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P R O C E E D I N G S

MS. RADDATZ: Apparently Representative Anthony Weiner is resigning. I notice it's kind of like a bar in here now at Brookings and we have the TVs. Fortunately, we turned them off for this event. I thought you'd have to multitask, and thank goodness they turned them off or you might be watching that. But what else is there to say other than he's resigning. The rest of the story you all probably know, except for Michael O'Hanlon, who says he's avoided it.

Greetings and welcome this morning. I am Martha Raddatz from ABC News. We are not going to have long introductions, because I presume everybody here knows the gentlemen next to me, Bruce Riedel and Michael O'Hanlon. And our topic this morning is topical: Afghanistan and Pakistan.

There is so much to talk about this morning, because, really, it seems to change. Every time I wake up in the morning, there is something new about Afghanistan and Pakistan. Of course on the horizon is President Obama's call for a troop reduction, and we're all waiting to see what that will be and how that will work. And Pakistan, apparently they killed the leader recently, I read in the news, and they've named a new one, which I would like to know how they exactly do choose a new leader in al Qaeda, how that works.

But I want to start this morning, because we are at Brookings and Afghanistan is certainly an incredible topic this morning, with Michael O'Hanlon, who will start with brief -- not brief, as long as you want --

MR. O'HANLON: Brief.

MS. RADDATZ: -- assorted statements on Afghanistan and just some observations, and then Mr. Riedel on Pakistan, and I might throw in a few words myself.

I was there about three weeks ago; you were there a month ago. We'll see who knows more. I think it's always you. I have to ask questions and often don't get answers and you do.

So, Michael O'Hanlon.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you, Martha, and we're all very grateful -- Bruce and I are very grateful that Martha's here doing this with us and grateful to you as well for putting aside the CNN breaking news just for a little bit. And we'll try to have little intermissions with, you know, the latest update once a while. (Laughter)

But let me just offer a few comments on four or five issues on Afghanistan policy, and of course we're all looking forward to the discussion.

I want to begin with just a couple of -- I don't want to call them prognostications, but sort of framing thoughts on how the President's upcoming troop drawdown decision might be influenced by specifically the military campaign plan and the broader civil military campaign plan in Afghanistan. And I don't know how to read the President right now. I would say -- and, you know, I think this is the best guidance we have for his future decision-making, to look at his past decision-making.

Bruce Riedel, of course, coordinated the first review for President Obama on Afghanistan and Pakistan, and then a second one occurred in the fall. In both cases, President Obama was pretty bullish and hawkish in how he addressed the Afghanistan situation. So, I'm of the view that that fact, combined with the fact that the campaign plan would imply a gradual drawdown, would suggest that the cuts won't be that big. But we all know there are many pressures on the President, so instead of my trying to predict what he might do, let me just a say a word about, again, where this military campaign plan would suggest that he might go if he sticks with the plan as

currently existing on paper and on the ground in Afghanistan.

And, as you know, we have a little more than 30,000 American troops in Afghanistan East, almost 40,000 in Afghanistan South; total U.S. presence is about 100,000 troops; total ISAF presence is close to 145,000. And the basic concept of what we're doing now, having cleared of the key populated areas of the Kandahar and Helmand provinces in the South last year and the year before, we're now bracing for the counteroffensive by the Taliban, which is now at some level underway, and hoping that we can hold pretty firm. The goal would be -- the preference would be not to draw down a lot of NATO forces until we see how firmly and how effectively that counteroffensive is carried out. Now, unfortunately, the Dutch and Canadians have been leaving the Kandahar area even as we speak, so there is some drawdown happening just by virtue of those decisions. But, nonetheless, the overall U.S. preference is not to draw down too much in 2011.

But people can already see the way ahead to draw dawn in Helmand and Kandahar this winter. And you might think, well, that gives the President an easy way to say, you know, starting in the late fall we're going to start pulling out, who knows, maybe 10,000 of those 38,000 U.S. troops in Helmand and Kandahar or maybe even more. However, we are still under-resourced according to commanders' interpretations of where we stand in the strategy in the East, which means that any drawdowns that were possible in the South would be partially used according to the campaign plan to reinforce our position in the East.

If you go back to the 2009 debate, remember John McChrystal wanted 40,000 troops, not the 30,000 that ultimately were provided, and the main place we had to make due with less than desired was in the East. And this is an area of course that

we'll naturally evolve into, in Bruce's discussion of Pakistan, but remains a very troubled area and a place where we have not done the kind of systematic clearing and holding yet that we have undertaken finally in Helmand and Kandahar.

So, the East is about a year behind the South, which is sort of ironic, because for the longest time the East was a year or two or three ahead of Kandahar and Helmand. But we've really emphasized the South and Southwest in the campaign plan of the last two years.

So, if you were going to try to infer from the campaign plan what the drawdown would ideally be if you just stuck with the military on the ground micro-level analysis alone, it would probably be just a few thousand troops coming out in 2011, and it would probably be something like 15- to 20,000 troops on the U.S. side coming out next year but not until the end of the fighting season, not until when you had hopefully made big progress in the East, withstood the attempted Taliban and Haqqani onslaughts, cleared a lot of those areas, and built up the Afghan security forces.

So, I would -- if I was going to predict based on the campaign plan, it would be a very modest drawdown over the next 12 or 15 months, a faster drawdown beginning in the winter of 2012, 2013. We'll see if that military campaign plan survives contact with the American political and budgetary calendars and every other consideration that has to be on the President's mind as he makes the decision, that that was worth putting things in those terms.

On the Afghan security forces, as I mentioned, in Kandahar and Helmand in the East they're coming along. In the trips I've made to Afghanistan this year, I've been very impressed with the progress, and it's not by accident. I think some of you heard General Caldwell here last week talk about all the things that we've done to

revamp and strengthen the training programs.

I don't want to recite all of those or go over all of those in detail. But I will make the following observation. As much as the Afghan security forces are improving -- and they're basically responsible for security in Kabul, which is a pretty impressive statement, because Kabul is reasonably stable and safe, safer than Baghdad these days and safer than Mexico City and a lot of other places statistically -- even if it still has a ways to go, they are making headway. But in the South, Southwest, and East, they're generally supporting NATO forces, fighting with NATO forces, taking more than half the casualties, providing about half the troops, and yet still not leading the major clearing operations. So, I'll leave it to you to gauge where you think they are along the spectrum of making progress, but I would submit that they are still a ways a way.

And numerically in the South we have something like 50,000 in the South and Southwest -- Kandahar and Helmand primarily -- something like 50,000 total ISAF forces. We have something like 40- to 50,000 Afghan forces, which means that -- leave aside who's better or how much faster the Afghans are catching up in capability. If we were to pull out most of the NATO forces in the near future, we would be dramatically diminishing combined coalition strength, which means that unless you think the threat is fundamentally less in the South already, you're not going to want to do that in the short term. Now, we'll find out if the threat is fundamentally less in the course of this fighting season. But, again, this is an argument that if you go with the campaign plan, even if the Afghan forces are getting better and showing much greater effectiveness as I think they are, you probably want to be pretty gradual in what you do in 2011 and the fighting season of 2012 by way of drawdowns.

Okay, those are a couple of points that I wanted to get on the table up

front.

My last trip to Afghanistan was in May in Helmand Province primarily with a brief foray into Kandahar, and I have to say I was impressed at the micro level. And there are big issues here and I'll get to a couple in a second as I wrap up. And Bruce I'm sure will talk about the Pakistan dimension both on its own terms and perhaps as it relates to Afghanistan.

There are big issues of politics; big issues, as we all know, of corruption, of whether Afghan politics will make a smooth transition in 2014 to a new president as is supposed to be the case under the constitution, whether any kind of reconciliation talks will become significant in the next 12 to 24 months. But leave aside all of that, on the ground the plan is starting to really work pretty well, and I've now made seven trips to Afghanistan. It's the first time I would say that. It's the first time I would come back and say at a micro level on the ground what I saw really seemed to be working.

What I mean by that -- and let me just give you a few facts and figures or anecdotes, impressions as well. For example, this is a pretty telling observation I think that other people shared with me. Until this year, Afghan officials in Helmand Province only traveled around the province by helicopter, because the roads were basically owned by the Taliban, a combination of checkpoints that were run by the Taliban and of course roadside bombs all over the place that made travel perilous for anybody in a quasi-official capacity either in NATO, ISAF, or Afghan government circles.

At this point, the Afghan officials are driving the roads. So the district governors and other officials are moving by road, something you don't want to telegraph too loudly, even though I just did. Thankfully, I'm not the first. But you don't want to, of course, set yourself up for disappointment.

And there was an assassination attempt of Governor Mangel in his car a couple of weeks ago, and some of you probably noticed that. Of course he's the reformist governor in Helmand Province who's doing so well. But still, as a snapshot of security trends, the fact that officials now can use the roads and that the population increasingly can, too, is a sign of headway.

Now, Helmand is still the opium capital of the world, and so I don't want to say that a reduction in poppy production by 50 percent over 3 years is any great accomplishment per se. It's still, you know, far and away the dominant source of this kind of narcotic on the planet. And yet it's now become clear that more is going on than just one single year of drought or poppy blight or any other one-time dynamic. What we're really seeing is that people are growing wheat instead of poppy in most of the areas that the government controls. Now, again, there's still a lot of poppy being grown, but that's another indicator. Poppy production is down by about half over the last three years.

A number of schools and health clinics, I can give you more statistics on this, and I, frankly, thought the Senate Formulations Committee Report, as useful as it was, should have spent a little more time talking about some of these positive trends. It had a little bit of an outdated field, frankly, to me, in some of the overall assessment that it reached, even if it was correct to underscore many relating problems. But, for example, 50 percent increase in kids in school in Helmand just in the last year and a half.

And so what we're seeing is not just the case studies from Marja or Nawa -- and I'm sure all of you have heard enough about those two towns. They're impressive, they're coming along, but it's not convincing just to hear progress in those places. But what you're starting to see now is throughout the entire Helmand River Valley the place is fundamentally safer and more open for business than it had been

before.

Still hugely problematic, and unfortunately our enemy is extraordinarily good at assassinations, as we've seen in Kandahar, in Konduz, and other parts of the country. And this campaign is, of course, by no means nearing anything called victory or success, but the micro trends on the ground are good.

One last data point: we are actually now able to attract enough Afghans into the police and army from Helmand and Kandahar, which is a first-time development. We're finally meeting local recruiting goals. And as those of you who have followed the Afghan security forces know, while there have been successes overall in recruiting in the past, and even among the Pashtun population in the central part of the country, the Pashtun part of the population in the South has never really wanted to join the army or police. But now they're starting to feel enough of a critical mass of various things working together that make this a more appealing prospect that they are now reaching the quotas on recruiting.

Okay, that's the happy talk, and I'm going to stop there on happy talk. I'm just going to now finish with one word of less happy talk before going over to Bruce and seeing what he provides today.

MS. RADDATZ: What's this about no happy talk? (Laughter)

MR. O'HANLON: But I'll say this on Kabul and politics in Afghanistan, central politics in Afghanistan -- and here, thank goodness we have Ambassador Crocker heading over soon, but he's certainly got his work cut out for him, and I salute Ambassador Eikenberry and all of his predecessors who have worked very hard on this problem, but we really haven't managed to have a clear way forward on Afghan politics.

We've helped create a terrible problem. And we like to blame Karzai for

it, and we should blame Karzai for some of it. But I'm just going to finish on this note: We helped write a constitution back in 2003 that gave him all the power. And when it was approved in '04, it basically said, okay, we've got a light footprint strategy -- that was the American/NATO approach -- and, therefore, Mr. President, President Karzai, you basically have no power. We haven't given you an army or a police force worth the name. We haven't given you anything but a few hundred million dollars to spread around the country. So, the one thing we think you probably have is the power to hire and fire at will throughout the entire country almost every position in government at every level of governance.

Frankly, what a foolish concept for a country that's supposed to understand that democracy doesn't just mean the tyranny of the majority at the ballot box. But it means institutional checks and balances with protection for minority rights and division of power so that no one person becomes autocratic.

Now, I'm not really suggesting that in 2003-2004 our leaders were uniformly foolish, because given that the light footprint strategy had been adopted, maybe we didn't we have a choice. But we were present at the creation. We helped write this constitution. We gave Karzai all the power. And now that he's in a country with tens of billions a year flowing in and a military and an army and police that are worth the name, to some extent, we're a little surprised that he acts in quasi-dictatorial and quasi-autocratic ways and abuses his power to some extent.

We've got to get serious about helping Afghans figure out ways to develop a system of constitution-based checks and balances. It's not for us to decide exactly how you do that, but the notion that the current Afghan government structure is viable and sustainable to me is almost laughable. And we are as guilty -- we are more

guilty of it than the Afghans, because in '03/'04 they were just getting their feet on the ground to figure out how to even run a country. We were the ones that were supposed to understand democracy, constitutions, elections, et cetera. And now our attitude is sometimes, well, they're a sovereign country. We can't make those decisions for them, so let's just keep our hands off.

And we hope that somehow there's a presidential election in Afghanistan in 2014 that magically produces a good leader when Karzai has to step down, that Karzai himself doesn't try to engineer a third term. We just hope that these things will happen and we have no real strategy for what to do to make them more likely. So, I hope in the discussion we spend some time on that, because I would acknowledge that for all my happy talk about ground-level conditions, there are some big problems here in our overall strategy.

MS. RADDATZ: Thanks, Michael. I will just, as a bridge here, say that I spent my time three weeks ago all in the East, all along the border, and basically saw what Michael is talking about, and that is that they feel they have a lot of work to do there on the border areas. Every combat outpost we went to, these small combat outposts, had seen a lot of activity. And I have to say, frankly, that some of them I don't quite understand why we're in those locations and what the purpose is, and I think in some of those places they still are trying to figure that out, because basically they've become just bullet magnets there and they're -- maybe you can help me explain that in a bit.

But, Bruce Riedel, we would love to know about Pakistan, would love to know about what it means with Zawahiri and a bit about Bin Laden, too.

MR. RIEDEL: Okay. Well, thank you, Martha. Thank you for hosting this, and thank you, Mike, for putting it together.

The good news is over. You've heard the upbeat part. But I want to make a comment about that. The good news, the happy talk of progress in Afghanistan has come over the last two years in spite of no help from Pakistan. In fact, I would put it more strongly then. In the face of Pakistanis' continued support for the Afghan Taliban, there have been positive developments in terms of getting Afghan and Pakistanis talking to each other for the first time in two years. But in terms of cutting off Pakistan's tangible assistance to the Afghan Taliban, no progress whatsoever, which makes the good news on the Afghan side of the border I think a little more striking when you think about it. We're doing this despite the fact that we're not getting Pakistani assistance.

Worse than that, as July approaches and the President's decision on troop levels approaches, the U.S.-Pakistani bilateral relationship is now in free fall. We're going in a nosedive and there's really no sign that we've bottomed out.

To step back on this relationship for a minute, this is a relationship that has been a rollercoaster for the last 65 years. And I'm indebted here to Tasie and Howard Schaffer, who are with us today for this idea, and I'm happy to say I've stolen it from them. This is a relationship that goes through periods of intense love affair followed by ugly divorce.

The first intense love affair was in the '50s and '60s built around the not-very-secret U-2 base in Peshawar. It crashed in the 1965 second Indo-Pakistan war. The second love affair followed with Henry Kissinger and Richard Nixon using Pakistan as a bridge to China. That crashed in the third Indo-Pakistani war in 1971.

The next love affair was, of course, the most earnest and the deepest, the 1980s war against the mujahideen, war with the mujahideen against the Soviets. This is the era that Pakistanis look back upon as the glory days, especially the Pakistani

intelligence service. It would love to go back to what it calls “Reagan rules,” which is we give them a big check of money and then let them do anything they want with it and don’t criticism them if they build atom bombs, provoke their neighbors, and encourage jihad around the world. That’s the glory days for them. That one came to a startling end in 1990, again over an indo-Pakistan crisis.

The most current love affair of course started on the morning of September 11, 2011. It probably had its heyday roughly around 2005 and 2006. Looking back, it’s clear to say that this current romance began to go into eclipse in 2008 for four reasons.

First, the murder of Benazir Bhutto, an operation carried out by al Qaeda according to the United Nations investigation. I would say it’s al Qaeda’s most important success since September 11th, which then led to the second nail in the coffin of the relationship, the demise of Pervez Musharraf, which was a nail for two reasons. First, he was our guy; and, second, we stood by our guy too long and thereby alienated more and more Pakistanis.

Third was the decision by the Bush Administration in 2008 to pressure for the firing of the director-general of the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate, at the time a man named Nadeem Taj. Nadeem Taj is a very important figure to look at in contemporary Pakistan. He was the commandant of the Kakul Military Academy in Abbottabad when Osama bin Laden moved into his little residence there in 2006. He then went on to be head of the ISI in 2007. We pushed for his firing in 2008 after two things: his fingerprints were all over blowing up the Indian embassy in Kabul, and he kept telling al Qaeda the targets for our drone strikes and making sure that they were out of the way before the strikes could occur. He was promoted up to become a

corps commander in the Pakistani army. I'm going to come back to him in a minute and the corps commanders.

And the fourth thing was, of course, the attack on Mumbai, which we now know in the wake of the trial of David Hedley and his co-conspirator had the fingerprints of the ISI all over it, too, in 2008.

The Obama Administration, as it likes to do -- and I admit to being guilty of this -- reset the button with Pakistan, and we said, okay, look, let's see if we can reset and start over. General Kayani asked us not to look in his dossier. It took me a while to figure out what that phrase meant, but I finally figured it out. It meant don't look at what I've done in the past, you won't like it, let's just focus on the future. And we did. And the signature item of the Obama policy toward Pakistan was the Kerry-Lugar legislation promising $1.5 billion in economic assistance for the next 5 years. We also provided about $2 billion a year in military assistance.

For two years or so, superficially, the relationship looked like it was working. We had a strategic dialogue. We had limited Pakistani counterinsurgency operations first in the Swat Valley and then there was Eurostat. If you looked too closely at those counterinsurgency operations, you saw a lot more smoke than fire, and one thing you never saw was any build and hold from the Pakistani government. There might be a lot of clearing, but there was no building and holding; there was no follow-through.

Ironically, though, those limited operations also stretched the Pakistani military pretty much to the brink. I don't think it's capable within its force posture, within its threat assessment of the neighborhood of doing significantly more.

Of course, this year the relationship has been falling apart, first with the Raymond Davis affair and now, more importantly, with Abbottabad. Abbottabad raises a

cloud over the U.S.-Pakistan relationship, which is unlikely to go away any time in the near future.

Just a word or two about Abbottabad. Abbottabad is a strange name for a Pakistani city, and that's because it's named after a British Army officer, John Abbott, who established it as a garrison city for the British army in India. It's home to three regiments of the Pakistani army, and as I said already it's home to the equivalent of West Point or Sandhurst for the Pakistani army.

This May, General Kayani gave a very much-advertised speech in Kakul about three weeks before the SEALS arrived, in which he said that the backbone of the Pakistani militant insurgency had been broken. First of all, he was wrong. Secondly, I think it's quite ironic to think that he gave that speech within earshot of Osama bin Laden.

The question mark that hangs over the U.S.-Pakistani relationship now is what did Pakistan know, who knew it, and when did they know it? The simple answer is, of course, al Qaeda's allies in Pakistan knew what was going on, and al Qaeda has a lot of allies in Pakistan: the Pakistani Taliban, which they're openly affiliated with; and Lashkar-e-Taiba, with which they are more and more openly affiliated. But the question that bedevils the relationship is who in the Pakistani army knew what was going on in that villa? The answer is we don't know, and the United States Government is spending a lot of time scratching its head trying to come up with a conclusion. Nothing that we found in Abbottabad so far answers the question.

The most senior levels of the American government -- Secretary Gates, Secretary Clinton -- have no real interest in coming to the conclusion that they have been directly misled by Kayani over the last few years and by others in the Pakistani military, but that question mark hangs there, especially in the American Congress, in the

American media, and in the American public.

At the end of the day there are only two real possibilities: the Pakistani military was clueless and had no idea that high-value target number one, the most wanted man in human history, was a mile away from their military academy in a building that General Musharraf has now told the British press he jogged by every time he went to Abbottabad in the last three years he was president of Pakistan; or they were complicit. And the levels of complicity could be at a junior level, could be at a middle level, they could be at a very senior level. We don't know the answer to this.

What we can say, and what I think is increasingly clear, is that the evidence of jihadist penetration of the Pakistani army is becoming clearer and clearer at all levels. And this was underscored by the attack on the Karachi naval facility two weeks ago. That was an almost entirely insider job, and it comes after a number of other attacks inside Pakistani military facilities, including general headquarters in Rawalpindi, that shows this army is penetrated to an alarming extent, and that raises all kinds of questions, of course, about the safety of the Pakistani nuclear force.

Now, every day this relationship is suffering more cuts. We have the news that the camps, the factories where improvised explosive devices were being built for the Afghan Taliban have been tipped off by somebody in Pakistan before the Pakistani army could show up. We have the news that the CIA's assets and informers in Abbottabad have been arrested by the ISI in the last 48 hours. One thing after another.

Ironically, the Pakistani army has suffered the worst in all of this. They have been humiliated in the eyes of the Pakistani people and, in fact, in their own eyes. The Pakistani army may be disturbed that high-value target number one was living in their midst, but they're even more disturbed that the United States military was able to get

in there, kill him, and get out without absolutely no reaction from Pakistani air defenses, Pakistani forces in the region.

For them what does this mean? The Indians could do the same thing. They could do it in more places and more dramatically. And as a footnote here, they're absolutely right in one sense. The Abbottabad raid, which I completely support, has now provided legitimacy for India in the future to do commando raids into Pakistan in the wake of the next big terrorist attack in South Asia, which I think is probably only a matter of time. A precedent has been established that you can go after terrorists in Pakistan using unilateral means.

General Kayani is the one most in trouble. He's being criticized by his own rank and file and by his corps commanders. They thought he had a strategy for dealing with the Americans. Well, on the 2nd of May, his strategy didn't seem to work anymore. They thought he was building a Pakistani military capable of defending the country, and it isn't. They're preoccupied with India, and their knowledge of the precedent that I just laid out is far more fixed in their DNA code than it is in mine.

The irony is he's also under pressure from the Americans, because we don't know what he knew and what he didn't know, and we have grave doubts that he really is our partner. And to add irony to irony, he's now under attack from al Qaeda, which has said, in effect, we're coming to get you, General Kayani, because you're being held accountable for letting the Americans know he was in Abbottabad, which of course we didn't know from him, but that's al Qaeda's spin on the whole situation.

General Kayani was given an unprecented three-year extension as chief of army staff last year, under intense American pressure to do so, by the way. I think it's increasingly unlikely that he will serve those three years out. I think there's increasing

chance that at some point the corps commanders will say to General Kayani we've lost faith in you and we think it's time for you to move on.

That's not good news either, because the corps commanders, about whom we don't know a whole lot, we do know a few things. They tend to be more anti-American than General Kayani is already, more nationalist, and some of them -- how many it's hard to say -- some of them far more sympathetic to the jihad than General Kayani has been.

The relationship, then, is in free fall. It's in a nosedive. It's time to think about recalibrating how we change where we're going. First thing, though, is there's really no alternative to engagement. Pakistan is too big, too important. This is not a country we can ignore. This is a country that will soon be the fifth largest country in terms of population, soon the fifth largest nuclear power in the world, and on a vector to be the fourth largest nuclear weapons arsenal in the world. It is the home of more terrorists than any other country in the world. It is simply too important for the United States to ignore. It is also, of course, our supply line to Afghanistan. The deep irony is it's the supply line for both sides in the war in Afghanistan, but that's an irony we have to live with and manage rather than try to simply wish away.

The other thing Abbottabad underscored dramatically about Pakistan is whether they were clueless or complicit. We can't rely on them to take care of al Qaeda. The President was right not to give them advance warning, and he would be a fool to give them advance warning in the future, and one thing is for sure: Barack Obama is no fool.

We will need to retain the capability to carry out unilateral missions in Pakistan both drones and in extremis commando raids. To do that, we need a base in the region. The geography is simple. There are only two places to do it from. India --

they're not going to let us operate out of their country, and there are all kinds of reasons we wouldn't want to operate out of India and Pakistan, so we need Afghanistan. Afghanistan is crucial to our long-term capability to deal with al Qaeda in Pakistan and to find Iman Sowahiri and take care of him.

That doesn't mean we need 145,000. You can make the case for less. But it means a long-term strategic relationship with Afghanistan, which is why the administration is working on that today.

There are some other things we can do to change our relationship with Pakistan. I'm just going to bullet headline them now so we can get to questions.

One, trade not aid. Our economic assistance program is unsustainable. Anyone who thinks this Congress is going to vote $1.5 billion in economic assistance with Pakistan next year is living in la-la land. They weren't going to do it before Abbottabad; they're certainly not going to in the future. We need to come up with a different way of helping the Pakistani economy, and a much more effective way of doing that is reducing tariffs on Pakistani products to the same level that we have tariffs on products from India, Bangladesh, Singapore, and a number of other countries.

Secondly, I think we need to put more accountability into our relationship with the ISI. I've advocated for some time that we tell the ISI that we're going to make it personal now. If we learn of the operations of a Pakistani colonel or major in support of a terrorist operation, we will put them on the terrorist list; we will freeze his assets; we will arrest him if he comes to the United States; we will go after his children if they are being educated in the United States and expel them; we will ask the British to do the same in London; and, if we think he's a bad enough bad guy we'll come and visit him personal and up close. Now, when I advocated this in the past, the CIA told me, well, Bruce,

you've been in liaison relationships. This is going to be one rocky liaison relationship in the future. I think the answer to that now is, yeah, it's already a pretty rocky liaison relationship. I don't think there's a whole lot to lose.

And lastly, I think we need to use the India card more deftly than we have until date. That's both in terms of positives, trying to encourage Indo-Pakistan reconciliation, which at the end of day is the biggest game changer in our favor but also is a negative, making clear to the Pakistanis that there is another girl in town, and that girl is the one we're probably going to be going with for a long time and if you don't get on board you're going to find yourself in a very difficult situation.

Lastly, just a word or two on Iman Zawahiri. Al Qaeda's actually a very structured, organized institution. It has bylaws. It doesn't have a constitution per se, but it has bylaws, and those bylaws are very specific. When the emir of al Qaeda is indisposed or dead, the deputy emir is supposed to succeed him, and there really is no way in these bylaws that anyone other than Iman Zawahiri could have become emir of al Qaeda. But al Qaeda did a very interesting thing. It basically allowed the voice of the jihad to be heard.

What do I mean by that? Over the course of the last month, jihadist websites and jihadist chat rooms have talked about who should replace Osama bin Laden, and the overwhelming consensus has been Iman Zawahiri. In fact, no candidate emerged as an alternative despite the strenuous efforts of experts in the West, including myself, to suggest here are some other possibilities. In the jihadist website world, none of those possibilities ever got very far.

So, after allowing this process of consensus to build, al Qaeda today has formalized the process and made him the new emir of al Qaeda. Whether he can

succeed in the boots of Osama bin Laden is an open question. He has a very difficult task in front of him. He doesn't have the charismatic effect of Osama bin Laden. He's a thinker. He's also a doer, but he's primarily a thinker, an ideologue. He's a writer of books. He probably has written even more books than Michael O'Hanlon in the last five years. (Laughter) And that's an amazing, amazing feat to produce.

Thank you very much.

MS. RADDATZ: Thank you. I have about 8 million questions, but I'm only going to ask one of each of you -- one or two maybe -- and open it up to the group here. And my question is this. Both of you talk about the importance of Afghanistan, obviously, to U.S. foreign policy. We also talk about counterinsurgency, and that is clearly the strategy that General Petraeus has undertaken there. Is there now room to go back to the debate of 2009, since Osama bin Laden's been killed, and go more toward what was described as Vice President Biden's strategy, which was a counterterrorist strategy to just target terrorists.

And let me add into that something you said, Michael, about President Obama and being rather bullish last time. Things have changed since last time. He's gotten Osama bin Laden. I think he's certainly had more experience with national security. I think last time he felt somewhat pressured by the military and taking only the military's advice because he hadn't been President very long.

So, talk about those two things from both sides of the border about the COIN strategy and why that should continue and the other wouldn't work and President Obama's change and what that might mean.

MR. O'HANLON: Shall I start?

MS. RADDATZ: Yeah.

MR. O'HANLON: Well, first of all, of course, Bruce, in Iraq with the President, which maybe makes it harder for him to answer your question in public, but my interpretation is that the military didn't pressure President Obama in 2009. President Obama had made very clear the parameters of what he wanted to do in Afghanistan. He had recognized that we had failed with the light footprint counterterrorism strategy.

MS. RADDATZ: Well, perhaps his own inexperience in national security made him feel pressure, not so much maybe that the military tried to pressure him, that he felt pressure.

MR. O'HANLON: But because this argument has had such, you know, echo in Washington and there's this -- I think Bob Woodward created a misimpression that the military boxed Obama in, I think it's worth underscoring that Obama set the parameters. He wanted the anti-Rumsfeld strategy. He didn't want CT, because we had tried CT, and we got what CT produced. And on this point I don't mean to be -- I think Bruce -- because I've read him and listened to him before -- Bruce would perhaps be more critical than I of the previous strategy in the sense that I think he was critical of it earlier than I was. I understood the logic for trying it. But let's face it. It failed. For eight years we tried to do Afghanistan on the cheap, and it didn't work. And so President Obama came in saying we're going to change. And I think, you know, if you're not going to do CT, there aren't that many in-between strategies.

General Cartwright is alleged to have supported a hybrid. Well, what's that mean? That you protect people in this city but that not city? That you take al Qaeda's sanctuaries away in Town X, but you let them operate in Town Y so they can come in and attack out of -- hybrids don't make sense in this business, so I think it's worth focusing not just on the politics of this but the fundamentals of strategy. You either

do CT or COIN but you don't do a hybrid, and I think that's going to remain true, because that's a strategic reality. That's not based on whether Osama bin Laden's alive or dead.

The point I would make however, and here I would concede a little more ground to the spirit of your question, none of us can quantify the risk to American security if Afghanistan fails again. And it's possible the risks are now a wee bit less, because Bin Laden's dead. It's also possible the risks are more, because Lashkar-e-Taiba with the Pakistani Taliban and al Qaeda collaborate more and have even more aims throughout the region in the world, and they would love to have a sanctuary throughout the entire Pashtun belt of Afghanistan.

I don't know how quantify the risks. But given where we are in the campaign plan, that we have spent now two years really working hard to clear out some dangerous areas, to build up the Afghan forces, and we're seeing progress, I think it makes sense to stick with the campaign plan for another one to two years. Now, if it fails demonstrably over that period of time, then we'll have no choice but to fall back on CT. And, by the way, if it fails -- if it succeeds, our role can increasingly adjust BCT, because the Afghans will be doing the COIN -- the counterinsurgency, the population protection -- and we can do the more limited things. But given where we are, given how much we've invested, and given the signs of progress on the ground, I think it makes sense to play out the campaign plan. If you were to stop it now, you might as well not have even bothered to begin. And maybe that's the point I should finish on.

MS. RADDATZ: And would you also add what you think the threat of al Qaeda is in Afghanistan?

MR. RIEDEL: First, I agree with everything that Mike has just said about not pulling the plug on something when you're in midstream. The other thing I would say

about the politics of this is that President Obama's decisions in 2009 to send more troops may have surprised some people, but anyone who worked in his campaign and listened to what he promised the American people he would do was not surprised. I certainly wasn't. I wrote his talking points on these things during the campaign, and he said he was going to focus on Afghanistan, and he said he was going to send more troops there. He also said that he would use unilateral ops against Pakistan if he came to the conclusion that the high-value target was there and the Pakistanis wouldn't do anything about it, and he lived up to that campaign promise, too.

He is in a very different political environment though. Anyone who listened to the Republican debate on Monday night or who's watched some of the reaction, the question of how many troops to keep in Afghanistan, how long to be there, which was not really a question of the Republican Party a month ago is now a question of the Republican Party and it's certainly a question of the Democratic Party. So, the politics of this are shifting underneath the President's position, and it will make it more difficult I think for him where he comes out.

The al Qaeda threat -- here I would go back to something Mike said, also, which is that al Qaeda by itself is probably a reduced threat today. Its future is in question now that its leader is gone. I don't think it's going to go away. Iman Zawahiri may emerge as a very effective leader. We don't know that yet. But it's on the defensive right now. But what's important to think about is not al Qaeda per se, but the syndicate of terrorism around it in Pakistan today: the Pakistani Taliban, Lashkar-e-Taiba, and the Afghan Taliban.

And here there's some very interesting new data. Since the killing of Osama bin Laden, we've gotten eulogies and memorials from all of these groups to

Osama bin Laden. Lashkar-e-Taiba, which in the past, used to take the position we never heard of them, we don't know who these people are. Its leader Hafiz Saeed, within hours of the announcement of his death, came out in public and said I mourn the great hero of the Islamic revolution. And he spent the first Friday after that Abbottabad raid lauding Osama bin Laden in his public Friday prayer comments, associating Lashkar-e-Taiba very closely with al Qaeda.

The Afghan Taliban who similarly, from 2007 on, had gone out of its way never ever to utter the word "al Qaeda" and never to speak about Osama bin Laden, issued a formal statement 24 hours after al Qaeda announced his death mourning the loss of the hero of the Afghan revolution, highlighting his role in fighting for Palestinian rights, and associating itself very closely with the global Islamic jihad. For those who believe that the Afghan Taliban can be weaned away from al Qaeda, that eulogy is a very inconvenient document. They may have been moved by their emotions to demonstrate their reality. The reality on the ground is al Qaeda, and the Taliban still cooperate together.

In his statement mourning Osama bin Laden's death Iman Zawahiri a week ago reaffirmed his loyalty to Mullah Omar as the emir of the believers. And in the statement this morning announcing that he is the emir of al Qaeda it was reiterated that al Qaeda sees Mullah Omar as the commander of the faithful and the leader of the global Islamic jihad.

MS. RADDATZ: Thank you. All right, let's open it up.

Shall we wait for -- let's wait for microphones I think?

MS. SCHAFFER: Thank you. Tasie Schaffer now at Brookings. I wanted to thank Bruce for the free advertising he provided for Howie's and my book on

how Pakistan negotiates with the United States. The, I would say, key finding that we had was that Pakistan strategy in managing its relationship with the United States is to create a dependence by the United States on Pakistan as well as the guilt trip that goes with it and that Pakistan starts from the proposition that we need them more than they need us. I would suggest to you that everything we've seen since the book was public has reinforced that conclusion.

I'd very much agree with implicit underpinning of what Bruce said, which is that Pakistan is more important than Afghanistan, but his proposed substitute strategy relies at least in part on Afghanistan. And so my question to whichever one of you feels like tackling it is how do you recommend that we manage Pakistan's role or non-role in any Afghan negotiating process, given that Pakistan has already demonstrated that it will play hardball to avoid being pushed out of the driver's seat in that process?

MR. O'HANLON: You're absolutely right. Pakistan -- I think it's a fruitless question who needs who more. The reality is that we are locked in an embrace and we can't get out of it. But the level of embrace varies enormously over time. In the specific case of political process in Afghanistan, the Pakistanis have to be brought in; otherwise, they'll be the spoiler in the room. But it seems to me they have to be brought in more by the Afghans than by the Americans.

I think this is a very hypothetical question, because while I support the notion of a political process in Afghanistan, I don't see one emerging. I keep hearing from the administration and from others that once the Taliban has been battered sufficiently, we hope that they will begin to enter into some kind of reconciliation political process. I don't see it. All I see now is talks about talks with people who don't represent the Afghan Taliban leadership in any meaningful way.

Pakistan, ironically, probably could deliver those people, or at least those who are prepared in any way to come to it, but so far I don't see the Pakistanis prepared to do that. So, I think this is an important issue but I think at this point it's still a hypothetical issue.

The last point I would make about it is if a political process actually begins in Afghanistan, I fear that most of our allies in Afghanistan are going to go south on us and say we don't want this political process. We don't want to deal with the Taliban at the negotiating table. We want to finish this. That certainly would be the deal of Abdullah Abdullah, of Amrullah Saleh, the other leaders of the anti-Karzai opposition within the Afghan national political movement.

MS. RADDATZ: Mike.

MR. O'HANLON: I agree with Bruce, but I would add a couple of points. I do think that -- I was speaking to a former Afghan cabinet member Pashtun and share some of the concerns. He works with Saleh and Abdullah, but is himself not Tajik, but Pashtun. And his view was very thoughtful because he doesn't trust the Pakistanis, but he also doesn't see any choice about the need to work with them, and he said here are a couple of areas where we could give ground.

We can, for example -- if they're really, really worried about these Indian consulates in the east and south of the country, you know what? We don't desperately need an Indian consulate in Jalalabad or Kandahar. And he said you know, if the Pakistanis just want to be part of the conversation more as we think about how we're going to do various peace deals with a lot of, you know, Afghan politicians who would like to be part of those talks more, have more transparency, maybe we can just get more people involved and be more transparent in general. And he said if the Pakistanis need

us to reaffirm the Duran line, well, of course that's going to be tough for some Afghans, and for those of you who don't follow this issue, it's sort of incredulous.

I mean, with apologies to any Afghan friends, here you have a small country fighting for its life, one of the poorest places on earth with 30 million total people, sitting next to a country with 180 million people and a hundred nuclear weapons and unwilling to recognize the border between them because the smaller country, Afghanistan, thinks the border should probably go east into Pakistani territory, taking some of the Pashtun areas in Pakistan and making them part of Afghanistan. It's a fairly preposterous dream, but it's one that Afghans can't really disassociate themselves from. But this former official said, well, maybe we can at least, you know, agree not to reopen the discussions on the line for 50 years and acknowledge that it's going to be the de facto line for whatever period of time and send a message that Pakistani Pashtun should look to Islamabad for their future leadership. So, he had some specific ideas on how they could try to do negotiations with Pakistan. But he said we have to be adamant when the Pakistanis insist that we sort of look to them as their big brother and break off or reduce our ties to the United States. That's non-negotiable, and that's ridiculous, and that's what Pakistanis are sometimes trying to do to Afghans, is to browbeat them into that kind of relationship, from what I gather.

Just one last point. When you think about reconciliation with the Taliban, I agree with Bruce. I haven't seen any movement on this to speak of. But I think we have to imagine what kinds of terms might be acceptable. And I could imagine some former Taliban getting district governor positions, for example, in Eastern Afghanistan as long as there are certain verifiable restrictions on the size of their personal militias and things like that. And I think the Pakistanis could help suggest to the Afghans -- not to us,

to the Afghans -- who some of those candidates might usefully be. And so that's another area where we could have fruitful discussion. Whether it's right for a deal I doubt as well. But those are the kinds of ideas I would throw into the mix.

MS. RADDATZ: Thanks, Mike.

The gentleman in -- yes. There you go.

SPEAKER: I have a comment and a question. The comment is I know that 10 years is a very long time for anybody to remember anything in Washington, but there was a very good reason why Karzai was given that much power by the constitution that our government helped to create for the Afghans, and that was that he was a total creation of the American government. He was put there. He was managed by our government for at least -- for the first five or six years, and they, therefore, wanted him to have that kind of power, because they were wielding the power. And nobody seems to remember that, that he was put there. He was not put there by the Afghans.

My question is this. I go to Afghanistan once a year, and when I go I go as an Afghan: and so that means that when I'm in Afghanistan, I'm with only Afghanistan people the whole time. And I've been going since 2003. Now, in that seven, eight years, I have seen incredible change. I mean, it's hard to imagine that that much could have happened in eight years. And I'm not just talking about rebuilding schools and roads and stuff like that. I'm talking about the reconstruction of the social, cultural existence of these people. And one measure of that, which I never see any reference to in any of the press or in policy analysis, think-tank people is what the Afghan people are doing in their own country. And by them I don't mean just the farmers and the widows and all the people that we occasionally hear about. I'm talking about foreign Afghan businessmen who've made a fortune in London, in the United States, wherever, in the last 40 years

who are investing huge amounts of money, taking on great risk to do this. And there is a reason why they're doing this. And I think it's a very good measure of what has really been happening there.

And everybody's focusing always on war and guns and soldiers and Kandahar and Helmand and all this, and the rest of the story is not being told by anybody. So, the American people -- of course they're tired of the war, but they're not getting any of the proper input that they should have in making their own decisions about how much money they're going to give for the next three or four years or whatever it's all about. And I think this is really a scandalous situation, and I complain about it to the Afghans all the time: Why don't you guys do something about this? But for some reason they don't know how to handle that so.

MS. RADDATZ: That's not a question, so. Anyway, you want to say something quickly about that.

MR. O'HANLON: Just it was very well said.

MS. RADDATZ: Yes, yes, thank you.

Cammie McCormick? No, you can't yell loud enough. We're not going to let you yell.

MS. McCORMICK: Thank you. Can I ask you to expand a little bit on two issues? One, General Kayani, and whenever you hear about Gates or Mullen -- Admiral Mullen visiting the region he's always the first person they meet with. So, really, what could this do as far as U.S.-Pakistan relationships if he was to be forced to be leave?

And, secondly, about Zawahiri, what impact could his being now the head of al Qaeda have on Pakistan?

MS. RADDATZ: And Bruce, can I add to that with General Kayani, who might be in the wings, who would be --

MR. RIEDEL: Right. Just a brief comment on your eloquent commentary. One of the reasons we don't hear about it is the Obama Administration's signal failure on Afghanistan to come up with a coherent communications and public diplomacy posture to bring the case to the American people for why we're there.

I think the President has the right strategy. I think he's done an abysmal job of explaining to the American people why it is we're there, why we need to stay, why it's in our national interest. And part of that of course would be to explain what the Afghan people are doing and give some kind of measure of our moral responsibility to people whom we've asked to do an enormous amount for us since 1979.

General Kayani is a sphinx. Those who meet with him don't understand what makes him tick. He is very good at playing his cards very close to his chest. Everyone assumed, until recently, that there was some master plan in those cards. I think that more and more people are beginning to realize that maybe there was nothing there and that's why he held it so close to his chest, because there wasn't much to look at. He's a clever manipulator. He ran the ISI. Probably was the second most successful director-general the ISI has ever had. But on his watch, the Afghan Taliban made their comeback, and on his watch David Hedley was recruited and sent to India to plan the Mumbai terrorist operations. And now the extent to which he personally knew of those things we don't know.

But I've worked in an intelligence organization for a long time. When you run a very important agent in your prime target, usually you keep the commander-in-chief in the loop as to what he's doing and especially about his expenditures and things like

that. I think we have to wonder what is in his dossier. Who comes after him? I don't know. I don't think anybody knows, one of the corps commanders. Those people are very difficult to get a handle on. Their core beliefs are even harder to get a handle on. One thing I think we can say is that they're not terribly predisposed toward the United States of America.

MS. RADDATZ: And Zawahiri?

MR. RIEDEL: And Zawahiri, I'm sorry, what was the Zawahiri question again?

MS. RADDATZ: Just more on what it would mean to --

MR. RIEDEL: Oh, yes, Zawahiri. Zawahiri's last book is a tome on why Pakistan does not have an Islamic government and why it needs to be overthrown and an Islamic government put in place. It's deadly. It's probably the worst of his books ever. And a lot of them are really pretty deadly, but this one --

MS. RADDATZ: Unlike Mike O'Hanlon.

MR. RIEDEL: Unlike Mike O'Hanlon's. (Laughter) This book is basically a critique of the Pakistani government, it's a critique of Pakistani history, and it's a call for revolution in Pakistan and the creation of a true Islamic government there. So, at the top of Mr. Zawahiri's priorities is Pakistan. Makes sense. That's al Qaeda's base. And it's also the most important country in the Muslim world and they know that. They understand; this is the strategic prize. His heart may be in his homeland of Egypt, but his head is definitely in Pakistan.

MS. RADDATZ: Thanks. Young lady right here, white shirt? Sorry? Okay, you're right after.

MS. ACTAR: Hi, my name's Afreen Actar. I wanted to get back to the

question of a political process. You mentioned that you didn't see one kick-starting or occurring over the next few years, and I agree with you, I think it would be difficult to imagine a disparate insurgency sort of brought into a marginally functional government. But my question is what's the end game then? I mean, it's a resilient insurgency, and I agree with you that a Tajik and his RF factions within the Afghan government are resistant to it. But what would be the point of continuing -- as he said, we're only midstream -- if there's no end game, which is a political solution?

MR. RIEDEL: I'll give you my version of the end game in Afghanistan, but I think Mike should also chime in. I think the end game that is within our power to accomplish is an Afghan national security infrastructure that is capable of dealing with a residual insurgency with virtually no foreign combat troops but considerable foreign military assistance. How big a number that is, I don't know. Mike may have a view on it.

I think that is an achievable goal. I think that's what the President's strategy is premised upon. That Afghan national security infrastructure would allow us to carry out operations against al Qaeda and other terrorists in the region in return for that continued level of American military support.

All the other outcomes in Afghanistan are out of our control. The Afghan Taliban may or may not be a negotiating body. I don't think they are a negotiating body. But we can't make them negotiate. We can hope they will. We can hope that Pakistan will play a more helpful game, but we can't make Pakistan do that. Strategy can't be built on hope. It's got to be built on what we control and produce.

MS. RADDATZ: Mike.

MR. O'HANLON: I agree with that answer. I would just try to take it from a different angle and say if you about the insurgency today -- and you're obviously quite

knowledgeable about it -- there are several pieces to it, and the strategy is a little different with each one, right? So, there's one piece that is, frankly, just putting its finger to the wind: Who's winning? Whose side do I want to be on based on just trying to stay alive and wanting to be on the winning side in my area? We can do something about that by military progress.

There's another aspect to the insurgency, which is tribes or groups that have felt disaffected, disenfranchised by Karzai government. And that's where the whole anti-corruption campaign is relevant to the fight. And that's a hard one, but we're trying. And of course we haven't talked a lot about that in detail, but everything from the H.R. McMaster efforts to a lot of the focus Kabul bank, major crimes task force, some of these things I believe work better than others. But that's a second piece of the insurgency.

A third piece is the potentially reconcilable Taliban -- capital T. I think that's the smallest piece, but we should hold out hope. We should just not delude ourselves that it's likely to appear in large numbers.

And the fourth piece just has to be defeated, which is the truly hardcore, probably the majority of the sort of, you know, quite assured Taliban Haqqani network. And then maybe a fifth piece would be Pakistan's role in trying to shut down infiltration, so even if some of those groups remain where they are, they can't be effective, and of course Bruce has already spoken to that.

With each of those of five groups you have a different strategy. The good news is that even if you're only successful with three or four of them, and even if the success is only 50 percent, if you're building up an Afghan security force at the same time, you hopefully have accomplished what Bruce said and taken the resistance down to a level that can be handled primarily by Afghans over time.

MS. RADDATZ: Michael?

MR. O'HANLON: Go ahead.

MS. RADDATZ: Can I just ask you quickly. The idea of reconciliation with the Taliban. What would the country look like? What would be different? What about Sharia law? What would they want?

MR. O'HANLON: The way I think of it -- and I had this op-ed published when McChrystal was in the air last June flying home, so it didn't get a lot of attention. (Laughter)

MS. RADDATZ: Funny, I don't remember it.

MR. O'HANLON: Not that it should have necessarily anyway, but the way I thought of it was in the eastern parts of the country of Afghanistan, where you have groups like the Haqqani network or in the Jalalabad area, groups that have a strong travel base, a strong sense of wanting to control their space, that there may be ways to limit their military capability but allow them to have some role in government if they will meet certain stipulations and allow the Afghan government to keep some eyes on them and NATO forces to keep some eyes on them. So, maybe there can be some Taliban who get district governorships. Now, in those areas you probably do have to concede that some modern rights, some women's rights, some secular rights will be constrained more than in the rest of the country. But I don't think that the central government and the central constitution of Afghanistan can go halfway toward Taliban demands, because I think, first of all, you'd spark a Tajik-Hazara civil war if you tried. And, secondly, Afghans don't deserve that nonsense. And so I think the trading space is along the border and it's in more geographic terms than it is in constitutional or legal terms.

MS. RADDATZ: Thanks. It's you.

MR. GILLIS: Thank you both for your time. I'm Ryan Gillis, Newsmax Media. I'm curious to what you think about -- many commentaries have talked about the recent targeting and death and the events surrounding the targeting of Ilyas Kashmiri, and someone said that indicates a close relationship between Pakistan and the United States and that Pakistan and the United States are actually -- or Pakistan is responding more to U.S. pressure. So, I'm curious what you think about that and also what you think about whether the strategy of targeting key militant leaders, does that actually end up weakening these militant groups or does it just cause them to decentralize and change in the way they operate? Thank you.

MS. RADDATZ: Are we sure he's dead?

MR. RIEDEL: No. That's the problem.

MR. O'HANLON: Reportedly dead. Mr. Kashmiri has risen from the drones twice before. There's no eulogy. There's no sign of memorials. There's no discussion in chat rooms about his departure. He may be dead, but if he is we're not seeing what we should see in the force of the jihad.

It's no secret that Mrs. Clinton gave the Pakistanis a list of four or five people. Kashmiri was on the list. From the Pakistani standpoint, he was the one on the list that they could say, yeah, okay, we'd like to get rid of him, too, he's our -- he's the man we created who turned on us. So, he's the one on that list that was most agreed upon by both sides that he could go. In many ways, the most dangerous Pakistani operative today, because he knows the system. He knows the interior of the ISI because he's been in the interior of ISI. He knows how the Special Services Group works because he was a member of the Special Services Group, which is the Pakistani equivalent of the SEALS.

The business of removing high-target, high profile -- it's not a cure-all, but it sure has some damaging effects. To put it one way, we tried to terrorize the terrorists and the drones, and SEAL operations are a way of terrorizing the terrorists, making their lives more difficult, making operational activities more difficult, forcing them to spend more time hiding and trying to find good places to hide than doing the other things that they would otherwise do.

MS. RADDATZ: A lot of mid-level guys missing, too, huh?

MR. O'HANLON: You know, the difference between mid-level and high level is often pretty hard --

MS. RADDATZ: It's like the day of the al Qaeda -- the most dangerous job in the world.

MR. O'HANLON: Right. It's hard to tell.

MS. RADDATZ: Okay. Way in the back please.

MR. ANDA: Good morning. My name's Mitch Anda from the Risk Advisory Group. My question is for Bruce.

You mentioned that a settlement on Kashmir would be a game changer, and I just wondered, given the institutional anti-Indian sentiment within the Pakistani military how much would a settlement on Kashmir actually change their perceptions of India as a threat, given that for the foreseeable future India will remain the preponderant military power and political power in South Asia?

MR. RIEDEL: I think what I said was Indo-Pakistani rapprochement, but you're right to take it to the inevitable step, which is Kashmir.

The biggest reason we don't have a settlement of course is that the Pakistanis' armies' equities would be upset if there was no longer a strategic rivalry within

India. But I think here we need to think -- we need to raise our game a little bit. The bottom line I described in Afghanistan is a pretty low bar, but it's -- and it is, I think, good enough to allow us to bring our forces home. But the long-term health of South Asia, which is a national security interest of the United States, requires something much broader and much more visionary. My vision of a long-term South Asia was actually described by Prime Minister Singh a few years go, where he said he envisioned a day when you could have breakfast in New Delhi, lunch in Islamabad, and dinner in Kabul. In other words, the creation of something like an economic free-trade zone in South Asia akin to the European Union.

In the long term, that's in everyone's interest. It's certainly in the interest of the people of South Asia, which will provide a way for the smaller countries in South Asia to become part of the Indian tiger economy and to latch on to it.

So, where do we start? I think the place to start is with relatively modest steps. You don't deal with the hardest problem first. Relative modest steps, like increasing communications links and transportation links between India and Pakistan. Prime Minister Singh has long wanted to do that. President Zadari wanted to do that, too. That's one of the reasons we got the Mumbai attack was the dark forces in Pakistan don't want it to happen.

Is there a way to constrain those dark forces? That's the $64 million question we've been looking at. There is no silver bullet that does it. There's no simple solution that does it. I think we need to be more creative in thinking about solutions, and here's a place where you don't have to be in government to be creative. Think tanks can be very helpful and useful in this regard in putting forward ideas.

I think, though, we have to recognize that these big visions in the end are

the solutions that we're looking for.

MR. O'HANLON: Thanks. Sir.

MR. MITCHELL: Thanks. Gary Mitchell from the *Mitchell Report*. Bruce, I want to go back to a comment, one of your early comments that I found pretty chilling in a way, which was the notion that the Abbottabad raid was -- should be of huge concern to the Pakistanis because among other things it suggests India could do the same thing. My thought -- the minute that you said that, I began thinking to myself I wonder if we're the ones that shouldn't be most fearful of our ability to have pulled off the Abbottabad raid, because it seems to me we've sort of operated under the assumption that that nuclear treasure chest that they have is safe because the Pakistani army is good and tough, et cetera. So, whether -- as you say, whether it was collusion or clueless with respect to Osama bin Laden being right in their backyard and we were able to pull that raid off, to what extent should we be more concerned about the safety and security of Pakistan's nuclear force as a result of having demonstrated how easy it is, and I don't -- I wouldn't say that to the Navy SEAL group, by the way, but how easy it is to have pulled that off.

MS. RADDATZ: I have a sneaking suspicion the nuclear weapons were safe during that raid, but.

MR. RIEDEL: It's a very important question. Let me, first of all, say I'm not saying that the Indians have the capabilities that we have to do it in the manner that we did it, but I would say that they have now a precedent for doing it in the future. They didn't need one, but they have one now. And should there be another mass casualty terrorist attack in India, which I think is only a matter of time, when the Indian cabinet meets they will say we have a basis, we have a legal precedent for what we may do.

Hopefully, they will say to themselves it's not worth it, it's too risky, let's not go that way. But we can't count on that.

The United States Government in two administrations have both repeatedly said to the American people don't worry, they're safe. I don't think I'm revealing a big secret. That's bluff. Two administrations that I've seen are worried sick about the security of Pakistan's nuclear weapons systems. But do you want the President of the United States to come out in public and say I'm worried to death that Pakistan's nuclear weapons are going to fall into the hands of al Qaeda? I don't see that that contributes to the solution. So, we say what we say.

The naval facility in Karachi that al Qaeda attacked with the Pakistani Taliban is a high-security facility. It was an inside job. I think a year -- maybe a little bit more than a year ago they attacked into the army headquarters in Rawalpindi. That was an inside job. About 18 months ago, they attacked a Pakistani air force base and penetrated into that base, and that was an inside job. Is it conceivable that they could attack into a facility or have someone on the inside? Yes, it's conceivable. It is conceivable. Do the Pakistani authorities know it's a possibility? Yes, they know it's a possibility. They spend an enormous amount of time and effort trying to secure and to render their nuclear capacity in a manner in which if you got one piece of it you don't have a full bomb. But these are real possibilities, and it's something people should be worried about.

One of the WikiLeaks cables that came out quotes France's national security advisor, Jean-David Levitte, as telling Richard Holbrooke, "I know what you say in public, Richard, but I'm worried sick about the security of the Pakistani nuclear security force." And I think Mr. Levitte is absolutely right.

MS. RADDATZ: So, more happy talk from Bruce Riedel.

I think we have time for one more question, and could I ask it to be about Afghanistan? Yes, ma'am.

MS BOLZ: Good morning. My name is Julia Bolz, and I am the founder of Ayni Education International. I've been working out of Mazar-e-Sharif for the past nine and a half years. So, Mike, where you have been talking about the positive effects in the South, the North has been just the opposite. I just came back most recently a few weeks ago. The day I was -- one of the days I was in Mazar, eight members of the U.N. were brutally killed in a protest that went violent after the Koran was burned here in the United States by the Florida pastor. We also had many families moving up to the North that have destabilized our region. I could tell you dozens of stories on the negative side. And if we impact about 200,000 family members for the first time in my 9-1/2 years, we're seeing lots of despair, impatience, and negativity toward the United States.

But my concern is really the emphasis of today's program, which has been much more on the military side of things. And our philosophy as a government has been this disrupt, dismantle, and defeat. And from my point of view, as someone who has been out building schools, engaging in micro-finance, agricultural reform, it's the whole other side of the spectrum which works, which gets so much at the cause of a lot of the problem -- hopelessness, lack of opportunity, you know, all those things -- and our focus yet as a government is way downstream.

MS. RADDATZ: I'm going to let you get to your question, if you wouldn't mind, because we only have a few minutes.

MS. BOLZ: So, if my -- I guess my comment to you is our philosophy is engage, educate, and empower. You have in most of your work taken the opposite tact.

Can you just maybe comment on that side of the coin?

MR. O'HANLON: Well, I was about to say that I agree with three-fourths of what you said, and I think I do, and I think you unfairly represent my work by the way. I've spent quite a bit of time trying to think through the issues of how do you do better development and how do you do better politics in Afghanistan, and just wrote a paper this spring with Gretchen Birkle of the International Republican Institute and Hassina Sherjan, who runs a girls' education program in Afghanistan, about our political strategy ideas. Because we think that -- you put -- first of all, thank you for your work, and you do a lot of important work. There's been a lot of progress in Afghanistan on the economic side, but that progress is not going to survive in the face of massive corruption and massive insecurity, and so the notion that we should be sort of at odds with each other over whether economics and education are more important than security -- I think it's a false debate and doesn't serve your interests or mine.

I'm very interested in hearing more about where you think we can make specific reforms and specific improvements in all the things that you're working on. But I would also point out that since President Obama came into office, we've now made Afghanistan our top foreign aid recipient, and if anything the problem is that we're trying to pump too many resources at all levels into this country and overwhelming the country. So, the notion that somehow, you know, a more prosperous country would be more resilient and, therefore, we should do even more aid, well, the first part I agree with; the second part is hard to pull off.

So, frankly, I would rather propose that we are in more agreement than you think and that I'll take your counsel and maybe in our next session on this part of the world we, you know, need to have a couple more opinions and thoughts on development

and on politics. But I think also we're at a point where, let's face it, Afghanistan has seen a lot of improvement in quality of life, but the security situation has been deteriorating perhaps a decade or more, and, therefore, all the progress that you are making is a risk. And you just mentioned that it's at risk even in the North. And so, I think we have to do it all. And I'll finish on that point.

MS. RADDATZ: Thank you very much.

Thank you very much. I'm sorry we didn't get to all of your questions, but there's so much happening in both those countries, but I only ask one teeny little question in the end of both of you if you could just take a minute each, and that is with all the change this year with Panetta going to defense, with Robert Gates leaving, with Petraeus going, we assume, to the CIA -- all these changes -- what difference does it make, if any? (Laughter)

MR. O'HANLON: Obviously it's a huge question.

MS. RADDATZ: And it gets one minute. Welcome to my world. Get go. I can pull it down to a minute every night.

MR. O'HANLON: I'll try, and you should have the last word in telling us what you think on this, too.

Dempsy replacing Mullen, not much change. Allen replacing Petraeus, not much change. Petraeus replacing Panetta, not much change. Panetta replacing Gates potentially big change. Maybe not on these wars, although I don't know but certainly on the full range of Pentagon issues. So, that's the change that I see as the most interesting.

MS. RADDATZ: One in particular budget?

MR. O'HANLON: The notion that -- I mean, in a way Gates is leaving

just when Obama needs him most. Gates has credibility. Across national security issues we're at large, and now the Pentagon is being asked to cut $400 billion out of its budget. The fact that Leon Panetta ran OMB doesn't help him with the politics of that challenge. It may help him with the accounting, but he doesn't have to do the accounting. He's got staff to do that. Gates has mustered this great credibility as a national security thinker, but he's not going to be the architect of the plan and try to cut the budget. So, that's where I think things are hardest.

MS. RADDATZ: And your one minute, Mr. Riedel.

MR. RIEDEL: Losing Bob Gates is a national setback. He is one of the great patriots of our time. He has every right to go home. He's fully served his country, but we will miss that steady hand and that annoying Kansas drawl.

Mr. Petraeus, since he will no longer be General Petraeus -- he will be Director Petraeus, Mr. Petraeus -- inherits the CIA revitalized by Leon Panetta and given the hugest boost in the arm he could possibly get on May 2nd, and I think he no longer has to worry about who runs the American intelligence community. He runs the American intelligence community and DNI I think will learn to live with it.

MS. RADDATZ: Okay, you did very well with your limited amount of time.

I just want to say one thing about Secretary Gates, because he's giving his final press conference in a couple of hours. It really has been quite amazing. What a difference covering Secretary Rumsfeld -- Secretary Gates is. (Laughter) And I probably don't have to say much more than that, but it was often very difficult covering Secretary Rumsfeld, who thought he was giving all sorts of information and contacts, and Secretary Gates very quietly and honestly would talk about what he did, what it meant, and why he

was doing it, and it will be a change in deed.

Thank you again for coming. Thanks.

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