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ATTITUDES TOWARD THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS:
SURVEYS OF ARAB AND JEWISH OPINION IN ISRAEL AND PUBLIC OPINION IN
THE UNITED STATES

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. INDYK: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to Brookings. I'm Martin Indyk, the director of Brookings and also one of the conveners of the Saban Forum, which is being staged by the Saban Center for Middle East Policy at Brookings starting tomorrow evening and going through the weekend. We wanted to use the occasion of the Saban Forum to present some very interesting polling data that Shibley Telhami -- I'll introduce him in a moment -- has produced, which is directly relevant to the discussions that we will be having over the weekend between high level American and Israeli policymakers and experts.

Shibley Telhami is the Anwar Sadat Professor for Peace and Development at the University of Maryland, and he is also a nonresident senior fellow in the Saban Center at Brookings. He has done some path breaking work in polling in the Middle East and indeed, his polling series now extend over 10 years -- I was going to say 6 years -- 10 years, so there's an amazing range of polling that's been undertaken which enables a very effective analysis of trend lines in public opinion in the Middle East and in the Arab world in particular.

But now Shibley has introduced new polling data. I don't believe you've done Israel -- Israeli opinion, particularly Arab citizens of Israel and Jewish citizens of Israel in that regard. And so we're very happy to be able to provide this platform for Shibley to share his new results with you, which I know because I've had a chance to preview them, you will find very interesting.

To discuss these poll results we will, after Shibley's presentation, be joined on the podium by Yoram Peri, who is the Abraham S. and Jack Kay chair in Israeli Studies and director of the Gildenhorn Institute for Israel Studies at the University of Maryland.

Yoram, who was an advisor to the late Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was the founder and the former head of the Chaim Herzog Institute for Media, Politics, and Society, and professor of political sociology and communication at Tel Aviv University. Before that he was the editor-in-chief of the Israeli Daily Devar. Unfortunately, the newspaper is no longer with us, and even more unfortunate for Israelis.

Yoram has published extensively on Israeli society, media, and politics, including most recently an excellent book on -- that's titled *The Assassination of Yitzhak Rabin*. But also *Between Battles and Ballots: The Israeli Military in Politics*, which is a good segue to welcome a perfect example of the Israeli military graduating into politics. Shalimar Fuzz has joined us. He's coming for the Saban Forum, but we're very glad to have you here. Former Israeli chief of staff and then minister of defense and deputy prime minister.

And then, Steve Kull, will be the other commentator. For those of you who have been coming to your polling events at Brookings, Steve is no stranger. He's often been up here presenting his polling results or commenting on Shibley's. He's the director of the Program on International Policy Attitudes, or PIPA, and the Center on Policy Attitudes, or COPA. He's a political psychologist who has done extensive work on world public opinion and American public opinion on international attitudes. He directs the PIPA knowledge network's poll, which conducts ongoing surveys of the U.S. public and he plays a central role in the BBC world service poll of global opinion. And he's currently directing a major study of social support of anti-American terrorism in Islamic countries.

So, without further ado, Shibley, let's have a look at the results.

MR. TELHAMI: Thank you.

MR. INDYK: Thank you.

MR. TELHAMI: Thank you very much, Martin. And it's also a pleasure to be here with my colleagues, Steve and Yoram.

I see that the displays are only on the side. I wonder if Dan can do the center display because they may be too small to view the showing. I assume we're going to have the center display. If someone can hear from the staff, perhaps we could also --

SPEAKER: Everybody has them, as well.

MR. TELHAMI: Oh, okay. No, actually, these do not include the slides. So if we can have -- I thought we could have the center because it's going to be very hard to see the slides otherwise.

But it's a pleasure to be here. Let me just tell you a little bit of a background on this, the poll today, because, in fact, the polls that I'm presenting today are a little bit different. Normally, I'm standing up here to present the annual Arab Public Opinion Poll that I conducted in six Arab countries. For the past decade I've been doing that to study the relationship between media opinion and identity in the Arab world. But today I'm doing something a little bit different. In part, it's an offshoot of that project. In part, it's related to another project.

Before I even did polling in the Arab world, I actually did polling in the U.S., mostly to find out who are the segments of the public in America who care deeply about the Middle East and is their opinion different from the rest? In fact, my entire approach to polling is one that in a way forces the respondents to rank issues because I think behavior and issue ranking are related. People care about multiple issues but they usually behave on the basis of the ones they care most deeply about. And so it's critical to find out how they rank issues. Which ones are most important to them? How these influence the way they think. How these influence the way they behave.

So from the beginning, back in the early '90s, I conducted an American

public opinion poll on the Middle East, published with a colleague of mine in an academic journal, to find out if the views of those who care most deeply about the Arab-Israeli issue differ from the views of those who don't, with the assumption being obviously there's a behavioral consequence of that. In fact, much of what I've done in Arab public opinion polling has been also in the Middle East trying to figure out what people care most deeply about. And that took me in some ways to the Arab Palestinian citizens of Israel in part because what I was trying to do was find out the relationship between what people watch on TV, the media, their exposure to media and their opinions and also their notions of identity.

And the thing about Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel is that they speak Hebrew and Arabic, and they're exposed to Israeli media and Arab media. And so it provided me with a very good control to figure out whether this is really an important dynamic in the way people think. And that originally -- last year I did my first poll in Israel among Arab citizens. And as I've done that I discovered that I also have to study Jewish public opinion to see if there are differences, particularly on some of the issues that matter pertaining to identity of the state and policy.

So that's how I ended up doing both Jewish public opinion and Arab public opinion in Israel. And the American public opinion really is an extension of what I've been doing for almost 20 years related to issue ranking. And so what I'm presenting today is really the results of three separate polls. One here in the U.S. among Americans, their attitudes toward the American diplomacy in the Middle East; one among Jewish citizens of Israel conducted by a separate firm, Dahaf; and one among Arab citizens of Israel.

And I'm going to start with a short public opinion poll among -- here in the U.S. among Americans. And you can see this was conducted October 8-22 and

November 6-15. We had two in a row coming up with 1,485 -- 1,486 total sample size, plus and minus 2-1/2 percentage points the error margin, and it was done through knowledge networks.

One of the first questions I ask is the importance of the issue. How important is the Arab Israeli conflict to U.S. interests? How does the public rank it? Is it the single most important issue? In the top three? In the top five? Not in the top five? And you'll see here that 4 percent of Americans rank it as the single most important issue. Another 21 percent rank it in the top 3. So you basically have a quarter of Americans rank it in the top 3 and another 38 percent rank it in the top 5. So two-thirds of Americans really rank it in the top five.

Now, remember, this is an issue that is not -- obviously, we're not comparing to other issues so you have to keep that in mind. Part of the purpose for this is to see whether there are differences in the views of those who care a lot about this issue from those who don't. And you'll see that it does matter quite a bit actually how people think about the issue depending on how important this issue is to them.

And I have to say just one thing in historical perspective because this is the kind of question I did ask in the mid-'90s. And in the mid-'90s, those who answered that it would be in the top three or the top five were much fewer. There were I think nearly half. So in historical perspectives at least it seems that at this time more Americans think it's important than did then in terms of America's priorities.

First question is which of the following is closest to your view of the Obama Administration? The administration is not trying hard enough in its diplomacy; administration is trying too hard; the administration efforts are at the right level. And you could see here we have 41 percent say at the right level at the bottom; 30 percent say it's not trying hard enough; and 21 percent say it's trying too hard. And that shows itself

actually in the following question as well where you ask them if they support American diplomatic effort to renew negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. You have 72 percent approve and 23 percent disapprove, which is almost exactly the combination of the previous -- the right level. They want even more activism, add up to exactly the same, over 72 percent. So clearly Americans want the U.S. to be involved in resolving this issue and clearly Americans think this is an important issue for the American national interests. That is obvious from the results.

Now, how about what they want the U.S. to do. Do they want the U.S. to lean toward neither side? Do they want the U.S. to lean toward Israel? Or do they want the U.S. to lean toward the Palestinians? What is the view of the public? Well, 67 percent say they want the U.S. to lean toward neither side; 25 percent say they want the U.S. to lean toward Israel; and 2 percent say they want the U.S. to lean towards the Palestinians.

Now, I have to tell you that this is not a remarkable finding. This has been actually rather consistent. The only difference -- we have historically had, and Steve can talk about that because we've done, you know, polling on this kind of issue before, and generally when you give people this third option which is lean toward neither side, you generally get roughly two-thirds who say lean toward neither side. So the fluctuating percentage is typically that other -- lean toward Israel or lean toward the Palestinians and that ratio has changed over time. In fact, it is very high in comparison to where it was 10 years ago. I think it was more like one to five and now it's much higher than that.

Now, here is the more interesting story, which is how do people think about this issue in terms of leaning toward one side or the other, depending on how they rank the issue. As I suggested to you that the higher the issues rank in people's priority,

the more it matters for them in terms of how they behave and the more it matters in terms of the pressure they put into the political process. So the ranking matters a lot.

So what are the views of those who rank the issue high in their priorities? And you can see I broke it down here. Most important, top three, top five, not top five. And the story indeed is telling. Those who rank it as the most important issue, 50 percent want to lean toward Israel. Those who rank it in the top 3, 30 percent; those who want to rank it in the top 5, 29 percent; those who don't rank it in the top 5, only 14 percent.

So, in essence, the higher they rank the issue in their priorities, the more they want the U.S. to lean toward Israel. The less -- the lower they rank the issue, the more they want the U.S. to be -- to lean toward neither side. And that is very clear. We could see it, you know, just goes on a straight line.

However, if you look at these trends, there are some very interesting trends that are going in a different direction, particularly with age. Look at the -- over 60 to the young 18 to 29, the older people are the more they want American diplomacy toward -- to lean toward Israel. The younger they are, the more they want the U.S. to lean toward neither side. So in terms of age, it's moving at a different direction. The generational change, it looks different here. Now, obviously there's other factors and sociology that could impact that but that's what it looks like right now.

Interestingly, there is also differences when you look at, you know, race ethnicity. If you look at the graph, you know, 30 percent of whites want American diplomacy to lean toward Israel but only 10 percent of blacks and 15 percent of Hispanics. So clearly, again, that's a trend issue in terms of the population change. It's going in another direction.

Now, the most striking graph actually is the one when you divide people by republican and democrat. This one is really particularly telling. Look at the graph.

Among republicans it's divided almost 50/50. Forty-six percent want the U.S. to lean toward Israel and 50 percent want the U.S. to lean toward neither side. Among democrats and independents, both categories, you know, the overwhelming majorities want the U.S. to lean toward neither side.

Still, obviously, if you look only -- lean toward Israel and lean toward the Palestinians, the ratio is huge in favor of leaning toward Israel, even among independents, even among democrats. But clearly, in terms of, you know, the way the country is divided now on republican, democrat, independent, there's a huge difference in the views of the constituency.

By the way, the same thing sort of holds to a lesser extent but also male-female. So females want to more to lean toward neither side than males. So that is the trend in that -- on this public opinion poll, by the way, we have other questions pertaining to the musk issue and civil rights in the U.S. I'm not releasing those today. We'll do another -- that will be a separate issue. We're focused on foreign policy issues for now.

Now, the next poll is one that was conducted in November -- November 17-24 -- that I did through the Doha Institute in Institute in Israel, and it is among 500 Israeli Jews. This is only Jewish Israelis. Now, let me again reiterate the reason we're doing that is that initially I was doing the Arab citizens of Israel survey and the methodology that was comparable to what I was doing in the Arab world, to have some comparison. And so we had to stick with that. And then have a separate poll for Jewish Israelis. Typically, people do both at the same time and they try to control. But the advantage of what we've done obviously is we have much more data on the Arab citizens of Israel because we have a larger sample than we normally do when we do a national sample within Israel.

First, attitudes towards the U.S. Israelis still are very -- have favorable

views toward the U.S., overwhelmingly: very favorable, 22 percent; somewhat favorable, 56 percent.

Self-identity. Now, this question I ask in part because I want to compare -- I'm very interested in the way people define themselves, how they identify themselves. In the Arab world, I remind you, those of you who have seen the results of the Arab Public Opinion Poll, including a 2000 Arab Public Opinion Poll, in the Arab World, people really are divided in the identity that they emphasize. Some say they're Muslim first, some say they're Arab first. Some say they're Egyptian or Jordanian first. But overall, aggregately in the data that we have, only about one-third of Arabs identify first with the state. The other two-thirds identify first either Muslims or Arabs. And so I wanted to see if there's something comparable going on here both within the Arab citizens of Israel and also among Jewish Citizens of Israel. So I asked how they identify themselves. And it's interesting because I think you have something of a similar trend. Half of Israelis identify themselves as Jews first and only 39 percent identify themselves as Israeli first. Remember, this is not always. Just Jewish-Israelis. Again, I keep repeating that because a lot of the polling that you're going to see will be Israelis. This is Jewish-Israelis. So it's very interesting that that's the case.

On prospects of lasting peace in the Middle East, it'll happen in the next five years. It's inevitable it will take longer. I don't believe it will ever happen. Here's what we have. You know, half of the population think it'll never happen, and those who think it'll happen, think it'll happen certainly not in the next five years. And by the way, that is almost identical to the Arab Public Opinion Poll of 2010. About -- the Arab Opinion Poll I think was actually a little bit more, maybe a little over 50 percent of the Arab public in the 6 countries that I typically study that said it'll never happen. So there's a lot of pessimism. And you'll see that's true also among the Arab citizens of Israeli. A lot of

pessimism about the prospects of peace.

Now, assessing the Obama Administration, here's a question that I ask -- I ask it also in the Arab world -- which is what is the prism through which they're evaluating the Obama Administration? What are they looking at? Are they looking at what it's doing toward Iran? What it's doing toward the Muslim world? Economic assistance to Israel? Human rights? Spreading democracy? What matters most to them in evaluating the Obama Administration. When we did the Arab public opinion poll it was clear that the first issue that Arabs identify is the Arab-Israeli issue. That is the prism through which they evaluate American foreign policy.

Well, it's interesting. That's true for Israelis, too. Even at a time when you actually think about Iran and you know that people talk about Iran, it's an important issue and it is a big issue in Israel and people are worried about Iran, and certainly governments are, still their key prism of evaluation of American foreign policy is not Iran and not assistance to Israel, but the Arab-Israeli issue, 42 percent, that's the ranking of the issue.

How about the Obama -- President Obama? What are the views of President Obama? We know what happened in the Arab world. It started off being warm in 2009. It declined in 2010. What about Jewish-Israelis views of President Obama? We know there are a lot of people who think that, you know, he gets below the margin of error support in Israel. Well, that doesn't turn out to be true. In fact, opinion is very divided about Obama. They're more negative than positive, but 41 percent have a somewhat positive opinion of Obama. And 51 percent have a somewhat negative opinion of the president. So it's far more divided than I think people realize. Somewhat more negative but, you know, it's interesting actually. It probably is very close to the American public opinion of the president right now and to some extent certainly warmer

toward the president than is Arab public opinion right now. But you'll see it's not as warm as Arab citizens of Israel that have a much more positive view of Obama.

What about Israel as a Jewish state? Now, you know this is a very important issue. It's been an issue in the debate, in the negotiations right now, whether or not the Palestinian authority should recognize Israel as a Jewish state as a precondition for a deal. And so I asked a question; I gave them three options. I support the demand that, you know, Palestinians accept Israel as a Jewish state and demand that such an acceptance be preconditioned for negotiations or any settlement freeze. And the second is support it but would accept Palestinian acceptance as part of a final peace agreement. So it's not a precondition, but in the end that's what I would expect. Or I do not support it. I do not support this demand. So I gave them three options.

And you can see here that the largest group is the one that actually says, well, I accept it but I can wait until there is a final status deal. And you have about one-third -- one-third of Jewish Israelis who say I don't, you know, who want it as a precondition. Only one-third want it as a precondition. Remember, this is only Jewish-Israelis. When you add 25 percent Arab citizens of Israel who are overwhelmingly opposed to defining Israel as a Jewish state to begin with, the mixture is going to look different. So this is just Jewish-Israelis. The numbers will look different if you add Arabs and non-Jewish. Because you would have 20 percent Arab citizens, another 5 percent other kind of groups.

Now, one of the questions I asked and Yoram will maybe talk about that - - one of the ideas that was put on the table -- is that if there is a way that defining Israel as the homeland of the Jewish people could also be defined in a way that it accommodates the non-Jewish citizens of Israel. And so we put the formulation forth to see what people thought about it, which is Israel as the homeland of the Jewish people

and of all its citizens and that is that whether they support it or oppose this kind of formulation. And you can see that 71 percent support this formulation. Seventy-one percent of Jewish-Israelis support this formulation; 27 percent reject it.

Which of the following is closer to your view? I'm prepared for a just peace with the Arabs, you know, based on the 67 borders with some modifications. Even if Arab states accept and recognize Israel, I will not accept such peace. And neither, meaning maybe they have another option. And this, by the way, is intended just to see whether you have principled oppositions. Not really trying to find out what terms the public will accept. So the most important number is really the middle number, which is 27. Twenty-seven percent basically have a principled opposition to making any compromise, even if they have Arab acceptance.

Now, that's by the way true in the Arab poll. In the Arab poll we have a paralleled question, which is again not intended to know what the bottom line is, but rather whether they have principled opposition to recognizing Israel, and we find in the past couple of years that basically you have one-quarter of the public who is principally opposed. So it's very comparable actually in terms of the percentage that I call principled opposition to a deal. The others may disagree on terms but they're not principled opposition to a deal.

Should or shouldn't Israel do more than it does today to promote comprehensive peace with the Arabs based on the 1967 borders with agreed modifications and the establishment of a peaceful Palestinian state next to Israel? Sixty-two percent say yes and 35 percent say no. So again, you know, you have a public that clearly wants to see more action in the pursuit of peace.

Outcome of a two-state solution. What would happen if the two-state solution collapsed? What would happen if the two-state solution collapses? We asked

that in the Arab world as well and we asked that among Arab citizens of Israel. And you see here we gave them several options. The Palestinians -- it'll lead to one state. It'll lead to a state of intense conflict for years to come, the status quo will continue, and Palestinians will eventually surrender to Israeli power and give up. And what we have here is look at the tail end of these extremes. Very few people believe, A, it'll lead to a one state solution or that it will lead to Palestinians giving up. So people are divided between those who think it's going to lead to intense conflict or not much will change. And in some ways in the Arab world you have something comparable, although in the Arab world you have even more people thinking it'll lead to intense conflict but you don't have people who -- where it's very, very similar is that on the tail ends of these you don't have much support -- you don't have people who believe it's going to lead to one state even in the Arab world. And you don't have people who believe the Palestinians are going to give up. This is what you have.

Now, I just want to -- we've asked a question which is an open question that I ask every year just to figure out, you know, the prism through which people are looking at the world. And the question is whom among world leaders do you admire most outside your own country? I don't want to put them in a position to judge it on leaders. I ask that in the Arab world. And because it's an open question we rarely have really large numbers. No one has huge majorities. We get dozens of names proposed because they can write any name they want and it could be from a famous actor to a genuine world leader to sometimes a dead leader that is mentioned in that mix. So it's just a question of how people rank. And sometimes we have first and second to get a little flavor to see how much support there is.

Now, this is the first time I ask this question among Jewish-Israelis so I don't have, you know, a historic comparison here to know. But here is a striking thing.

That while no one really gets a very high degree of admiration, you know, the top is just a little below 10 percent, it is striking that in 2010 the Jews of Israel admire more than anyone else in the entire world a German. I mean, that is really quite striking I think. And so you can see Angela Merkel is the most admired leader, not huge, you know, but again an open question. This is a respectable number followed by Bill Clinton. But here's the other shocker. The third most admired person on that list is Barack Obama. And he ranks -- he ranks third, that people mention third most on that list. And really no one pretty much comes after that that comes close to that list. Again, it's not very high but that's intensity. Because when people are mentioning a hero, you know, even nine percent of people thinking of you as a hero out of the blue, they're coming up with the name, that's a lot. It's not -- this is not a popularity contest. This is how intensely you feel about someone to name them as your most admired person in the world.

But here's the bad news for President Obama. As I said, he is -- he's also the second most disliked in Israel. You know, you could see that in the numbers that I showed you earlier, how divided people are about him. He's the third most liked but he's also -- 10 percent name him as the second most disliked leader. Hamadin Rijad not surprisingly is 41 percent the most disliked leader by Israeli Jews.

Now, there are a couple of interesting things on that list. One interesting thing is that Hassan Nasrallah is less than 4 percent on that list. He's not -- he doesn't score as high as one might expect, the leader of Hezbollah. The prime minister of Turkey, Erdoğan, does not even show up on that list of most disliked, despite all the intensity of the discourse within Israel and in the past few months. They're not named -- he's not named as a most disliked leader, even though he gets a lot of bad press now. So it's very interesting to see how the public is thinking about this.

I'm not going to go through the empathy questions. I asked a lot of

empathy questions. I'm happy to answer those because one of the things that I tried to do in these polls is to find out under what circumstances people empathize with the other side. I ask that -- I started asking empathy questions in the 2010 Arab Public Opinion Poll and I have -- I ask questions in this particular poll among Jews and among Arabs. And, you know, the kind of reaction I'm getting is very similar to the kind of results I'm getting in the Arab world, which is that generally when people see favorable footage of the other side, rather than -- or when they see pictures of victims and civilian victims of the other side, the first reaction is not to empathize. The first reaction is to think it's going to take away from their cause or get third party sympathy away from them. And so in that sense we see a lot less empathy expressed when people are exposed to pictures of victims of the other. And we've seen confirmation of that in both polls. I'd be happy to answer questions about that.

Let me turn to the third poll and just review some of the results and then we'll open up the conversation.

This poll is actually the second poll that I conduct among Arab Palestinian citizens of Israel. I conducted one in 2009. And it's a little bit longer because some of the questions were intended to see whether their answers are different from the questions that I ask in the Arab world to see the extent to which citizens of Israel who are Arabs identify themselves differently from citizens of Egypt or Jordan or Saudi Arabia and the extent to which their opinions are different. And the extent to which the media market is different. And this was done -- it was a sample of 600. It was done October 20 to November 3rd, plus or minus for a margin of error.

Now, on identity, when you think about yourself, which of the following is your most important identity? And you could see that again, you know, the ethnic and religious identity in some ways is stronger. Thirty-six percent identify themselves as Arab

first; 22 percent as Palestinian first; 19 percent is Muslim first; and 12 percent is Israeli first. Now, that varies a little bit depending on their religious -- actually quite a bit, not a little bit. Muslims, you could see the Arab first, 34 percent. Then it's Muslim, 27 percent. Then Palestinian, then Israeli. Christians are overwhelmingly Arab first and then Palestinian, then Israeli. But the Christian identity is very insignificant in comparison. In fact, it's the only actual group that does not so much identify with the religion as a key identity. And the Jews, 39 percent say Jews first and then 31 percent say Israeli, and then Arab third and Palestinian fourth.

I divided this identity by people who in the demographics -- I had a demographic question asking people whether they had relatives who became refugees in 1948 or not. And it turns out that roughly half of Arab Palestinian citizens of Israel have relatives who were refugees -- who became refugees in '48. And so I decided that since this is sort of a precondition of the state in a way, this is what they start with, to see whether that variable has an impact on the way people think about the issues. And I have to tell you that in my study it is the single most important demographic variable explaining the variations, even stronger on some issues than ethnical religious background. It is by far the most telling aspect, demographic aspect of opinion. And you can see it here on the identity question, for example. The yes meaning those who have relatives; the no meaning those who don't have relatives who were refugees. So if you look at the yes line, you know, 30 percent, roughly the same as those who identify as Arab, identify themselves as Palestinian first, as opposed to 12 percent at the bottom, you know, on the no. The Palestinian identity is much stronger among those who have refugee relatives. And you'll see it in other variables as well.

What about attitudes towards the U.S., particularly in comparison to the ones in the Arab world? Well, they're divided. You can see that it's slightly more

negative than positive, but that was true also in 2009. It's gotten a little bit worse. In 2009, 44 percent had somewhat positive views of the U.S. In 2010, it's 37 percent. Now, that is better than you have in the Arab world for sure, but the trend obviously is going down the same way that it went in the Arab world from 2009 to 2010.

What about President Obama? Well, here's an interesting community that still is more favorable toward the president than negative. In 2009, it was overwhelmingly positive. You had 60 percent of Arab citizens of Israel who had a favorable view of the president. In 2010, you have 45, but that's still better than the 34 who were negative. So, clearly more positive views of the president.

Same thing in terms of when you look at what issues they look at to evaluate the Obama Administration and the president. The Arab-Israeli issue is number one as it was in 2009. There's not, you know, considerable changes. It's still number one in the way they evaluate American policy.

They're somewhat positive about American policy in the Middle East. And I just want to go through very quickly here toward Iran. And I just want to show you the attitudes toward Iran because I know last summer when we released the polls in -- the Arab Public Opinion Poll, there was striking about Iran because it was a mood of kind of surprise that the Arab public was kind of in a defiance mood of being more open to Iran.

So one of the questions we asked is do you think Iran is conducting research for peaceful purposes or is it in your opinion developing nuclear weapons? Well, the majority is no change from 2009 to 2010. It's virtually identical. And so, you know, 61 percent think Iran is developing nuclear weapons. They believe, you know, they don't believe Iran. By the way, that's true in the Arab world, too. They actually think Iran is trying to develop nuclear weapons.

What about Iran? Does Iran have the right to its nuclear program or should Iran be pressured to stop its nuclear program? And if you recall, in the Arab world in the 2010 poll, what we had was that a majority of Arabs believe that Iran has the right to its nuclear program and should not be pressured by the international community to stop its nuclear program. Well, among Arab citizens of Israel, actually that holds true. Not to the same degree but you can see they are more divided on it but still 50 percent. Virtually no change from last year, roughly the same. And you have, you know, 50 percent say Iran has the right and, you know, it shouldn't be pressured. And 41 percent say it should be stopped.

One key difference from the Arab world is the following, which is do you think if Iran were to acquire -- let me just see here. This is based on refugees. If Iran were to acquire nuclear weapons would the outcome be positive for the Middle East or negative for the Middle East? In the 2010 Arab Public Opinion Poll there was actually slight aggregately, while varied from country to country, aggregately there was -- they thought it was slightly positive for the Middle East. Here, actually it's, you know, a majority of it says it's negative for the Middle East. It's not an overwhelming majority. You have 21 percent who say it's positive; 18 percent who say it doesn't matter, but a slight majority who think it would be negative for the Middle East.

On the Arab Israeli conflict, the right of return. How do you feel about the right of return? Not too important; important but a compromise should be found; important and cannot be compromised in any way. Look at that. There's not much change from 2009. Majorities say important cannot be compromised in any way. It's a very strong issue even among Arab citizens of Israel. It is really striking -- by the way, I don't have -- I don't think I have the table here but as you can imagine, if you break them down between those who have relatives who became refugees in '48 and those who

don't, the overwhelming majority or those who had relatives and refugees think it's important and the others are more divided. So on this it's very critical this variable that I talked about.

What would happen if the two-state solution collapses? Very similar to Jewish attitudes, the trend, you know, the numbers are slightly different but not much different. You know, very few people believe it's going to lead to one state. Very few people believe Palestinians will surrender. And they're divided between the state of conflict for years to come and -- or the status quo will continue. So actually, Arab and Jewish attitudes on this issue are pretty much the same.

Israel as a Jewish state. Do you accept without conditions; accept only if Palestinian state is established; or Arab Palestinian citizens of Israel given full rights? You can see half of Arab citizens of Israel say do not accept under any circumstances. The other half are more flexible but it's an issue of division on that. And there are 13 who accept without conditions. And it varies along sectarian lines.

I'm just going to show you the division. If you look at -- just if you look at the people who had relatives who were refugees, how much more rigid they are on this one. Yes, the two top columns, 2009, 2010, you have 60 and 61 percent who say don't accept under any circumstances. That goes down to 36 percent in 2010 among those who don't have relatives who were refugees. So that state really is extremely important. That variable is extremely important in explaining the attitudes.

The prospects of lasting peace. You can see here more pessimism than in 2009. In 2009, 52 percent think it will never happen. In 2010, 63 percent think it'll never happen. So very similar to the Israeli-Jewish trends. You have comparable.

In terms of their sympathies with the Palestinian authority and the divide within the Palestinians among the Palestinians themselves, you can see that there's not

much change from 2009 to 2010. They don't really have much sympathy with either side. Only 11 percent have sympathy with Hamas. Even smaller number with Feta, five percent. Fifty-four percent say none of the above. A clear sense of frustration with Palestinian leadership.

When you look at the internal Palestinian political divisions, do you prefer to see the Feta government, the Hamas government, the National Unity government or other? Well, you can see National Unity government is the preferred outcome. That is identical to the numbers we have in the Arab world. Identical. But what's interesting from 2009 to 2010 is the number of people who say other has increased. Even the National Unity government is not an option in their own minds.

Would you accept the transfer of some Arab-Palestinian towns currently in Israel to a new Palestinian state when established? Remember, there are people who are suggesting that in the exchange of territories. And what do Arab citizens of Israel think of this issue? The overwhelming majority reject it. There are people who actually accept it. You have nearly one-third. Thirty-six percent, actually one-third. Yes. And then you have 58 percent who reject it.

Now, when you ask them for reasons by the way why they accept -- those who reject it, who say no, we followed up with a question. So what is the most important reason that you don't want this to happen? It's interesting actually. Not much changed from 2009 to 2010. A little bit of a change but the trends are the same. Jobs in Israel are better is number one. Number two, I don't want to be separated from other Israeli-Palestinian Arabs. And then you have a few other things. It's clear those are some of the reasons.

The loyalty oath. We asked, you know, there is a proposed law in Israel to have non-Jews -- new non-Jewish citizens be subject to a loyalty oath to Israel as a

Jewish state. And 51 percent oppose it among Arabs. Twenty-two percent would support it if Israel was defined as a state of all. But you know, a majority oppose it. Now, when you ask them why -- I'm just going to go through. This, by the way, if you look again, people who had refugee relatives versus no refugee relatives, the overwhelming majority, 67 percent of those who have relatives of refugees say no, whereas among those who don't have refugee relatives it's far more divided. Far more divided. So that really is a critical variable. It shows up in everything.

Now, why do they reject the loyalty oath? Fifty percent say -- I mean, this is the biggest chunk right here which says because they think it's ultimately aimed at Arab citizens of Israel. That is the kind of the thinking about it. Thirty-three percent say that they reject the definition of Israel as a Jewish state and 10 percent oppose the loyalty oaths in principle.

I just want to go through -- I want to go through quickly. I just want to say that I have -- one of the questions I have about empathy, I ask that in the Arab world, which is, you know, when you watch, you know, a program about the Holocaust, what is your reaction? I asked that in the poll for the first time the last time and I asked of Israeli-Jewish citizens, I asked them what happens when they see the story of refugee homelessness and how they react to that. And in this particular case you can see, you know, 38 percent say they empathize with the Jews; 28 percent say, you know, they resent it because they think it brings sympathy toward Israel at their expense; and 28 percent say they have mixed feelings.

Now, in the Arab countries it's actually flipped. The majority say they resent it and fewer people say they empathize. And you can see, in fact, it's very interesting because exposure obviously matters. I broke down the results by people who say they have Jewish friends and people on the Jewish side who say they have Arab

friends. And it makes all the difference in terms of the degree -- the answers clearly vary depending on the extent to which they have interactions. Remarkably, the majority of Arabs in Israel and the majority of Jews in Israel don't have friends on the other side. Actually, among Israeli Jews, 71 percent say they do not have Arab friends. And, you know, that tells you part of the story, I think, when it comes to the empathy question.

I just want to end with a couple of media things. When, you know, what are they watching? What are Arab citizens of Israel watching? Al-Jazeera is still number one for them, although it dropped from last year. As it did, by the way, from 2009 to 2010 in the Arab world. I can't figure out yet why. I'm going to have to do a little bit of analysis of that but there's no question there was a drop. But it's still number one. And Israeli TV networks have actually increased from the year before. Al-Manar TV nonetheless of Hezbollah you can see it gets a pretty -- you know, 6 percent, but that's a pretty sizable number of people who say it's their first choice for news. This is the first choice for news identified in that way and NBC is out there. And I think it, you know, it changed from the year before is clear.

When you look at, you know, which country in the world is most threatening to you in an open question and you can see 32 percent named Iran; 28 percent named the U.S.; 17 percent name Israel. And that, you know, tells you something about the mindset of the public on that issue.

So I'm not going to go through the rest of it because there's a lot more. Most of it -- all of it will actually be posted on the website, both the Brookings website and at the University of Maryland website, the Anwar Sadat Chair for Peace and Development. We're going to post all the data with all the breakdowns of the demographics. You're welcome to look at them if you want to pursue it further but I'll end here and turn to the discussion. (Applause)

MR. INDYK: Thank you very much, Shibley. A lot of material to digest. And as a result, of course, we've used up a lot of our time. But let's go directly to Yoram Peri and then Steve for some -- their reactions to it and then hopefully we'll have a little bit of time for questions from the audience.

Yoram, please.

MR. PERI: Thank you. It really doesn't do justice to give you 45 minutes to talk because the survey is so wide in reach and has so many questions. Tens, if not more than hundreds. And you should have more time to do that. But as it's already on the web, I really recommend you to look at it.

I will try to see the forest behind the trees and take four major points that one can summarize the survey or the surveys. In a way, these surveys confirm very many trends that were seen by three major surveys that were published in the last four or five months. The first one is Professor Samas Moha's index of Arab-Israeli-Jewish relations. He calls it the "Lost 2000 Decade." Samas Moha is from Haifa University and he does a lot of research in the Arab community.

The second one is the survey that was published last week by the Israeli Democracy Institute, the yearly "Democracy Index." And the third one is the very interesting survey that was done by the Institution for National Security studies at Tel Aviv University, INSS, that I believe that Martin has some fingers there. It's called "Vox Populi: Trends in the Israeli Public Opinion on National Security 2004-2010."

So all three surveys give you a perspective of the last decade. And the one that we hear today is really another layer that can be put on the previous three which confirms very many of the points that were done there but adds a lot. Because there are so many questions and it's so detailed and there are very many questions that were not asked by the others so I really recommend you to see it.

Let's start with the first theory or the first idea. The first point is that if you look at the decade, the last decade, the first decade of the 20th century, you'll see clearly a withdrawal from positions that were held by the Israeli Jews and Arabs. And by Arabs. Lack of trust, radicalization, polarization of the political map. Both communities move to the sides. And lack of trust in the hope for probability to have -- to get peace in the future, yet not a decline in the willingness to seek peace. That's quite interesting.

For example, talking about lack of trust, lack of belief, lack of hope. In Shibley's survey you saw that the number of people who did not believe that there is an option to make peace in the future went up from 52 percent to 63 percent. But if you look at the Israeli position, for example, in one of the other cases, only 27 percent of the Israelis were against withdrawal in any case. In your study it was 27 percent of the Israeli Jews -- only 27 percent -- keep the strong position that Israel should not withdraw from the territories. Not more than 27 percent.

So, on the one hand, you have a very high level of desire to see peace, but, at the same time, very low level of hope that peace will be achieved. In the survey of INSS, about two-thirds of the Israelis want the peace process to continue, but only one-third believe that something will come out -- something positive will come out of it. We saw the same figures, more or less, today. So that's one point.

Now, the second point is -- has to do not so much with the polarization of position but with the structural change of the public opinion, both among Israelis, Israeli Jews, Palestinians, and I guess in the Arab world as well. But particularly among Israelis. And that is the change from -- the change of the basis of collective identity in Israel. The conflict that was in the past much more political became more based on religious elements. We know of that. We don't need surveys for that but we saw that in many of the questions that were asked and were shown to us. But beyond that it's the ethnic

element. So what we see is that the structure of the self identity or collective identity of the Israeli Jews and the Israeli Palestinians have moved from the basis of political nationalism to the basis of ethno and religious nationalism. For example, when people say about themselves that they are Muslims or Arabs rather than Palestinians or the Jews say that -- the Israeli Jews say that first of all I am a Jew and fewer say I'm an Israeli. In the past there were more Israelis among the Israelis. Now there are more Jews among the Israelis. So it's a change of the basis of self perception. And the outcome or the result is very clear. Not only that we hear it in the preachers or the imams on the mosques or in the latest expression of fewer Israeli -- more than a few Israeli rabbis who argue that the Jews in Israel should not let Palestinian Israeli or Arab Israelis take -- rent apartments.

You hear it in -- you see it in another way as well, and that is that the -- you see that the way the conflict is described is less on practical political elements but more on symbolic issues. And if you look beyond the symbolism, you find fascinating topics. For example, the only -- as I said earlier, only a fourth of the Israelis -- a quarter of the Israelis are totally against any withdrawal. So there's much more pragmatism than what you'll read in the newspapers today. Among the Palestinians, and here Shibley I would read the picture the opposite way that you read it. You said that very many, about 60 percent of the Palestinians support the right of return. I would say the opposite. Forty percent of the Palestinians are willing to compromise on the right of return. It's a huge number, almost half of the Palestinians. This is the major topic that they raise every time and 40 percent are willing to see a compromise on that.

So if you look beyond the symbolism, there is a lot of room for an agreement for compromise. But because the structure of the self identity, the collective identity has changed, we are now very deep into the ethnoreligious conflict much more

than we were in the past.

The third point is why is that pessimism? And you saw that in all of the surveys that you did. Both the Israeli Jews, the Israeli Arabs and others. Lack of confidence with leadership. Lack of trust with political leadership, both in the United States and Israel and within the Palestinians. The level of trust in the Knesset went down to 37 percent. Only 25 percent have some trust with parties in Israel.

Even among the international leaders, you mentioned about the support of Israelis of the popularity of international leaders among Israelis. So the highest one, Merkel had only 9 percent. In the past it used to be much higher. There is a decline of confidence in political leadership, in the political process, and no wonder that people do not see a future because there are no leaders to lead them towards that direction.

I want to touch another point which I think is very interesting and very important, particularly for the American community, both Jews and non-Jews. And that is that the position of American public vis-à-vis Israel and the conflict. So it's true that the American people do support Israel much more than the Palestinians. The empathy is much higher for the Israelis than the Palestinians. Twenty-five percent compared to two percent. But the structure of support has changed dramatically. And this is important because there was -- there is a huge debate among many people, both in Israel and the United States, about the structure. Since four months ago or five months ago, Peter Barnhart published his article in the *New York Review of Books* in which he argued that there's a change in the structure of support in Israel and very many people said no, that's not true. It's not right. And they based on the survey of the American Jewish committee.

Now, there is a change, dramatic change, important change which will lead who knows where. And the change is that why in the past the support for Israel crossed any group -- political, color, whatever. Today you'll see a major change between

parties, democrats and republicans, age, young and old, and gender. And the results that you published were straight from one of the two camps in this very interesting debate that is going on in America, particularly the American jury.

Let me add one last point, and that is two short points. One is that you asked me to talk about, and that's the definition of Israel. You know that there is a basic discussion in Israel about the issue of Israel as a Jewish state. I personally don't like the term Jewish state. A state cannot be Jewish. What is a Jewish state? Jewish air? Jewish land? Jewish trees? Jewish chairs? People are Jewish or non-Jewish.

SPEAKER: Jewish food.

MR. PERI: Jewish food. That's a good -- that's true. So, but, so, and the question is whether Israel should be a state of the Jewish people or as some post-Zionists and anti-Zionists argue that Israel should be a state of all its citizens. And the solution that independently both Shibley and I reached a long time ago and advocate is that Israel should be the state of the Jewish people and all its citizens. The Jews have the right, like any other nation, to have political representation and expression in the state. The Palestinians have the same right in Palestine and future Palestine. And yet because there are 70 percent Arabs or Palestinians in Israel and few percent non-Jews, they have the right to be as equal as the Jews there. So the solution for that problem, what -- how will this state be defined, is so simple if it will be defined as the state of the Jewish people and all its citizens. And I was very surprised and happy to see that 71 percent of the Israelis supported that proposition.

Last point. Following the -- following the publication of the Wikipedia archives --

SPEAKER: WikiLeaks.

MR. PERI: WikiLeaks, sorry. Prime Minister Netanyahu celebrated and

he spoke everywhere, including his annual meeting with the editorial board, the committee of the Israeli editors of newspapers in which he argued that in this major question what comes first, the Israeli Palestinian conflict or the Irani threat, he was right. It's the Irani threat. And the relations of the document show that even the leaders of the Arab world agree with it. So we were right. If an Israeli-Palestinian issue has been solved, it won't have anything to do with the Irani thing.

Shibley himself published an article -- an excellent article which I recommend you to read -- you see, I'm following you -- in the *National Interest* a week ago, in which he said that it is true. The Arab leaders privately say something to the Israelis that they don't do publicly. However, the public opinion in their states think differently. And a year ago your results showed very well that the majority of the Arab people in Arab states think that Israel is the major enemy of the Arab world, more than -- much more than Iran.

Now, surprisingly, today you showed us different. Today you said that the major threat is Iran.

MR. TELHAMI: And Arab citizens of Israel. That's not the Arab World.

MR. PERI: So you answered the question that I wanted to ask you. All right. So that's the answer. Fine, very good. Thank you.

MR. INDYK: Thank you, Yoram. But the Israeli Jews did not see Iran as the threat that one might expect to be perceived as given their prime ministers' position on this.

MR. TELHAMI: At least they're not evaluating American foreign policy based on what the U.S. is doing or not doing in Iran. They're primarily looking at the Arab-Israeli relations.

MR. INDYK: Steve. Quickly, please, because we need to leave a few

minutes for questions.

MR. KULL: Sure. I'll try to be brief. And also ultimately try to see if there is any kind of positive angle on all these data that we're looking at today and from other sources that we've been analyzing at PIPA.

Let's start by looking at this interesting finding among Israeli Jews, that they have a positive view of the United States at the level of 78 percent but only a positive view of Obama at 41 percent. So it seems that in some ways they are differentiating Obama from the United States. Al Richman did a very interesting analysis that you'll be able to find that looks at views of the U.S. and finds that they're independent of attitudes about making accommodations for a peace agreement. There's also attitudes about the U.S. that are independent of whether people think the U.S. should play an active role.

So what does this all point to? It points to the Israeli Jews think of the U.S. as basically a system that gives them unconditional support. That Obama is pretty much in a position to use carrots but not sticks. And this -- the question then is this -- is this likely to continue to be the case in the long run for there to be this unconditional support coming from the U.S.? Well, I would say certainly in the short run, yes. But if we look at U.S. public opinion, is it likely that that will remain that way indefinitely.

What about in a sense the tectonic plates? That's how I think of it. If you have a situation with public opinion, it does not dictate public policy but it creates a kind of pressure, a tectonic plate-type of pressure that can ultimately in the long term bring about some change.

So does the American public support this kind of unconditional support for Israel? Well, as Shibley pointed out there is a strong support in the American public for the United States to not take sides in the conflict. If you ask Americans which side

they sympathize with more, they sympathize with Israel more. It's sort of an emotional thing almost. But what do they want to see the U.S. do? They want the U.S. to play an even handed role.

What are we seeing over time? We are seeing an increasing impatience I would say with Israel. We're seeing increasing opposition to Israel's settlements. So most recently three-quarters said that they were -- they disapproved of the settlements. And there is a readiness, a greater readiness in the American public to put pressure on Israel than you find in the U.S. Government. There's even readiness to hold back aid as a way to pressure Israel to move toward a peace agreement.

Now, there is -- you may respond by saying so what. That doesn't seem to be what really governs things. It does seem that the forces that influence U.S. policy are more on the side of supporting Israel and as Shibley pointed out those who support Israel more -- those who put more attention on the issue want the U.S. to support Israel more than others. But even here it's somewhat divided. Even here you don't have a majority.

If you look at long-term trends, as Shibley pointed out, younger people are not quite as sympathetic. So here again you see the same kinds of long-term trends. There's also a growing sense that what is happening in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is important to the U.S. People are paying more attention to it and that means more people who are not as ready to be as aligned with Israel. Again, I'm not making any kind of short-term prediction, just that these are sort of long-term trends given the dynamics in public opinion.

Now, if you look at the Israeli-Palestinian conflict you see some interesting and parallel dynamics. It has been pointed out, and here again you can find some interesting data on this on our website, that if you look -- if you take the Israeli and

Palestinian publics, they are much more ready to find common ground than our leaders. Just as in the U.S., groups that have intense feelings about the issue tend to dominate and have the capacity for undermining movement toward common ground.

Now, if you look at the data, it's not all clear. It's not like there are, you know, large majorities that are saying, yes, let's make all these concessions and so on. But in general in this kind of situation in a conflict situation, in a poll you cannot say to somebody what is your bottom line? You know, what is it you're willing to do? What is it you're willing to give up. And polls tend to ask questions like that. You know, would you be willing to do X, Y, or Z in support of getting the peace agreement? Well, you know, in a sukha you don't come in and say, okay, I want this rug. What's the lowest price you're going to pay? So you can see in the polling data that people are engaging in a sense in bargaining behavior right there in the poll. I won't go into all the details, but by asking multiple questions that becomes clear.

Also, as noted in Shibley's poll, Jewish opinion is not as hard line on the question of accepting Israel as a Jewish state as a precondition for negotiation as the government position is. You find in Israel in the general public annoyance with the settlers. So again, all of these forces in a sense on the Palestinian side you see frustration with both Fata and Hamas, this desire for the parties to come together. So all of these are in a sense pressures, long-term pressures that tend to move towards some kind of shift in the patterns that we've seen heretofore.

So that was my effort at eliciting some kind of long-term optimism based on looking at what publics all around seem to be saying.

MR. INDYK: Thank you. I'm making a command decision here. We'll go 10 minutes longer than normal. Excuse me. And let's go straight to questions. Please identify yourself and make sure you ask a question.

SPEAKER: My name is (inaudible) Daily Newspaper. Now that we can all take comfort in the stability of the status quo and perpetual conflict, what would you say to the secretary of state who still thinks that she can really conclude this deal by year's end or within the remaining nine months and so on? Thank you.

MR. TELHAMI: Well, first of all, maybe she already knows. She's going to talk tomorrow night at the Saban Forum so we'll hear. But, you know, one of the things that's obviously clear, the American public think this is an important issue. The Arab and Israeli publics clearly are open to a deal. There is -- when you look at the data it's obvious. They're pessimistic. They don't have an alternative. They're pessimistic but they think things are going to get worse if there is no deal. So I think there's an opportunity, and I don't think we can walk away from it. And I think time is short. So I think if I'm looking at it, you know, I just finished drafting part of a book on American policy in the Middle East in the past 20 years and Martin was part of the Clinton Administration. Obviously they failed at Camp David. But one of the striking things --

MR. INDYK: Thank you for reminding us of that.

MR. TELHAMI: But you had a decade of, you know, no major war in the Middle East. That's not bad. So, you know, there's a silver lining somewhere.

But the amazing thing is there doesn't appear to have been major analysis of the consequences of diplomatic failure for America's interests. There were political consequences and so forth and I think we are now at -- if you look at the trends, you know, sort of the ethnic sectarianism identity that is emerging, the pessimism that is out there, the absence of ideas in the region, it doesn't bode well for what might happen if there's a collapse. And I think we can't afford it.

MR. INDYK: Okay. Yes, please. Next to Hassan.

MS. BELBISSIO: Thank you. Nadia Belbissio with NBC Television.

Thank you very much for the survey. I'm glad to know that we're number three on the list in terms of the television watched in the region.

I wanted to ask you a technical question. As you know, Israel launched a major war in Gaza and they've seen Hamas or perceived it as a major threat, the huge expense of 1,400 civilian deaths. Why you didn't or you decided to omit in your survey when it comes to the Israeli Jews to talk about Hamas and its perceived threat? Is it still seen as such? Do they think that they consolidate their power in Gaza? Are they moving to the West Bank? How do you perceive them? Why you decided not to go that way?

MR. TELHAMI: As usual, you know, when you do a poll, you know, you have a particular aim. There are many questions you can ask. If this was strictly a question among Jews about the conflict I would have done that. Actually, the main aim of the part among the Jewish citizens was to ask parallel questions particularly pertaining to identity and empathy with the Arab citizens because my aim wasn't just to poll Israeli Jews on everything to do with the Arab-Israel conflict. So it was really, you know, these are like -- the project's aim isn't to look at all aspects of Jewish opinion with the Arab-Israeli conflict. And on Gaza, there were a lot of questions that we asked the Arab citizens because we were comparing with the Arab world, but that wasn't the aim of the project.

MR. INDYK: Okay. One here and then we'll go over there.

SPEAKER: Mohammed (inaudible), Voice for America. With such support for peace as shown in the survey results, how do you explain the impasse in the negotiations and what kind of message people in the area and the United States are sending to the Obama Administration?

MR. TELHAMI: Anybody who wants to take a cut at this.

SPEAKER: Go ahead.

MR. INDYK: It's your poll, Shibley. Don't be shy. But I'm sure Yoram and Steve will weigh in if they have something to say.

SPEAKER: I answered that question.

MR. TELHAMI: It's not -- I mean, there's no secret to it. I mean, this is not unusual where you have openness on both sides and people don't trust. And who's going to take the first step? I happen to think that while you cannot possibly impose a solution on both sides because it's, you know, for them it's their futures, the U.S. couldn't impose it on weak Palestinians at Camp David, by the way, and obviously you can't impose a solution. I do not think that the parties on their own are capable of breaking the cycle of mistrust to conclude an agreement without outside active -- outside support, particularly American. I just don't think they're capable of it. And I don't think -- it's just you're looking at a particularly odd set of circumstances where you have domestic Israeli politics that are more complex than even usual. They're always complex. And on the Palestinian side let's also not forget there's a division that is critical and a crisis of legitimacy. So you have two governments that have their own peculiarities in historical perspective, but it's more than that. I think that there is more, you know, there is no collective trust and no ability to break through that.

If you look at, you know, I'm a student of conflict. If you look at the history of how conflicts are broken, usually it's some extraordinary or unexpected leaders, you know, that somebody does something unexpected and takes risks that most leaders are not prepared to take or some event that is unexpected or some third party from the outside. They just don't happen on their own. That is, agreements don't happen just automatically on their own.

MR. KULL: Just to underscore, both Israelis and Palestinians want the U.S. to play a stronger role.

MR. INDYK: Okay. Over here. The man in the blue shirt. Please identify yourself.

MR. AMATRUDA: Will Amatruda. Dr. Telhami, in your poll of Arab citizens of Israel, you differentiate between people who have relatives who were refugees from '48-49 and those who didn't. Did you consider differentiating between Arabs who were citizens of Israel under Israeli rule from 1948-49 to the present and those who only became citizens in '67 because of the annexation of Jerusalem and the area around it?

MR. TELHAMI: No, we really haven't. You know, we're not talking about a huge number from the Palestinian -- from the Palestinian community in East Jerusalem who became citizens that you could quantify but I have not done that. It's really -- in the demographics, in fact, you know, I have the typical demographics that we all ask, you know, income, education, gender, religion, sex, geographical, regional. We have regional distribution so we know, for example, where in Jerusalem we pulled. And I actually controlled even the villages to make sure that we have demographic distribution from south to center to north. But this idea about the relatives who are refugees, I had to introduce as an element. I didn't expect it to have as much of an impact as it ended up having. It ended up being by far the most critical variable, more than anything else.

MR. INDYK: Yes, please, in the orange shirt.

SPEAKER: Hi. My name is (inaudible). I'm the Palestinian deputy chief of mission here in D.C. And my question to you, Dr. Telhami, is, you know, you spoke about the change of self perception of Israeli Jews inside Israel and my question here is you spoke -- just before that you spoke also about a leader changing, you know, the tone of conflict and, you know, having leadership to change the atmosphere of conflict or a major event. Do you think that's leadership driven? That change in self perception? Or is it vice versa? And if, you know, can you explain why is this change if it's not a

leadership driven one?

MR. TELHAMI: Can I explain what change? I'm not sure.

SPEAKER: Change in self perception as a Jew, like identifying themselves first as Jews and then as Israelis.

MR. TELHAMI: Well, that, you know, I think, you know, I was -- I actually started writing about this back in the late '90s and certainly when Camp David collapsed was the first one to write that if the Oslo Accords, of course, don't work, we're going -- the nationalist project is going to collapse and you're going to have more and more people thinking in religious and ethnic terms. So I was worried about that then, and I wrote about that more than once, you know, in that line of thinking. And I think we can see it happening. Now, it's not the only reason. There are multiple reasons why we have an intensification of religious and ethnic identity and I think the post 9-11 era has something to do with it at a macro level globally, particularly in the relationship between the West and Muslim majority countries. So the Islamic identity also has been kind of accentuated by the crisis, the global crisis that emerged.

But I think that it's not a surprise. I think as people get more and more pessimistic about the two-state solution and, you know, the nationalist project that has been the basis of negotiations going down, how do they think of themselves? And so I -- and I see that in Israeli there's, in addition to that, also demographic change that is taking place on its own but that has in some ways been bolstered by the discomfort with the nationalist project that is -- and its prospects. And I think the two, you know, two together kind of enhance sectarian ethnic religious identity in a way that is very worrisome. I'm very worried about what might happen if we don't have -- if people asses, there's no chance we're going to have peace based on a nationalist project. Even within Israel itself we see the tension already arising within Arab and Jewish citizens in ways that we

haven't seen in a long time. so it's very problematic.

MR. INDYK: Last question to Gary Mitchell over here.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you. Shibley, Gary Mitchell from Mitchell Report.

It's hard to not -- it's hard to sit through a presentation like the one you've just given and not be familiar with the numbers and sort of find that the one or two numbers that sort of reinforce what you thought before you walked in the room. And so I want to try this on you which is that on the one hand there's -- 40 percent are in the I am prepared for a just and comprehensive yadda, yadda, yadda. Forty-seven percent say ain't no way there's going to be an agreement. I would argue that not just because 47 is larger than 40, but that there's much greater political salience to the ain't gonna happen than to the, you know, I'm fully prepared for a just and whatever it is peace agreement, A; B, it is my sense and I think it's reinforced by these numbers because I've just sort of heard them I'm not so sure, but it certainly is reinforced by my own sort of anecdotal experience which is I'm thinking about the last X-number of conversations that I've been involved in. I don't hear people talking about this anymore. I hear about Afghanistan and Pakistan and Korea and China, et cetera. It feels to me like in terms of political salience, this thing is sort of headed for the sunset and I wonder if there is anything in the data that suggests that's right or dead wrong.

MR. TELHAMI: Well, first on the first question, I think I'm not sure I agree and I'll tell you why. I mean, I know that people are pessimistic on both Arabs and Israelis and in some ways I think it's more than pessimistic. I think in some ways they lost, you know, there's an absence of belief at a deeper level. They've been disappointed too many times. They don't even want to listen when somebody is putting an option on the table. That's kind of the sense of resignation.

But I, you know, believe having observed, you know, what has transpired before, that a lot of that change is -- I think, for example, when there is major events or great acts of leadership that 25 percent of the public could be swayed one way or the other by just a single nature event or single nature decision jut overnight. And that's why I think what Yoram said about well, I'm looking at the other side, 40 percent are prepared to compromise even if you have 60 or not. I think he's right because I think in the 60 I think 20 probably could be swayed the other way if you have the right set of circumstances. So I'm, in principle, it's not impossible and, in fact, that's how change occurs usually. So, but, you know, you can't identify where it's going to come from or if it's going to come at all.

Now, whether it's going toward the sunset, this thing. I don't know what this thing is. If you mean peace is going or the two-state solution is going to the sunset, I think many of us fear that. I fear that in a sense that I don't think -- I don't know anyone who believes that the two-state solution has a long time horizon still. You know, you either -- it's either going to happen in the next, you know, whatever -- you don't know the exact time, but you know you're running out of time. And if it doesn't happen relatively soon there's going to be something that's going to kill it. But nobody knows what's going to happen if you kill it except that both Arabs and Israelis know one thing that it's not going to be good. And that should worry us.

MR. INDYK: Yoram, are you going to -- I'm sorry, Steve.

MR. KULL: On this question of the 40 percent saying that they're ready to make a deal based on 67 borders and the other 40-something percent saying ain't gonna happen. Now, we went to the poll where we asked would you be willing to make a deal, and 40-something percent on both sides said that they would be willing to make a deal based on 67 borders. And then the other half said that they weren't. And then we

said, well, are you -- we took those and said are you saying that because you want to have more territory or because you simply don't want to say that because you don't think the other side is willing to make a deal like that? And about half of them said that it's just that the other side won't -- really won't do it. Right? So that's what I mean by the other side really won't do it. Right? So that's what I mean by bargaining behavior. They're not going to come forward and say I'm ready to make a deal like that as long as I think the other side's not. And thus you have kind of an impasse and this kind of mistrust and this posturing and you go first and you say it first and that kind of thing.

But the fact that they didn't say no, we have the right to more territory and that is our last and final position, is actually ultimately encouraging. And Shibley has asked some questions along those lines and other questions as well. So those represent conditions that are ultimately conducive and that because it does suggest that the framework of 67 borders is still -- has some kind of inherent legitimacy in people's minds and it's a reference point. And to that extent there is some underlying common ground.

MR. INDYK: Yoram, take us into the sunset.

MR. PERI: Just one sentence. Just one sentence. I'm a great believer in civil society and in the power of the people to change the course of history. And yet in this particular case I'm afraid the onus is on the politicians, on the leaders, because public opinion will be swayed different ways if the leaders will show them the way. That was the case in the past. After all, before President Sadat came to Israel, 89 percent of the Israelis said there will never be peace with Egypt. In one visit of one person to the Israeli Knesset changed the public opinion in Israeli. So did the other Israeli leaders. So I think that it's really a matter of leadership and we are living in an age of deficit of leadership. So maybe in the Saban discussions in the next few days you will find a solution to leadership.

MR. INDYK: That's in the hands of the people, too.

Thank you, Shibley and Yoram and Steve very much for an
extraordinarily enlightening conversation.

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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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