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Introduction and Moderator

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. BYMAN: Good morning. I think we're ready to begin. My name is Dan Byman. I'm a Senior Fellow here at the Saban Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution, and also I direct Georgetown's Security Studies Program.

Usually, when you begin a talk or a panel on counterterrorism, it's customary to kind of date the panel from 9/11. So you begin by saying something like, "well, it's been over seven years now since 9/11."

I think that it's time we moved beyond that sort of introduction. In my opinion, there have been two huge changes when you think about counterterrorism from an American perspective in the last several years that have moved us beyond that way of thinking about the problem.

The first and most menacing in the long-term has been the return of the Al Qaeda core, with a strong base in Pakistan, where this was an adversary I certainly don't want to say that was defeated, but was certainly having serious problems by 2002, that by 2008 is far stronger than it was six years ago.

The second thing is that we now have a wide range of other issues that are politically at the front of America instead of counterterrorism.

Last night, I cashed in my IRA and took my wife to the movies, and I've noticed that some other Americans are focused not just

on counterterrorism, but also on the economy, oil, Russia. A wide range of issues are now competing for space and political attention with counterterrorism.

And, as a result, there is a challenge for counterterrorism, which is not simply doing their job effectively against a very dangerous adversary, but being integrated into overall U.S. foreign policy in a way that is sustainable years and, I would dare say, decades to come.

That's why I'm so pleased that Brookings is having this panel today because we have a truly superb set of individuals to talk to us about many of these issues.

You have the bios of the speakers or, if you don't, I believe that everyone up here is known to you. But let me give a very brief introduction.

To begin with and presenting his paper, "Strategic Counterterrorism," is Dan Benjamin. At Brookings, Dan is the Director of the Center for the United States and Europe.

He held senior positions on counterterrorism in the Clinton administration, and he is co-author of two of the best recent books on counterterrorism.

His paper, "Strategic Counterterrorism," is available on the Brookings website, and I'm sure after you hear Dan talk about it today, you'll rush to read it. But I highly commend it to you all.

Commenting on this, the first commentary, will be Rob Satloff. Rob is the Executive Director of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

He's the author of many works, but most recently "Among the Righteous," which looks at the holocaust in Arab lands and its legacy, which is truly a neglected chapter in something that many people believed the full story was out.

He is also and very importantly for evidence in U.S. policy towards the Middle East, he is also the host of Dakhil Washington, a weekly program on al-Hurra that covers the region and brings what's going on in this town over to the Middle East.

He's written widely in many issues, but I'll stress for this panel, much of his work and thinking on public diplomacy and the role of the United States in the Middle East.

Our second panelist is Professor Paul Pillar. Professor Pillar works right next to me at Georgetown University as a professor, but he is also a career veteran of the intelligence community, where his last position before leaving the community was National Intelligence Officer for the Middle East.

Out there, I believe in the lobby, is his book he wrote several years ago when he was a Fellow at Brookings on counterterrorism and U.S. foreign policy, which is still, in my opinion, the strongest book that looks exclusively at this issue.

Batting clean up for us will be Ambassador Tom Pickering, who is currently the Vice Chairman of Hills and Company.

To sum up his career in less than three or four hours would really not do justice to it, so I'll simply say that he, among many positions, he achieved the rank of Career Ambassador, which is the highest rank at the State Department.

For those of you who have followed U.S. foreign policy in the last 25 years, basically you can look to wherever the mess was and then, about three months later, you could see Ambassador Pickering being the one sent to help clean it up and take care of it.

This is done basically with the very small number of most qualified people, and his long career reflects how the -- several administration saw him, which was man to send when there's a problem.

So it’s a great group today, and now let me turn it over directly to Dan Benjamin.

MR. BENJAMIN: Well, thank you very much, Dan, and thanks to you for coming out early on a Friday morning, when, no doubt, there were 100 other events that you could have gone to on such obscure events as the latest polls in the elections or the financial crisis, as Dan suggested. I'm delighted that people are still interested in the subject. I'm also particularly grateful that our panelists could join us here today.

I can assure you as someone who sets up events all the time for our center, I never would have allowed anyone to pick a group,

with all of whom he is so friendly, but I have no end of confidence that they will still find things to disagree with.

Let me start with first principles. And I think it is a good time before the arrival of a new president to step back and think about where we are in terms of dealing with the terrorist challenge.

Terrorism, I believe the Director of Central Intelligence said recently, “remains the most serious national security threat we face.”

However, I want to follow that up by saying, it's not an existential threat or the only one we face, or that defeating it is the preeminent purpose of American power in the world. And so, I think one of the first conclusions we would come to is that the United States needs -- and it is high time for this -- a shift away from a foreign and security policy that makes counterterrorism the prism through which everything is evaluated and decided.

At the same time, I believe that the United States has lacked in recent years a viable concept of strategic counterterrorism, a doctrine that will guide our actions and help us as we seek to undermine the recruitment of terrorists, reduce their appeal, and change the environments in which they live into increasingly non-permissive ones, that is to say, make their environments ones that will ultimately help us as we seek to reduce terrorism.

And we have also lacked a strategy that I think really fits well into a larger global strategy.

The result has been that at the global level however many tactical successes we've had in preventing terrorists and thwarting plots, we continue to see growing terrorist activity in South Asia, the Maghreb, Europe, and elsewhere, and I think Dan is exactly right about how we should be looking at recent developments.

Now one thing I don't want to suggest is that we should, in any way, scant our tactical counterterrorism efforts. The business of catching terrorists and stopping their conspiracies has to go on. No strategy will be a substitute for that.

But there's also no substitute for a long-term strategy. And I believe that one key reason that we've had the problems that we have had at the strategic level is that we as a nation have not sufficiently recognized that the threat that we face from the radical Islamist challenge is one of narrative.

When bin Laden talks to his audience -- and his audience is principally Muslim -- he talks about the United States and the West as being a predatory power that seeks to occupy Muslim countries, destroy their religion -- destroy the Islamic religion -- and steal those countries' wealth.

From the point of view of many Muslims today around the world, America's principal form of engagement with the Muslim world centers now on killing terrorism and occasionally innocent Muslims and occupying historic Arab lands.

Our own self understanding here is beside the point. For a substantial number of these people, bin Laden's description, however much they may dislike his tactics, his description of the universe has essentially been validated.

To fight on the level of strategy requires that we must jam their narrative. United States must essentially reposition itself so that for millions of Muslims from different regions and societies, radical anti-Americanism has less purchase.

Now I think for most people in this room who would take the extra step and try to figure out what our counter-narrative is it's not a very difficult task.

I would put it this way: the U.S. is a benign power that seeks to help those who wish to modernize their societies, improve their conditions, participate in the global economy, and create a better future for their children.

Nations that play by the international rules of the road will receive our assistance and our support in the global community. We harbor no enmity for any religion or race or ethnic group.

We recognize that our future depends, in no small measure, on continuing improvements in conditions around the globe, and we know that we cannot swim as others sink.

Now I think few, if any, Americans would find this account objectionable, but I also think fairly few Muslims would believe it.

This cannot be done solely through messaging. To achieve this goal, that is to essentially mount this counter-narrative, we have to create facts that contradict the jihadist account of the world.

Now part of the reason that the jihadist account has gained the currency that it has is, of course, the conditions in most Muslim countries and the ability of the extremists to exploit a sense of civilizational humiliation, by using a rereading of Islamic history and doctrine that places blame on the generalized identity of the West.

Some of the grievances that are aired are legitimate; many are not. But the fact remains that addressing the human needs that are often cited here, whatever their causes, is, it seems to me, essential for reducing the appeal of what's become known as the jihadist single narrative.

A long-term strategy that makes Muslim societies less incubators of radicalism and more satisfiers of fundamental human needs is in our deepest interests.

Now I hasten to add we are not going to heal all the ills of the Muslim world, and much of what is driving the jihadist movement has nothing to do with us.

I have to say that with -- and I think we also need to recognize -- that with the invasion of Iraq we had our Jacobin moment in this country, and our own desire to remake the world ought to be curbed.

But the symbolism, even if we can't actually fulfill all of our desires and heal all these ills, symbolism is very important. I say this fully

recognizing that the financial crisis is going to severely curtail our ability to do some of the things we want to in this realm.

Let me add a note on framing this change of narrative. I think that as long as the global community views that our actions are meant to advance our security, narrowly defined, we are going to continue to fail. We are going to continue to alienate those we need to draw into our camp.

I think that the genius of America's foreign policy in the past and the reason that we have often been so successful is our ability to do things because they're right, not because they narrowly serve our interests, but because they're right in themselves, and I think that that ought to be the aegis under which we do many of the things that I'm suggesting.

Now there are many reasons why it would be very difficult to achieve the kind of pre-positioning or the kind of narrative I've suggested, and I'm sure we'll talk about them in the Q&A.

But let me speak briefly about what I see as first the prerequisites for the kind of re-engagement with the Muslim world that I'm suggesting, and then the actual substance of it.

The first I think prerequisites in a sense for a re-admission to the discussion. First Iraq, I think we do need to get our troops out of Iraq, not necessarily all of them. But I think we need to get them out as soon as possible, in a way that is not precipitous, but in a way that is decisive.

As I said, you could have a limited number of troops for specific missions, like counterterrorism, as long as it's agreeable to the Iraqi government. But I really think that as long as we are there and perceived as occupiers, our ability to reengage will be limited.

Number two, I think we need to want a sustained effort to restart the Middle East peace process, and we need to do more to ameliorate the plight of the Palestinians.

No issue is higher on the list of grievances for Muslims around the world, and years of neglect of the peace process -- some of those years the neglect was quite understandable, I hasten to add, but years of neglect have done great harm to America's standing in the region.

This, of course, won't be easy, and I'm sure we'll get into the reasons why, but it seems to me that this falls into the category of things you run at hard even when you know that the results may be very, very difficult to obtain and possibly even elusive.

This is another one of those, it seems to me, paradigmatic examples of things that America does because it's right to do.

Number three is revalidate the nation's moral character. The international community and Muslims in particular require this, I think, for any constructive exchange in the future. Before a deeper engagement is possible, those who are on the fence about America's global role need to be convinced that the United States has not forsaken the rule of law and to quote one very senior official, “not continue to work the dark side and to

make that -- and make torture and human rights violations a permanent part of the struggle against terror."

I think this will require, at a minimum, clear declarations by the next president that America does not torture. It requires a resolve to close Guantanamo and a clear and sustainable policy on rendition and compensation for those who have been mistreated.

Now if we do these things, I think we'll probably -- we will eventually be in a position to craft a more positive agenda and create the facts that are needed to make our message clear.

Which of the core of a new relationship would the Muslim world be?

The best way to put it, I think, is a positive agenda focused on modernization, a term that captures the mixture of economic liberalization, institutional reform, and, yes, democratization that would bring the Muslim world closer to the mainstream of the global system.

Making progress with such an agenda will take many years. It will cost a great deal of money, and I think that's yet another reason why it needs to be not just an American, but a Western project. But I think that if we start soon and show resolve and strategic patience, we could make a significant -- we could make significant gains in the not-too-distant future.

Now we can talk about how this will be done specifically, but let me just rattle off quickly some of the elements.

I think we need to have economic and technical assistance so that we show that American concern for these economies and for the well-being of individual citizens in these countries.

We should have -- we should focus on humanitarian relief, which, as we saw in Southeast Asia after the tsunami, can benefit our reputation.

We should be investing in health programs and education and in the Rule of Law programs, which, in much of this region, would go towards ameliorating concerns, the endemic concerns, about corruption and the poor provision of justice.

Now the hard part -- were the hardest part, I should say -- is really figuring out how democratization fits into the scheme. This takes us back to the core grievances of the jihadists, and I think it's worth noting that -- and I -- by the way, I'm not suggesting we're going to change their minds, but that we are going to create some immunity in their core audience for their appeal. But they do strike a chord when they rail against the apostate rulers who rule these autocratic regimes and who have denied any voice to the citizenry.

That's why I think that democratization has to be in the mix, but I think we also have to recognize that even as we are steady in our calls for it and side with liberals and Democrats when we can, we should not overpromise, and we should not make this a purely rhetorical approach. And that's why I think will of law is such an important part of it, because when we overpromise, we undermine our own success.

I hasten to add here, too, coming back to the economics, that creating real leverage for change will be very, very difficult, especially under the current economic circumstances.

It's worth remembering that we give Egypt $2 billion a year, for which we don't get all that much. We get support for the peace process. We get some regional security assistance, but we've had very little success at using that leverage to achieve more in the way of democratic reforms.

That suggests to me that the price tag on serious reform is going to be very high, and so it's with a certain resignation that I even talk about this at all in this environment, but I think it's important to have out on the table.

Another point to bring up is the -- is that it’s high time for a reassessment of the military's role in counterterrorism. Now while U.S. military engagement in the region remains essential, I think it's time that we saw the disadvantages of using our forces in this regard.

Now I think it's an American instinct, or it has become one, not faced with a powerful threat, we wheel out our most powerful response, which is our Armed Forces. Nonetheless, the majority, the large majority, of counterterrorism work depends on intelligence and law enforcement work. And I have to say that the constant debate at the political level in this country on, you know, you only believe in law enforcement. You're not taking the fight to the enemy has been, it seems to me, debilitating and misleading.

It’s important to recognize that most of the states where there are terrorists are friends. We're not going to attack them with military force. And elsewhere, we are going to have real problems when we do use military force.

Now there are times when it’s appropriate, as in Afghanistan in 2001-2002, and today in Afghanistan, which cannot, again, become a safe haven for Al Qaeda. But as we have learned the hard way or being reminded the hard way, occupations or large-scale troop presences arouse resistance, and we need to avoid spurring recruitment through unwise deployments.

We also need to recognize that relying on troops to fight militants plays into the terrorists" game. They’re happy to have the targets closer to them. The fact is they would prefer to attack soldiers than citizens for reasons having to do with the attitudes of their own audience. It's glamorizing for them. They’re taking on the tough guys. It allows them to portray themselves as the true standard bearers of Muslim dignity.

And, of course, it provides fodder for enormous incitement and recruitment.

And I was pleased to see the former Chief of MI5, Stella Remington, mention this in her interview last weekend. The videos that came out of Iraq I think are going to be with us for quite a long time and have quite a negative effect.

Finally, military force is typically indiscriminate. We don't talk about this a lot in this country, but there are tens and probably hundreds of

thousands of Iraqi casualties, most of which we didn't necessarily cause, but for which we're going to take some of the blame regardless. And this also makes it very, very difficult for us to rehabilitate our image.

Now there are a lot of other things in the paper that we could talk about, but I want to just close on one issue that's a little distinct from the rest in terms of the subject of it, but which I think is important for how we go forward.

And that is public posture and public education about the terrorist threat. As I said at the beginning, it is the greatest security threat we face, but at the same time, it is not an existential threat.

And it is a peculiar threat, too, because although we've had an enormous amount of talk in this country about the mobilization of the public and asking people to sacrifice and become involved in what can everyone do about this threat, the fact is there's relatively little that we can do as citizens about the threat, except to have a very informed discussion, one that leads to wiser policies.

What you need in combating terrorism is a mobilized government. An over-mobilized public, which is to say a panicky public, is not a helpful thing in this. And in order to get to that point where we don't have a panicked and I would say uninformed public, I think we need to have some very serious leadership on the issue of what really threatens us and what we can live with.

My own view is that terrorism is going to be with us for quite a while, and even once we see off the jihadist threat, and I'm confident we

will, the advance of technology makes the barrier to entry for someone who wants to use violence against others lower and lower. And that is a dangerous and empowering thing, and it's going to be a fact, I believe, of modern societies for a long time to come.

So we need to decide if this is going to be unavoidable, what we can tolerate and what we can't. And when I say what we can tolerate, I don't mean that we should just accept it, put up with it, but I think we need to be able to calibrate our responses to it.

And so I think we know that when we think about it, that we can deal with the occasional car bombing. We can deal with the occasional attack on a building, some kind of, shall we say, a low-level attack with casualties in relatively small numbers.

What we can't deal with are the high end WMD attacks, and this is a real danger and will become more of a danger as years go by, especially in the bio field, or those campaigns that involve multiple attacks and ultimately undermine people's confidence in their institutions.

I don’t see any way that we get from here to the future without confronting this issue and having a very sober discussion about what -- about the violence that we may not be able to avoid in our society, and it's important to note that there has been a rise in religiously motivated violence in every tradition in the last couple of decades.

And that probably as a counter-reaction to globalization and modernization is not going to go away. But we do need to distinguish between what truly threatens us and what doesn't -- what threatens our

society and what unfortunately is just the cost of living in the modern world.

And with that, I'll stop, and thanks for your attention.

(Applause)

MR. BYMAN: I think that's a suitably depressing note to turn it over to our panelists now. Rob, if I may ask you to begin?

MR. SATLOFF: Sure. Good morning. Thank you very much for having me at this panel. This is a second microphone at Brookings I'm speaking into this week, after, I think, 10 years of being banished to the wilderness. So it's a special delight to be here. This is very good for my reputation, so I appreciate that.

And, Dan, I want to thank you first for inviting me to participate. Dan is a very good friend, and I assume you invited me in order to -- because you know that some of the points you've made, I may take a different view at and that we can have a vigorous and friendly debate. I hope I won't disappoint.

But first, the most important thing. There's a lot of very important, very useful, very constructive policy analysis and recommendations in what Dan has written -- a lot about counterterrorism, international cooperation, about the need for a varied response among regions and countries, about homeland security, about the use of force, all of which, I think, is very useful. These are issues in which I know actually very little, and so I'm not going to comment very much other than to say that a lot of this sounds extraordinarily sensible to me.

Secondly, Dan's most important point is, I think, undeniable, which is the urgency of transforming our current counterterrorism strategy into a truly strategic approach to how we address the overall threat of terrorism. But I think you are implying something even broader. Your paper is actually much broader than how we address, even in a more exhaustive way, terrorism. It's really counter-radicalization in a broader sense, and I think that's absolutely right. And I think that it should be a very high priority among all those priorities that you are -- that you ticked off on a new administration to think more broadly and more fundamentally about this.

At this point, I disagree with some of the prescriptions that Dan has laid out. You have -- you suggest that, I think correctly so, that our partner for counterterrorism or counter radicalization -- our partner is among Muslims themselves. And I think that's absolutely right.

But I think that I take a somewhat different view on, as you say, what is the admission to the discussion with Muslims around the world?

Essentially, you suggest that the admission of discussions is -- the price of admission is about us, is what we need to do differently in order to engage various Muslims.

And I assume, in reading from your paper, this is derived from public opinion polling around the world -- various sites from very popular public opinion polls about various Muslim audiences' reactions to the United States.

The implicit point -- and I think it's implicit epistemologically, it's implicit in all polls -- is that there's a connection between what these polls say and what people do, either on an individual sense or their impact on their nations, on their governments.

It is a very unproven point, of course. If I could just step back for a brief moment to give my 30-second critique of this general approach, for all of recorded human history, up until about a decade ago, we judged what large bodies of people thought by what they did. They rose up in protest. They kill their leaders. They marched on cities. They burned whatever. We judged what people thought by what they did.

Then, certainly in the Arab and Muslim societies, it was about a decade ago, that we threw that entire approach to understanding out the window, and we started judging what people thought by what they said to pollsters -- and polls of various degrees of accuracy and reliability.

But in the process, we totally jettisoned the question of what people did. And the working assumption was that what people say is, in some way, connected to what they've done or what they will do.

And I think I -- it is not too heretical to suggest that there is no empirical evidence at all to suggest that the polling data that has emerged from the Middle East in the last decade is at all connected to what people actually do.

I can say this with some certainty, because I just got a very large grant in order to try to do this, which is to try to do -- to try to assess

any connection between behavior and attitudes in Arab and Muslim societies. It's something that hasn't been done before.

Now, even if, even if you accept the idea that there's a connection here, then I think there's another major issue that, Dan, would be necessary to address, which is the one most important finding of all polls in the last five years from all Arab and Muslim societies is the following: is continued high dislike, if you will, for the United States and various reasons, but an enormous shift against terrorism -- against terrorism.

What is the conclusion here? That the link between attitudes regarding United States and attitudes regarding terrorism fears, shall we at least say, not so clear. I might go further, but at least not so clear.

And so I think it still needs to be a proven case analytically that what people do on terrorism questions, especially because so much of terrorism has been targeted against them, from Bali to Amman, to Sharmel Sheikh, and whatever, I think it's yet to be proven that our actions or inactions, which is not to say our actions or inactions are right or wrong -- that's a separate discussion -- but whether it is the price of admission, as Dan said a moment ago, to a discussion on this issue.

My own view is the appropriate question to pose is less how do we fix Arab and Muslim views of the United States in order to engage them better in counterterrorism than a more directed question, which is, recognizing that there is a contest in almost every Muslim society today between Islamists and their more radical fringe and non-Islamists, the

question, then, is what can the United States do to identify, nurture, support, and empower non-or anti-Islamists in their contest against the Islamists.

That, to me, is the appropriate strategic question rather than how do we fix their view of the United States. And if you take that as the premise, then you immediately jump to Dan's second set of suggestions, which is more operational -- what you would do in these countries.

And I would only here say the following: I think Dan laid out a set of, you know, sensible approaches to some of the broad issues in terms of democratization, liberalization, modernization. I would suggest or request that the next administration actually has four serious dilemmas -- I would call them for questions -- that they have to answer when they get to that point of their strategy.

And let me just briefly lists these four questions. Who are our adversaries? Are our adversaries in this contest? Are they violent Islamists -- Al Qaeda? Are they non-violent radical Islamists, people who want to reshape their societies in a worldview according to Al Qaeda, but don't espouse the violence as the means to do it?

Or are they the authoritarian leaders of many of these countries, who, as Dan suggested, are keeping their populaces suppressed and not letting them modernize in appropriate fashion?

Which one of these groups are our adversaries? Or multiple? Where's the overlap?

Secondly, who are our allies? Who are our partners in this contest? Are they non-violent Islamists who we want to support to compete against the violent Islamists?

Are they anti-Islamists, everybody from secularists to pious believers who don't espouse the imposition of sharia law? Or are they, dare I say, the autocrats, people who are more fearful of, you know, the radicals, because they're going to -- the radicals are trying to overthrow them. And what connection between these potential set of allies will our strategy define?

Thirdly, what is the relationship between combating radicalism, counterterrorism in this sense, and promoting democracy? Is it identical? Is it complementary? Or is it sometimes in conflict?

And I think in various countries each of the answers may apply.

And lastly, depending on the answer to that third question, how can the United States or should the United States be indifferent to the politics that emerges in these countries?

Or should we solely be interested in building up the institutions, as Dan rightly said -- the institutions of the rule of law and accountability and transparency and good governance? But should we do that while being indifferent to the actual political developments in these countries?

Should the United States be indifferent to the outcome of elections in these countries? Or can we do both at the same time?

Can we legitimately and do we have the flexibility to support the growth of institutions and also support those who share our values and share our approach to solving problems?

These are not easy questions, and I'm not suggesting that there are simple answers to them.

But I do think that as we move into this -- the process of defining a real counterterrorism strategy that's country by country and region by region that we can't avoid asking these four questions as we move beyond the levels that Dan has outlined in his presentation.

MR. BYMAN: Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. PILLAR: Thank you and good morning. I'll start by saying I agree with almost everything Dan Benjamin said in his paper, so you're not going to get a reputation from me.

I thought I'd take my few minutes instead to point out some of the what are in my view unhelpful attributes that are all too prevalent in a lot of other commentary about counterterrorism and counter-terrorist strategy, and to which Dan's paper, in my view, is a very useful antidote.

One of those attributes is what I might call a uni-dimensional approach to counterterrorism, which exhibits itself in, for example, discussions and debates over what is the cause of terrorism, as if it's a matter of only one to the exclusion of everything else.

Most often you hear this in the refutations of what the cause is, with counter-examples or lacks of correlation being adduced, while not

realizing that we've got a whole array of risk factors here when we talk about roots or causes of terrorism, no one of which explains all of the variants.

So, of course, there are going to be counter-examples. Of course, there are not going to be perfect correlations.

The uni-dimensional approach also tends to ignore the diversity of nature and purpose among different terrorist groups, which is enormous, even among Islamic groups or Islamist groups.

They run the gamut from those that are interested in attaining political power in a particular territory versus the Al Qaeda type of grandiose goal of establishing a caliphate.

These are very different beasts, which call for very different counter-terrorist tactics and strategies.

The uni-dimensional approach also tends to overlook distinctions among terrorist leaders, rank and file members of groups, and larger populations that may, to varying degrees, sympathize with or support the activities of terrorists.

And when we talk about, you know, what people say, what people do, those distinctions are very important. You know, the attitudes of larger populations are important not because everyone who expresses, say, an anti-American view is going to run out tomorrow and become a terrorist.

The very small number, however, who do could affect us in a big way, and the many who don't, nonetheless, are part of the picture in so

far as they provide sympathy, support, and in whose midst the messages of some of the terrorists resonate.

A second unfortunate tendency is to think that this whole counterterrorism business all began in September 2001, and that is a mistake, both for the reasons that Dan Byman mentioned in his introduction with regard to what's happened since then, but also -- and this the part I'd emphasize -- because of everything that came before.

We've got kind of a national amnesia here, in which we forget that there have been times in the past when this country has been, albeit not to the same degree, admittedly, after the 9/11 experience, nonetheless, focused on counterterrorism in a way that we weren't at many other points in our recent history.

The 1980s, when we were besieged by Hezbollah's activities in Lebanon. The Marine barracks bombing. The other activities. The hostage taking and so on. There was a lot of stuff going on.

And when we forget about what was done in the past about counterterrorism, and the sorts of things that Dan Benjamin and I were working on when we were working on the topic in the 1990s, we forget about the experiments, the initiatives, policies that worked, policies that didn't.

For example, just on the organizational front, there has been enormous attention to the reorganization that was instituted with the December 2004 legislation that created the Office of Director of National Intelligence. This is a little bit of rearranging boxes.

The single most important and effective reorganization in counterterrorism was one that occurred 22 years ago, when the CIA created the Counter-Terrorist Center, which was a big bureaucratic experiment; broke a lot of bureaucratic crockery.

But we tend to forget about this sort of thing, because it was 22 years ago, and it was initiated by the bureaucracy itself rather than, you know, came out of some commission.

The third unhelpful element, which is related to this, is this term, you know, war on terror or all its variants -- war on terrorism; GWOT, global war on terror. A bad term.

I've always thought so from the very beginning. I'm not the only one who thinks that. It contributes to the fallacy of -- that we've got a definite beginning and a definite end to what we know of as counterterrorism.

It panders to the unfortunate non-Klausivitsian American tendency to divide foreign into time of war and time of peace, and never the twain shall meet. And it's like flicking a switch on and off. Counterterrorism is not like that.

And it contributes to confusion among the various literal and metaphorical ways in which the term "war" gets used, whether it just means -- it's a way of expressing the seriousness of the problem, just like we've talked about war on drugs or war on poverty.

Or it's a way of characterizing the nature of the threat. Or it's a way of expressing a prescription for what particular tools, in this case military tools, we ought to use.

And much of the use of that term “war on terror” has deliberately exploited that kind of semantic confusion, where you get pseudo-syllogisms that basically say, if it's a serious problem, then it's war; and if it's war, then we have to use military force primarily to fight it. That's not logical.

And that leads me to the fourth unfortunate tendency, which I would underscore, and that is heavily politicized way in which counterterrorism tends to be discussed and debated in this country.

It's partly the sort of thing I just mentioned, you know, using terms and semantic confusion to not directly, but indirectly argue for particular policies or use of particular instruments.

It is also because the so-called war on terror has been used as a justification for other policy goals. And with regard to the current administration, two of them stand out.

One is, of course, the -- by far, biggest foreign-policy initiative and commitment of the Bush administration, the war in Iraq, the selling of which depended to a very large degree on the notion of it being part of the “war on terror.”

And the other one I would point out is the goal of expanding executive powers, which seems to be a project, particularly of the Office of Vice President.

And any time you have any concept, in this case counterterrorism, that is being manipulated to justify and provide the rhetorical context for other objectives, then it impedes our understanding of counterterrorism itself.

The fifth and last thing I would point out as an unfortunate tendency is -- and a couple of my colleagues have indirectly alluded to this -- is the tendency to think of counterterrorism as the be all and end all, the only national security objective we have at the moment and that we have had for the last seven years.

However important it is, it's not the be all and end all, and it does conflict with other things. And Rob mentioned the issue of, you know, possible conflict with other goals.

You have to place in a larger foreign policy context, and I think Dan Benjamin's done a very good job of doing that in his paper.

Many of the what in retrospect would seem like useful counter-terrorist things that we might have done in the past, for example, perhaps launching Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan earlier than the fall of 2001, has not been done not because there was an unrecognized threat, but because there are other foreign policy interests and goals, other national interests, such as expenditure of resources and conserving our resources that have tended to conflict.

And I would just end on that last note. It is not useful when anyone talks about, say, with regard to homeland security and defensive

security measures, how much do you need? How much do we need to spend in order to protect ourselves?

There's no how much. There's never enough. There are always trade-offs between, in this case, how much security we want to buy and how much we're willing to pay for it. And in the current economic times, with all the fiscal implications involved of bailouts and so on, that trade-off becomes all the more acute.

But read Dan's paper and please heed it. Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. BYMAN: Ambassador.

MR. PICKERING: Maybe for elegant variation, I'll try standing up, although I am wired to some kind of chair here at the moment.

I'm delighted to be here. It's a distinguished panel, and I'll do what I can at the end to add what I hope are some perspectives on the points that have already been made, but I'll hope I avoid the Washington syndrome of while everything's been said, not everybody has said it yet.

Thank you, Dan, very much for your kind introduction, in which you conflated me with messes and clean up. I'm not here in either guise.

I think Dan's paper is well worth reading and makes a major contribution, long overdue, to our thinking about this issue and how it fits in our national purpose.

Rob has asked some salient questions, and I want to try to address at least a couple of those before I sit down. And Paul has provided some significant guidance on critical questions that have long disturbed all of us.

I would begin by saying that on the Friday after 9/11, I was in Rome watching American television and have an opportunity to write back to my employers, the Boeing Company, and say that I thought at least two things had to be kept in mind as we looked ahead.

One was that 9/11 would change things. It would change principally our thinking and our concentration, but it would not change a great deal about what was going on in the world and how the world operated.

And I think this is true, and I think Dan's paper makes the point that there are a whole series of issues, short- and long-term, which play into our ability to deal with terrorism, but in and of themselves are tremendously intrinsically important for our national interest.

And so Dan has, in effect, brought into play the question of synergy.

The second thing I said was that I saw the serious danger that we could turn our preoccupation with terrorism sooner or later into a war on Islam. And my deep concern is that Iraq has helped to move us pretty far down that road, and that Dan's paper helps us to contend with that I think in a sensible and important way.

The next thing that I draw from the paper, which I think is useful to think about is that terrorism, for me, is the use of violence and force to create some political or economic goal or objective, to reach a goal or objective.

That secondly, I think that Dan's paper carries a message for me that terrorism uses tactics to affect issues strategically. And Dan's paper says that we ought to think strategically in order to employ tactics effectively against terrorism.

And that interrelationship is a very important one, and it makes, to me, a great deal of sense; that as we think ahead, down the road, of how to deal with terrorism, the immediate, the military represents but one effort, and we have tended, as Paul has pointed out, to lose sight of the fact that this is all taking place in a larger world context.

The second point, I think here, that is significant to look at is that many of the events and developments which we have over a period of years focused on in our foreign and security policy have a direct and intimate role with what we are doing in our effort to deal with terrorism. And if we don't take advantage of them, we will have made serious mistakes.

One comment: one of the victories of terrorism so far, in my view, is that it has provided us an inducement to walk the wrong path, to walk in too narrow a set of activities to deal with the problem, and has, in that sense, led us quite astray, not just in using the only instrument that we see out there, the hammer, to make terrorism to the nail, but also to

take away from a number of other serious objectives both our focus and our national interest.

And to that sense, terrorism has been particularly Al Qaeda terrorism been quite successful in diverting us from many courses, the sum total of which, in my view, would have been much more useful to deal with terrorism, particularly the long-term.

There is in Dan's paper, I think quite clearly, a serious effort to equate both the short-term and long-term, to look at these strategically, to look not just at how we hit the forces will be ready violently to attack us at a moment's notice, but to look at well -- as the -- as well at not just the strategic direction of those forces, but indeed the basis on which they look at us, and even more importantly, the use of that basis within their own societies to replenish, recruit, and redouble their efforts against us.

So the medium- and longer-term are, in my view, as important as the short-term, and we are engaged in a typical American problem where the crisis is so great that we have only the energy, only the time to do the walk against the short-term and forget the chewing a gum against the medium- and longer-term.

And we have to pay more attention to this.

I would just say a couple of other things. If we look at the priorities for the next president and the next administration, I think that if we look at the strategically, we will see an interrelationship that comes very clearly to us in Dan's paper. Let me say this: I think that no president

will face a greater set of challenges than the next president of the United States, and they run the gamut.

And if we look at those at large, the exhausting problem is immediately to figure out what the priorities are to be and how they will be addressed.

I've taken a look at six clusters of problems that I think rise to the top in this boiling cauldron that I believe are intimately related in one way or another, not just with our national interests, but also with the struggle that we're engaged in against terrorism, and that Dan's strategic perception, I think, helps to inform them.

Let me just mention those very briefly without paying any attention to how those challenges can be met, because that's a whole other talk.

But I would put, because of today, and as I came in here, the market was about to dive 600 points, I would put the management of the world's macro economic systems, with particular efforts to deal with finance, investment, and banking, in our current tragedy. And I would link that with a tremendously important set of issues surrounding trade.

To some extent, they may seem ultimately remote from terrorism. But they condition how people will live, not just in the Islamic world, but all around the world. And they will either add to or detract from our ability in the medium- and long-term to help shape the course of our struggle against terrorism.

Let me go on briefly -- and some of these I think will be self evident. Think about them.

The next set of issues perhaps that's terribly important is the question of poverty, economic development -- a cluster with food, with health, with water -- and its relationship to trade.

And each of these clusters I think we need to think about strategically, because it is no longer possible for us to have the luxury to think about strategic goals in such narrow contexts that the interrelationships between these issues disappear or that we lose, in fact, the leverage which comes in dealing with these issues by thinking about and understanding the interrelationships and how they affect each other.

A third cluster would be energy, climate change, and environment. And this, too, I think energy ceded a lot of it in areas directly affected by terrorist activities or coming out of places in which terrorists can affect outcomes and indeed infrastructure are important.

The final set of what I would call issues not defined by geography, functional issues in traditional diplomatic context, has to do with disarmament, arms control, nonproliferation, and I would say terror itself in the sense that Dan points out, and it's a concern I share that the nexus between terrorism and weapons of mass distraction as to concern us both short-, medium-, and long-term.

Finally, there are two sets of clusters of issues defined in geographic terms that are very important.

The first and most obvious, the most pressing short-term need, the one that I think rises in this sense very high on the agenda is the question of what I would call the extended Middle East -- the three countries with “I” initials at their beginning -- Israel, and the Arab-Israeli question; Iraq and Iran; and the extended portion of the Middle East, in my view certainly, defined through Islam and common culture in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

These are hugely pressing issues. They are directly related to terrorism issues.

And then finally, the set of issues that I defined as partners and rivals for the United States -- China, Russia, India, the European Union, Japan, and perhaps Brazil.

All of these in one way or another are going to be deeply affected by dealing with terrorism, because many of them have these problems in their own backyards, much as we hope to avoid having on ourselves.

This means, in fact, that from what Dan has put together, we now have what I hope will be a way to see through terrorism clearly as a major question for us to deal with, not the sole driver, but one where there are synergies that are very important in pursuing new foreign and security policy approaches for the future, and that the next administration will take your excellent paper to heart, and I hope use that.

Rob mentioned some interesting -- and I think very important issues. How do we square the struggle that we’re now engaged in with

many of the autocratic rulers who are, in fact, in charge in the countries where we have perhaps the greatest sources of problems?

And now do we, in fact, deal, both diplomatically and in security terms, with those critical states, recognizing that it is never a wise idea to subtract a putative ally in the face of an uncertain replacement?

And my view is that we should deal with these in the context of what my Arab friends always tell me when they see me walking too fast, *schweh*, *schweh*. Slowly, slowly. Carefully, carefully.

It is only a, put it this way, tactical prescription. I think over time, we can expect change, but it is not ours to induce gratuitously or indeed without being exquisitely careful.

And we have to pay attention obviously to the fact that such change has to come out of the region itself, and we come back to Dan's principal point that we have to have the right narrative.

By that, I mean a total sense of how to deal with this problem across the spectrum.

I would not say the opportunity is to jam their narrative. It's to trump their narrative. And I would hope, Dan, that you would find that comment a felicitous one.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment, and I look forward to the discussion.

(Applause)

MR. BYMAN: I am going to shortly take questions from the audience, but one of the advantages of being a person who compiles a list is I've put my name at the very top of it.

Dan, if I could ask you to address the comments that several of our panelists made and Ambassador Pickering ended with, which is this issue of democratization and counterterrorism cooperation in particular.

Let me give you, just to make it a bit more concrete, the example of Egypt, which you note in your paper we get some help on some issues, but is also a tremendously important ally in counterterrorism.

It's also led by a corrupt and rather inept autocrat, who's turning Egypt back into a hereditary monarchy; and clearly, undemocratic, by any standards, and, in my opinion, going backward.

With this in mind, I can think of two way to fail as we push democratization. One is we angered the regime, and they curtail, probably not end, but curtail counterterrorism cooperation.

And the other is we succeed, and one of the -- if you want to go back to Rob's point about actions -- one of the findings, if you will of Arab countries in recent years, is the more open the election, the better the Islamists do.

And I'm not one of those people who believes that the Muslim Brotherhood and Al Qaeda are the same thing, but I will point out that I can't imagine the Muslim Brotherhood would be a close ally of the United States on counterterrorism issues. I think that we would certainly see a big drop.

In addition to handling this carefully and slowly, how do you manage these tensions in the medium- and long-term?

MR. BENJAMIN: There's no question that this is an absolutely central issue, and I tried to be careful to suggest that we not move precipitously and that we not -- I couldn't possibly come up with a phrase as felicitous as Ambassador Pickering about replacing a known quantity with an unknown one.

And I do think we need to work with these countries, and Paul and I both know quite well the utility of that relationship with Egypt on counterterrorism. It's essential.

What's more is I try to point out in the paper that -- and if I didn't do enough, I should do it more times in the next edition -- democratization is not in itself a short-term cure for terrorism.

On the contrary, democratic institutions when it comes to security are going to be less efficient in stopping radicalism, and democracy will probably create more space for violence.

Over the long-term, I do believe it is important, and I do believe that it will make an important contribution to leading this steam out of the system, mitigating grievances, and creating a forum where people can talk about, you know, how they view the world and do so in a nonviolent way.

And I also think that it -- when people have control of their own lives or feel that they have some control of their own lives, they are less likely to turn to violence.

So I share your concern and Tom's concern about getting that right. But I do want to suggest that we not throw the baby out with the bathwater on this one, because -- and this is meant to respond to Rob's concern -- it is -- there is no question that there is a very important issue in terms of the relationship between thoughts and actions and what people demand of their governments, and how they behave based on -- regarding how they feel.

But I think that if you're a United States policymaker, you need to think about the long-term, and you need to consider that change is going to come some day, and you want to be on the right side of history.

And I think that in particular that's a lesson that we have learned from our dealings with Iran, and perhaps it's impossible to get it quite right.

But I think that when change does come to these countries, you don't want the new rulers to come to power thinking that America is inevitably the opponent of change and will inevitably be a hostile force and an upholder of what was an inequitable status quo.

You know, just to -- just to add a little bit -- two other points, one answering Rob.

You know you point up the key issue, and that was part of the reason we invited you here, Rob. But at the same time, you know, even if -- even if it's a relatively small number of people, and indeed quite a small number of people, who do turn to violence and a relatively small number of people who are, in a sense, in their circle, who create this what

I call permissive environment for that, if you change the image of the United States and change people's sense of what is going on in the relationship between the United States and the Muslim world, you're going to make that circle smaller and make it more difficult for them to act regardless of how they feel about their governments, regarding us of what their governments are doing.

And it seems to me that this, over long-term is beneficial.

Now you're absolutely right about the decline in support for terrorism. There is a certain murkiness there as to what constitutes terrorism, in some cases it has been clear that terrorism is when Muslims are killed, but not when Americans, or Westerners or Israel are our killed.

And that's a further issue that needs some exploration.

The last point I would make comes back to Tom's remarks, and this has to do on the issue of resources, and I'll put it just very bluntly: I've laid out some ideas, which I've been chewing over for longtime, about how by deepening our engagement, and especially non-military engagement with some of these countries, we might get better outcomes over the long-term.

When I say this, usually people are amused but can't imagine how America would ever operate in such a way. But just imagine if we put $700 billion into something other than invading Iraq. We'd only have to put a small fraction of it into these relationships. We might have gotten a far more satisfactory outcome. So why don't I stop there.

MR. BYMAN: Now, I'd like to open it up with a few instructions, please. First, say your name. Second, please wait for the microphone.

And third, when you have a question, I'm going to ask you to limit it to one question, and I will instruct the panelists to only answer one question, so presumably they won't answer the one you least want them to answer. So we're ready to begin.

MR. DREYFUSS: Hey, good morning. I'm Bob Dreyfuss, reporting with *The Nation* magazine. Dan, I thought your paper is a terrific effort at kind of reorienting the conversation in this country about terrorism.

But my question goes to something that I think might be a -- kind of you're falling into a trap that other people have fell into before, when you talked about this project taking a lot of years and a lot of money, and, therefore, it has to be not only a U.S. effort, but a Western effort.

And where I think -- and even Ambassador Pickering touched on this -- is what you didn't say is that it really needs to be a global effort involving Russia, China, India, a lot of other countries that have interests in this arc of crisis area and so forth.

And so just one quick comment on background for that question is you-maybe everyone in this room, maybe not except Rob, can agree that the unilateral depredations of the neocons the last eight years have caused, you know, from Iraq to a lot of other problems have left things worse than they were before.

But radicalism -- and Rob talked about counter-radicalism -- radicalism did not start with the neoconservative bungling. It started 60 years ago, radicals turned to communism, Baathism, Arab nationalism, and so forth. Then maybe in the '70s, they started turning to Islamism.

But underneath all that are legitimate -- or maybe you don't agree -- but there were legitimate grievances that people had. You know, people want to change they can believe in.

And the question is, are they going to get it now? Is the U.S. going to take a step back from the region, reduce its military footprint, and let the rest of the world kind of step in and maybe bail us out in places like Pakistan and Iraq and elsewhere, where China and Russia and other countries have interests?

Or is it really like you said, is it an American and Western project, which kind of validates that maybe some of the concerns and anti-Americanism that exists in this area? Because it's not really a Western project, is it?

MR. BENJAMIN: When I use the phrase it's a Western project, I meant it in the sense that -- well, in two senses. First of all, the West is the primary referent when people talk about the far enemy. And to the extent that people in the Muslim world buy into the notion that the West is ultimately the prop for the autocratic regimes, then I think the West needs to be engaged in a more positive way.

I also talked that the West is the place where the resources are, and I was talking largely about that part of it, you know, who's going to

do the -- who's going to open up their markets. And Paul made a very -- I'm sorry -- Tom made a very important point that a lot of it is going to be about trade. Who's going to open up their markets? Who's going to make the investments in healthcare, education, and the like?

I certainly agree that there is a global element of this, and a big one, and in the paper, you know, I talk about essentially counterterrorism efforts and the institutionalization of them.

But in terms of detoxifying the relationship a bit and finding the resources, I do think that the West has a central role that you just can't blink at.

MR. BYMAN: Rob, may I ask you also to comment on this subject?

MR. SATLOFF: Well, actually, if I can, there's a -- on a connected topic, I just wanted to comment a phrase that Dan used a few moments ago about getting on the right side of history in terms of how we deal with the democratization or whatever.

I think we have to be awfully careful trying to imagine where history is going to be. I remember in my doctoral research, I had the pleasure of showing keen Hussein of Jordan a National Security Council memorandum initialed by Dwight Eisenhower in '59 or early '60, which said, it is the position of the United States essentially to get on the right side of history in the Middle East and to view with favor the division and the dismemberment of the Hashemite Kingdom to permit the Nasserists

tied to control the East Bank, and the West Bank will be under Israeli control, because this is the tide of history.

Well, of course, you know, the King laughed when I showed him this, because the staying power of the King and the staying power of many of these regimes in the Middle East is far greater than the tide of history might suggest.

And just to connect to your or your major point, I think that we underestimate the staying power of these regimes at our peril, at our mistake.

And the implication is I think that they can withstand a far greater effort on our part to advance -- I wouldn't call it democratization -- but a much more aggressive effort at the sort of institution building that you're talking about than we give them credit for.

I think there's a dialectic here that we don't factor in appropriately. They're stronger than we think they are, and we can do more, therefore, and they can absorb it.

MS. ADAMS: Well, I have a lot of sympathy for that. Unfortunately, I think I wish I had been a call for every time I read an intelligence report that said Saudi Arabia has five more years, which, you know, it's sort of a well roasted chestnut at this point. But, let's move on.

MR. BYMAN: Ambassador, may I ask you this?

AMBASSADOR PICKERING: Just quickly in response to the question, I think that we have to look at this as a global question; that we can't do it all ourselves, and we have to work with other people.

Interestingly enough, even with some of our scratchiest relationships, counterterrorism seems to survive as a continued basis for forward progress.

And secondly, at least in so far as we remain a principal enemy of the terrorists, we, I think, have to use that enviable -- unenviable position perhaps to continue to try to take the lead in the efforts to move it ahead.

But we have to do that in what I would call a smart fashion. It can't be through unilateral dictat so much as finding common cause, and it relates to the exercise of diplomacy I think rather than kind of authoritarian prescription.

MR. PILLAR: Just to add on to what Tom Pickering said, as someone who in the past dealt with counterparts who were in government with whom we had those scratchy relationships, it's not just something we need to do, but something we have done for years -- engaging the non-Westerners.

The one challenge that we have to be aware of here is in dealing with the likes of the Russians and the Chinese is not to encourage their use of the counter-terrorist label or war on terror label to do things that we really wouldn't consider as legitimate counterterrorism -- Russians bashing Chechens; Chinese bashing Uighurs, or objectives like that and simply call it counterterrorism.

MR. BYMAN: Hello?

SPEAKER: Thanks, I want to inject a dose of cynical realism, because I thought, you know, the discussion was a little too cheerful and not depressing enough.

A few words about strategic counterterrorism, and then I'll follow it up with a question. The term is very attractive, but it could also be a little too ambitious. It's attractive because we have to think about it in long-term, as Tom Pickering said and as both all of you guys agree, in order to neutralize the terrorism threat.

But it is ambitious, because we know what we should be doing, but we just don't know how to do it or we are either incapable of doing it, whether it's democracy promotion, social engineering in the Arab world, we just don't know how to do it.

So can we just settle for tactical counterterrorism and promised ourselves that we're going to excel in that category?

MR. BYMAN: You want to take that, Dan?

MR. BENJAMIN: Well, I think the principle of the paper is no. If I had felt that way, I wouldn't have written it.

I do think tactical counterterrorism is essential, but I also am heartened that we have actually done all right at economic development and humanitarian engagement and even democratization over the long-term in different parts of the world.

You know, I have to say the one thing that George Bush has said in the last seven or eight years that I really agreed with was we made

a fundamental mistake in giving a pass to a broad swath of the world on democratization.

Now, again, I think he went about it all wrong, and I don't think we ought to push countries over the edge.

But in the same way that we dealt with the Philippines and Korea and the like, I think that over a very long-term we can have a positive impact.

So that's my answer, and I'm sticking with it.

MR. PICKERING: Your question I think arises from the premise of what I would call incapacity, and it's a comment on the American condition.

I would say in capacity stems from a couple of sources.

One is resources. Another is intellectual, and the third is leadership.

I thought Dan had answered the question on resources. If we can, in fact, put $700 billion on the line every once in a while for an objective, then some lesser figure to deal with one of our more salient problems, but also in terms of synergy, a whole lot of other issues we're concerned with for other reasons is important.

This meeting, I hope, begins to answer some of the intellectual qualities, and in a week and a half, you will have an opportunity to decide the leadership question.

I don't think that, in fact, we have a permanent condition of incapacity, even as terrible as circumstances now appear.

MR. BYMAN: I'm going to take three questions in a row, and then ask our panelists to provide their thoughts, and hopefully the three questions and the panelists' remarks will intersect to some degree.

Our first in the way back, standing in the corner.

MR. DOYLE: Thank you. John Doyle with Aviation Week and Space Technology Magazine.

Given the debate about military versus non-military solutions, I was wondering what the panel thinks of the Defense Department's new Africa Command, which is being billed as a pairing of military and humanitarian and civil responsibilities under the leadership of the State Department and the Pentagon.

Do you see this as a roadmap for addressing the types of issues we're talking about today, or is this a bad idea?

MR. BYMAN: Second question, if I could ask the gentleman over there?

MR. HISHMI: George Hishmi. I know we're focusing on Arab and Islamic terrorism -- excuse me. There's a new movement in the Middle East now that's concerning many people. Israel settlers are attacking the Palestinians and Israelis -- Israeli peaceniks.

Do you see this as a mushrooming terrorist movement within Israel? And how would Israel deal with it or should deal with it? Thank you.

MR. BYMAN: This one, right here.

MR. MITCHELL: Thanks. Gary Mitchell from the Mitchell Report.

I've been thinking -- listening to this today, I'm thinking about the intersection of what we've been talking about here and November 4th. And one of the questions that I think we are beginning to ask ourselves about November 4th is, if the polls are accurate or close to being accurate, and it is an Obama administration, will this turn out to be a transitional or a transformational election?

And understanding that it -- A, we don't know what's going to happen on the fourth, and, B, it always takes a while to know that, my question would be what signs would you, the panelists, look for?

What steps, what tonality would you look for to sort of help answer that question of whether this was transitional or transformational and whether we might be headed on the right path on the counterterrorism and some of the other issues that you've identified here today?

MR. BYMAN: Fantastic. I'm going to ask our panelists for last remarks. I think we'll go in reverse order and ask Dan to close things down. But, Ambassador, if you could begin, please.

MR. PICKERING: Sure. On the Africa Command, I think it's a serious mistake. It's a solution in search of a problem at the moment.

My feeling is after having spent eight years of my career in Africa, that the military portion of our interest in Africa is very small.

I think it's important to do things like peacekeeping training and to help friends, but I don't think, in fact, we should turn it into a military

problem. And the Command shows every focusing moving it in that direction.

I think in terms of terrorism is not a unique preserve of Islamic fundamentalism. We had the assassination of an Israeli prime minister, and we have the disruption of an American federal building in Oklahoma to understand this.

The notion that we should turn it into an exclusively Islamic preserve is a serious mistake, and it's a problem for most people in lots of circumstances.

And then finally, what signs should we look for. I will say it *grosso moto*. We should look for the degree to which the next administration can move from campaign rhetoric and appreciation of hard reality.

The two are not necessarily the same thing. And in this campaign, we have seen a fairly significant divergence.

One classic example of that is what I call "move the embassy to Jerusalem." Move the embassy to Jerusalem figures in every campaign, and it's forgotten the day of the election, I think wisely so.

There are other issues that are harder, like protectionism. And there are other issues that are even harder -- what do we do about terrorism?

But I think that the degree to which a new administration can become not just transitional, but transformational is its appreciation of reality and its ability in the first six months to convey that, both

internationally at home, and to express that in new initiatives and new policies.

And, of course, right now, the opportunity is endless to do that.

MR. PILLAR: On the first question, it's not just the creation of Africa, but we saw some indications before it was created with the European Command still being responsible for much of Africa of a somewhat unfortunate tendency to kind of get in on the counter-terrorist action.

And, if it's a military command, well it's a hammer looking for nails to hammer. If it's, you know, some other instrument of statecraft, it will be something else.

But I really am kind of neutral on Africa itself. But I wince a little bit at how, you know, different components, military or civilian, in the government try to get in on the counter-terrorist, whether it's the most appropriate way to respond not.

With regard to sort of non-Islamist terrorist movements or groups, the only observation I make on that is a very general one that we would be making a mistake if in designing counter-terrorist policies and the organizations to pursue them we think solely in terms of Islamist threats, even if we might all -- and most of us in this room agree that that's, you know, the principal counter-terrorist concern and will remain so for the next several years.

The next big counter-terrorist failure -- policy failure, intelligence failure, or however it's going to be described that we will encounter will be something of a totally different ideology, not Islamist, not religious.

This may still be, you know, even a couple of decades in the future, but where people say, my goodness, why couldn't we have seen this coming. You know, we were focused so much on these other groups that were of such a concern back in the '90s and after 2000. So we should keep that in mind.

Finally, in terms of Gary Mitchell's question, I would -- not to directly answer your question, Gary, but I don't expect, regardless of the outcome 11 days from now, that we're going to have transformation with regard to counter-terrorist policy.

So many other things are on the plate, and there are so many constants regardless of who is in the White House about the tools available to us, the challenges that have to be faced, the principles that are going to have to be followed in counterterrorism regardless of who's president that I don't expect transformation at all.

MR. BYMAN: Rob?

MR. SATLOFF: On Africa, I think Africa is essentially a symptom of a larger structural problem in our government, where the assets are in the military to do humanitarian work.

And I think if you get the AFRICOM briefing, the overwhelming amount of stuff that they're doing is humanitarian -- you

know, HIV, health, or whatever. And they have the assets. And it's a big problem, because the assets should be elsewhere.

And, you know, I'm glad it's being done. I'm glad somebody is doing it, but that's not really the answer to the structural problem.

In terms of the Israelis or other non-Islamist terror, it's obviously, you know, important for us to address, whether PKK or FARC or whatever it is.

In the context of strategic terrorism, counterterrorism, I think Dan appropriately identified what the thrust of the strategic counterterrorism needs to be about, which is the, you know, Islamist organizations were movements targeting America and its allies.

And lastly, I can only say that would have thought that eight years ago that Bush, for better or for worse, was a transformational figure on the world stage.

But an event nine months after his election thrust upon him the, you know, that role, and, you know, McMillan is right -- it is events that I think will determine whether the next president on this issue and many others is transformational or transitional.

MR. BENJAMIN: I think AFRICOM has been flogged sufficiently, so I won't address that.

On the issue -- I agree with Rob on -- and with Paul and Tom on the issue of terrorism threats.

I would only add that while -- and this is really a core point in the paper -- that while the radical Islamists pose the greatest national

security threat to us, our ability to enlist partners around the world to deal with our security concerns will depend greatly on our ability to meet their security concerns.

Rob mentioned the PKK. We had a near crisis with one our closest allies, Turkey, over the fact that weren't taking their PKK problem seriously enough not very long ago.

I think any set of policies that aims to advance our interests on this score should take into account those of others. And Paul is, of course, right that -- and I've suggested this earlier -- that we're going to see other kinds of terrorism,

Gary, as for transitional or transformational, the word transformational just kind of gives me hives at this point, so I'm actually hoping it won't be transformational. I just hope that it will be a lot wiser.

And part of wisdom may actually be knowing what the right increment is in change and how quickly you can bring it on.

I think one thing to watch for, though, is if, you know, if the polls are borne out and Obama is elected, then I think the question of whether or not he gives that speech that he promised and begins to engage in serious outreach to the Muslim world early on that will be a telling sign.

You know, the one thing we don't have in this country is a history of, as I said before, strategic patience and sticking with policies for long periods of time.

So if it is transformational in the more noble sense, ask at the end of the first or even the second term.

MR. BYMAN: Thank you all very much. I'm sorry to say we're out of time, but before we head out, please join me in thanking Dan and our panelists for an excellent morning presentation.

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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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