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A HIGH PRICE:
THE TRIUMPHS AND FAILURES OF ISRAELI COUNTERTERRORISM

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. RIEDEL: Good morning. I'm Bruce Riedel, a senior fellow at the Saban Center for Middle East Studies at the Brookings Institution.

And I want to welcome you to Brookings today to a particularly useful and insightful opportunity to discuss two very important subjects. One, Israel: its politics, its history, its future. And secondly, the question of counterterrorism: how do we fight terrorism, a scourge that applies not just to Israel, of course, but to the United States and to the rest of the world?

And uniquely, these two issues come together in Dan Byman's new book, *A High Price: The Triumphs and Failures of Israeli Counterterrorism.* This has been a project in the Saban Center for a couple of years now under Dan's direction, and I think he has produced a really seminal work on an important subject.

To discuss this book and to discuss the wider issues of Israel and counterterrorism we have, of course, Dan himself, the author. Dan is a former CIA officer who worked with me back in the early 1990s. He went on to be a staff member in the 9-11 Commission. He was director of Georgetown University's Center for Peace and Security Studies, and today he is a senior fellow in the Saban Center.

He has his Ph.D. from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He's the author of numerous books. I think the only person who writes more books than Dan is probably our own Michael Hanlon.

To comment on the book and to comment on the issues, we're very proud to have Lieutenant General Retired Gabi Ashkenazi, who is a veteran of the prestigious Golani Brigade of the Israeli Defense Forces, a veteran of the 1973, 1982, 2006, and 2009 wars and numerous campaigns in between. Chief of staff of the Israel Defense Forces from 2007 to 2011, and a visiting fellow at Brookings currently. He's a

graduate of the University of Haifa, and also of the United States Marine Corps Staff College.

Dan will talk first for about 20 or 25 minutes about the book and his research, and then we'll invite Gabi to speak. And then I'll host a conversation and invite your questions into the mix as well. Thank you.

MR. BYMAN: Good morning. Thank you very much for joining me today. It's a particular honor to be up here on the stage with Bruce Riedel, who taught me so much about the topics in this book. And it's an especial honor to be up here with General Ashkenazi. He in his career paralleled many of the events I discuss in my book. And it's frankly a bit daunting to have someone with this experience here to comment and think on these issues alongside me as I speak.

My book really began when I was in Israel in 2002. I was there as part of an investigation into the 9-11 terrorist attacks. And while I was in the region, Israel killed Sala Shahada, who was the founder of Hamas' military wing. And Israel blames him for the deaths of well over 100 Israelis.

Shahada was a very tough target. He was hiding out in Gaza. Israel had asked Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian authority to arrest him, with no success. And through a rather elaborate series of intelligence measures, Israel eventually found out where he was and, just as importantly, where he would be so they could launch a military strike.

The problem was the intelligence didn't say exactly where in the building Shahada would be. And Israel used a very large bomb to knock down the building. The bomb also destroyed the buildings next to the building that housed Shahada. So, not only did Shahada die but so, too, did 10 children.

And there was outrage around the world. The Bush White House which,

I think it's safe to say, was very supportive of Israel, declared that the killing of Shahada and the deaths of innocents was very heavy handed. Hamas vowed revenge, and several weeks later Hamas bombed Hebrew University's cafeteria and killed seven people, including five American students who were studying there.

I was wrestling with the question which is, is the Shahada killing a counterterrorism success? A man who was clearly up to his neck in violence against civilians, versus the loss of -- by any stretch of the imagination -- innocent life.

At the same time -- roughly same time -- Donald Rumsfeld was asking a question. Which is, are we killing, arresting, or dissuading terrorists faster than religious schools -- radical religious schools -- and preachers are producing them. To me, this was a very important question, this question of tactical success versus broader strategic success. And Israel was facing that at the time. And this was really one of the big questions that my book is about.

My book is really about Israeli counterterrorism and, in my mind at least, for an American audience. If you look at things like suicide bombings, airplane hijackings, these were seen as Israeli problems. And then, they became global problems.

I think among many Americans, the image of Israeli counterterrorism is the Entebbe Raid. Very dramatic hostage rescue raid and a very, to me, unambiguous case of good versus evil.

I would argue that in the years that have followed that, Israeli counterterrorism has become much more like the Shahada killing, where you have shades of gray, where you have tradeoffs, where you have ambiguities. And one of the themes of the book is that many of Israel's most effective means of counterterrorism are also the most disruptive. That come with the most tradeoffs.

I'm going to really talk in my remarks today about three different issues relatively briefly. How I feel Israel won the Second Intifada. The question of deterrents, and a bit on the peace process.

As you all know, the Second Intifada breaks out in 2000. And it was a surprise, at least to me. Starting in 1993, you had what seemed to be progress on peace accords. You had limited Palestinian self-rule in Gaza and the West Bank.

And as negotiations went on in the 1990s, terrorism disrupted it. You had Jewish terrorism, in particularly the killing of Rabin. And, you had Palestinian terrorism. And this violence soured both sides on negotiations. And as negotiations soured, there was a sense that peace itself is not achieving what it's supposed to be. The peace talks are not -- and that violence is a solution. And, this was a real victory for terrorism. That you had promising negotiations that later erupted into massive violence.

An important event that happened early in the Second Intifada is, you had a shift in the orientation of Palestinian security forces, where, in the 1990s, these are partners for Israel, but during the Second Intifada many stand aside. And some join the violence. And I'm going to come back to this issue later, because it's very relevant for Israel today. But you had a complete change in the circumstances for Israeli counterterrorism.

During the height of the Second Intifada, it's very hard for Americans to imagine the scale and the regularity of violence. You have literally thousands of attempted attacks. You have several attempted suicide bombings a week. Some of you may remember the D.C. sniper incident and how that really paralyzed life in the United States? Imagine that continuing for years and on a much greater scale. That was the kind of domestic sentiment, the domestic pressure Israel was under.

You have a huge shift in Israel's response starting in 2002. Before that,

there's an attempt to punish Palestinian groups, but there's also, at least, a hope among some Israelis that we can get peace talks restarted. That the goal is to push Palestinians back to peace talks.

In early 2002, you have a bombing at the Park Hotel in Netanya that kills 30 people. It's not just the bloodiest bombing of the Second Intifada, but it was done during a Passover Seder. The victims were elderly, several had been Holocaust survivors. It's something that touched an incredibly emotional chord in Israelis even beyond the rather staggering carnage.

At this point, the Israeli strategy shifts and really abandons any desire to go back to the peace process. And it becomes shutting down the groups directly. Israeli military forces reoccupy much of the West Bank, and in general this is extremely smooth. But it isn't everywhere.

And one instance I talk about in my book is the refugee camp of Jinin. And this is a nightmare for military forces. It's a warren of alleys and dilapidated buildings. And there are improvised explosive devices, really, everywhere. On the ground, by doors, hanging from trees, literally thousands.

Palestinian militant groups know the Israelis are coming. And this is where they hope to bring the battle. One of the militants describes Jinin as a hornet's nest. And this is where they want the fight.

Israel's tactics for this sort of thing are actually quite innovative. In many cases, because they know doors and alleyways are going to be booby trapped, they go through buildings. So, you know, to get outside instead of going through that door, you go through that wall because there's no booby trap through that wall.

Israel begins to use armored bulldozers, which can explode various bombs, are largely immune to small arms fire, and are devastating, I'll say, weapons for

this type of conflict, knocking down buildings, clearing paths that allow troops to go through, screening for troops. But needless to say, these measures are exceptionally destructive. So you have a media image of a swath of destruction in Jinin.

You also have Israeli tactics that cause a lot of turmoil within Israel itself. In order to minimize Israeli soldiers' casualties, Israel uses human shields. So, young men at times are used to open doors. Israeli troops will go down streets at times, in one case, with rifles resting on the shoulders of civilians because the known Palestinian militant groups won't want to fire on their own people. So, troubling from a law of war practice -- a very troubling tactic.

Part of Israel's approach at this time is that as one Israeli told me, we didn't want the cameraman under the feet of the Israeli soldier. So, they banned the media. But in today's day and age, you don't really ban the media. It just means someone else controls the story. So, Palestinian propagandists fill the void. There are stories that thousands of people have been killed, that the Israelis have been stacking up bodies and hauling them away in trucks. There are movies about this. And I think if you ask many people in the Arab world and in Europe today, they would say that Israel killed thousands of people in Jinin.

The UN later did an investigation. Fifty-four people died, about half of whom were militants. Most of the others were civilians who died under, I would say, very understandable circumstances given that this was a war zone. But the image is often what endures.

After this sort of military operation, though, Israel had tremendous advantages in the West Bank. And these are the advantages of occupation. Part of is that day-to-day occupation can be a boon for intelligence. That if you want information and you can gain it through interactions of people of government. So if a Palestinian

wants to send his son to school, okay. But to get that sort of permission, the Palestinian family may be asked to talk to the local intelligence officer. You want to send your mother to the hospital. Okay, but intelligence can intrude there as well. So, the day-to-day interactions become an intelligence tool.

And you also have a much wider scale of detention that enables interrogation. And as a result, you have a wrapping up of many of these networks. Also, it's much easier for military forces to respond quickly. They don't have to enter from several kilometers away; their presence is not given away as they go through by people warning as they go through. So, you have much more rapid arrests and it's easier to do these sorts of operations with less fear of casualties.

The result is constant pressure. One Israeli intelligence officer, when I asked him why does Hamas give in, why do they give in? And he said, well, their leaders were tired of only seeing the sun in pictures. You know, they always had to go from place to place, they were always hiding, and that wore them down.

At the same time, you have defensive measures established. You have checkpoints put in throughout the West Bank, and you have a barrier. Whether you call it a wall or a fence is a subject of, to me, very great and rather silly debate. But you have a barrier that runs across much of Israel's border.

Again, this is an intelligence benefit because people have to go through a barrier. You can learn about them, you can search them. Also, it's a time benefit. That if you have limited information on an individual and you know an attack is in progress, in the past it would take minutes to go from the West Bank to Israel proper. Now you can stop that transit completely, or you can slow it down dramatically. And both those have a huge impact.

The defensive measures and the offensive measures work together. As

leaders are arrested, as leaders are killed, less experienced ones come to the fore. And they're still committed. This is a very popular cause. But, they don't know what they're doing. So they make stupid mistakes, they're arrested, they're killed, and the cycle continues until, over time, it becomes even more dramatic.

Over time, society itself begins to ostracize many of the militants involved because they know if they meet at a particular café, that café might be raided or destroyed completely. And the defensive measures come into play here as well, as less experienced people take over they're less able to overcome defenses. And as a result they, again, make more mistakes. To overcome the defenses, you have cells in different parts of the West Bank that have to work together. And that's hard to do, especially hard to do when you're hiding. And one intelligence officer told me what he called intelligence, math, which is, 1 + 1 = 11. For every additional person who knows something, you have that many more chances of finding out the plot and disrupting it. So, you have huge problem for operational security for the Palestinians.

I'm just going to read you a few statistics to show you the shift in capabilities. In 2002, there were 188 Israeli fatalities and 53 successful suicide bombings. So, more than one successful bombing a week. Again, to me, a staggering total.

You go from 53 to 26 in 2003. Then you go to 12 the next year, then you go to 8. And in 2008, you're down to 1. So you've gone from a problem that really dominates society to one that -- I don't want to say is minor or nonexistent, but is not the subject of day-to-day life within Israel.

But there are costs to occupation, and these costs are tremendous. Something I go into in my book is many of the costs to the Palestinians. How this is utterly disruptive of social and economic and political life in so many ways. What I'll

mention very briefly in my talk is some of the cost to Israel, which is, again, more the focus of my book.

One is that the occupation doesn't end. Then National Security Advisor Rice was asked as the Jinin operation was going on, she says -- she's asked, you know -- excuse me, she says, Israel needs to get out. And she's asked by a reporter, well, when? And she says, well, now means now. Israelis say: we need a few weeks. We've got to clean this up, and all this. A few weeks go by. Well, we really need a few months. Still there, right? And this occupation has been ongoing.

There's a financial cost that, in order to have a constant surveillance presence, a regular military presence, Israel, like every other country, has other budget needs and there's a financial cost.

A big cost, though, is legitimacy. That the occupation makes Israel widely hated. There was a poll done in Europe that showed that Israel was the fourth-least popular country in the world. It did beat out North Korea so, you know, maybe Israelis could take comfort there. But if you think about the huge number of dictatorships that scored well ahead of Israel, it really shows how the occupation has damaged Israel's legitimacy. And to me, this is a fact whether you think that's fair or not. That's a reality that Israel needs to deal with.

But also, the occupation makes the peace process much harder. It creates more intermixing, it creates more anger, and it makes it harder to get peace going again.

A second thing I'd like to talk about briefly is deterrence. As I mentioned, occupation is costly. But also at times, it's not popular -- or, excuse me, it's not possible. When fighting Hezbollah, I don't think it's realistic to expect Israel to reoccupy large chunks of Lebanon. I would say the same thing about Gaza. Then your goal is

deterrence, where you're really trying to use the threat of force to dissuade the group from using violence. It still can, it has the capability, but it chooses not to.

Israel has long used deterrents in counterterrorism. The title of my book, *A High Price*, comes from a quote when Israel's founding father, David Ben-Gurion, is speaking to a young major named Ariel Sharon. And this is just before a raid on Kibbiya on the West Bank, which is under Jordanian control. And he says, unless we show the Arabs that there is a high price to pay for murdering Jews, we won't survive. And this is a classic deterrence idea that you might be able to hit me, but I'm going to hit you so much harder. And in the Kibbiya operation, you had over 40 noncombatants killed. And the orders at the time were to achieve maximum property damage.

There was a tremendous outcry. But again, this worked. You had the Jordanian government never want to have this happen again, and step up security. So, a very strong use of force produced the response. But again, there was an outcry and a legitimacy issue.

Again, Jordan in 1970, you have a large number of cross-border attacks from Palestinian groups. Israel hits back at the groups and at Jordan itself quite hard. This causes outrage, but the Jordanian government, fearing it's losing control of its own country, cracks down on the Palestinian groups and the eventually flee to Lebanon.

But this is often much more mixed in practice. Israel tries the same tactic in Lebanon and it fails there. The government collapses. And this is a -- it shows to me that deterrence -- it's very hard to predict. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. And you need, ironically -- you need a strong opponent for a deterrent to work. They need to be able to control their own people.

Terrorist groups are particularly hard to deter in general. It's hard to hit the right people. There' san intelligence issue of simply finding people who are

underground. Also, they're often willing to have their own people pounded. That these are groups that, they do have constituents. But in many cases, they believe that if their own people are pounded, support for the fight will increase. So they're able to benefit politically from their own side suffering.

I think also important, though, is inter-group competition. Many, many times in Palestinian history you've had Palestinian groups that wanted to at least have a cessation in violence. But there was yet a more radical group out there that accused them of being cowards, and was able to take money and take recruits away from them when the more moderate group pushed for a cease-fire. So the inter-group competition, which is a constant in politics in general, was a real problem for deterrence.

Also, these groups have few other means of attaining their goals. If you tell them, don't use violence, you're often telling them, fade into oblivion. A compliment to deterrence is a negotiation strategy. That some means of saying there's a nonviolent means of achieving ends.

Now, some groups you should never have that for. I don't really think with the United States and al-Qaeda there is much to negotiate over. But, there are groups that have legitimate goals at times, even through their means are not legitimate that deserve consideration in this.

Here again, we'll ask General Ashkenazi, who is one of the architects of the Cast Lead Operation. So I will speak cautiously on this. But the deterrence in Cast Lead, to me, is very instructive. This is the 2008-2009 Israeli operation in Gaza.

Israel, you have steady Hamas rocket attacks, but they don't provoke much of an Israeli response before this, in part because people are not dying. So, you can be poked but when you don't have the bloodshed, you don't need to respond. But over time, this creates a perception that you're never going to respond. So your

deterrence erodes.

Israelis fear range is growing. And when they decide to act, the goal is to hit back quite hard. There is a change in the rules of engagement. I mentioned in Jinin the use of human shields. The Israeli Supreme Court rules that that's not acceptable. And the IDF adheres to that change. It's a fundamental change in their rules.

But, they're still not going to expose their own troops to death needlessly. So, if there's a dangerous situation, rather than send their troops into a building with a sniper, say, they're more likely to bring the building down. And you see much more, I'll say, aggressive -- you could say permissive, whatever adjective you want -- rules of engagement in Cast Lead than you saw 5 years before, 10 years before. I think it's a result of this.

But to me, Cast Lead works. You had very, very strong use of force, extremely destructive. As with everything, the figures of civilian casualties are disputed. But clearly, large numbers of casualties both on the Hamas side and destruction in Gaza.

But the peace is largely held. Hamas does not want to go another round with the Israeli Defense Force. But in general, I believe deterrence is harder today against groups than it was, say, 20, 30 years ago. In part because human rights concerns are more widely acknowledged.

There's a fundamental tension between the law of war, which stresses proportionality, and the logic of deterrence, which stresses disproportionality. And proportionality you're not supposed to hit back that much harder that you've been hit. Deterrence, though, you say just the opposite. You know, you bother me a little you're going to suffer a lot. And that's a fundamental tension that Western militaries wrestle with.

A second issue -- and this is very important for both Hamas and Hezbollah -- is that these groups can retaliate. They have rockets, in particular, that are very hard to stop in a comprehensive way. Israel's casualty sensitivity has also grown. So, like the United States, Israel is very sensitive to the losses of its soldiers, but I would say much more so even than the United States.

The result is that if Israel and Hezbollah get into a fight, as they did in 2006, and Israel inflicts 5 times, 10 times -- again disputed figures -- as many casualties on Hezbollah as Israel suffers, Israel loses. And this is a deterrence problem because the scale of suffering you have to inflict is that much greater for deterrence to work. But again, going back to the proportionality issue, the proportionality becomes that much more strained.

I'll conclude with some brief thoughts on counterterrorism and peace. Peace is the best counterterrorism strategy. And I don't mean this in kind of a squishy; everyone will like each other sort of way. If you look at Egypt, if you look at Jordan, these countries have been strong allies of Israel on counterterrorism -- very effective allies -- because they're better at policing themselves than Israel is at policing them. No matter how good Israel is in terms of its intelligence and military, it will never be as good as a country's ability to police itself.

That question, though, was always an open one with the Palestinians. As I suspect everyone in this audience knows, there's a huge debate over the question of whether Yasser Arafat was ever ready to make peace. And I'll spare you my take on this, but it's there in my book.

The problem today, though, to me is actually quite different. To me in my mind, at least, there is no doubt that Abbas on the West Bank is committed to making peace with Israel. And has taken very politically costly steps to do so. And the Israeli

fear is actually that Abbas is not as strong as Arafat. That he won't be able to enforce his will, and that the West Bank will become Gaza.

And remember, I talked about this idea that in the 1990s the soldiers on the Palestinian side whom Israel cooperated with later turned their weapons on Israel? That's the fear; that they'll be returned to this. That as Palestinian state is established on the West Bank, these individuals will turn against Israel.

The problem, though, is that to make Abbas stronger politically requires Israel to reduce the occupation. The checkpoints, the raids, the disregard for the Palestinian police, all that weakens Palestinian moderates. All that makes it harder for them to politically go to the peace table and make concessions. And as a result, Israel's strategy -- in my mind, at least -- is increasing support for radicalism because on a day-to-day basis, it's actually keeping the peace in the West Bank.

Hamas is a very different case. I would argue that in terms of provision of services, in terms of law and order, Gaza is better governed than it has been in its entire history, okay? I don't mean that to say that Hamas is a nice government. But in terms of government efficiency in kind of a social science sense, Hamas is quite good. And so the question is not strength in Hamas' case, the question is intention.

And in my view, Hamas' intentions are unclear. It hates Israel, sees it as illegitimate. It sees itself as a resistance group. But at the same time, it wants to govern Gaza. And it knows that Israeli pressure makes that difficult. And if Israel wants, Israel can make that impossible. It also knows that its own citizens don't want to have a fight with the IDF.

So, you have Hamas adhering to a cease-fire. But at the same time, not willing to openly enter into a process -- a peace process. And as a result, it's unclear if peace talks can go ahead. And it's also unclear to me if the cease-fire will hold. Hamas has

pressures, as well, to break it. And so, it's a very -- to me it's a -- the situation has endured, but I'm not sure how stable it is.

One problem, I found, with Israel is I think it often has a very bad political system for counterterrorism. You have the Israeli military. To a lesser degree, Israeli intelligence. And they are capable of doing planning and they do it quite well.

The Israeli political process is not capable of doing planning. The Israeli foreign ministry is not capable of doing planning. So, when you have counterterrorism events, you have one aspect of Israeli power well-developed and prepared and other aspects that are silent or unprepared.

And this, over time, to me creates a disproportionate bias. And ironically, some of the voices for the foreign ministry are often strongest in the military because the foreign ministry itself is missing.

I will conclude with kind of a few lessons -- I'm going to say lessons I didn't really want to learn. But, nevertheless they're ones I learned in my research. One which I think I mentioned is this idea that occupations can work. Israel right now does not have a major terrorism problem from the West Bank. And that's in large part due to how it's run the occupation and it's cooperation, and it's gotten support from Abbas and other Palestinians. But it's been a very effective strategy.

And there is kind of this idea out there that if you occupy a people, they're going to rise up.

(Interruption; woman speaking Spanish)

MR. BYMAN: Not quite sure what's going on there, but a second part is that violent uses of force, extremely strong, can help deterrence. But again, there is this sense out there that if you hit back very hard, it often produces a reaction that is worse than the original problem. That's often not the case. And I think Israel's history is replete

with examples where quite heavy uses of force that generate outcry, from a deterrence point of view, were effective.

A third lesson I didn't want to learn is this idea that Israel is very bad at the political side of counterterrorism. I mentioned the planning issue. And more broadly, by not negotiating with moderates, by taking steps on the West Bank that at times undermine them, I think that Israel has strengthened Hamas. It strengthens Palestinian voices that say peace talks aren't going to work. And that Israel is never going to make concessions.

Hamas has said in its elections and elsewhere, you know, we've been doing peace talks for 18 years, if you think about it, starting in 1993. Where are we? Where are we, the Palestinians? We are farther away from having a state. We are farther away from having a state. We are farther away from recognition. We are -- there are more Israeli settlements. And we can talk about whose fault that is and on and on, but on the surface at least that's a very strong message.

When Israel withdrew from Gaza in 2005 it did so -- you had Palestinian moderate leaders who were begging Israel to pretend to negotiate with them so they could claim credit for the withdrawal and gain politically. Israel, for its own domestic political reasons, refused to do so. Didn't want to be seen as negotiating a withdrawal. But the result was that Hamas claimed credit. Hamas said, we're the ones who got Israel out of Gaza, and I think that's a perception that many Israelis would share. So again, the more radical voice was the one that gained politically.

I'll end by noting that I do think that Israel does face an existential threat, but it's not from terrorism. I think terrorism is a serious problem. I think, especially during the height of the Second Intifada it was a tremendous, tremendous problem. But to me, if you think about what Israel is as a Jewish state, a democratic state, it needs peace to

survive. As again, I think this audience knows, the demographic logic is against Israel as a Jewish state. As long as it occupies large swaths of Palestinian territory, it faces a choice between becoming less Jewish or less democratic every year. And if you look on projections 10 years, 20 years, 30 years out, the future is quite grim.

Counterterrorism, to me, is both the key to success for having a negotiated settlement and also the problem. It's the key to success because you can't have successful negotiations in the face of massive terrorism. Doing negotiations in 2001, 2002, to me, was politically absurd and impossible. Political leaders could not negotiate in that environment.

At the same time, though, if counterterrorism becomes the end, it makes the peace process that much harder. And I think that Israel now has shifted to a position where I think it can take more risks for peace, and I think should.

Thank you very much. (Applause)

GENERAL ASHKENAZI: Good morning. It's an honor to be here. And after being in Washington, D.C., for the last two weeks or so, I finally concluded that it was much better to spend more time here before I did my previous job. There is so much to learn and exchange.

And when Dan asked me to speak about his book, I -- I mean, describing the Israeli case, I found it very challenging. I tried to read every page of it. I struggled with the book, but I haven't read every word. But the most of it, I think, I covered. And I think it's a very important book, and it was not easy for me as an Israeli to read. But that's the only way to learn.

Dan is in the last chapter, the last paragraph in his book, indicating that it's important to others to learn from our experience. While Israelis are familiar with his way of describing what happened during the last 60 years or so. Well, I argue the last

statement. Even Israelis are not as familiar as the book represents the events and the lessons learned.

I cannot compete with Dan's articulated English. And well, I think puts the summary. But I would like to share with you some of my lessons learned from counterterrorism. And I'm not going to refer to the political aspect of it, but I'll do say that if you can negotiate peace with your opponents it's a preferred way to do it.

But assuming you cannot -- and I think that with Hamas and Hezbollah we cannot negotiate -- you have to protect your civilians. What's the right doctrine, concept of operation, matter -- tactics to deal with the problem? Given the fact that you must, and that's not an option. You must protect your civilians.

It's one thing to fight terror in remote places in the globe than fighting terrors in your heartland. It's not just the enormous pressure of the political pressure; it's the basic demand from the military or the security organization to defend the civilians. And it's a very debated, very complex issue.

My first lesson learned is it's essential to discuss the problem, to learn, and to explore it with your political bosses. It's not, I think, typical just to the Israeli case. I think elsewhere in the world it's very difficult to define the objective, to agree on the methods, on the investment, and it was -- what is related to this problem. It's not the old world. It's very different. It's costly, both politically, socially, and other.

And it's changing face all the time. I fought the '73 war, and this is not the same -- it's not the same fighting. Winning and losing is different. The enemy is different. So, in that sense, I found it very essential and very effective to discuss it with my political bosses, at least before the Cast Lead Operation. That's what we have done.

You also adjust the expectation. Using the force -- military forces or other forces, it's a tool. It's not an objective by itself. What you can achieve, what you

cannot achieve by using the force, it's an essential question. Very essential.

During this conversation, you adjust expectations. Usually you start by regime change and then you ask, okay. You want a regime change? How are we going to achieve it? Usually it's related to occupying the land. You cannot create a regime change without being present, just by using standoff weapons or whatever. You have to be on the ground. That's very costly, that's very expensive.

In my profession, there is a high relationship -- intense relationship between high achievement and high price. There is no silver bullet. It's tough decisions. Take the case of Hamas, Cast Lead Operation. Can we occupy Gaza? Obviously. There is a price which comes with this thing.

I would say roughly that through the years of 2000 up to 2006 we operated against capabilities of terrorism organizations. From 2006, 2007, we operated again intention. That's involved with deterrence. That brings me to the second issue, deterrence.

I think it's one of the essential pillars of fighting terror. It's hard to maintain and sustain, it's costly. Sometimes it backfires. But it's very essential. That's, I would say, the first line of defense. And I think it's still work. And the problem with deterrence is, you don't -- we cannot usually predict when it's less effective. You can tell it only in retrospect.

Right now, with our vicious enemies, Hezbollah, the border is quiet. With all the problems related to the second Lebanon war, I think one of the biggest achievements is deterrence. I know Hezbollah since '82, when they started to send the trucks against us and Marine Corps and French troops in Lebanon. For the first time ever, the border and the situation between us and Hamas is quiet. Not a single bullet cross the border from one side to the other. Children in the northern part of Israel, after

many years, going to join first grade elementary school without spending one night in shelters. That's a significant change. What causes it? I think deterrence, that's the answer. But you have to sustain it.

And it's costly. And it's always choosing between tough and, I would say, bad options. Or, most of the alternatives are bad options. It's not easy to choose.

Second important thing, I think it's the intelligence. Think it's not the same old intelligence as it was. We needed to dominate intelligence before, during, and after. We have to realize the intention, organization, objectives of each terror organization. And it's varied and different. PLO is different from Hezbollah, and both of them different from Hamas and other organizations. And that's my main shape and foster your doctrine and tactics.

More importantly, it's not like the old traditional war. When I was young, we had to mobilize, go to the front, raise our binoculars, see what the divisions are, adapt our plan to defensive, offensive, and executing whatever is needed to execute it. Today, you go to the lines at the front, you don't really know where are the lines, where are the fronts. You raise your binoculars, there are no divisions. Now in urban areas, underground, it's different.

In terms of targeting, you have to work before escalation, before the events. And that's what we are doing. I think it's an essential lesson learned.

Targeted killing. I think it's debatable, I think, even in Israel, but my -- I think among the defense establishment and myself, I think it works. And it is still working. The problem is, again, the high price around what's called very clean statement collateral damage.

It's a very difficult dilemma. Even to the -- I still remember when I ran into a very tough decision. What do you do when your sensors, whether on drones or

others, detect a terrorist team organizing a rocket to be launched to your -- one of your cities in Gaza? And it's happened, by the way, in Jabalia, which is the most populated refugee camp, I think, in the Middle East. No one argues it is a rocket, no one argues it's going to be launched. Now, what do you do? You have the duty to protect your civilians. But it's a mighty hard area and very tense.

We usually use the most accurate and special guided ammunition to minimize the damage and the target. And that's -- you run into that kind of dilemma every day on a daily basis. But, without doing that, you don't have the possibility to prevent attacks on your civilians.

You have to get the legal advisors in line with your doctrine. It's important to the conducting of your operation, and to the legitimacy, at least among your troops, your society, as well as abroad. And I can tell you that this is one of the areas that is less developed since the last big World War II. I think international laws today are not irrelevant, but are not developed to cope with the terrorism problem.

Most of the international law, if you look at it, after the Second World War II derives from the need -- and, I think, the just need -- to protect civilians. But what are you doing when you're fighting someone who is working or operating in urban areas? Who are not wearing uniforms? Who are not identifying themselves? And they exploit this advantage.

In Gaza and in Lebanon, there are many urban areas. It's Hezbollah and Hamas' choices to go to urban areas. Are we going to provide them safe haven for that? I think not. The reason they go there is because they believe that giving our norms and laws of being a democracy, they will be immune from being targeted. And it's our challenge how to separate, so to speak, them from the population.

The other reason they are going to urban areas being democracy, giving

the sensitivity to casualties. We will be reluctant to go to this messy, bloody urban fighting in urban areas. And we try to demonstrate through the last operation, Cast Lead Operation, that they were wrong. And we have to cope with it, and the pictures are tough.

You have to deal with funds. I think we have a tendency to neglect this important source for the terrorist organization. This is the oil on the wheels of this organization. And it's less costly to deal with this, and it's effective. You can look at it as using soft power, if you want.

I can give you examples when we were very successful in stopping finance to some organizations. It inflicts the capabilities dramatically. And I think -- from what I strongly recommend for everyone who deals with that to engage with the fund source.

You must need a unified, clear chain of command with all the inter-agencies. And I think we have learned through the years that it's an added value-based decision. And we learned how to deal with ego competition, impediments, and other problems. We are a very task-, mission-oriented country or organization. I think it's very clear, both for a civilian organization, inter-agencies, and military.

Sharing of information. It's important, and I think it was mentioned.

Border control. Dan referred to this issue by describing the war and, I call it, defense. The barrier. I think border control is the issue. I think it's less expensive, less costly, both politically and economically to deal with terrorists on your border rather than to deal with them within the border. It's a huge investment, but it's very preventative and it's, I think, easier.

Definitely, it depends on your size and it's easier to do it in Israel. But at the end of the day, if you look at the Israel borders today, we have more than 2,000

kilometers around Israel, not just the fence -- the security fence in the West Bank -- which are with early warning systems sponsored by cameras, videos, and other very advanced weapons and technology. And this helps us to control the flood of money to purposes -- staff, people, knowledge, explosives, whatever you can think of. And it's easier to do it there rather to look for them inside the territory.

Legitimacy. I think this is one of the most difficult and newest issues on fighting terror. I think legitimacy today represents from a professional standpoint the freedom of action. And it's about narratives, and it's about politics, it's about the story of each side. But you have to deal with legitimacy.

One final point. It's for the military and the security organization. I think the biggest challenge that fighting terror and encountering insurgency represents one of the toughest questions to military planners and defense establishment. It's how to remain relevant with your military power against terror, while not neglecting the needs to fight traditional war. How you really prepare your military to this wide variety of threats, which are different?

We did some mistakes in that. I found that you have to prepare the military and train them and equip them to the big war, if you want, to the symmetric war. And it's easier always to go to the asymmetrics, to low-intensity conflict if you are prepared for high-intensity conflict. But even though, you have to be very creative, innovative in terms to exercise your military.

Air forces today. Are they relevant? Not the drones, not the UAVs. I think we must find a way -- and we did find a way -- to use them. And more important is to make the differences between using your military power. When I usually talk with the troops, I describe it as choosing between M16 and F16. And you have to choose right. It's not always M16, and vice versa. But you need them both.

Thank you. (Applause)

MR. RIEDEL: Thank you. Thank you. I think you see now quite dramatically why this book is so interesting and why it's so important, because we're dealing with some very, very difficult issues in many, many different respects.

Before taking your questions, I'm going to take the prerogative of the chair to ask one of my own questions. And that is to fast-forward.

Israel has been able to fight in a counterterrorism environment. As you said, Dan, with the assistance of its peace partners. Those peace partners were able to fight terrorism effectively because they were police states, in which the Mukhabarat could do anything it wanted to. The questions of legitimacy and rule of law, which bedevil the Israeli security services, do not bedevil the Egyptian security services in the same way.

GENERAL ASHKENAZI: They have no (inaudible), as Robin put it.

MR. RIEDEL: Right, exactly.

We're entering a new era. Omar Suleiman is in the dustbin of history, unless he makes a big return. How do you see this new era affecting the counterterrorism struggle facing Israel? And if you want to make it even more broad, facing the challenge the United States has.

We'll go to Dan, but I also want to get the General's thoughts on this issue as well.

MR. BYMAN: In my mind, it's a tremendous shift. Counterterrorism cooperation often occurred in the background. But it was done because the professionals involved on both sides knew its importance. But if democracy has any meaning -- let's say in the case of Egypt -- it's going to mean the purging of the security services.

The security services that went after individuals linked to Hamas in

Egypt, that went after al Qaeda-linked groups also went after peaceful dissidents. And it's very hard to change one without the other.

The people who are going to come in are going to be, I think, less familiar with this problem. At the same time, they will also be suspicious of cooperation, both with the United States and with Israel.

I think over time, they will learn that they don't want these groups operating on their soil. That it's dangerous for their own stability. But I think it could be a very rough transition. And the rough transition I'm most concerned about is in Gaza. With the border open, I think you're going to see certainly Hamas people coming in and out, often for training in Lebanon or Iran. It's very hard to stop that. You may also see an increase in weapons coming in and out.

And there's going to be pressure from Israel to stop this. There'll be public pressure in Egypt not to stop it, not to be seen as Israel's puppet. And so, Israel may decide to act unilaterally to protect its own security. And this will put the United States in a very, very tough position. It will be between Israel's security and a desire to win the goodwill of a new Egyptian government. And I think the United States will side, as it often has, on working with Israeli security. But it's not a fight the Obama Administration wants to have.

So from a U.S. point of view and, I think, from an Israeli point of view as well, the more that can be done behind the scenes the better. General Ashkenazi mentioned this idea of soft power and counterterrorism. To me, a tremendously important concept. That are there things that can be done that don't grab the attention of the camera?

The Arab Spring right now is not about Israel. But at times, the Israeli-Palestinian, the Israeli-Arab dispute has dramatically shown up in inter-Arab politics. And

if it does again, it will put tremendous pressure on governments not to be cooperating with Israel at a time they're domestically vulnerable. And I think that's not in Israel's interest, as well as not in the interest of the governments involved.

GENERAL ASHKENAZI: I think -- I agree with Dan. But I think the most important issue for us is, obviously, we want to see democracy on the other side of the border. And to see a less-tough neighborhood. But the first priority is to see an accountable address.

You don't want to deal with counterterrorism when you have a failed state. I think when you have an accountable address on the other side -- at least an accountable address -- be it authoritarian regime or whatever; it's more easier to deal, to cooperate. And on a mutual basis, mutual interests. And we are doing it with some of -- other neighbors in the region, when we face a mutual threat of interests, although we don't enjoy a peace situation with them.

So I think, based on my experience, you want to see on the other side of the border at least an accountable address. An address that you can deal with and they can be responsible on their own organizations, troops, country, whatever.

MR. RIEDEL: Please identify yourself, and let the microphone come to you. Right here in the -- gentleman with the green tie.

MR. TUA: Thank you very much. I am Benjamin Tua, retired U.S. bureaucrat.

Dr. Byman, you referred to the exclusion of the media in the Jinin situation. And the cost that Israel paid as a result of that position. President Assad does not seem to have learned the lesson, but more pertinently it seems to me that Israel did not learn the lesson because it did the same thing during Operation Cast Lead.

I wonder if you could comment on this decision, the costs and benefits.

And since General Ashkenazi played such a significant role in that operation, he might also wish to add some comments.

MR. BYMAN: The media question is a great one for counterterrorism. The way terrorists win is not by victory through arms. They win in the media. They create the perception of death, the perception of failure. And that perception takes on a life of its own. So, to combat that really media, psychological threat, you need a psychological response.

I discussed Jinin. The Israeli polar opposite to me was the 2006 Lebanon war. Where basically there were cameramen, there were reporters everywhere on the Israeli side. And the result was that politicians had to respond to constant media attention. That you would have relatively low-level soldiers, you would have comments by officials throughout government that were driving the story on the Israeli side in a way that was completely out of control from a government point of view. So, to me, there were two extremes on the Israeli side, both of which failed.

I actually see Cast Lead as getting closer to a proper balance. Because there was an Israeli attempt to both limit the media, but at the same time allow it. There was a recognition that some story has to get out. And of course, you know, Al Jazeera was there, right? And Al Jazeera or an equivalent is going to be there. And as the events in Syria show, that's going to increase. That, you know, me with my very weak technical capabilities, you know, I can do live video from almost anywhere in the world. And that's -- so, it's very hard to stop the story from getting out.

What you need is your own counter-narrative. You need the ability to get a story out. And just as important, in my mind, the media representative -- if you want to call it that -- from the military point of view or government point of view needs to be in the room as the operations are being designed.

Their job, in my mind, is not to clean up the mess after it's happened but to be there before to say, if you strike this particular target, it has a military logic. But here's how it's going to play around the world. Here's what it's going to look like. At times this happened, I would say, in Lebanon in the 1990s. In '93, in particular, Israel looked, to me, both weak and cruel. And that's a very dangerous combination. You can look strong, and that has benefits. And you can look fair, and that has benefits. But when you combine the two negatives, it's very dangerous.

And to me, the media needs to be there very early on.

GENERAL ASHKENAZI: Well, I agree with Dan about it. And I think we have learned a lesson. But still, I must tell you that the picture is not going to be easy, given the problems, unless you are not fighting.

At the end of the day, the problems remain. How you engage with terrorists in urban areas? And I think we did a good job. I know the notion and perception. I strongly recommend to see what are the benchmarks around the world? And we do have some. Come and look in Fallujah what happened. See the (inaudible) there. See what we did.

We phoned to families in Gaza prior to attacking the building, asking them to leave, sacrificing the surprise. Who has done it?

We -- after the operation, opened the gates in Gaza to people from Gaza to complain -- to issue their problems to us. It's like open office to the Fallujan, and hearing their complaints about what happened in Fallujah. That's what we did.

So, I think we are coming to this debate with a clean head. Have we done mistakes? Obviously. I'm the first to admit it. But we did our utmost to reduce the cost of this.

When they use mosques to -- as a stronghold or a depot, what else can

you do? You have to engage with this. I don't have the luxury to say, okay. I don't know it and I don't see it. I do know it, and I do see it. And that's the kind of problem you're going to have in the future. And you must address it.

MR. RIEDEL: Right here.

MR. OMARY: Hi, Gather Omary from the American Task Force on Palestine.

Dan, you mentioned the issue, the problems, and the failures of the Palestinian security sector in the '90s and the beginning of the Intifada. I know that some of these lessons were learned by the Palestinians and there was an attempt to deal with some of these issues -- fragmentation, chain of command, doctrine, et cetera -- by Prime Minister Fayyad under President Abbas with American support.

The question is do you think they've succeeded? Do you think that what we have now in the West Bank in the security sector is qualitatively different from what we had in the '90s? And, do you think it's sustainable given the uncertainty today? Is it sustainable given that right there -- I mean the question, of course, to both of you. Thank you.

MR. BYMAN: I'll give my take. I think there has been huge progress in the last five years. And I'll be the first to admit, not progress I anticipated.

When I began researching this book, my going-in assumption was that the Palestinian security forces would remain fragmented, would remain ineffective. And then the evidence started piling up. You know, you'd hear the claims that it was going well and not to dismiss government claims, but often those claims are a bit exaggerated. But the evidence, to me, became increasingly clear. And I would see skeptics on the Israeli side change their mind. And so, to me, there has been a huge shift.

The real issue, to me, is whether it is sustainable or not. And this is, to

me, a very political question. Security cooperation, there is a technical aspect to it. But there is a very strong political aspect to it. In the 1990s, you had Palestinian security forces at times arresting people they considered brothers in the fight against Israel, comrades. And they did so because they could look themselves in the mirror and say: the way I'm going to get a Palestinian state is to end violence against Israel. And to do that, I need to arrest this guy. And I can do that with a clean conscience. When you have a political deal, that promise to yourself is real.

I think the same thing is happening today in the West Bank, where security cooperation is happening because Fayyad in particular believes it's a way to a Palestinian state. It's a way of proving that the Palestinians have the institutions to govern themselves. If that doesn't happen, I don't know when, but I think you're going to see a decrease in security cooperation. That the individuals involved will see themselves not as cooperating but as collaborating. So, on the technical side, I think there is progress. On the political side, I actually worry things might be getting worse.

GENERAL ASHKENAZI: I think the situation on the ground is completely different. I think it's due to the improvement of the Palestinian security organization and the work that General Dayton and his team did together with the Palestinians, with us, and with the Jordanians. With the assistance of the U.S. funds, I should mention.

And you can see a difference when you travel in Palestinian cities in the West Bank. Definitely in the area of law and order, but even fighting terror. When it comes to the Hamas, it's very obvious. I think for very substantial and true reason the picture from 2007, when Hamas took over in Gaza, is still fresh in most Palestinian's minds, when they threw their families and sometimes their relatives from the rooftops to the street.

I think the coordination -- security coordination between us is different. It's much better. We meet occasionally, our local commanders on the ground with the security organization commander. And I think our concept is very simple. The more they'll do, the less we do.

Is it sustainable? I think it's -- even the Palestinian will admit that it's still too early. It's going to take time. They still, I think, agree with -- it would be fair to say that it's a common knowledge. But they are doing better, definitely.

MR. RIEDEL: Here.

MR. HUGHES: Hi, Art Hughes, Middle East Institute.

Going back in time just a little, there was a cycle of events that led to the bombings of the Jewish community center and Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires. And it was -- seems to me pretty clear that there were certain lessons learned on both sides. What were those lessons, from your point of view? And are those lessons still relevant and operational now?

MR. BYMAN: This is -- these were Hezbollah bombings that had Iranian linkages in Buenos Aires. And this was tied to the conflict that was going on in the security zone in Lebanon near the Israeli border. And in -- they involved a number of actions, one of which was Israel's killing of Hezbollah's secretary general at the time, who was replaced by Hassan Nasrallah, the current leader. Others were a series of escalations within Lebanon that led to a back and forth.

In part this was because, in my view, Israel in the 1990s was trapped in a relatively difficult strategy -- strategic situation in Lebanon. Which is, Hezbollah had the ability to escalate, whether it was through terrorism in Argentina or through rocket attacks -- increasingly as its rockets grew in range. And Israel didn't want that disruption, wasn't wiling to take that risk.

So, Israel tried hard to try to limit the conflict to the security zone in Lebanon. But to me, that was a long-term strategy for failure for Israel, because Israel was much more casualty sensitive than Hezbollah. Israel's tactics changed over time, and General Ashkenazi was involved in making it much more effective. But in the end, Hezbollah could take far more casualties than Israel.

So Israel, in order to change that balance -- to change the day-to-day balance against it -- had to find ways to strike Hezbollah outside it. But when it did that, Hezbollah could respond. And so one of the lessons, I think, from Israeli point of view was, don't get caught in wars of attrition.

That when this happens -- and I think this very much applies to the United States. Look at the United States in Afghanistan. We are inflicting far more casualties on the Taliban than the Taliban is inflicting on the United States. But in my mind, there is no question of where the will is weakening. Whether it's -- I think it's weakening much more in America than it is among the Taliban. That democracies have a very hard time fighting wars of attrition, especially when there is the interest is not seen as overwhelming, as was increasingly the case in Lebanon. So, to me, that was one of the big takeaways from the Israeli side.

MR. RIEDEL: You ruined it -- we could go on for an hour and 15 minutes without anyone raising Afghanistan or Pakistan. And Dan has to bring it up and remind me of other things today. General?

GENERAL ASHKENAZI: I think the answer is deterrence. And I give you a quick example how it's different today, because I think the deterrence. I agree with Dan how he described the events then.

I mentioned in my speech that the border is quiet, and I think that Hezbollah is deterred. And I think this deterrence was tested twice. Once during Cast

Lead Operation, when we went to Gaza. Secondly, at least Hezbollah blamed us for the mysterious disappearance of Mornea. And Mornea, no doubt, is important to Hezbollah as the general secretary. And up to now, nothing happened yet.

And the question is, why? Lack of means or lack of will? I think it's the second part, for the time being.

MR. RIEDEL: Okay, I want to take two or three questions in the interest of time. Right over here? Yes.

MS. BEDANI: Hi. I'm Juria Bedani with the Brookings Institution. First, I want to say that I think this has been an extremely illuminating discussion on the price and the costs for legitimacy and for security, both for the Palestinians and for the Israelis.

But my question is really related to the security aspect of it. Which is, Dan was discussing both deterrents and proportionality in terms of responses. And both of those would really be predicated on actions. So, one action is met by a proportional response, one action is met by a greater response, right? In terms of deterrence.

But General Ashkenazi, I was struck when you talked about an action predicated on intention. Which really isn't about an action, it's a response based on what the Palestinians may want to do. And perhaps I didn't understand that correctly. But if you could talk a little bit about that, because that does seem like a particularly dangerous premise. Thank you.

MR. RIEDEL: Let me get a couple of questions. Over here in the front.

MS. GOREM: Hi, Caitlin Gorem with BA Systems. You both today mentioned border control, and I was just wondering if you could elaborate a little more on methods and technology that Israel has used to increase their border security? And whether you think it's effective in their fight against terrorism.

MR. RIEDEL: One more over here.

MR. BLAKLEY: Hi, thanks. Jonathan Blakley from National Public Radio. I'm wondering if you can talk a bit -- or just get your comments, General and you, too, Dan, about Iran. There are those who are a bit critical of Netanyahu's government perhaps being a bit too hawkish. General, you're one of those people. And I think, also, if I'm not mistaken, the retired Mossad leader are a bit, you know, critical. And could you comment on -- around and where we are with policy -- with Israel's policy? Thanks.

MR. RIEDEL: Why don't we flip the order this time?

GENERAL ASHKENAZI: One thing is similar to Israel in Washington. Regardless the subject of the --

MR. RIEDEL: Iran comes up.

GENERAL ASHKENAZI: -- always going to Iran.

MR. RIEDEL: General, why don't you go first this time?

GENERAL ASHKENAZI: As part of the -- willing, as I put it. Maybe I was not that clear.

I said that we -- during 2000, 2006, we operated against the capabilities of the terrorist organization. Which means the Palestinian terrorist organizations. It's a higher achievement, if you are able to achieve it. But it's highly cost -- why you have to go to the area to arrest people, to damage infrastructures, and actually looking for the capabilities. Depots, weapons, and that sort of thing. But it's involved with being present on a day-to-day basis on the area. And just -- actually, to occupy it.

And the other basic method is not to operate in that direction, but to operate against the willing to use violence. Which is more limited operation and more limited objective, but it's not as costly as the other one. That's what I meant. I hope it's more clear.

That's what we did, by the way, in Cast Lead Operation. It was a limited

objective and a limited operation. It was not like Defensive Shield, that's the operation during the Second Intifada. That was a different -- that was a shift, I think, in our sight. And the same happening right now with Hezbollah, to be honest. It's about deterrence and operating against our will to use power or violence. That's what I'm referring to.

About the border controlling I found it, as I mentioned, very effective. In the sense that you don't have one silver bullet to successfully deal with terror. But I think it's a combination of doctrine and tactics and measures.

One of them -- one of which, I think it's border control. Like what you're doing in the States in your airports. I don't like when they -- I am asked to take off my shoes and my wallet, or whatever. But I think that's the kind -- that's the sort of thing that is needed to control the border. And if you do so, it's prevented much of the other capabilities to develop. Sometimes it's a man with knowledge. We tracked a tremendous -- I mean, a very big difference in IDs after one of the experts were able to get inside the territories. It's not just about -- sometimes it's the knowledge, sometimes it's the money. And sometimes, it's the dual purpose.

To give you an example, in the West Bank when we had these suicide bombers the improvement of the results -- I mean, that's reflected in casualties was the different explosives. The way to get a more effective explosives is by using different dual purpose stuff from Israel. Like fertilizer for agriculture. How do you control it if you don't have border control? And that sort of thing. It goes vice versa.

As part of Iran, I think that it's a regional and global challenge. It's not just Israel. I think it represents a greater challenge to the region. And if -- and in fact, if you're traveling in the Middle East, you can hear it from the Gulf countries as well as from our neighboring countries. We're not alone in this issue.

I think the best course of action is to go through the sanctions. I think the

Iranians are more vulnerable economically, despite being higher price of oil. And I think it's less costly than all the other options if we are serious in saying that we are going to prevent them from having the weapons.

And I think there is a long way to go, in that sense. Sometimes I get the feeling that the rhetoric -- there is a huge rhetoric between -- a huge gap between the rhetoric and the reality. And I think that's a very promising direction, while keeping all the options on the table. And that's, I think, basically our current policy on the issue.

MR. RIEDEL: Dan, we're going to give you the last word. You did all the writing, you did all the research, you deserve the last comment on the whole issue.

MR. BYMAN: I'll just conclude with, I think, a fairly obvious observation but one that, to me, is a very important one.

In much of what Israel faces, it faces a question of which bad option it wants. So, there are tradeoffs between security in the peace process, there are tradeoffs in security and human rights. And Israel, of course, is going to fluctuate depending on how serious it sees the threat.

One of the joys of being an analyst at Brookings, a professor at Georgetown is, I can sit back and criticize whatever approach is taken because it will have flaws. And that's one of the joys of not being in the policy world. But I mentioned that Israel, I think, has kind of moved beyond the Entebbe era where, to me, the choices were more clear-cut.

Instead, you're dealing with very disruptive but very effective means. And the question is how to balance these with other Israeli concerns. And to me, that's an extremely difficult challenge. And one that I hope is done well in the years to come.

Thank you all very much for coming. (Applause)

MR. RIEDEL: Thank you.

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