUASHER: I think first there is a growing realization that radicalism is on the rise in this region and that the way to address this radicalism is not by hard tactics, military tactics, alone, that we're not going to be able to change the minds and hearts of millions of people just through the tactic of (inaudible) and I'm not saying that all the autocrats, all the leaders of the region understand this fully, but there is certainly a growing realization that this is the case and that we need other than the hard tactics (inaudible) I think the problem you're going to face is not just with necessarily say the leaders of the countries, but with the bureaucracies of the countries because the governments of the region have invested heavily in the bureaucracy so that the real opposition is going to come from these bureaucrats whose interests have been served

by the status quo and who will fight tooth and nail against any reform effort. I've been involved in the reform effort in Jordan and I faced exactly that. The opposition came. The fiercest opposition did not come from the King. The King in fact supported the process. It came from the bureaucrats whose interests were served and who understood too well that through an evolutionary system they are going to lose gradually their interests. How you deal with that I believe is more important than just convincing the leaders who today I believe are convinced that something needs to be done.

MR. LEWIS: Sam Lewis, the American Academy of Diplomacy. I'd like to go back to one of Marwan's points, Ken, and maybe get both of you to comment on it. You made a pretty strong case for the need for evolution everywhere else but we've already had the evolution on the Arab-Israeli peace process and it's time now I believe you said to complete the process or impose solutions (inaudible) and you also said that it has so poisoned and affected the psyche of the Arab public over so long that you need to get this problem headed toward resolution in order to have (inaudible) U.S. ideas to go after Ken's long-term strategy.

I'm concerned about the leadership issue. I find it hard to understand how the United States given its current state of prestige and the lack of it in the region can complete this process unless there are

strong Palestinian and Israeli leaders who've also reached the conclusion that they've got to solve it. We've all been in this mixture, all of us too much and that's not apparently on the immediate horizon. So how do you get past this conundrum? Do you wait for the evolution of the leadership? We've been sort of doing that for quite a while, 8 years. That was Bush's approach to let them negotiate and it hasn't worked. And even introducing a heavier-handed U.S. role toward the end, it is far from producing an outcome. So how does the U.S. deal with the indigenous leadership issue that has to be primarily decided on the ground with a lot of American help?

MR. MUASHER: By changing the mindset. I speak as a creature of the Oslo Process, of the gradual approach. I no longer believe it because if we are going to wait until the stars are perfectly aligned and we have a perfectly responsible and strong Palestinian government and a perfectly responsible and strong Israeli government and a willing U.S. administration and all that, we will never solve this problem. Fortunately we don't need to wait. I don't buy some of the arguments of a weak Palestinian or Israeli governments and I'll tell you why. I was ambassador in Israel, so was Martin, when Rabin passed Oslo through the Knesset with 61 votes versus 59 and no one called Rabin a weak prime minister. What I want to say is we need to change the mindset. How? We have on the table today a set of frameworks which, one, are a result of direct

negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians. So they are not enforced. These are not ideas that have been enforced by the U.S. government, any U.S. government is what I should say. Two, we have the Arab Peace Initiative which transforms the problem from being one between Israel and the Palestinians, to being one between Israel and the Arab world, and I believe strongly that in the context of a comprehensive solution today, a settlement, that gives Israel the security it needs collectively by all Arab states and not just by those neighboring Israel, by giving Israel the assurance that we are talking about an agreed solution to the refugee problem and not about 4 million Palestinians going back to Israel, that gives Israel the assurance that there are no more claims beyond '67, addressing every single Israeli need, I have no doubt that the majority of the Israeli public will go for such a solution no matter who their leaders are, and I have no doubt also that the majority of the Palestinians will go for such a solution too. If we keep thinking of this as a problem between the Israelis and the Palestinians today, we will not solve the problem because Hamas and such organizations in this context are major players. In the context of an agreement between Israel and the Arab world, organizations like Hamas or Hizballah become very minor players.

MR. INDYK: I think you'd find it rather hard to believe that the president is going to do this.

MR. BROOKS: The only thing, again if I were to talk to the president in the coming years I'd say we've invested a lot of time in human resources, we've had (inaudible) education in one country in the Middle East, Iraq. We've had some good events over the past year (inaudible) hope it works out and then maybe it'll radiate. Don't diffuse your efforts into the Middle East peace process or other countries in a sort of half-assed way. I might just say that because when I was up there speaking I thought Ken's project was difficult and now I realize that solving the Middle East peace process is the precondition to starting that process. So that makes it seem difficulty (inaudible)

MR. INDYK: That's not quite (inaudible)

MR. BROOKS: I'm exaggerating.

MR. INDYK: Over here.

MR. GUGGENHEIM: My name is Joe Guggenheim. I'm just a private citizen. One of the United States has been criticized -- of course is its unilateralism in Iraq and I wonder -- I haven't read your book, Ken, but I wonder what you think about whether or not rather than having a U.S. grand strategy we need a collaborative grand strategy involving Europe and the other major players who can help with technical assistance, financial aid -- if you think we shouldn't be subsuming our

policy to an overall policy -- specifically how would you do it with the right institutions internationally would you call on to work in the area?

MR. POLLACK: Thank you, Joe. Yes, one of my 11 principles for doing this is in fact multilateralism and it -- start with that little quip that I used before, the Churchill line about how the rest of the world is waiting for us to do it. The fact of the matter is that a lot of the rest of the world recognizes that this needs to happen and they also believe that it is feasible although not easy by any stretch of the imagination. I would argue that it is important for the United States to turn this into a multilateral effort for a whole variety of reasons. I'll just throw out a few, actually (inaudible) one is as you pointed out before the United States is a terribly powerful and very rich country, but even our resources are finite and they're especially finite as David was suggesting in the era of recession. Therefore, being able to increase the leverage by soliciting contributions and assistance of other countries multiply our own contributions many-fold. A second point is in some ways related to that, that as everybody up here knows and I think as everyone in the audience knows, the United States can be the kiss of death in some ways for many reformers in the region. Barry Rubin has written a very interesting book about what it's like reformers in the Middle East and the kinds of uphill battles that they face out there. Like all of Barry's stuff, it's on the one hand, on the other hand.

On the one hand he thinks that this is necessary, on the other hand he is saying this is going to be hard, and the fact of the matter is that many times when we try to do something it becomes counterproductive because we're associated and so bringing in that multilateral approach can again allow us to pursue things in ways that are much more palatable to the people of the region. Senator Lugar stood on this stage actually a number of years ago and proposed a development bank for the Middle East that would be international so that U.S. hands could be off it so that the people in the region and reformers in the region could accept money from an organization that ultimately would get a big chunk of that money from the United States but that would not be associated with the United States in particular. That multilateral effort is absolutely critical. And I would simply say that it was presumptuous enough of me to propose an American grand strategy, I drew the line at proposing a grand strategy for the entire world.

MR. INDYK: Let's take a question here which will have to be I think the last question.

MR. EARLY: I'm Marshall Early with the State Department. In light of what you said about making the regimes in the region our partners and not our adversaries, is Condi Rice's visit to Libya positive or negative in your view?

MR. POLLACK: As with everything about the Middle East, it depends. It depends on what comes out of it. It depends on how it is seen in the rest of the region. There is an argument to be made and I think it is a good one that defusing the role of the rogue regimes of the region is a very important one. It's one that I developed in the book particularly when I talk about Iran, that Iran has an anti- status quo agenda and they pursue that anti-status quo agenda by creating greater turmoil. They look for turmoil wherever they find it. They try to exploit it and they try to exacerbate it. The Libyans in previous eras did the same exact things. They weren't as potent as the Iranians, but they could make the situation worse. When you think about the region, and one of the things I try to do in that last section when I'm looking at all the subregional policies is try to tie the specifics of what we're doing to these larger agendas. We need to recognize that this is a program about helping the countries of the region and enabling them to embark on programs of reform which have inherent in them elements of instability. When talking about change, change is always destabilizing. If you've got a Libya out there, if you've got an Iran out there, if you've got a Syria out there, a Sudan or Saddam Hussein, who is trying to consciously take advantage of instability and exacerbate it, that's not going to help the cause of reform. Governments are going to react, they're going to (inaudible) and they're going to say in

an era when I've got an Iran or Libya, et cetera, out there looking to take advantage of instability, I'm not going to embark on reforms that will create that very instability, and therefore neutralizing regimes like Libya's are very important. By the same token (inaudible) does is simply reinforce Muammar Qaddafi and basically give him carte blanche (inaudible) what he wants, we should remember that one of the major forces driving him to accept the American offer were his own internal problems which are very similar to the internal problems faced by so many other countries in the region, and what comes out of this is he simply gets carte blanche to kill anyone he wants to stay in power and that probably won't have the (inaudible)

MR. INDYK: Just a very brief comment on -- I had the melancholic pleasure of starting the negotiations with the Libyans when I was Assistant Secretary of State in 1998, so it took 10 years to move to the point where the Secretary of State could visit Libya and I think it's fair to say that Qaddafi was ready back in 1998 and when we talk about evolutionary processes we also take some time in our procedures. Ladies and gentlemen, I think you will want to join me in thanking David Brooks, Marwan Muasher, and our own Ken Pollock for what has been a fascinating session. On your way out, don't forget to stop at the bookstore

and buy Ken's book, and along the way pick up Marwan's too. Thanks
very much.

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I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

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Commonwealth of Virginia
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