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DEFENSE CHALLENGES AND FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

THE 21ST CENTURY DEFENSE INITIATIVE'S SECOND ANNUAL MILITARY AND FEDERAL FELLOW RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

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PARTICIPANTS:

**Welcome:**

PETER SINGER
Senior Fellow and Director, 21st Century Defense Initiative
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PANEL 1: REGIONAL INSECURITY AND EMERGING GOVERNANCE:

**Moderator:**

TED PICCONE
Senior Fellow and Deputy Director, Foreign Policy
The Brookings Institution

**Panelists:**

COLONEL TIMOTHY McKERNAN (USA)
Secretary of Defense Corporate Fellow
"The Future of Iraq: The Bumpy Road on the Highway of Peace and Prosperity"

LIEUTENANT COLONEL CHRISTOPHER NALER (USMC)
Federal Executive Fellow, The Brookings Institution
"Democracy's Guardians: The Role of the Military in Emerging Democracies"

CAPTAIN LAWRENCE VASQUEZ (USN)
Federal Executive Fellow, The Brookings Institution
"The Role of Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan"

P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. SINGER: Hello, I'm Peter Singer, the director of the 21st Century Defense Initiative here at Brookings. And on behalf of Brookings and 21 CDI, it is an honor and a delight to welcome you to the 2011 Military and Federal Fellow Research Symposium.

Today we're entering a period in national security that very strategic documents ranging from the QDR to the British Security Strategy have entitled an "age of uncertainty." And everything from the threats that we face to the resources that we might have to deal with them, we're often left grasping for some sort of guidance, something fixed to cling to, something to help us make sense out of it all. And it's times like these that policy and policymakers need most of all that all important but frequently misunderstood and often abused thing that we call research.

The official definition of research is the search for knowledge. It's the systematic investigation with an open mind to establish novel facts using a scientific method. That's the official definition of it. But noted strategic thinker, J.R.R. Tolkien of *Lord of the Rings* fame may have put it a little bit better. He said, "There's nothing like looking if you want to find something. You certainly usually find something if you look, but it is not always quite the something that you were after."

Today we're going to see the fruits of that kind of searching for something. Like a number of think tanks, Brookings has the honor of hosting mid-career military officers and leaders from other federal government agencies who spent time conducting independent research on issues faced by the defense and national security community.

Now, important to note for the media that's gathered joining us here today is that this research and the policy recommendations and the statements that these

folks are going to make today are not about espousing official policy; rather, this is a research symposium intended to provide greater awareness of the valuable research work that these leaders are producing on cutting edge issues. In particular on topics and often with research methodologies that the bureaucracy in the Pentagon has found a difficult time to deal with.

And that's why the subject of today's symposium, Defense Challenges and Future Opportunities, is so apt. The symposium is going to feature panels on everything from cyber warfare to maritime security to evolving alliances, regional insecurity, emerging democracies. And what's striking is that every one of these topics you would find if you opened up today's newspaper, but all of the fellows who will be presenting on them set out on their journey to find the truth, to find the novel facts about these issues many months ago. And that again points to the value of independent research that's in a sense bottom up rather than top down.

And so in essence what we're about to enjoy today is an event organized by military officers designed to highlight some of the best research today being conducted by military officers. And so it's been an honor for us here at Brookings not only to host the Federal Fellows Program, but also to put together this symposium. And we very much appreciate all of you joining us here today.

And with that I'd like to invite our first panelists to join us up here on stage.

MR. PICCONE: Good morning, everyone. My name is Ted Piccone. I'm a senior fellow and deputy director for Foreign Policy here at Brookings. And I'm honored to be part of this effort. I think in my short time here at Brookings I've been really impressed, not only with Peter Singer's leadership and Michael Hanlon's of the 21st century Defense Initiative, but to see the dedication that our federal executive fellows

have given to their research year and I've learned a lot along the way and I think you will today as well.

The topic of our first panel is Regional Insecurity and Emerging Governance. And in talking to the group in preparation for this morning, there's kind of a connecting thread among these three presentations that you might note. They all have to really do with the relationship between civilian and military sectors of governance. And in different ways. But that's really at the core of it. And I will, as I introduce our speakers, talk a little bit more about that.

We're going to start with Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Naler from the Marine Corps. You have the bios in our packet. As you'll see, Chris has served the Corps for over 25 years in a range of operations, conventional and special operations units. He has served in Afghanistan and Helmand province. Also, in the Western Pacific, Japan, Korea, Iraq, Bahrain, and Afghanistan. The topic of his work is "Democracy's Guardians: The Role of the Military in Emerging Democracies." And you can't think of a more relevant issue right now as we see the transitions underway in the Middle East and in other parts of the world. So we'll hear more about that as we go through the presentation.

Our second speaker will be Captain Lawrence Vasquez from the U.S. Navy. He is a naval aviator, a Seahawk pilot, and has deployed on various cruisers, destroyers, and frigates, again, mostly in the Western Pacific. Also, counterdrug operations in Central and South America. For today's presentation it is particularly relevant that he was a commanding officer for a provincial reconstruction team in Farah, Afghanistan. So he'll be speaking to that issue and kind of lessons learned about how the civilian component of governance, particularly of the U.S. assistance world needs to step up in how it tries to transition these states to more functional societies.

Our third speaker will be Colonel Timothy McKernan, who is proudly wearing his Irish heritage today, a day early. He is the secretary of defense corporate fellow. And he has been working in various deployments overseas, particularly Somalia, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Kuwait, as well as Korean and Honduras. And Timothy will talk specifically about the role of the private sector, another key factor in the way we do deployments these days, and particularly transitioning to civilian-led operations as we try to stabilize various situations but particularly in this case in Iraq.

So those are my short introduction words. And we're going to start at the far end and work this way. Chris.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL NALER: Thank you very much, Ted. Thank you also for attending today. And as we start, for what it's worth, a slight movement of levity, this is our version of March Madness. So I'm going to give my support to the men and women basketball teams of UNC Chapel Hill. Go Tarheels. Good to go, Heather.

But thank you, Ted. And we do appreciate the opportunity to share it with you today. Just some highlights of our projects and research.

The scope and title of my research portrays what I believe, and current events in North Africa and the Middle East demonstrate, is the critical role of national military forces, so the success or failure of a nation attempting to transition from oppressive and dysfunctional governments towards democratic reform.

My interest in emerging democracies began on February 1, 2010, while flying from Afghanistan to Bahrain accompanying a senior Bahrainian officer who had concluded a three-day visit reviewing the progress of his unit's inaugural combat deployment to Afghanistan. As we discussed the current challenges associated with Bahrain's democratic aspirations. This led to my initial interest and further investigation on Bahrain's democratic reforms that were initiated by Hamad in 2001. However, in the

course of my research on Bahrain, I eventually expanded my aperture after reviewing case study, theory development, and selected one country from each region or continent that initiated or reinitiated democratization third wave of 1974 to 1990.

Additionally, I refrain from considering G-20 countries due to their size and global attention, and limited my global attention to all but one of the 58 nations that Collier refers to as his bottom billion. The selected countries -- Chile, Thailand, Georgia, Nigeria, and Bahrain -- were examined through four -- examined through the lenses of lenses of four interrelated questions. First, what are the roles, behaviors, and characteristics of the military through the phases of democratic transition?

Second, what challenges evolved in the transition or formation of civilian military-relationships. What reengineering of the military occurred during the democratization process? And last, how did the U.S. Department of State, Department of Defense, influence the previous questions through foreign aid and mill to mill engagement programs.

By examining the transitions through these lenses, my goal is to identify exportable trends and patterns for consideration and adoption by appointed or elected officials serving in national legislative and ministerial positions within post-conflict or post-revolutionary countries pursuing democratic transition. I examined a spectrum of behaviors and characteristics of the military and their relationship to the National Governing Institute that design national security and military strategy, allocate resources, and issue orders and guidance for the employment or deployment of their military forces.

I want to briefly offer a few characteristics and measurements that I used to examine the military's contribution to each country's democratic reform. The first, whether the military was internally focused, externally focused, or a combination of the two. Next, how professional the force was. And this does everything from recruiting,

educational infrastructure, overall infrastructure to support and sustain the force.

The next and probably one of the more interesting areas of each of the countries is the existence and design of national security strategy or national military strategy normally in the form of a white paper or some other strategic-level document. Also, what is the existence or the relationship in the sieve mill relationship? Does it exist? Is it a hybrid? Does the sieve mill relationship -- is it pure civilian or a hybrid with uniformed not only active duty but also retired military within the ranks? And last, is the composition of the ranks of the military? Were these indigenous forces recruited from the country? Or did you have forces recruited from abroad brought in to assist with the overall defense, whether that be security forces or the military?

I attempted to review all military echelons to determine what layers within the ranks exerted the most influence on government transition. Analysis of the military's internal and external behaviors were dependent on national command and control and their respective service leadership in their associated ethos. Not surprisingly, the most influential leaders or misguided culprits were the military officer corps.

The following are a few examples of my observations and potential trends as I complete my research. First, which I think is a very good example, Georgia's development of national military strategy and national security strategy through a bilaterally collaboration with the Netherlands Ministry of Defense provided a framework to design and employ the military in accordance with national priorities. This type of national policy development is one of the more critical themes illustrated in my research. It is imperative that policies developed and published and addresses five critical audiences.

First, the elected or appointed national leadership. Second, the military services and their officer corp. Third, neighboring allies and antagonists. Fourth,

international audiences desiring partnership or potential economic investment. And last, national population which deserve insight and transparency on the role of their military.

Nigeria. Nigeria has demonstrated, particularly since the Fourth Republic 1999 to present, their ability to deploy and support regional crisis in Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Sudan demonstrates their regional influence and professional development of this force to answer intercontinental challenges as a premier military force on the African continent.

Thailand. Thailand's 78-year experience through 18 coups is the result of entrenched active and retired military throughout the government institutions. Improved checks and balances must prevail in order to achieve consistent and meaningful democratic reform. Thailand's 83-year-old king is the world's longest serving monarch and maintains his influence on the prime minister, the privy council, and parliament. The military's increased power since the 2006 coup is an attempt to position themselves for the eventual transition of the throne.

Number four, Bahrain. For those of you who haven't heard of this country, Bahrain's military, like many Arab monarchies, is primarily internally focused on preservation of the monarchy and less concerned with exerting influence beyond their borders and territorial waters. Their participation in Coalition Task Force 1-5-2 or 152 is a regional international effort to gain GCC and international credibility as a regional maritime power. However, stalled democratic momentum in 2003 to 2006 has resulted in a political U-turn effective 16 February 2011 as the military dealt a heavy-handed response at the Pearl Roundabout. The recent introduction of Saudi Forces and the king's declaration of a state of emergency will once again place the military on center stage as this monarchy struggles to meet compromises with the opposition.

And finally, a little closer to home, and just for what it's worth,

simultaneous to this presentation on this particular topic, this testimony is also being received right now on the role of foreign assistance on the Hill with regards to accountability of our resources. And this goes really to the heart of one of my first recommendations from a policy perspective. Yes, I know we're in belt-tightening times and budgets are challenging, but we must sustain our foreign assistance. And in particular in the foreign assistance I would argue that the role of IMET is critical within overall foreign assistance.

I have been fortunate enough to train and serve with 25 different nations at different schools throughout my 25-year career and I am convinced throwing money at a problem is not the answer. It is about relationships. It's about the relationships I have with the students. I had the opportunity to teach not only from Egypt, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia. The opportunity to serve with and teach personnel, the first officer from Slovenia, from Senegal. These are the relationships that matter and I think we have seen this play out over the last two months in particular when we see not only Admiral Mullen and others as they move abroad. They're going to see their friends and their peers and their colleagues. Next, we must develop a comprehensive grand strategy that empowers all applicable agencies with promoting democratic principles. We cannot be caught flatfooted.

As I conclude my research and manuscript in the following weeks, I expect to find additional similarities within the case studies and quantitative proof of the value of foreign aid and military engagement return on investment. As reported last week in the *Miami Herald*, the former Chilean minister visited Egypt and Georgian officials were contacted by Egypt's interim leaders to collaborate on the next step in Cairo's democratic transition strategy. The fourth wave of democracy is unfolding in front of us and the results of this popular uprising generated by netizens through virtual assembly and

physical assembly of citizens will require patience and mentorship from consolidated democracies as demonstrated by the former Chilean officials. I hope the results of my research provide countries like Iraq and Afghanistan tangible tools to form and sustain their government and posture their military to support national efforts to achieve democratic reforms and their role as democracy's guardians. Thank you.

MR. PICCONE: Thank you very much, Colonel Naler. As you can see from his topic it was broad ranging, comparative, and covers a lot of important issues. And I'm sure we'll get more to it in the discussion.

Larry.

CAPTAIN VASQUEZ: Thanks. And I also want to thank Brookings for obviously hosting the fellows and helping to put this together. It's been a great year and the institution has been very welcoming. So thank you.

Also, I'm going to give a shout out to the Syracuse Orangemen for the NCAA tournament. We'll see you in the East.

As Ted mentioned and gave a little bit of our biographies, you're probably wondering what is a Navy commander doing on the ground in Afghanistan as a commander of a provincial reconstruction team. And I have to tell you I wondered that several times during my tour myself. If you had asked me as a young junior officer if I ever thought I would get the opportunity to command on the ground I would have bet significant amounts of money that that would never happen. But there I was last summer in command of a reconstruction team. And it just goes to highlight what was true then and what is true now, that the Navy has more personnel in the central command area of operations on the ground than we have at sea. A lot of people don't know that but we have over 13,000 folks on the ground in the CENTCOM area right now.

We had over 1,200 folks during my rotation. Of 12 PRTs, 6 were led by

Navy, 6 were led by Air Force personnel. A PRT structure, just to briefly cover, is about 80 to 110 personnel depending on the PRT. Half of those are our security force which enabled us to go and operate in the province. Mostly manned by Army National Guard units. The other half was comprised Navy and Air Force support personnel. Part of that was medical teams, Army civil affairs teams, and least and for all I have three active duty Army personnel that helped comprise my staff and just a handful of civilian personnel representing USAID, Department of State, and U.S. Department of Agriculture. But of the entire staff of 80 to 110, less than 20 percent was what I would consider my key implementers. The balance was our enablers, our security force that enable us to move within the province.

So for me in Farah, the fourth largest province in Afghanistan, it covers about 18,000 square miles, one and a half times the size of Maryland and just had just short of a million people, you know, 110 people doesn't go a long way. So I was very happy to see some additional troops show up during the surge of last summer which I'll talk about briefly.

Timeframe. We started training in February. February through June of 2009 and we arrived in-country in July of 2009 for a nine-month rotation. And we left in March of 2010. We turned over -- actually, one year ago today I was in Kandahar doing some of my out processing and it's been actually one year and three days since my transfer of authority in Farah province.

So the focus of my research has been to give a view from the field of all of the PRT commanders during my rotation because for all the services, the Navy and the Air Force at least, when we redeploy, when we come back we have a series of lessons learned that we compile. But for the Navy that lessons learned has not even been released yet. Some commanders were not captured. I'm uncertain as to the Air

Force process but I think it's about the same. And many times some of the information there is classified so it will never make it out into the public domain. And even what is in the public domain, well, some of it is never even published. So I thought it was very, very important to capture our entire experience, what was good, what was bad, and highlight really obviously that Afghanistan is totally different in some areas. What I saw in Farah in a semi-permissive environment was very different from what some of my counterparts encountered in the east or even in the south.

So from 2002 when PRTs were established, unfortunately little has changed in the structure and some of the focus of PRTs. And I think going forward we need to tailor that to the environment in which the PRTs are operating the provinces and tailor it to the conditions on the ground. All of us were honored to have led some of the best men and women in our nation under very challenging circumstances and we are making progress. Secretary Gates I think said it best recently when he was in theatre and I'll just read you a short quote: It's encouraging on the ground, he said. It's been encouraging watching it from Washington, but as you've heard me say before, I think the closer you are to this fight the better it looks.

So I'll leave you with three points here that I think highlight some of the challenges and as I move towards policy, recommendations in my paper. All of the commanders were convinced that our teams made a positive impact on the province and the lives of the Afghan people. We all partnered with our local government to tackle their priorities. Not our priorities but their priorities. In Farah it was roads, water, and electricity. And 90 percent of our projects were focused in these areas.

You may have seen news reports where the PRTs are kind of doing their own thing and not really collaborating with their provincial governments. I didn't see that and a lot of my peers said that whether there was effective governance we did partner

with them. We did look at the Afghan National Development Strategy. We made it a point to involve them so that they set the priorities, which I think is very, very important instead of us just going in there and saying I think you need schools or I think you need health clinics. But they set the priorities which I think is very, very important.

On metrics, we heard a lot about metrics before we arrived in theater and even while we were in theater. It's very important to look at our mission statement. And our mission statement basically said our job was to assist the Afghan government in extending its authority in order to facilitate security governance, reconstruction and development. That was our mission statements and in many cases that was most of the guidance that we received. And I would submit to you that if I took 12 people in this audience and I told you -- put you through 4 months of training and gave you that mission statement, the results after 9 months would be very, very different in each province because of conditions on the ground.

And I think we need, and what my fellow commanders and I think we need is a focus area in each province so that we have an ability to assess from a performance standpoint instead of just a reporting standpoint. We reported on metrics every week, sometimes every day. But the metrics tell you what you're doing but not what you're striving for. Governance, as we know, is very hard in a combat environment. So what do you focus on first? I would have very much liked to have had a focus area supported by my regional commander who was an Italian one-star that said, Larry, I want you to focus on rule of law. Within the next 12 months, these are the assets that you're going to have and I want a weekly report on what you need and I'll get it for you. What we had was go out and do governance or reconstruction development, work within the rules, and we'll meet every three months and assess where we are. Very, very tough to do and I think we needed a focus of effort within each province. It may not be rule of law

in Ghazi because maybe it wasn't as permissive. Maybe it didn't have -- there were some underlying stability issues that didn't allow you to do that. But I think we need to focus within each of our provinces on a line of effort moving forward.

Secondly, partnering and mentoring works. When I arrived in Farah, we had 45 personnel of an embedded training team and their job was to help establish or help the police and the army develop in Farah province. I mean, 45 people just could not get the job done. It just wasn't going to happen. So they did weekly patrols but capacity building was very, very challenged. In September, late August, we had over 800 personnel from 82nd Airborne show up and they got it right. They lived with and patrolled with the police and the army, the Afghan National Army. And no surprise to us, security got better. It improved. The people saw it and we saw it.

In September or October there was an operation in the Bala Baluk district, in Shewan province, led by special forces with Afghan special forces and we retook Shewan village which had been problematic and was hurting our efforts in the Ring Road. Within a week of that successful operation I was with the governor when reports came in that fuel prices had gone down by 50 percent just in town. The markets were thriving where they weren't thriving before. So security obviously has helped and is a key factor going forward.

But partnering and mentoring is not happening at that level in our civilian personnel. The surge -- civilian surge that you may have heard about resulted in, at least for me in Farah, just getting one additional USAID person. So I had three civilians on the ground and now I had four. In a *Washington Post* article just last week it mentioned that the civilian surge happened to be about 1,100 U.S. personnel but two-thirds of those are in Kabul. I will tell you that I need a lot more. The PRTs need a lot more to be successful out in the province. I would have loved instead of 4 to have 40 working on everything

from rule of law to governance to education. There is no shortage of need on the ground in the district and the provinces.

And lastly, NGO participation and collaboration. Again, shortly after arriving I was met by a team from UNAMA who told me that they thought Farah was unstable, that it was too kinetic for them to operate. That was not what we saw on the ground. We, in some areas it was very dangerous but in a large majority of the province we enjoyed freedom of movement and we were willing to partner with whatever NGOs would feel free to operate in that area. Unfortunately, we only had a handful and I think that hindered our efforts.

So we were doing some of the reconstruction and development that we would have liked to have seen NGOs participate in. USAID was obviously very, very active and with the help of the USAID person attached to the PRT I think we did some very great things but I would just ask that the NGOs really look forward -- take a much more forward-looking outlook and work with PRTs. And I was told quite frankly that some NGOs didn't even want to talk to PRTs, didn't want to have anything to do with us. And I think in that environment it is very, very hard to collaborate and do great work in Afghanistan. And the people need us to show up and help them.

So going forward in 2011 is a very critical year. And even looking at 2014. PRTs are a key effort if we are to succeed in Afghanistan and I believe require a much needed review if they are to remain a central part of our COIN strategy. I look forward to your questions.

MR. PICCONE: Thank you very much, Captain Vasquez. I think he gave a lot for us to chew on. It always helps to get real boots on the ground reality check on these issues.

Colonel McKernan.

COLONEL McKERNAN: Thanks for the introduction, Ted. And to my Army buddies out here I'm going to apologize if I'm not nearly as smart or well spoken and knowing that there's a Marine up there that kind of really hurts me. (Laughter)

On a serious note, though, let me start out by offering my condolences to the Japanese people as they deal with this great tragedy. However, seeing them and knowing many of them, I know that they'll emerge from this a much stronger nation.

We're only about three or four days short of it being the eight year anniversary of our invasion of Iraq. Since then, virtually all U.S. Government agencies, and particularly U.S. Armed Forces, have learned many hard lessons from some of the great missteps we made in Iraq. But gone are the day where our military sees interaction with the media, with Department of State, with other U.S. agencies and NGOs as verboten. We've needed to erase that legacy and today you see much more areas where our goals are nested with each other in support and particularly set out in the national security strategy.

Today, we embrace the state U.S. agencies as true equals in our quest for peace in Iraq and elsewhere. However, time and again the U.S. Government is where interagency cooperation starts and unfortunately ends. I'm talking about three key components of the national security strategy, that being defense, diplomacy, and the economic piece. And I want to draw your attention by reading a somewhat long paragraph from the national security strategy which I think is very important. It's entitled "The American People in the Private Sector."

"The ideas, values, energy, creativity, and resilience of our citizens are America's greatest resource. We will support the development of prepared, vigilant, and engaged communities and underscore that our citizens are the heart of a resilient country and we must tap the ingenuity outside government through strategic partnerships with the

private sector, nongovernmental organizations, foundations, and community-based organizations. Such partnerships are critical to U.S. success at home and abroad and we will support them through enhanced opportunities for engagement, coordination, transparency, and information sharing."

And so as you see, our national security strategy indeed draws attention to the need for us to cooperate. And I come personally from the old school where I think that the only way a country can indeed prosper and be stable and safe is through a strong economy and the only way they can get that is through a strong investment from the private sector. And that means that in order for the private sector to come into a country the benefits -- and yes, that means profits -- must outweigh the risks. And in order for that to outweigh the risks, this country has to be a safe and stable place.

And when I look at Iraq, sometimes I kind of see them in a Catch-22 situation. On one hand the people want safety and security. They want a better way of life. But the security situation doesn't support it. Conversely, the private sector isn't going to be able to come in without that. So how do we get that strong and stable security? And I think that as we look back and we find the rub here is that there are a lot of us out there, particularly folks in the military that have done multiple tours not only to Iraq but throughout the Middle East where we've gained the insight on importance of relationship building with our partners.

I'll be the first to admit that the situation, you know, as we took Baghdad and liberated the Iraqi Freedom, the days of heady happiness by the Iraqi people for being free, being quickly replaced by the insurgency and then the tide turning during the surge, having been there firsthand to see that I kind of get struck with a simple statement that was given to me by one of my Iraqi friends. And they said that what they really wanted was simple things. They wanted just to be able to take their kids out for ice

cream without having to worry about being robbed, kidnapped, without having to go through 15 checkpoints just to get there. So some of those things that we take for granted, the Iraqis and the Iraqi government are still struggling with. However, clearly they're doing a lot better and the stage is really set for our withdrawal at the end of this year.

So in Iraq, the short- to mid-term solution to the semblance of economic security can clearly only be done through a massive influx of funding from the private sector, mainly throughout the infrastructure which, as we all know, has been decimated by years of war followed by years of sanction and just deprivation that the Iraqi people have lived through. And clearly, the only way they're going to have that economic boon is through gaining additional revenues. And we all know that that's going to be through revitalization of their energy, their oil industry.

So as we look at Iraq and we recognize that there is this huge need of private sector investment, we here in the government sector, time and again we fail to embrace the importance of this as I stated set out in the national security strategy. And me, personally, I quit counting the number of times where I reached out to my comrades in the military, to other government agencies, seeking more cooperation between us, between the private sector, in order to help jumpstart the Iraqi economy because, let's face it, that's good for everybody. Most people will just push back. They'll tell me things like go see the State Department. Go see Commerce or Agriculture or simply, you know, the best copout I saw was, well, that's just not my job. I personally say that really it's all of our jobs. It's not only wrong to say that but in my mind it's a dangerous attitude.

And while state and other nonmilitary government agencies, they can provide some modicum of support and they do their best. I personally think that the true knowledge of the inner workings of Iraq lie in those of us in the military who have had the

greatest experience over the past several years there.

So my solution to this quandary and recommendations to address the problems are really short and easy to implement. First, as stated earlier, you know, with Congress debating things like our foreign aid and how we're going to do that, I say to Congress that they must fully fund U.S. Government agencies operation in Iraq and elsewhere particularly in areas where there's regional insecurity. The Department of State in particular must be resourced in a way where success becomes possible. And although our country is struggling economically, this is clearly not the time to reduce foreign aid and engagement with countries worldwide.

Second, the U.S. military, specifically U.S. forces and Iraq security assistance mission, which for those of you that don't know, that's our foreign military sales arm in Iraq, they must collect, publish, and distribute to our private sector partners the many lessons learned on how to be successful in Iraq. I personally have lived through several instances where a small incident became quite a large one that caused a lot of damage both in prestige and in the Iraqi's trust in us. So quite honestly, the private sector has the same possibility of making those mistakes. So instead, we need to share those lessons that we learned over the past eight years as we did our operations and kind of turn this operation around.

And finally, my last recommendation is that the U.S. Government must sponsor and resource the immediate establishment, at least three regional governmental-industry cooperation centers. And my recommendation is that they be initially in Basra, Baghdad, and Mosul, but eventually elsewhere where there are large population centers. And there, in coordination with the U.S. Governmental agencies, they can have a safe place where they can everybody be in a central location, come and the Iraqis could come and present things like business propositions. They could settle disputes. And quite

honestly, where the average Iraqi could come looking to see how they can help to do better for their country through economic development.

So only time will tell whether we can look back at our time in Iraq to see if we got it right. I personally, you know, say that the clock is ticking. I mean, December 31st is going to be here shortly and we need to do something now. So the question is whether we're going to be able to put aside our parochial animosities and suspicious of interacting with the private sector and really just go out and help the Iraqi people. I personally remain very optimistic about our long-term success in Iraq and I certainly hope we get it right. I, for one, look forward to the day where I can go back wearing a business suit -- yes, with my Irish tie -- instead of wearing body armor. I tell you, it's a much better situation and those of you that have gotten to know the Iraqi people will attest that they're a wonderful people.

I want to close with a quote. You know, all Army guys, I think we have to have a quote. And mine, surprisingly for those that know me, is one by Indira Gandhi. And I think it's appropriate to our alliance. She said, "You can't shake hands with a clenched fist." And I think that that -- with that I recommend that each of us continue to extend that hand of friendship to the Iraqi people. And with that I'll close and I'll turn it back over to Ted.

MR. PICCONE: Thank you very much, Colonel McKernan. I think you can recognize that we're benefitting from this kind of practical experience that all three of them have had on the ground, but also kind of the way they're projecting ideas, particularly for the civilian sector, for civilian agencies, for the private sector, for NGOs. And I'm also particularly struck by the consistent thread around the importance of foreign aid and that Congress, hopefully, is listening to this as we get through this very difficult budget cycle.

If you think about the bang for the buck in terms of what we get in return -- and this is a consistent theme that you hear not only in the kind of military post-conflict stabilization role but also in other parts of foreign assistance -- if you think about education and foreign exchange -- exchanges of foreign students, the value that we have gotten from that over years is something that Secretary Clinton highlighted on the Hill just a couple of weeks ago as so important to our long-term kind of relationship building around the world. So it's something we need to continue to work on. So I kind of -- you guys seem to be channeling both Secretary Gates and Secretary Clinton in pushing that theme. Of course, the content of the exchange matters as much as just the contact itself so that's to be kept in mind.

So we have lots of good ideas on the table. I would really like to open it up to the group for Q&A. We have about 20, 25 minutes for discussion. We've got a microphone going around. Don't be shy. Please, right here.

MR. NEWBERRY: Hi, Brian Newberry from the Wilson Center. Thank you to all for the great presentations.

My question is for Captain Vasquez. I was curious if you have any sense if our interagency partners were doing anything on lessons learned or were they just going back to their own agencies and taking their own lessons learned? Because obviously they're, as you mentioned, a very critical part of any PRT and any future effort that we'll do in the future. Thank you.

CAPTAIN VASQUEZ: Yeah, I'm not sure what the lessons learned process is. I know that the USAID person that I had attached to the PRT in Farah published a paper on an operation that we had that we thought was successful in bringing Afghan expertise into the province. Out of Kabul, boots on the ground, we took them into that Shewan area that I mentioned where we were in the hold and build stage.

And great ideas. I don't know if it was received well only because I think we in the military, we think, hey, we've got a very bureaucratic kind of challenge and our chain of command is very, very stringent and is not very flexible sometimes but I found that his paper going forward was not well received because he didn't get it cleared in the appropriate manner.

So again I'm not sure what their process is but you're right, it's absolutely critical going forward that we learn those lessons so that our 9-month rotation instead of 9 years of involvement is not -- it's not 9 years, you know, it's 9 or 10 short 9-month rotations and everybody is learning how to do this every time they go in theater. Again, we spent about two, three months figuring out who is who in the province and what we're doing. Another couple of months getting ready to go home and everything that that entails. So we really only have about three months on the ground where everything is coming together we hope and that we're really being effective. So all the projects that I initiated I never saw. So I think it is a critical piece.

MR. PICCONE: I have a question right here.

MS. SCHADLOW: I actually had one for each person. Is that okay?

MR. PICCONE: Sure.

MS. SCHADLOW: Okay. I'm Nadia Schadlow from the Smith-Richardson Foundation.

For Colonel Naler, I was going to ask how your model and thinking applies to a country like Turkey or some of the more problematic countries where the military has been traditionally a more secular force and now you have different sorts of political parties emerging that some would argue are less democratic.

For Captain Vasquez, a little bit related to lessons learned but more specifically. Are the PRTs exportable models that we should institutionalize between

conflicts? Or are they just going to be sort of gotten rid of after these conflicts? So should we just recreate them every time or create some sort of institutional structure so that they can be deployed in future contingencies?

And for Colonel McKernan, I was wondering from your talking to the private sector, is there a sense from them of the specific sort of 10 main obstacles that the U.S. Government is putting in their way and preventing -- essentially not facilitating their investment? I know from talking to people in the private business world that they're often very frustrated by the obstacles that the U.S. Government puts down on the ground and makes it very, very hard for them to compete effectively let's say or in other situations. And that might be an interesting sort of avenue also for your research where the end of it sort of summarizes and says if these main obstacles are fixed essentially we would do a lot better.

MR. PICCONE: Excellent questions. Chris, should we start with you?

LIEUTENANT COLONEL NALER: Yeah, sure. Thank you, Nadia, for the question.

I had four of the mentors, if you will, that I've consulted with throughout my work. One, me and my director, Peter Singer and a few others had mentioned Turkey as potential for research. And as I briefly looked at Turkey I think what, in the scope of my research from a model perspective, I don't know necessarily how successful it may be as a model, but I think at least the lenses and the ways that I'm looking at the problem I would offer this. As Turkey is definitely -- as recommended by Larry Diamond to me on the telephone during an interview, he goes, Chris, why don't you go after Turkey? And I go, Larry, too big, too much, I can't handle it right now. And he goes, but it's a fabulous example. And I think it is a strong example.

But once again, if you look at different measures and similar to the

discussion about metrics and measures of effectiveness and ways to gauge democratic reform, it'll be very interesting to see what levels of sustainment Turkey is going to have with their current changes and particularly as was conveyed to me, this is unprecedented change in the last 100 years for Turkey to move to the relationship, particularly the sieve mill relationship that they are pursuing and the role of the military within that land. So it'll be very interesting but I think you've got to go back and you have to look at certain tenets. And those tenets have to be able to sustain key dimensions of democratic reform. And if they don't apply to those, then this is going to be a short lived experiment.

CAPTAIN VASQUEZ: I do think PRTs are an exportable model. When you look at the bang for the buck and what you get for a PRT with not a lot of folks, and I talked about the 20 percent of enablers, I think the Navy will, at last within the Navy, we're going to be looking at some sort of capability to operate. And I think we've just recently stood up a maritime civil affairs force and I think that's what we're going to focus on. But in the maritime environment, in the lateral environment, and if I'm not -- I think DOD has come out with a directive recently that said all of the services will come out but we'll have the ability to create or to engage in stability operations. And I think each one of them is interpreting it within their force.

COLONEL McKERNAN: Okay. I'll probably -- this is one place where I'll say a little bit more because I do appreciate the question. I can tell you that probably when I talk to people one of the -- in the military, specifically, asking them why we're not helping private industry more. There seems to be a pervasive belief that there is U.S. law that prevents us from sharing information with private corporations. And this really could be further from the truth. The key is simply equal access. So you're not going to, you know, try to help one aircraft manufacturer or weapon manufacturer or hydroelectric plant manufacturer over another but you simply have to be willing and open to provide the data

that people are asking for, the advice that they're asking for on an equal basis. So really that's an education piece that could be fixed fairly quickly.

The other thing that I think that the private sector has issues with is just simply knowing where power lies within countries, how the country governments are organized. In the case of Iraq, I mean, we went from, you know, having no government really almost whatsoever after the de-Baathification to what's really a rapidly growing and expanding and, you know, changing organization. However, you know, folks in the embassy and the other U.S. agencies, as well as the military who has advisors throughout the Iraqi government as they get on their feet, we know how these organizations are. And more importantly, we know who the real power players are within those organizations. It might not always be the person at the top. It might be somebody that's on the periphery that's pulling the strings.

So just providing that to our private corporations that allows them to not waste their time drinking tea and forming a relationship with somebody that can't do that. I mean, in Iraq particularly, we as Americans find it difficult because we'll go in and want to put a proposal on the table and expect a signature and a contract to be signed that day. And those of you that spent some time in the Middle East know that that's just not the case. You've got to build that relationship first and gain trust and answer a lot of questions and go through a pretty strong bureaucracy.

The other thing that private sector looks for that we can help with are demographics. In the Middle East where tribal and religious affiliations are very important, it's also important that our private sector understand who they should be cooperating with so as not to go out and, for example, hire a subcontractor from an area outside that might be opposed to the locals. That could cause obviously some great issues.

Education is also a big piece. I think you'll find that most corporations that are trying to go into Iraq, into other emerging democracies, are going to try to hire as many locals as possible. And after years of the Iraqi government and the sanctions, their education system is somewhat declined as well. So just being able to find qualified engineers and scientists and some of the skilled technology personnel is just a little bit difficult. But I think a lot of them are doing a lot of great work to educate some of the Iraqi people so that they can return to help out their folks.

And then finally really is the labor force. We can help by -- and it kind of gets back to the demographics -- is by reaching out with those partnerships that we have gained over years and years to put these private sector corporations in contact with the right people, the right village elders, in order to provide a good workforce that is going to help out the local community and be better for the country as a whole.

MR. PICCONE: Excellent. Thank you. There are a couple of seats up front. People who are in the back, if you want to come forward. Some other questions? Matt, a FEF alum. Welcome.

MR. FRANKEL: Thanks. Matt Frankel, FEF alumni.

Question for Captain Vasquez and Colonel McKernan. There's been a lot written lately about the potential negative impact of vast amounts of reconstruction aid that have floated into Afghanistan. I think there were some parallels there for Iraq as well on the issue of fueling corruption, that having all this money there lends itself to creating this culture of corruption, kickbacks, having to buy your way through, as you say, a growing bureaucracy in Iraq, for example. And I'm wondering both through personal experience or through your research, if you could comment on the potential negative impacts that perhaps you saw on the ground in Afghanistan or have seen in Iraq of corruption as a real hindrance to this development. Thanks.

MR. PICCONE: Excellent question.

CAPTAIN VASQUEZ: I inherited a $1.7 million bridge in Farah province. Again, the PRT started out as the entity to implement quick impact projects. I had up to $25,000 of authority and then it went up to $50,000 for my brigade commander. So how I ended up with a $1.7 million bridge I'll never know. But you quickly learn that you've got to find -- you have to follow the dollars and where they're going.

We had some success in contracting in that again we involved the provincial officials, the minister of economy, to kind of vet some of the contractors that were bidding for some of these -- for the contracts. And they were very, very good in kind of sifting through some of the folks and some of their capabilities. And where we did see some form of corruption, whether it was taking some off the top or not delivering services, then they were quickly blacklisted and they could no longer perform or even bid on services that used SURP funding. So it's out there. We were aware of it and we took all the steps that we could to make sure that if they -- if we saw corruption, to try and at least mitigate it and then stop it where we could.

COLONEL McKERNAN: I look at it, I guess, a little bit different in that one of my concerns has always been, and I think that we're probably going to start seeing some of this in Iraqi, is the fact that through U.S. Government investments in infrastructure works and other things, we've really artificially inflated some of the local economies. And so what's going to happen now at the end of the year when we pull out and our efforts are scaled back dramatically. So I think that's going to be an issue. And really it gets to the heart of the matter that I talked about earlier about hiring locals.

I'm sure many of you out here are probably aware of the work of Greg Mortenson in the Central Asia Institute. In fact, I happen to be reading his follow-up to *Three Cups of Tea* called *Stones into Schools*. And I think that this is a model that would

really work well even in Afghanistan.

Throughout there is, you know, why hire a corporation and pay billions and billions of dollars if they're to come in and need to spend mostly on security and outside help when the locals are looking for work, they're looking for something that's going to help their country and their local community. Hire them to do that. I mean, it's, you know, when they can build a school for 1,000 kids for, you know, $50,000 or $60,000 and we would spend, you know, several hundred or probably several million dollars for that same type of facility, you know, the math is there. So there's other ways where we can do it more effectively. And that will really bypass a lot of the corruption that you may have within the government.

MR. PICCONE: Okay. Let's take a couple more questions. I have someone here and I'm looking for other hands.

MR. LEWIS: Thank you. My name is Tony Lewis. I'm with the National Guard Bureau. My question is for Captain Vasquez.

You said that much of your PRT was National Guard and I'm wondering what challenges did you face in terms of integrating the reserve component and active component soldiers. And was the difference in rotation times and boots on the ground time an obstacle that you faced?

MR. PICCONE: Before you -- are there any other questions that we can take a round? Okay.

CAPTAIN VASQUEZ: I was very fortunate to have a Guard unit from Guam. And they were phenomenal. I would go anywhere with them again. We did have challenges and it's something that I found during our PDSS -- it's called a Pre-Deployment Site Survey -- and we found this -- all the commanders found this very, very valuable. Early on in our training we deploy into Afghanistan and meet with the PRT

that's on the ground that we are going to relieve. And I found that the PRT there had some challenges integrating the Guard, and especially a lot of the Navy folks who are on the ground who thought they were going to go and be drivers and gunners in Humvees. And they are actually trained to do this. But early on, boots on the ground, they got busy and it was just the security forces that were going outside the wire and conducting missions. And it really -- there was a sense of disenchantment within the Navy folks, that they were not doing the things that they thought they were going to do. They were manning guard posts and doing the communications in our communications center but they weren't doing some of the other things that they had been trained to do.

So I made a point of making sure that we were integrated from the very first day. And we integrated Navy folks so that they were trained to be gunners and drivers and some of the first missions outside the wire, if someone was qualified to be a gunner or a driver they were to be added to those missions. Now, I left it up to my platoon leader, a very, very capable first lieutenant, to make those decisions as to who went. But we integrated, again, from our training all the way through our time in Afghanistan. And I think it worked out well for us.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL NALER: I'd like to chime in on this, and I'll go back to my 15 months that I commanded the battalion during the surge. During that time I had 21 different companies working for me. I think all but three of them were Guard or Reserve companies. And I will tell you that the capability that they brought really came from the fact that almost all of them were from a local area. They knew each other. Many of them had been working for years and years. So there wasn't the discovery learning that we have from a rapidly PCS and military force.

But one of the biggest things I think that you have anytime you reintegrate, and particularly these units and the Guard units that had been maybe there

early on during the beginning of the operation and then came back is that situations change. And so getting people to give up some of the old habits just simply by, you know, 6, 8 months, 10 months into the surge as the violence dropped off, simple stuff like sharing a road and not pushing people off and shooting their engine blocks if they got too close to our convoys, that was a difficult thing to. You know, go ahead and instill in a unit that might have been in some of the worst fights up in the middle of Baghdad, you know, taking rounds every day. So a lot of that, though, I did find that through, you know, what was really a -- whether you call it a family or a community-based situation with the Guard and Reserve units I think made it actually a lot easier for me.

MR. PICCONE: (inaudible)

COLONEL McKERNAN: Yeah, I'm sorry, you asked about the rotation times as well. Every commander during my rotation stated that we needed to be there for at least a year, not nine months as is the practice right now. And you can't do that with the Reserves because it's, as I understand it, 365 days from call up to when they need to come home. And that training time counts. So that's why the Reserves, we can only be on the ground as a unit for nine months. I think that needs to change. Again, when you're taking three months up front to find out what's going on in your province, another couple of months starting to work your way back home, you don't have that much time on the ground, And we were told back in '09 that it was going to change for the subsequent rotations.

And I just had dinner with a couple of commanders who are just starting their training track, haven't even met their teams yet and they are projected to be in country for only nine months. So if I could change one thing that would be it, to allow the Reserves to be on the ground for at least a year and then the training time would be in addition to that. Or rotate units. Rotate our security force at some point but at least leave

the implementers -- the medical folks, the CA teams, the command team -- to stay on the ground longer.

MR. SUDDER: Pepe Sudder from Northrop Grumman.

With U.S. military being asked to do more with less in the future, are PRTs (inaudible) to do or should that gravitate more the State Department or some other government agency?

CAPTAIN VASQUEZ: You're right. I mean, mission creep is something I heard again as a junior officer and I don't know if we hear it as much anymore, but I think PRTs, the model, is an enduring model and I think each of the services is looking at how best to implement that. You get a lot of bang for the buck in a PRT, especially if you source them with the correct personnel.

Just a quick anecdote here. I was given three engineers to conduct my reconstruction and development projects. One was an actual Seabee. He worked on electrical components but the other two, one was a maritime engineer who knew diesel engines inside and out and the other one was a nuclear engineer from the Naval Academy who was used to driving submarines. So, you know, that's an incredible challenge when you're in charge of a $1.7 million bridge and I'm looking at a submarine officer and he's telling me, yeah, we're good to go. The bridge is solid. Well, how do you know? The cement is strong. Okay. I think I need a little bit more than that to go forward.

So we actually had to call out and try and get a bridge specialist from the Corps of Engineers to come down and luckily he looked at the bridge, looked at some other reports on the cement samples and we took him out to the site. And he said, yes, I am 99 percent confident when the first time you drive a truck over this thing it won't collapse, which is a good thing. And again, something that the special inspector for

Afghan reconstruction had looked at in the past was do PRTs have the expertise within the teams to do what they're asked to do and what they're expected to do. And I would say yes, if we're resourced properly.

But just, again, I think all the military services do this. When you're asked to provide engineers and you've been doing this for six or seven years, at the end, especially with the -- at least for the Navy, the up-tempo of the Seabees, you kind of run out of folks. So now then the call becomes, hey, they need engineers so anybody who has an engineering degree is an engineer. Again, I was supplied as a squadron commander to provide one of my officers to go actually to Iraq to some engineering job and I called him in and I was like, hey, you're on the short list. He was, like, what am I going to be doing? I said reconstruction and development. That's exactly what it tells me in the spreadsheet that I've got. He goes, sir, I was an ocean engineer. I'm like, you're an engineer. You're going.

So again, if we staff them properly I think PRTs are an enduring model.

MR. PICCONE: We have time for maybe one more question or I can ask. I've got one in the back. Great. Thanks.

ME. PENOTE: Hi. Steve Penote, Air Force, obviously.

Colonel -- my question is for Colonel Naler. Sir, in your research did you look at the restrictions or additional contingencies that you put on military aid based on all the developments that are occurring in North Africa and the Middle East? Should those restrictions have been removed? And then also, what is the potential additional foreign aid actually undermining or delegitimizing the populist perception within the countries? This is a non-Western-influenced uprising. If you could just comment on those, sir.

MR. PICCONE: If I could ask you also, Chris, to comment on in the cases that you looked at what role human rights played. Because I think it goes to

conditionality issues as well. A lot of them are human rights conditions and a certain expectation that abuses of the past need to be dealt with. You know, transitional justice issues. Is there a good case out there in your group that has something to teach us?

LIEUTENANT COLONEL NALER: Okay. Yeah, Steve, thank you for your question. Interesting you ask it. I think you're probably aware, maybe this is why you're asking your question, but I think Friday an investigation -- last Friday an investigation was opened on the foreign assistance that was provided to Bahrain over the last four years and if any of the money used to train that security sector was used on the special security forces. And this goes to the integrity of the aid. Same thing obviously in North African and some of the other Middle Eastern countries. And I'll actually tie both yours and Ted's question together. And Ted has actually been a good mentor, a great mentor for me, quite frankly, on the whole human rights aspects of it because I guess there's two ways when you look at the effectiveness of military and also maybe the legitimacy of a democracy because there's a couple different ways to follow it. And Larry alluded to this from his PRT examples. And one is you follow the money and two, you follow how they treat their people. And 9 times out of 10, sometimes these converge but they also have some independent paths as well.

What I thought was interesting is I pulled up some foreign assistance numbers from the different case models, particularly Chile, which definitely had some horrific times from 1973 to 1989 and extensive human rights violations during that period. And I think from a case model a good example of how we balanced, if you will, kind of a carrot on a stick. And I guess that's the way I see foreign assistance. Do you support a country after they've demonstrated good behavior? Or do you support them while they're slightly misbehaving in a hope that they're going to behave better? And it was interesting.

I ran the numbers on three of my case studies and Chile was a good example that we definitely rewarded Chile for their behavior after quite frankly Pinochet. And I know that kind of sounds bad to say it that way but quite frankly from 1988 post-Placebit and the installation of the new government you saw rapid changes form '89 to '95 and even more importantly as you moved into 2000, 2003, the commissions that looked at the human rights violations.

Well, if you follow the foreign aid, it directly relates to shaping that. As they behaved and started cleaning up their act you saw an increase in the foreign assistance. Counter to that, and something a little closer to home and as far as time-wise a more contemporary model, this is one that really caught me by surprise. And I have an interview set up for the two former ambassadors of Bahrain to ask them this very question, Steve, to the heart of your question. As I looked at Bahrain from 2006 to 2011, it varied in foreign assistance between $18 million at a high point to $5 million at a low point. Ironically, of the five sectors of foreign assistance there was only one sector we applied any money to and that was security.

Now, as I look at that, and you know, I appreciate Mack's compliment about, you know, my speaking abilities and I am a marine. I am the dumbest of the six and I'm the leadoff batter. My job was just to get on base today of the 11 players. Okay? But I'll just present it to you this way. It doesn't take an economics or a financial degree to figure out or a political science degree, if you've got a country that has had human rights violations under investigation and they're an emerging, struggling democracy, why wouldn't you put some money into democratic and human rights programs? The total amount of money, and I'm only using from 2006 but those are critical years for Bahrain, from '06 to '10 and the request for 2011, the total amount of resources applied to human rights and democracy programs was zero.

Now, I don't understand that. I don't understand, and I had the opportunity because we have a few ambassadors on the staff here, former ambassadors, and I sat down with one yesterday and I posed the very question to him. I said, I said, and I asked him from a carrot and stick perspective, I said, sir, this doesn't make sense to me. Now, granted, I'm sure there's good reasons why, but that's the very question Steve I'm going to ask the two former ambassadors to Bahrain, Ambassador Neumann and also Ambassador Ereli, who are both here in D.C., why? If you knew there were problems, why? So I think this kind of gets to the overall how you use foreign assistance and do you apply it during the problems and hope that that will heal the problem? Or do you reward them after the fact?

Thank you for your question.

MR. PICCONE: Well, I think you would all agree that I think we've got three homerun hitters here. They did an excellent job and it's a great start to the day. And I really appreciate your questions and look forward to the continued discussion. Thank you to our panelists. (Applause)

MR. PICCONE: Is there a coffee break? Right? Coffee break for 10 minutes and then back.

(Recess)