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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. O'HANLON: Good afternoon. My name is Michael O'Hanlon and I am a senior fellow here at Brookings, though today I am here to moderate a panel discussion with three of my favorite and most distinguished colleagues, and in my own head at least I think of this event as being nicknamed or subtitled "From the Frontlines" because we have three of our scholars here who have been working on policies that are being discussed today, in particular Bruce in an incarnation within the Obama Administration a couple of months ago, but also who have been traveling in Afghanistan on the battlefields recently, Jeremy and Vanda, who were there just a few weeks ago especially in the south, the crucial part of the country where so many American reinforcements are now flowing, but their focus was also on NATO and what's happening in the sectors that are run by the Dutch -- or I should say in the individual parts of these broader sectors that are run by the Dutch, the British, the Canadians and so on.

Let me just say a brief word about each of my distinguished colleagues. The way we're going to do this today is begin with Afghanistan and go to Pakistan, and so we'll begin with Jeremy Shapiro, and then have Vanda Felbab-Brown speak, and then have Bruce Riedel speak. Jeremy is one of our top Europe and NATO experts. He's also,

even though he often doesn't admit it, an outstanding defense analyst, so there are very few people as well equipped to understand the dynamics in the South of Afghanistan as Jeremy, and he'll begin with some of his observations. He is also the senior author of the "Afghanistan Index" that you can find on our website and that he and Jason Campbell have been working on together now for a number of months.

Vanda Felbab-Brown is one of the most promising young scholars in the country, and she's just putting out a book called *Shooting Up*. If you want to be able to say to your friends that you bought her book back in its original form at the time it first came out, buy it now because you'll be able to tell your children and grandchildren for years to come that you were in at the ground floor at seeing some of her fantastic writing. She is an expert not only on this part of the world but on illicit economies and the way in which, in this case, opium is a crucial and big part of the problem, but also the criminal networks and other kinds of illicit activities that surround drug production and trafficking and also Afghanistan's security environment and political environment. So she will speak about a number of the policy issues that are relevant now across the whole range of matters inside of Afghanistan.

Bruce Riedel is frankly not only one of our favorites here, but clearly one of President Obama's favorites and one of General Petraeus's

favorites. He spearheaded the review on Afghanistan and Pakistan policy for the Obama Administration. He has riveted us at Brookings with explanations of the issues and debates that occurred inside that review, but today he also wants to move beyond. So you're not just going to get a recent politics and history lesson from Bruce, he's focusing in his new work on Pakistan, and that's the subject of his new book project. So he is not here to represent the Obama Administration, only himself, and he may or may not say things that are fully consonant with the thinking inside the administration at present.

So without further ado, we'll hear from each one for about 10 minutes and then look forward to your questions. Jeremy?

MR. SHAPIRO: Thanks, Mike. That was a great introduction. It made my feel better not only about myself but about my colleagues.

I wanted to talk about two things really here. One is the sort of trends in Afghanistan that we're tracing in our "Afghanistan Index." Second is about the sort of issues that are facing NATO in Afghanistan in the coming year. I think I want to be very brief to try to have some sort of a conversation about this.

I think the first thing to say about the trends, it won't surprise you that this year we've seen a continued very large increase in the

violence in Afghanistan. What was interesting about this is that the fighting didn't really show the usual degree of a winter dip that we have seen in past years. In part this was because it was a fairly warm winter in Afghanistan. In part it was because of the increased tempo that was conducted by the NATO and U.S. forces and the Afghan national security forces in Afghanistan who had a deliberate strategy not to allow the sort of winter respite. In any case we saw a very large increase in attacks in the January to May period. They were up according to ISAF about 59 percent relative to last year. This is especially true of IED attacks which were up even more at 64 percent. The result was a very large increase in military casualties, in coalition casualties which were up 62 percent, and in ANSF casualties, Afghanistan National Security Forces, casualties which were up 33 percent.

What is interesting, there are many things that are interesting about this, but one of the things that's interesting about it is that this increase in violence persists and continues with a fairly good sense of security in local areas. In other words, people don't feel terribly insecure of their areas, and there's even been a slight improvement in the feelings of security over the last two quarters as compared to last year, so about 85 percent of Afghans report feeling secure or fairly secure in their local communities.

It's interesting to try to understand what's going on in Afghanistan to think about how this increase in violence can coexist with the fairly strong feelings of security. One of the reasons is that the fighting is still very concentrated particularly in the South, particularly in Helmand Province, but also in a few other provinces. Another reason is probably because of the increased troop presence of both ISAF and Afghan National Security Forces. The force levels are growing and they are more present in the communities. Another reason I think that we don't like to talk about very much is a fairly high tolerance for violence that we see in Afghanistan. We have a separate project which is being conducted by Carol Graham here at Brookings where we're looking at attitudes of well-being in Afghanistan and one of the things that's noticed is that there's a very high level of adaptability to both violence and corruption relative to other societies that she's done work in. One of the hypotheses for this is that they have essentially been more or less continuously at war for 30 years in Afghanistan and so they're able to cope with levels of violence which would be I think a lot more difficult for us or for most societies.

Another reason seems to be that there have been perhaps for the slight increases in feelings of security is fewer civilian casualties this year as compared to last. They're down about 27 percent in the first quarter. In part I think this is due to improved procedures on the part of

the coalition who has spent a lot of time on this since last summer, but of course the civilian casualties, depending on who you ask, about 25 to 35 percent are caused by pro-government forces. The bulk of them are caused by the insurgency, so changes in government tactics are not enough to explain that. I think there's possibly also a change going on in insurgent tactics. We've seen I think this year some greater coherence in the insurgent attacks, fewer attacks on civilians, fewer kidnappings, more attacks on government officials and government infrastructure, and of course security forces of all types, which is consistent with the great reliance on improvised explosive devices. This is perhaps a reaction to, in fact the continuing low popularity and even decreasing popularity of insurgent forces in Afghanistan who have caused a lot of civilian casualties. The IEDs I think are still a problem for the insurgents. About 66 percent of civilian casualties are caused by IEDs because obviously they're not a very well-targeted weapon.

All of this I think points to a feature which has come out of our index a lot which is that it's very difficult I think to use violence per se as a measure of where the insurgency is. The level of violence in Afghanistan particularly if you compare it to say Iraq at the height of the troubles there in 2006 or so is actually quite low by that standard which is a tough standard. So what we're trying to measure here I think more is

the capacity to provide services and the views of the population on the government and on their security situation which is I think where the new strategy is going. I think that should provide you with some food for discussion.

I want to also talk a little bit about the sort of state of NATO as opposed to U.S. forces in Afghanistan. Vanda and I did a trip as Mike mentioned to the Southern part of Afghanistan which is the main thrust of the non-U.S./NATO effort in Afghanistan in April, and I think one of the things that you're immediately struck by in visiting the South as opposed in particular to the East, I took a similar trip to the East last year, is the difficulties in the command structure there that result from the NATO operation. I don't think it's too strong to say that each of the main countries there is really running its own provincial war. Each of the countries has its own strengths, its own weaknesses, a lot of them are doing quite well in various things. The Dutch for example who are in charge of Uruzgan Province who we've heard a lot about in articles in the *New York Times* are doing a lot of impressive things particularly with regards to development. They are really showing the way in civil/military integration and they have a very strong cultural awareness of the province. I would say that the problem in these approaches is not that any one is better than the other or that we really need a single approach to all

of these different provinces, they are quite distinct, but the overall problem is that there really is no unity of command in Afghanistan so we're unable, and this is true even in just the Southern region, to prioritize and to shift resources to deal with the most important problems. This isn't just a question of caveats which are often the focus of the press, it's related to the fact that for every NATO force in Afghanistan including the Americans, there are two chains of command, one up through the NATO commander who is an American, and one to the National Capital, and in case of conflict, the National Capital Command always takes priority. The result is that each of the lead countries in the South, the Canadians in Kandahar, the British in Helmand, the Dutch in Uruzgan, are focused on their own priorities, on improving specific indicators in their piece of the war in their own province or district without a great deal of attention to the impact of that measure on the overall fight. But of course it's clear that the insurgency crosses provincial borders. As we know, it crosses the national borders without much regard, and it certainly crosses the provincial borders without regard. The result I would say in the South is that there is not sufficient attention to the overall insurgency strategies. For example, Uruzgan where the Dutch are doing very well is to a large degree serving as a sanctuary for insurgents to rest and refit and plan and to engage in the struggle in Kandahar and Helmand. Because the use of

Uruzgan as a sanctuary doesn't interfere with Dutch priorities and with the way that the Dutch measure the situation in Uruzgan, they don't pay in the view of the British and the Canadians sufficient attention to it. But I think what the British and Canadians would argue is that the priority for Afghanistan is not Uruzgan, it is Kandahar and Helmand and of the development of Uruzgan comes at the cost of strengthening the insurgency in other provinces, it's perhaps not the best use of resources.

What this means I think overall particularly in the South is that as the number of U.S. forces have increased, the U.S. military has become very weary of NATO forces. This is not principally a quality issue I think. Certainly there are some quality issues, but even the forces that are very effective at their tasks, even NATO forces that are very effective at their tasks, are not useful I think from the standpoint of the American military command if they're unable to be devoted to the overall priorities of the region or of the country. I think what that means is that the dirty little secret of the NATO summit this past April where we were focused on how many new combat troops the United States and Obama could get from its European allies was that in fact large parts of the U.S. government, particularly the military, really didn't want more European forces in Afghanistan. I think with new U.S. troops coming in, the focus for the U.S. military command is on segregating the battlefield which is to say

assigning roles to coalition partners that don't require intense coordination. There are a few exceptions I think, but overall I think that's the case. What that presages is an Americanization of the war including in the South, and I think frankly that's already underway as the new forces come in this year and I think by sometime next year we'll see that NATO will still be there and it will still be in command, but I would be very dubious that we'll be truly fighting a NATO war at that point.

As someone who looks at Afghanistan, I'm a little mixed as to how I feel about this development. I don't think that the NATO command structure has been very effective in Afghanistan and it's arguable as to whether this Americanization is good for Afghanistan. We can discuss it more if you want. As a transatlantic specialist I'm a lot less agnostic. This is certainly not a good development for NATO. I think what we've seen is a real decrease in American faith in the capacity of NATO to run operations like this at the same time that we essentially believe that these are the types of operations we'll be doing well into the future and I think the consequences of that for NATO are not so good.

MR. O'HANLON: Could I quickly ask you to clarify one thing before we go to Vanda, Jeremy, which is do you see this American lack of confidence in many NATO forces as linked to the new idea to have General Rodriguez be the three-star operational commander, or do you

think the latter would have been a good idea on its own merits regardless? In other words, should Europeans take some umbrage in events or feel like the Americans are reaching this verdict on their contribution by the proposal to have Rodriguez or is it a good idea even if you were to believe that NATO was fully pulling its own weight?

MR. SHAPIRO: I think both, actually. The main thrust of the new U.S. forces is going to be in the South and there needs to be I think a bulking up of the command structure there, and Rodriguez's position certainly would make sense given the rise in force levels almost under any circumstances. It's interesting that that person has to be an American position and I think that's demonstrative of how little faith the Americans have in the NATO command structures at the moment. They're sort of moving a lot of the command structures out of NATO and filling some of the key positions with Americans. So you see for example even before a lot of American forces starting coming into the South, the new deputy commander of Regional Command South is an American general who Vanda and I met when we were there. He's sort of a mole in the headquarters and he's spending a lot of his time preparing for the American forces and preparing for a new command structure that will support them.

MR. O'HANLON: Thanks. Vanda?

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Thank you, and good afternoon. The Obama Administration inherited Afghanistan and Pakistan in a deep crisis. In Afghanistan the situation today is clearly by any measure the worst it has been since 2002 both in terms of the trends in the insurgency, the deterioration of governance, the feeling of insecurity and lack of hope on the part of the population, as well as in the rise of crime. By crime I don't simply mean here the rise of the opium production, but ordinary crime that deeply threatens human security and affects the lives and behaviors of the Afghan population.

The Taliban, and let me just preface it here by saying that I'll use the word Taliban although it's a conglomerate actor of various more or less loosely affiliated groups and elements, clearly feels that the momentum is on its side. We think about the South as being especially in a critical situation with respect to violence, the lack of governance, the stagnation of economic development, and the rise of crime, but similar trends are also seen in the East, though perhaps not at the same pace or at the same level and are not so much on our radar screens. And even the North of the country that has frequently been thought of as very stable is showing signs of destabilization, though again not on the scale that we are seeing in the South or in the East, but certainly the potential that

violence in multiple forms could erupt in the North should not be dismissed.

The population still does not in any way actively by and large embrace the Taliban, nor do they lament the lack of the doctrinaire, brutal and oppressive regime that the Taliban offered them during the 1990s, or imposed on them, rather, I should say. But more and more we hear comments such as the Taliban were bad. We didn't like the restrictions they imposed on us. We like flying kites. We didn't like having to grow beards of certain length, but we were safe. We could travel with a million of rupees from Lashkar Gah to Kabul and not be attacked and not be robbed. Today if we just try to travel between Lashkar Gah and Kandahar City, we will have to pay bribes to police officials, to armed groups, some of them the Taliban, we'll risk our lives, and by the time we get to Kandahar we will likely not be left with money. What this indicates is that the population does not lament the regime that the Taliban provided, and certainly the Taliban was unable to embrace any socioeconomic aspirations of the people, but the Taliban could nonetheless provide order and at least one element of physical security, of course that was security linked to the cultural norms that the Taliban was imposing.

Today these trends are clearly lacking there, and so the big challenge for the Obama Administration is how to persuade the Afghan

population that the future is still better with the government and with NATO and ISF forces that support and enable the government to transform the country, to bring in more security and to start socioeconomic development in one of the poorest and most underdeveloped countries in the world. To the extent that the administration -- to the strategic review that Mike mentioned and came up with a plan that's been called multiple surges, that is a really multifaceted increase of resources from military resources to economic resources to the diplomatic and political attention given to Afghanistan and Pakistan and the broader region. I should say that one of the best things about the review was appointing my colleague Bruce Riedel to be the head because there are very few people in town who would be as qualified as Bruce to spearhead the review.

Indeed, I think the review very correctly identified an increase of attention and an increase of resources as the appropriate strategy. But even after identifying the key objectives, still some key questions remain about how the strategy will be implemented, and some critical questions remain unanswered. In many ways, these questions are in my view the crucibles that will make or break the policy and our success in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The first crucible despite the review still remains not to be fully resolved is the relationship between counterterrorism and

counterinsurgency and nation-building, and this gets at the core of what the key U.S. objective is in Afghanistan and what the key NATO and international community's objectives are there. Is it simply to prevent al-Qaeda safe havens, in which case you can imagine the highly limited minimalist approach akin to what the Bush administration was doing at least early on in the years. Or is it really to enable nation-building or actually the safe state-building more appropriately because Afghanistan has a sense of a nation and a sense of a country and what it lacks is a state that is present. If it's the latter of course then it requires a very different force posture, a very different commitment of resources, a very different (inaudible) possibly. The surge indicated that it was leaning toward the state-building strategy of a cohesive unitary Afghanistan run from Kabul even if saying the objective is not a prosperous democracy, the objective is simply stability and some level of economic progress. But nonetheless, it was very much couched in language about an exit and the need for benchmarks and having a clear exit strategy. This reverberated in Afghanistan as well as internationally I think in a way that reduced the lack of clarity about what the objectives or the strategies are.

From the perspective of the Afghan population, exit reminded them of being abandoned as they had been many times before and perhaps dissuades with them siding fully with NATO and ISAP forces.

And certainly counterterrorism defined as preventing al-Qaeda safe havens does very little to embrace the aspirations of the population and persuade them that the future is indeed better with siding with the Afghan government and the international community that supports it. Similarly, it did not necessarily enhance the best impulses among Afghan politicians and once again generated the sentiment that now it's time to obtain resources from the international community, and the same I should say goes for many businesses and contractors in Afghanistan. Certainly it was a message that was problematic from the perspective of Pakistan because one of the things that Pakistan fears in Afghanistan apart from a really strong Afghanistan with very heavy India leanings is a collapse in Afghanistan and return to the early 1990 situation that civil war has either broken out or is imminent and many international actors including India are trying to develop a strong influence. So resolving this tension between counterterrorism and pressure in defining the goals is very narrow especially as the voices of skepticism in the United States and Europe and elsewhere are rising as we hear talk about is Afghanistan the graveyard of empires, can the war ever be won? So resolving the tension between counterterrorism impulses defined very limitedly and a more robust state-building, nation-building counterinsurgent mission will continue to be a major challenge.

The second crucible is the issue of resources. The lack of resources is what got us to the situation today. What enabled the Taliban to come back, what contributed to bad governance, although there are many independent sources of bad governance in Afghanistan that was one of the obstacles to socioeconomic development, but certainly drove the lack of security (inaudible) and security today. We have already heard that 21,000 more U.S. troops are heading to Afghanistan, 17,000 which will be there more permanently, 4,000 are enablers. And various of the NATO countries have indicated limited boosts in forces especially to guard the elections. But it still remains the key question whether this increase in troops is in fact sufficient because one of the challenges that the counterinsurgency is facing is the inability to hold and so the consistent cycle of clearing many territories being unable to hold, holding them over to either the Afghan National Army or more frequently the Afghan National Police who then cannot hold the districts and getting into cycles of clearing, losing, clearing, losing on a repeated basis in key districts like Zhari and Panjwayi; until recently Musa Qala, Gamsir and Helmand for example. This challenge will be all the more difficult that many NATO troops will start peeling off within the next year or two including the Dutch and the Canadians whose missions are supposed to end in either 2010 or 2011. So to some extent the administration and the international

community are trying to resolve this issue by relying more heavily on Afghan national forces and that's why there is a planned increase in the Afghan National Army. Of course, that requires many more enablers than we have the capacity to mobilize. Moreover, while the Afghan National Army has been a success in Afghanistan we are seeing real problems in retaining gains especially in the South that's subject to high kinetic operations and a high operational tempo. So if in these provinces especially we are seeing a real problem retaining the army, one needs to question how easy it will be for us then to really boost the levels of the Afghan National Army to higher levels. The same is true for the police, but the problem with the police is all the more compounded that the police are so corrupt and so (inaudible) and for many Afghans it's a greater or equal menace than either the insurgents or criminal organizations.

The second way to deal with the lack of resources including military resources is to raise militias. There is much talk about it and it's an issue that's still being discussed with various opinions. We have pilot projects now under the rubric of the Afghan Population Protection Force in Wardak and Logar, but there is simply much talk about whether this should be extended in the South. In my view, the militia option is particularly bad for Afghanistan. It will neither accomplish the short-term

tactical objectives nor will it be consistent with our medium- and long-term goals. I can get into that in detail in Q and A.

The third crucible very much driven by the lack of resources and security is the tension between developing intelligence and the broad strategic picture in engaging with the country with the population and the terrain and force protection. The Taliban has become very successful at attacking soft targets, attacking not simply civilians and NGOs who come from abroad, but also Afghans who cooperate with ISAP, NATO or with the Afghan government, and also attacking Afghan government officials in local districts. As a result, both the international community and Afghan representatives have become more and more bogged down at their compounds and their bases and the ability to communicate with the population is becoming harder. So one of the key things that the boost in troops needs to accomplish is not only to bring a sense of security to the population, but also to enable far more robust and extensive engagement with the population so that not simply narrow tactical actionable intelligence can be gathered, but broader strategic intelligence can be gathered on the critical economic forces, on elementary issues for development such as land distribution, on the political landscape in any particular district, all of which are critical for enabling governance.

As I mentioned, governance is very poor and in many ways I think this is an area where the international community has the least tools and lease of a sense of how to improve the situation. We are heading for elections very soon. In my view, it remains questionable whether the elections will even be seen as legitimate. They are likely to be highly contested by whoever the loser is as well as contested by voices suggesting that in many parts of the country insecurity prevented legitimate elections. But also even if they are seen as legitimate, it's not at all obvious they will generate officials who are less corrupt and more competent and that even at the highest leadership this will then translate into appointments of less corrupt and more effective officials. So once again the international community has developed the strategy by passing the national government in some ways akin to the militia option now, we are going more and more local with respect to dealing with government officials, but this has not so far produced the changes in governance that we would like to see and it will remain a major issue for both counterinsurgency and the efforts to build a stronger and more effective state.

Linked to this is then the issue or reconciliation. There has been much talk about it recently at Brookings at the session on negotiating with the Taliban a week ago. Let me not get into it in great detail, but

along with the call for a militia, what is now called for is an Afghan entity to negotiate things with the Taliban. That can mean many things from strategic negotiations which in my view are very bad and are likely not feasible today, to sort of peeling off militias or peeling off aspects of the Taliban. I think the second is more feasible, but the key question is what do we want to do with the tribes or the fighters that you brought out from out of the cold.

The sixth crucible is what the role of development is and how development is done. Is it simply narrow in the sense of supporting the counterinsurgency operation so that you can have some success in holding territories? If that is the case, how should development take place? Should it be handouts to the community that are done very quickly? Should NATO forces or the international community come in quickly and build stuff for the community as a direct or indirect buyer for support against the Taliban? Or is it less important to focus on the immediate short-term counterinsurgency gain and more important to focus on long-term development that's sustainable and that's owned by the Afghans? We have not resolved that dilemma as well. Related to that is who are our valid counterparts? Is it simply the Afghan government officials? Or is it local strongmen who are part of any formal government

structure but nonetheless exercise a tremendous amount of local power and frequently much more so than Afghan government officials?

The seventh crucible is then what is the role of counternarcotics and what shape does counternarcotics policy take place? We have already heard that the administration will back away from a strong push on eradication including spraying and instead focus on interdiction of traffickers and rural development. Nonetheless, how this grand strategy is then operationalized on the ground very much remains to be seen, and to some extent how it's operationalized has to do with whether its goal is to use counternarcotics as a way to circumvent the insurgency to deprive the Taliban of opium money. Or is it meant as a way to develop a legal economy in Afghanistan and shore up the state in a legal way? These two approaches can be deeply contradictory in terms of just pure counternarcotics policy itself. Again I'm happy to go into detail in Q and A.

Finally, and after this I will hand it over to Bruce, the eighth crucible is the issue of the relationship between Afghanistan and Pakistan. It's become a cliché to say in Washington that the effort in Afghanistan cannot succeed without addressing safe havens in Pakistan and that what's happening in Pakistan is critical for the insurgency in Afghanistan. And while this is true, I would add here, however, that the insurgency in

Afghanistan is internally self-sustaining in Afghanistan itself today and that while addressing the Pakistan safe havens will be of enormous help, it's not by its own sufficient without improving counterinsurgency in Afghanistan and without improving governance. However, I would posit whether the reverse has come true today given how much Pakistan has become destabilized. Is it also true now that without succeeding in Afghanistan, we'll be in a very difficult position to improve the situation in Pakistan? Thank you.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you, Vanda. As we pass the baton, let me quickly say if people want to sit, there are five empty seats up here in the front row for anybody in the back who may want to relax. Bruce?

MR. RIEDEL: Thank you. Two preliminary remarks. First I want to thank you for coming. You probably didn't realize when you agreed to come to this event that we intended to create the hot and sticky ambience of a South Asian bus terminal. Now that you're here, you're stuck. Secondly, I want thank my colleagues for their kind remarks, but I want to reiterate one thing that Mike said. I'm not here as a spokesman for the United States government or for President Obama, so please do not ascribe anything that I say to be a position of the United States government.

I'd like to start with al-Qaeda because I think that we always need to bear in mind what is going in with al-Qaeda when we talk about the American war in Afghanistan and Pakistan because that's why we're there. Frankly, we wouldn't have 70,000 young American men and women en route to Afghanistan today if not for the threat that continues to be posed by al-Qaeda. The President made this clear I think in his speech in Cairo last week when he started with talking about Afghanistan in terms of the threat that is still posed by al-Qaeda.

In that regard, we have two very important statements last week from the al-Qaeda leadership. First, a statement from the putative number two Ayman Zawahiri. Zawahiri's statement was very, very predictable. It was all about Barack's imminent visit to Cairo and what should be expected during his visit to Egypt. What he said in that statement was very simple. He tried to highlight the tension between the President's message about American support for change and reform and the reality of Egypt today in which change and reform is something pretty hard to see. In fact, he came back again and again to the notion that Mubarak's regime is a police regime which has increased not the number of schools in the country over the last 25 years, but the number of prisons in the country. This tension is obviously one that al-Qaeda wants to

continue to play on, that in effect the Americans may be talking the right talk, but they're still standing by authoritarian regimes.

The second and I think much more important message though was the one from Osama bin Laden that came out a few hours later. The media has really mischaracterized this message so far. If you read the American and international media, this was supposed to be like Zawahiri's message, a comment on the President's visit to Saudi Arabia. In fact, if you read the actual 25-minute-long message, he nowhere at all talks about the President even being in the Middle East. This is not a commentary on the President's visit to Saudi Arabia. Instead, it's all about Pakistan. This is a message about what's going on Pakistan today and a clear call for jihad against the Pakistani government and the Pakistani state. The narrative of this message is really very simple. According to bin Laden, the Americans summoned President Zardari to Washington earlier this spring, read him the riot act and told him it's your responsibility to take on the Taliban in the Swat Valley and in effect ordered the military offensive that we have there. Bin Laden does a very clever little trick of saying that in response to this order and agreement to do it, Zardari got far more than his usual 10 percent, a reference to Zardari's image as Mister 10 Percent in Pakistan. The submessage is this isn't change you can

believe in, this is more of the same. Obama is just Bush with a nicer image, and Zardari is just Musharraf without even a nicer image.

There are several things we can say about this. Number one, it's clear that they recognize now that the battle for the hearts and minds of the Islamic world has really been joined and that the Obama Administration in its Cairo speech was carrying the war of ideas to the enemy and the narrative of al-Qaeda is now being attacked really for the first time. But secondly, it's the focus on Pakistan, and I don't think there's any surprise here either. Pakistan has now become the epicenter of the global Islamic jihad. The stakes here are enormous, 175 million Muslims, the second largest Muslim country in the world, the fastest-growing nuclear arsenal in the world, and a hothouse of terrorist groups that is really unrivaled anywhere else in the world. And above all, the question of whether Pakistan can emerge as a stable and viable democracy or is it going to be a failed, failing state, or even worse, a jihadist state? And bin Laden's statement implies but doesn't say clearly, but I think implies very clearly that the jihadists smell blood in the water. They think they're on the brink of a game changer in the struggle between al-Qaeda and the rest of the world and that is the jihadist takeover of Pakistan. And there is good reason for them to think it. Look at the numbers to start with. According to the National Counterterrorism Center, the number of terrorist incidents

in Pakistan more than doubled from 2007 to 2008, from roughly a little under 900 in 2007, to well over 1,800 last year, and these incidents are not confined to west of the Indus in the usual tribal areas. We now see major acts of terror as a regular occurrence in every single Pakistani city. There is today a real possibility, not inevitable, not the most likely, certainly not imminent, but a real possibility of a jihadist takeover in Pakistan. We can come back to some of the implications of that in questions and answers.

But it's not all grim news. There is some good news on the horizon. I think the good news that comes in a pretty messy package is the Pakistani military offensive that bin Laden railed against in the Swat Valley. This is the most coherent, the largest counterinsurgency and counterterrorist military offensive by the Pakistani state since September 11. It is producing an awful lot of messy results with almost 3 million internally displaced people. The damage inside the valley is something we don't know yet because the Pakistanis have not allowed foreign journalists to have access to the valley yet. But unlike so many other military offensives in the past, this appears to be a serious attempt to defeat the Taliban in an important part of the country. The army looks like it's gotten serious and has gotten the message.

More important than that though, the public seems to be backing this offensive. For the first time since September 11, we see the Pakistani Army fighting jihadist forces, fighting the Taliban, with generally popular support across the political consensus in Pakistan. It's very fragile, it could break apart, but for now there seems to be support for it. But it is way too soon that we are undergoing a sea change or a turning point. We've seen this before albeit in smaller proportions in other areas, in Bajaur in the past for example. It would be premature to say this is the tipping point. Experience and history should tell us to be skeptical about arguments that we now have approached a real tipping point.

Secondly, as the army constantly indicates, the military offensive is only part one of what needs to be a much larger project, a project to build in the Swat Valley and in other parts of the Northwest Frontier province and in the federally administered tribal areas governance that actually delivers something to the people who live there. For 60 years, Pakistani governments, civilian, military, PPP, PML, you name it, have all regarded this part of Pakistan as somehow a second-class status. That can't go on. Pakistan now needs to urgently provide development, jobs, opportunity, education and a sense that these parts of the country are as much a part of the country as the Punjab is. This task is enormous. Let me give you just one number to wrap your head around. Female

illiteracy in the federally administered tribal areas is 96 percent. Female illiteracy in most of Pakistan is a little bit over 50 percent, but in the federally administered tribal areas it's 96 percent. That's fundamental to the whole future of that part of the country. Educated females are not going to stand for Taliban-like rules; uneducated females won't know any alternatives. The government of Pakistan urgently needs a strategic plan for what it's going to do with the Swat Valley and then with other areas if it intends to go on fighting the Taliban, and it needs the resources to go with it. I think the administration has been wise to urgently promise more additional humanitarian resources, I think it's wise to mobilize the international community behind it, but first and foremost, this is about the government of Pakistan and whether it's prepared now to do what it needs to do.

Moreover, there are still far too many signs that the Pakistani leadership continues to believe in a policy which I will call selective counterterrorism which is that there are good jihadists and bad jihadists. Bad jihadists are punished, good jihadists are patronized. This is a long-standing policy that goes way back before the Musharraf era and has been one that Pakistani governments have pursued since the late 1980s. It is very difficult to persuade the Pakistani military and in particular the Pakistani Intelligence Service that some of the jihadists are no longer

useful assets for the future. Two in particular stand out. The Kashmiri assets particularly groups like Lashkar-e Tayyiba under its new name Jamaat u Dawa and its new name since Jamaat u Dawa. I'll refer to them as Lashkari Tiba because I think it only confuses you to keep using all of their new names because they really are still Lashkar-e Tayyiba. The release last week of the leader of Lashkar-e Tayyiba, although he denies any relationship with it, but we know that he is in fact the leader, Hafiz Muhammad Saeed, from the farce of being under house arrest was a step in the wrong direction. It clearly sent the signal that these are still regarded as good jihadists by the Pakistani state and it is a serious setback to any prospects of diminishing tensions between India and Pakistan. Less noticed by many is it is precisely Lashkar-e Tayyiba's humanitarian wing which was the first put into the IDP camps outside of the Swat Valley. In other words, the good jihadists were put in charge of taking care of some of the humanitarian recovery caused by the bad jihadists. That kind of selective counterterrorism is going to inevitably beat weak counterterrorism.

The problem in a nutshell is this. The jihadists refuse to stay in their lanes. They refuse to play the game the way they're supposed to. They keep seeing all of them as being one movement together rather than playing by narrowly defined rules. In fact, the trend is in the opposite

direction. There is a growing coalescence of jihadist groups in Pakistan. I'll give you two examples. First, this February when three of the groups that are now referred to collectively as the Pakistan Taliban united together. In their unification statement, what did they say? That their spiritual mentor was Mullah Omar, the Commander of the Faithful of the Afghan Taliban, and their exemplar of what a good Muslim jihadist is is, you got it, Sheikh Osama bin Laden. This was a public statement. The second example of this coalescence occurred last month in Karachi. The Karachi police, not the central government police, but the Karachi police uncovered a major plot to attack the headquarters of the party that dominates Karachi, the MQM. This plot was in a well-advanced stage of preparation. The three masterminds of the plot, one was from Lashkar-e Tayyiba, one was from the Pakistan Taliban, and one was from al-Qaeda. The point here is we've seen this coalescence, this movement toward working more and more together; still far from a monolith, still far from a united force, no recognizable leader other than the putative allegiances to Mullah Omar and bin Laden, but growing cooperation. And let me highlight the importance of Lashkar-e Tayyiba in this. Lashkar-e Tayyiba provides these groups with a global support network that has bases of support throughout the Gulf, in Europe, in other parts of South Asia, and even in the United States.

Let me conclude with a few comments about the implications for the United States. The Swat Valley operation is an opportunity for the United States to spotlight its concerns and its support for the Pakistani people. We should be rushing humanitarian support there in as fast as we can, just as did during the Kashmir earthquake a few years ago. Nothing will do more to demonstrate our seriousness than to actually do something on the ground at this critical period. But we need to be realistic. Anti-Americanism in Pakistan today remains at all time highs. Let me quote one Pakistani expert and his comments, "In spite of being on the United States dole, Pakistan is probably the most anti-American country in the world. There are festering resentments that produce a paranoid mindset that blames Washington for all of Pakistan's ills, old and new." In other words, we're pushing a pretty heavy stone up a very pretty hard incline. On top of that, you probably didn't notice this, but in an otherwise I think extraordinarily brilliant speech, Pakistanis noticed one word was missing in Cairo, Kashmir. Kashmir is the cause celebre, the central cause around which Pakistan revolves. It is the raison d'etre for having a large Pakistani military, it is the raison d'etre for supporting groups like Lashkar-e Tayyiba. It wasn't in the speech. Pakistanis noticed. If they didn't notice, the Indians very helpfully pointed it out. You had screaming headlines an hour after the speech was done in India saying, "Kashmir is Not in the

Speech. We Won." In the zero sum game of South Asian politics, India scored points and Pakistan lost points.

What the United States needs in Pakistan is constancy, consistency and the resources behind it. We should press not for selective counterterrorism, but for counterterrorism against all terrorists including Lashkar-e Tayyiba. We need to hold Pakistan responsible for whatever support networks supported the attack on Mumbai last November. We also need to hold Pakistan accountable for the activities of the Afghan Taliban in Balujistan. The Quetta shura, the virtual equivalent of the Taliban movement, needs to be shut down and that needs to be high on our agenda list. The Swat Valley operation in short is an important step, one that we can hope offers a sign of more steps in the future, but it would be very premature to say we've reached the end of the game.

One last point. Now that we finally have a new government in India, actually it's not a new government, it's the old government but with a much stronger mandate than it ever had before, it is time to significantly increase the U.S. engagement with India. I think the administration was right to let Indians get their own house in order over the last several months. But the house is in order now. It's time to come a-calling, not only in Afghanistan, but on the entire range of bilateral

issues that we have with India. No country is more important to America in the 21st century on issues like global warming, nonproliferation, the battle against terrorism, the future of democracy than India. Now is the time to engage at a very senior level. I hope and trust that Secretary Clinton will make this an urgent stop on her travel agenda for this summer. Thank you very much.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you, Bruce. Before turning to all of you, one quick question. What's your sense or your best explanation of why the Pakistani state isn't really clamping down on Lashkar-e Tayyiba? Is it the personal loyalties that have built up over the years or do they feel like this kind of a group really in the end will not pose a threat to the Punjabi-based government because they are fellow Punjabis in many cases, or is there some other rationale?

MR. RIEDEL: The forces in Afghanistan that have supported Lashkar-e Tayyiba over the years and tolerated it, encouraged it, funded it, supported it, see Lashkar-e Tayyiba as fighting the good jihad, the jihad against India, the jihad that is critical to the identity of the state. Those forces are strong and powerful. Last November they saw themselves threatened by what President Zardari was talking about, about trying to reduce tensions by a no first use nuclear policy and they struck back with a major act of terror. Those forces are deeply entrenched

particularly in the Punjabi elite and in elements of the Pakistani Intelligence Service and it will be very difficult to persuade them to give them up. But I come back to this. You can't be selective in this business of counterterrorism. If you are selective, you'll end up having weak counterterrorism.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you. Let's start over here, please, sir, and please identify yourself and also wait for the microphone that's coming right down.

MR. HANIFFA: Aziz Haniffa with "India Abroad." Bruce, you made the strong point that the ISI elements and the association with LET is still strong as ever, but the administration seems to have sort of felt that General Pasha and the points he made during the time he was here and the meetings that Senator Kerry and others had, that there seems to be an easing up of this ISI involvement. Is this wrong for the administration to think that there has been an easing because you strongly argue that these links are strong as ever? And just after the Mumbai attacks you made a strong case about the LET links and the global jihad support that they have. And also in this same frame, the fact that suddenly Prime Minister Gilani speaks about a similar nuclear deal for Pakistan and bringing up the Kashmir issue when almost the civilian government is unraveling in

Pakistan. Is this just wishful thinking or just throwing up these things so as to take way from the entrenched links of the ISI, the LET, et cetera?

MR. RIEDEL: I think that the administration was pretty critical last week. Ambassador Holbrooke commented publicly en route to Islamabad that the release from what was a very mild form of house arrest was inconsistent with Pakistan's responsibilities. This is not going to come overnight. The relationships that built over 30 years with these groups are not going to be resolved overnight. First of all, many Pakistanis don't believe we'll be there. They believe we're going to cut and run, whether it's 2 years from now or 4 years from now. Changing that calculation will be critical to getting them to change their policy toward these groups. It's hard to argue right now that not keeping your hand with the Afghan Taliban won't pay off when you listen to Jeremy and Vanda lay out all the concerns about the future of the mission in Afghanistan, and the Quetta shura which was holding meetings at the same time as we were doing our strategic review is reading the same public opinion polls that Americans are reading and feel that time is on their side. Until we start to change those perceptions, I don't think we're going to be successful, but that's not an excuse for constantly raising them at the highest level over and over again.

MR. O'HANLON: Vanda?

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Just one thing to add on Bruce's comments regarding Mohammed Saed, the head of Jamaat u Dawa and Lashkar-e Tayyiba. The release I think epitomizes what Bruce has commented many times about, the dilemma for U.S. foreign policy regarding Afghanistan in clearing the desire for short-term outcomes, short-term behavior on the part of the Pakistani government and tolerating authoritarian tendencies and supporting democracy. Because Saeed was actually released by the new Supreme Court or at least members of the Supreme Court are new after many demonstrations for over a year really brought the new leadership and was meant to strengthen the Supreme Court leadership, and they argued that the evidence against Saeed was insufficient to holding him. We can debate that that is true, and clearly from a counterterrorism perspective it really was a bad move and certainly from a regional stability perspective the release was a very bad move because it only strengthens beliefs in India that the Pakistanis are not serious about counterterrorism.

However, you can take a different view and say from the position of an independent judiciary, an independent civilian role, that this is just an indication that they are in fact much stronger than they were under the Musharraf era. But then there is the issue then to the second question, is civilian leadership necessarily better and where there's the

dilemma and the tension between the immediate short-term goals and counterterrorism imperatives and the long-term development of institutions in Pakistan coming.

MR. O'HANLON: Yes, sir, here in the front?

SPEAKER: My name is (inaudible) the problem of Pakistan has been developing not yesterday but for decades and the fundamental problem for Pakistan is unraveling of the state of Pakistan and the lack of a link between the state of Pakistan and the people of Pakistan, therefore the problem of Pakistan is not limited to the North, it's going to be (inaudible) how do you think?

MR. RIEDEL: I think you're absolutely right. What we are seeing is a problem whose roots go back to the very earliest days of the Pakistani state and may even lie in the concept of it, but we can't reverse history and we can't go back. If we could have given Jinnah another 10 years to give the state a chance to get developed, we can't do it.

The second point I would make is this. Americans can't do it, first of all. We are extraordinarily unpopular there. The depths of conspiracy feeling about America in Pakistan are extraordinary and even the most innocuous piece about what's going on in Pakistan is interpreted in the Pakistani press and by many Pakistanis in ways that are almost farcical if they weren't so serious. Pakistanis will have to do this on their

own. That said, the American role I think should consist of a number of things. Number one, to support the democratic process. We've tried the route of military dictators. We've explored that. That does not produce a more stable Pakistan. You may feel better for a brief amount of time, but a military dictatorship in Pakistan undermines civil-military relations, undermines the rule of law, undermines accountability, undermines the judicial system. We know the answer. This is not the solution, and those, and you're already beginning to hear them in this city who are saying it was a mistake to get rid of Musharraf or Kiani looks like maybe he's the guy to be on horseback to save us are just fundamentally wrong.

Number two, we need a policy which as I said is consistent and constant. In the last 60 years our policy toward Pakistan has oscillated wildly. Sometimes we're madly in love with Pakistan, they can't do anything wrong, and we throw billions of dollars at them with no accountability. That in effect was the Reagan Administration and the second Bush Administration. Then we swing in the other direction. Nothing they can do is right. We need to sanction them for everything. A.Q. Khan, nuclear testing, human rights abuses, supporting terrorism, not building enough educational institutions, they're not teaching Christianity in their madrassas. The last one I went over the top, but that was to make sure you're still listening. These two wild oscillations between infatuation

and complete isolation don't work. We've tried both of them. We need to be in a more consistent and constant course. That means dealing with the Pakistani government, recognizing its faults but continuing to deal with it. And in addition to dealing with it, providing the resources that give us some influence in doing that. I think the notion of tripling economic assistance to Pakistan makes a lot of sense especially if you do it with a long-term promise that they can count on it for the next 10 years which is what the original Biden-Lugar legislation tried to do. I think military assistance that is geared toward counterinsurgency makes sense, not G-16s, but helicopters. We need also people-to-people programs. We need to get Americans concerned about what's going on in Pakistan today. My favorite example is Karachi. Karachi is a city of 18 million people. It is the largest Islamic city in the world. It gets virtually no attention in the United States, and yet it is in Karachi today that the battle against the Taliban is as intense as it is anywhere else in the country. We need to increase people-to people programs. We need to increase educational programs. We also have to change our time horizon. If you're right, and I fundamentally agree with you that Pakistan has been on a downward slide for let's say 50 years, don't expect that it's going to turn around in 50 days. I don't think it's going to turn around in 5 years.

My last point, if you don't like the Pakistan you're dealing with today, ponder for a moment what a jihadist state in Pakistan would look like. Just think about it for a minute. Let me just take your question and let me just think. A jihadist state in Pakistan which not being a passive patron of terror is an active patron of terror will make the Afghanistan of the 1990s look like Tiddlywinks. Plus it has the fastest-growing nuclear arsenal in the world. A lot of people are rightly concerned about what Shia Iran will look like with nuclear weapons. Imagine a Pakistan run by Sunni jihadists. It pales in significance. My point here is not that it's inevitable, imminent or even the most likely outcome. My point here is to get you to think that the Pakistan we have now is the Pakistan we have to save and help.

MR. O'HANLON: Vanda?

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: You're absolutely right that at the core of Pakistan's problems is a weak and a weakening state. We could in fact argue that since the inception, the hollowing of the state has been the trend almost starting from a low basis where the state was weak and not consolidated naturally at the birth of the country. Indeed what needs to take place is a multifaceted strengthening of the state in the security domain, but that applies to police, so that the police stop being simply the enforcers of a particular political regime, but they can provide public

safety. It means extending the judiciary and the rule of law. It means undertaking not simply socioeconomic development in neglected and ignored areas like FATA and the Northwest frontier provinces, but it means undertaking difficult socioeconomic reforms and changes in Punjab for example.

Unfortunately, we are actually in a situation where such a multifaceted strengthening of the state in many ways critically cuts against the interests of key political stakeholders, and the key dilemma is how can we assess, how can we encourage, political, military and intelligence elites in Pakistan to undertake excruciatingly difficult resource-intensive reforms that at the end of the day will cut the feudal-like or military dictatorship-like power.

MR. O'HANLON: Very quickly, please, because we only have 20 minutes left.

SPEAKER: Might it mean also that Pakistan has been taken over by a very (inaudible) the military (inaudible) and the (inaudible) so in terms of cynicism all across the country if we don't treat that problem by dealing with the (inaudible) Zardari and the military (inaudible) because they are part of the problem and they are not part of the solution. Unless you deal with that issue, Pakistan is sunk.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you. The woman in the fourth row here, and then we'll move back farther.

MS. KHAN: My name is Amina Khan and I'm a student at Georgetown University. My question is really to Mr. Riedel. You've talked about isolation and infatuation and sort of if I can couch it in my terms, the marriage of convenience that has existed between the U.S. and Pakistan. What do you think are the fundamental features of constructive engagement? Is that going to be a lot of money in the future and a lot of accountability? And the second thing is, do you think Pakistan uses these jihadists and terrorists as a hedge against U.S. disengagement?

MR. RIEDEL: Firstly, I'm glad we have someone here from the finest university in our nation's capital if not the finest in America. Since I teach there I'm allowed to say that.

The answer to your second question is, yes, obviously. They see these as long-term assets. NATO will go away. The Taliban and Mullah Omar will be there. Your first question, it's hard to give you a satisfying and rich answer which you will walk out of here and say we've got this licked. There is no simple solution. This is more about how Pakistanis get their future together, and the cynicism that you were reflecting in your question is well founded about this Pakistani leadership. Bin Laden was doing a very clever thing when he said in that statement he

got more than his usual 10 percent. Everybody in Pakistan immediately got it. They knew what he was saying.

But the stakes are so huge that we have to make every effort. We should do so with complete candor about the partner that we're working with. No illusions. Don't pretend that there is something better than it is. But I'll turn the question around. Where are the alternatives? Is there a Thomas Jefferson on the horizon? I don't see it. We've tried the military man on horseback. That's how we got into the mess we're in. The military is the largest landholder in Pakistan. It's becoming the largest controller of the industrial base in Pakistan. Asking it to get out of this business is asking it to give up all of its perks that Vanda was talking about. But we don't have an alternative. Theoretically if you want to do JFK policy school analysis, we can invade Pakistan. That isn't so ridiculous. We just invaded two countries in the last 10 years, so don't say it can't happen. What would we do the day after with 175 million Pakistanis, assuming they didn't use nuclear weapons to defend themselves? When you don't have great options, you got to use what sticks you have, what carrots, what leverage we have, and engagement is the best one we have today.

MR. O'HANLON: Yes, ma'am, about six rows back all the way by the window.

MS. MARTIN: I'm Sara Martin. I'm representing a fine institution across the street, Johns Hopkins, also an excellent university.

My question is also for Mr. Riedel. You mentioned strengthening the U.S. relationship with India as being a key feature for the current administration. I'm wondering what role you would envision India should play in stabilization of the region while remaining sensitive to tensions in the region and also Pakistan's sensitivities surrounding encirclement.

MR. RIEDEL: Mike teaches at SAIS, so maybe he should answer that question.

If you want to change Pakistani behavior, you cannot overlook the issue that obsesses Pakistan and that's India. Why does the Pakistan military argue it should have such a huge amount of the country's resources is because of the existential threat that continues to be posed by India. Is there no threat? I hardly think you could convince Pakistanis of that. Can it be reduced? I think it can, and here I want to put in a point of optimism in what has so far been a pretty bleak summary from this panel. Before Mumbai, Pakistan and India were making significant progress on improving their relationships. Trade has been opened, communications, transportation links had been opened, and by all accounts, back-channel negotiations had made considerable progress in

finding the outline of what could be a solution of the Kashmir problem; not a complete solution, but a lot of movement in that direction.

General Musharraf perversely deserves a lot of credit for this. After he tried nuclear intimidation, a small limited war, support for terrorism at the highest levels against the Indian state, he finally came around to the idea of diplomacy. So he's a slow learner, but he got to the right place at the end of the day. Unfortunately, like with any military dictator, his time was expiring at the critical moment. The Zardari government indicated when it came in that it was prepared to move in the same direction. That's why we got Mumbai, because groups like Lashkar-e Tayyiba or Jamaat u Dawa pr whatever you want to call them and their sponsors in the Pakistani system felt threatened by where this was going.

The challenge for the Obama Administration is to work with Prime Minister Singh to try to move us back there. The first thing the Indians are going to want is for some accountability for what happened in Mumbai. That's a thoroughly acceptable and understandable requirement and that's why the release of Mr. Saeed was so unfortunate last week. We and India have a common interest here. A failing Pakistan with 100 or so nuclear weapons and the hothouse of virtually every important Sunni terrorist organization in the world today except Hamas is nightmare for Americans. Thankfully it's on the far side of the planet. For Indians it's

next door. India does not want to be publicly part of the Afghan-Pakistan issue and I think that's a reasonable request, but it certainly wants a stake in the outcome of what happens here and we ought to consult closely with the Indians, work with them, try to reduce tensions, try to get accountability for Mumbai, try to get the ball back on track, along with a host of other bilateral issues that should be high on Secretary Clinton's agenda.

MR. O'HANLON: We have 10 minutes left. Here is how I would like to proceed for those 10 minutes. I want to make sure we get an Afghanistan question next, so I'd like to see hands, please, for Afghanistan questions. Then we'll have a final bonus round in which case you can go back to Pakistan or Afghanistan and we'll take three questions together for the three panelists to wind up each with their own turn. But for this one, please, I'd like an Afghanistan question. So I'll go here in the red shirt in the fourth row.

MS. ROYAL: My name is Elizabeth Royal. Recently the U.S. military said it would change its policy on releasing numbers of insurgents they have killed and captured in their daily operations. Do you think that this is a step forward? I think it may assure some Americans that the military is efficient, but I'm concerned about how Afghans are going to feel about this and they'll see it more as the U.S. military and

NATO killing a lot of Afghans and not protecting them. What do think the outcome of that will be?

MR. O'HANLON: I'll broaden the question to the whole air strike issue and civilian protection issue if you like, but please go ahead.

MR. SHAPIRO: I guess there are a few ways to look at it. I think in terms of the specific question of releasing insurgents, it goes to the weakness in U.S. policy with regard to detention which is a weakness, and I probably don't need to review the story for you, but it doesn't have that much to do actually with Afghanistan per se. It's very interesting in Afghanistan. Most of the NATO partners are not allowed to cooperate with the United States on detention. They're not allowed to release prisoners to hand prisoners over to the United States. They're allowed to hand them over to the Afghan government, but the Afghan government doesn't really have the justice system or the prisons to detain them effectively as we saw in Kandahar. So there isn't an effective detention system in Afghanistan. The U.S. has had the largest system and the most effective one, but I think that they're tiring of it and there are increasing attacks from allies on the Bagram Prison which frankly could be more transparent to put it mildly. So I think that we're sort of reaping what we sew there. We have to for international opinion ramp down that detention system. It's probably not as you imply very good for the struggle against

the insurgency and it does signal to the Afghans that we're not as serious as we could be.

On the civilian casualty issue, I think what you're seeing there, if you look at as we did a bit the procedures that go into the air strike missions in Afghanistan, you see what's probably the most careful effort at avoiding civilian casualties in the history of warfare. It doesn't always work. That's quite clear. I think one of the problems is that most of the civilian casualties from air strikes come from requests from troops on the ground to protect them once they get into engagements or ambushes or something like that. What the Afghans see there is trading off coalition force lives against Afghan civilian lives, and this I think presents a real dilemma. We have force-protection rules in Afghanistan which are consistent with our understanding of how much danger we're willing to put our troops in the face of but are not really consistent with some of our counterinsurgency goals and not really consistent with winning the hearts and minds of the Afghan population and they notice that, and I think some of those decisions are decisions that we can really allocate to the commanders on the ground.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Let me just add here quickly that clearly simply focusing or primarily focusing on killing or capturing the insurgents has not produced the results in Afghanistan or in Pakistan that

we are all seeking to see. If you look at the levels of captured and killed, by many accounts they exceed what many believe are the estimates of numbers of insurgents in either theater. This either means that we are vastly underestimating the numbers of insurgents or by killing insurgents without addressing broader issues we are simply generating new recruitment so that the cousin of the killed man and the brother will sign up. What is important and encouraging however is General McCrystal's testimony last week where he clearly said that the measure of success in Afghanistan will not be the numbers of insurgents killed or captured but, rather, it will be the percentage of the population that now feels more secure. And that is precisely also the challenge that the Pakistani military is facing in Swat. By all accounts as Bruce talked about, they have managed to clear the Swat and at least some of the surrounding areas, yet they have not yet persuaded the population that they can come back, that they can hold the territory and that security will be sustained for them, and here is where the crux of the counterinsurgency most of the time needs to be.

MR. O'HANLON: Final round. We're going to go with three questions from the middle and back part of the room, and please keep them brief, and I know my friend Lorelei will make a good example for this.

I'll let her begin, please, standing here against the wall if you could and then we'll swing over. Three quick questions and then wrap up.

MS. KELLY: Thank you. I'm going to drag us into domestic politics. I'm Lorelei Kelly with progressivecongress.org. It's the Progressive Caucus Foundation. Almost 60 members voted against the supplemental because of the proportion of less than 10 percent civilian and there's a lot of talk right now of voting against the supplemental again unless there is some sort of an exit strategy. I'm trying to give people an option that's not a timeline-based exit strategy but that's conditions-based which would go along with the counterinsurgency much better. Is anybody working on this? Because I have a feeling if we don't give these folks something to aspire toward, you can get a large movement that's just going to be a rejection.

MR. O'HANLON: Good question. Then here in the blue shirt, please.

MR. SLOAN: Stuart Sloan. This question is for Mr. O'Hanlon. How secure are the Pakistan nukes, and if not very secure, what can we do about it? If I can stick in another quick one, how effective are the Predator attacks? Are they productive or counterproductive?

MR. O'HANLON: The last question in the back of the room, please. Yes, sir, the blue and red striped tie.

MR. WALTON: Timothy Walton, Georgetown University. This is for Dr. Felbab-Brown. What model of economic development do you see needed in Afghanistan? Is it going to be more of a provincial PRT team or more of the UNAMA approach to help the Afghan government with its budget, et cetera?

MR. O'HANLON: Why don't we start in the same order? Jeremy, whichever question or questions you'd like to take on, please feel free.

MR. SHAPIRO: Actually I wanted to comment maybe on the overall thrust of the questions which were interesting, not surprising to me, but there's a lot of focus on Pakistan, and Mike had to beg for an Afghanistan question, which I appreciated but it was interesting that he had to make the effort. I think in Washington we have a tendency to focus on the most urgent problem. I think I pretty much agreed that Bruce said except for that crack about Georgetown, and Pakistan probably is more urgent and more serious than Afghanistan particularly at the moment. What's interesting though is that for me the implication of what he said about just how little influence we have over Pakistan, just how few levers we have with regard to Pakistan, contrasts very strongly with what we have in Afghanistan. We have 70,000 troops there and we have an 8-year ongoing effort. It seems to me, not comparing the urgency or the

seriousness but comparing our capacity to effect change, actually Afghanistan is still where we need to concentrate even if we're thinking about the Pakistan problem because probably given what levers we have, the best thing we can do for Pakistan is to get the Afghanistan situation right because as we've talked about many times, there are a tremendous number of interactions and that's the place where we can actually create a stabilizing influence if we're lucky on Pakistan.

Now to get at some of the questions. The Predator attacks. It's pretty hard to assess from the outside. I can give you the U.S. military view which is that they are very tactically effective. They have succeeded in killing a lot of very important operational commanders in Pakistan and the U.S. military notices local decreases in attack frequency right across the border when the Predator strikes eliminate leadership. Leadership is not in abundant supply in these insurgent groups.

Having said that, I think they would be the first to say that this is essentially a Band-Aid strategy, that eventually these leaders are replaced. Very often the groups splinter and they get more radical as a result of these attacks with certainly overall increases in violence although not necessarily increases in effectiveness in the insurgency. Also they are mindful of the effects on the Pakistani population, but I think the problem for the military on the ground is that they very much need a respite from

the violence, and the Predator attacks do that. So that's the dilemma that they're in, and I guess I can't say what the best answer to it is.

In terms of a conditions-based exit strategy which is an excellent question, I wish I had an excellent answer. I think that ultimately if you read between the lines of what the President said and what the review says, he is providing the background broadly for a conditions-based exit strategy, but what he's essentially saying is we need to have effective Afghan governance and effective Afghan security institutions in place and that that's our exist strategy. So what we're trying to do at Brookings and I think throughout the Washington community is develop metrics for understanding how those things are progressing in a realistic time horizon for understanding when we can expect progress and when we can expect to see progress and how we can expect to know where it is. I think the challenge for the administration, what the administration actually owes the Congress and owes us is not to lay out exactly when we will leave, but to lay out how we know whether we are making progress or not. I think if they do that which is possible, then they can sustain public opinion actually almost no matter what the progress indicators say. But as of yet, I've seen a recognition of that, but I haven't actually seen how we would know what the progress is. We're working on it here and we'd be happy to tell them.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Since Jeremy talked about the Predator attacks, I can't resist coming on that issue as well. He talked about short-term tactical gains in terms of the counterinsurgency and safe havens in Pakistan for the Afghan (inaudible) we are also hearing that the effectiveness on the short-term counterterrorism side is rather high. Many medium-level commanders of al-Qaeda have been killed as a result of the Predator attacks. Many also have escaped on a repeated basis. One of the downsides of the success however is that many of the al-Qaeda and other jihadi leaders have been pushed from FATA to both Quetta and most ominously to Karachi. Bruce already talked about the destabilization of Karachi, that's nothing new, but it's increased remarkably over the past 2 years or so. The fact that we have successfully bombed in FATA and now as a result have pushed many of these leaders to Karachi is deeply problematic (inaudible) we should expand the Predator bombings to Quetta because that then gets into the downside of the bombings that Jeremy talked about which is the long-term radicalization and antagonization of the population, and clearly the Predator attacks are at the core of resentments against the U.S.

Now on the socioeconomic model or model of development for Afghanistan. You characterized it between local-led PRT efforts and UNAMA-led state effort. I would answer it by saying that the real

development for Afghanistan needs to be rural development. That from a development perspective is not optimal, but nonetheless there is no way to shortcut this in Afghanistan given the level of underdevelopment and the fact that it is the third poorest country in the world by some standards, possibly even lower than that. How you do rural development then is a complex question that in Afghanistan's case I think includes both efforts, both local efforts led by PRTs or other entities and ideally they should really be led by local Afghan government officials with the assistance of PRTs. But at the same time it is absolutely critical to strengthen the state at the core and strengthen the state and make it more effective and more accountable. Even at the local PRT level there are a lot of opportunities for success at the local level more so today than at the national level. That's one of the reasons why the CDCs, the community development councils, have been so effective is because local efforts can reach the low-hanging fruit sort of building the immediate bridge, building the well, addressing land distribution in this particular area. At some point though however these need to be scaled up and the limitations of the CDCs is precisely that they are so local and at some point you need to coordinate among provinces which the PRTs are failing to do, and so efforts on water management in one province for example are really severely curtailing water availability in the neighboring province and undercutting efforts

there. So the pan-regional coordination needs to take place at this level. And this then needs to come -- at the same time it's strengthening the state and the state taking ownership, and here is where the most difficult challenges for development are. Even if you can make local development successful, how do you build up in scale to a regional and statewide level?

MR. O'HANLON: I'll say a quick word before turning it over to Bruce which is appropriate only because it makes him the cleanup hitter going forth, and because on this question in particular I think he sometimes does feel the need to clean up after me, and he's been very helpful in helping me understand the sensitivities here. Let me just say a couple of brief things on the issue of Pakistan's nuclear weapons. One, I don't have any idea personally where they are or how many we think as a government know the location of. Two, however, there is a decent chance that we know where some of them are. For one thing, we worked with the Pakistani military on their security procedures. They are sensitive about that because they don't necessarily want us to know where all of them are. But I think there's a decent chance just reasoning from broad principles that we can not see the weapons themselves but see the people and the institutions around them and have some idea of where Pakistan might choose to keep such important assets of the state. Three, there's no way we know where all of them are. As a matter of principle, the Pakistanis

will make sure we don't, I believe, and also weapons could be in transit. Four, your question raises the issue of how we would deal with their arsenal in the event of potential collapse. I think they're probably well enough secured underground that any kind of American air strike option would be probably unpromising which is just as well because, five, my last and most important point, I can only see us doing anything on this issue under worst-case scenarios that would require attention to it with the active collaboration of the Pakistani military. In other words, if we could be of any help, it would only be in the context of a situation in which we were asked to help. No one wants to talk about that day to day. The Pakistanis certainly don't want to. But because of the physics of this, because of the nature of the problem, I cannot imagine us being helpful unless the Pakistanis themselves say we've got a big problem and we need assistance perhaps in the form of special ground troops to help secure the sites or perhaps to help the Pakistanis move them to a different part of the country in a secure way. So that's the most important point. I cannot imagine unilateral American action on this question. And now Bruce can take care of whatever he needs to on this or other final questions.

MR. RIEDEL: I think Mike has it exactly right. It's a fantasy to believe that there is some kind of America military option which secures

Pakistan's nuclear weapons in the face of opposition of the Pakistani Army. Get that out of your heads. It doesn't exist.

The second thing I want to say is I think Jeremy put it very well. With Pakistan our levers are very limited. The problem is enormous. With Afghanistan the problem is enormous too, but we do have levers. And more importantly than that, the Afghan authorities starting with President Karzai and including key members of his cabinet and including key members of his military are not conflicted about this. There is no ambivalence among the Afghans as there is on the Pakistani side about who the enemy is or what the outcome is. Afghans do not want to go back to living in the Medieval hell that was created for them in the 1990s. That's not to say that they might not be forced into it if we decide to cut and run, but they're certainly going to fight hard to prevent that from happening, and that's our opportunity there.

The last thing I would say is this. We've done the cut and run in Afghanistan twice, in the 1990s after our victory over the Soviet Union and in many ways in this century after the victory over the Taliban in 2001 and 2002 which was probably too easy for our own good. We've learned the consequences of underresourcing and ignoring Afghanistan. It was bad enough to do it once. It was stupid to do it twice. To me it is inconceivable to do it a third time.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you all very much for being here.

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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.

/s/Carleton J. Anderson, III

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