THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

THE VIEW FROM THE MIDDLE EAST: THE 2011 ARAB PUBLIC OPINION POLL

Washington, D.C.
Monday, November 21, 2011

PARTICIPANTS:

Introduction and Moderator:

KENNETH POLLACK
Senior Fellow and Director, Saban Center for
Middle East Policy
The Brookings Institution

Presenter:

SHIBLEY TELHAMI
Anwar Sadat Professor for Peach and Development,
University of Maryland
Nonresident Senior Fellow,
The Brookings Institution

Discussants:

STEVEN HEYDEMANN
Senior Advisor for Middle East Initiatives
The United States Institute of Peace

MARGARET WARNER
Senior Correspondent
PBS *NewsHour*

* * * * *

P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. POLLACK: Well, good afternoon. Welcome to the Brookings Institution and to a presentation of the Saban Center for Middle East Policy at Brookings.

And welcome to an annual event that I have grown increasingly fond of over the years. And with exquisite prescience, in the days before 9/11, Dr. Shibley Telhami -- who I'll be introducing in just a moment -- had the foresight to realize that now was really a time that we needed to have a better sense of where the Arab publics were, what they were really thinking, what was going on in their minds and in their societies, as opposed to simply getting whatever packaged and heavily processed their government-controlled presses wanted to dole out to the rest of the outside world.

And so even before those planes crashed into the Twin Towers, Shibley had put in a grant request -- and it had been approved -- to do a poll all throughout the Middle East to get a better grip on Arab attitudes. Since then he has done it 10 times, and each time it has been easily one of the most interesting events on the Brookings calendar each year.

Each year he has told us new things about what's going on in the Arab world that we couldn't get anywhere else. And, of course, over the course of time, seeing the results of Sibley's polls unfold, and seeing how the world changed, seeing how the Arab world reacted to those changes has been equally fascinating.

And so like the rest of you, I can't wait to see what Shibley has found out this year. And for that reason, I'm going to cut right to the chase.

We are delighted to once again have our colleague, Professor Shibley Telhami, a Non-Resident Senior Fellow of the Saban Center, presenting his annual poll.

I will start out by introducing the three members of our panel. After that, we will bring Shibley up. He will present the results of the poll. Once he is done, he is

going to be joined by Professor Steve Heydemann and Margaret Warner of the News Hour who I'll also introduce in just a moment. They'll come up here, and it will be Margaret who will be asking the questions, directing the discussion. And hopefully, at that point in time, we can get into a much more interesting and in-depth conversation about what the results of the poll show, and what's really going on in the Arab world.

So just some brief introductions. Again, you've got full bios in front of you in these handy little sheets.

But, of course, we begin with Professor Shibley Telhami who, as I said, is a Non-Resident Senior Fellow of the Saban Center at Brookings. He is also, of course, the Anwar Sadat Professor for Peace and Development at the University of Maryland College Park. And as I think many of you know, Shibley's had prior teaching assignments at Cornell, at Ohio State, at USC, Princeton, Columbia, Swarthmore and Berkeley. And in addition, he is the author of a number of different books, including most recently, *The Stakes: America in the Middle East*.

For our commentator this afternoon, we have with us Steven Heydemann -- again, someone I think is known to this audience. Steve is an old friend of the Saban Center and of Brookings. Steve is currently a senior advisor for Middle East Initiatives at the United States Institute of Peace. Previously he has served as the director for the Center for Democracy and Civil Society at Georgetown University. And he also is the author of numerous works, including one that strikes me as particularly relevant right now, *Authoritarianism in Syria: Institutions and Social Conflict* -- something that Steve may need to do an updated volume, or perhaps it will just become a history at some point soon.

And as I mentioned, the panel discussion will be moderated by Margaret Warner who, again, I think is pretty well known to this audience. Margaret is the Emmy

Award-winning -- one of the Emmy Award-winning correspondents, excuse me -- of PBS's News Hour. She is also the leader of the overseas reporting, and is a frequent fixture both on your TV screens and our stage. And we're delighted to have all of them here with us this afternoon.

And we're delighted to have all of them here with us this afternoon.

So with that little bit of introduction -- Shibley, what did you find?

MR. TELHAMI: Thanks, Ken. It's always a pleasure to be here. And it's great opportunity for me to present the 2011 Arab Public Opinion Poll results.

I just want to say a couple of things about it first before I review these results.

As Ken suggested, this was really envisioned as a pre-9/11 kind of study that I started doing, really, when Al Jazeera became a big phenomenon in the 1990s. I set out to do a project called "Media Opinion and Identity in the Arab World." I speculated that the information revolution was going to have a far-reaching impact. It was going to make public opinion more relevant, and it's going to even have an impact on identities. And we wanted to do it empirically -- to start a project to do it empirically.

This project has been an academic project. It's funded by a scholarly grant from the Carnegie Corporation in New York and the University of Maryland, and no other source. And it's been consistently that way, including this particular poll.

In all of the cases, we did six countries that included Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, the United Arab Emirates, Lebanon, and Jordan. And you can see here that we are aggregating five countries because, frankly, the Saudi data just came an hour ago. And I did eyeball it, so I'll make some references to it, but this is actually the aggregate data from five countries that doesn't include Saudi Arabia. And I will make

some mention of Saudi Arabia, particularly where I was struck by some differences or issues that -- where things matter, in particular, I will bring the data into this process.

This is a -- every single year for the past 10 years we've done this in major urban areas. Typically, the sample is 3,750 to 4,000. So, including Saudi Arabia, it's 3,750. This one is a sample of 3,000.

These are all face-to-face interviews. We do not do phone interviews. None of the have been phone interviews. They're all face-to-face interviews in these countries.

This one was conducted literally the last couple of weeks of October. The last day of interviewing was literally three weeks ago -- October 30th. And so this is fresh. This is data that we're getting out very quickly. And we think it represents, you know, the current sentiment you'll see in a few minutes.

I should also say that, in addition to this poll, we also do a poll among Arabs and Jews in Israel. We're going to actually be revealing those results in another event on December 1st here at Brookings, where we talk about a variety of attitudes pertaining to the U.S., and also to relations with each other and how the environment is changing. So this is really the broad Arab public opinion poll.

I'm going to go through, very quickly, with the results. I'm going to start with attitudes toward the Awakening.

I should say, prior to talking about the Awakening specifically, is that the norm in these polls is that we ask questions that we repeat every single year. So we have a lot of core questions about the media habits, as well as opinion on some core issues that we repeat every year. Because the most meaningful analysis is usually about change over time -- how things change over time, and differences within different segments of society. So we have that.

But every year we also add some timely questions that have to do with current events or important issues. Obviously, this year -- this is the first annual Arab Public Opinion since the Arab Awakening, since -- you know, in the past year. And so in some ways we asked specific questions. Particularly in the case of Egypt, which is scheduled to have a parliamentary election a week from today, we asked specific questions about Egypt, including questions about the military.

So the first -- I'm going to start with the set of questions that are new, that are about the Arab Awakening. And I'm starting with this one question on many people's mind today, which is: What is the Egyptian public attitude toward the military authorities? We know of the tragic events that are unfolding in Egypt and the loss of life. And a lot of people have been asking questions about this issue.

And I say this is, of course, central because it's timely, but it's also central in many ways because previous polls have polled Egyptians less on the attitudes of the military authorities toward the revolution, and more about whether or not people trusted the institution of the military. The two questions, in my mind, are not the same. Because you're going to have people who have affection for the military, who want the army to be strong. Egyptians serve in the millions in the army. A lot of people are paid by the military. The military industry is a very important part of the infrastructure in Egypt. So they could have warm affection toward the military institution, but that's different from trusting the military rules to rule over political life.

And so the question that we asked, therefore, was "Do you believe that the military authorities in Egypt are working to, A, advance the gains of the revolution; B, are indifferent to the aims of the revolution; or C, they aim to slow or reverse the gains of the revolution?" And so that is the question.

And here is the answer.

You can see that only 21 percent actually feel that the military authorities are trying to advance the gains of the revolution. And 43 percent believe that the military is actually trying to reverse or slow the gains of the revolution. And 14 percent believe they are indifferent to the aims of the revolution.

And I say that -- this is not to necessarily challenge the idea that the public has a trust in the military institution. We've seen good polls that indicated, particularly early on after the first months, when the military was seen to be playing a constructive roll, polls that showed a lot of trust in the military. This could be reflective, in part, of a change in the sentiment, but perhaps even more, the fact that they were judging simply the intent of the military authorities pertaining to the politics of the country.

That question that I just gave you was just in Egypt, obviously, because you were asking Egyptians. That was just the Egyptian citizens that were asked about the military.

These other questions, including this one, they were asked in all six countries. But this is a weighted average of all five countries together.

We asked, "Looking at the international reaction to the events in the Arab world in the past few months, which two countries do you believe played the most constructive role?"

Now, the reason why we very often ask two countries, I think that people have an instinct, and they have to dig a little bit deeper to make an evaluation. If I had more money, and I could ask a lot more questions, I could probably break this down into two or three questions or even more. But where I can't, I find that while the ranking isn't exactly going to be the same, it gives you a sense where the public is.

And so these questions broke down this way. Turkey is by far the number one. It's 50 percent of those polled include Turkey on the list of the two most

constructive countries. Followed by France with 30 percent, the United States with 24 percent, and China with 20 percent.

Now, this seems a bit puzzling. And it needs a little bit of evaluation.

Turkey is not a surprise, in many ways. We know that, you know -- in fact, I call it the biggest winner of the Arab Awakening. And you'll see that in some of the other results that I'm going to show you, Turkey emerges as a big winner. But this is, in part, not a surprise.

The question was, of course, how the other countries are reacting to the Arab Awakening. And particularly in Libya, because that was sort of a test case. Whether or not that was going to be seen as a positive or a negative.

And here you have, in some ways -- China, which had a, not exactly -- has not been exactly responsive to intervention in the Arab world, doing reasonably well. And France, which has been very much interventionists -- certainly after Tunisia, anyway, starting with Libya -- it gets 30 percent. And the U.S., which is sort of in between, is getting reasonably good marks on this issue.

So what is going on here? And as you will see from some of the following slides, is that Arabs are very divided on international intervention, polarized on international intervention. So, you know, there are segments who are rewarding people who want to intervene, and segments who are punishing people who want to intervene.

And while this looks good for France, you will see that on other numbers, France has declined in Arab public opinion. It had been number one on so many dimensions over the past several years that many of the questions now show a reduced admiration for France in Arab public opinion, and that's very interesting.

"In retrospect, do you believe that the international intervention in Libya was the right thing to do or the wrong thing to do?"

Now that was interesting, too, because we didn't have a poll exactly in the Arab world finding out whether Arabs wanted -- we knew they were divided. I have done some blog analysis and found that there were, you know -- there was a lot of support in some cases, majority support, particularly when Qaddafi was threatening his people, but there was also a lot of opposition to international intervention.

And so we didn't know exactly how the Arab public opinion would fall. And this, of course, is after what could be construed as a relatively successful outcome -- that is, the removal of Qaddafi. And so far, you know, events in Libya have not really deteriorated in a manner that would lead people to be negative about it.

And yet, look at that. Arabs really are divided on Libya. And you have, still, 46 percent, in the average of the five countries, who think the international intervention in Libya was the wrong thing, and 35 percent say it's the right thing.

And just to add the Saudi data, which I just received, Saudis are divided almost half and half -- you know, roughly 36, 37 percent who think it's right, and the same number who think it's wrong. So it's almost exactly -- very, very divided on whether or not there should be intervention in Libya. I would have thought there would be more support. This is interesting, and it's going to require us to think about this norm of fearing foreign intervention still so strong even among people who were rooting very deeply for the rebels to succeed.

Now I asked specific questions about whether they sympathize with the rebels or with the governments in each one of three countries -- Syria, Yemen, and Bahrain -- to just see where they fall on the sentiment, if they look at it in that simplistic terminology, rebels versus governments.

And this is on Syria. You can see that the overwhelming majority, 86 percent, sympathize with the rebels. That's on average, the weighted averages in the

five countries. They vary a little bit from country to country, but particularly in Lebanon, the Lebanese are divided almost half and half on the rebels versus the government in Syria. But elsewhere, overwhelming majority is for the rebels.

On Yemen, you get roughly the same result -- 89 percent favoring the rebels, 5 percent favoring the government.

On Bahrain, you still have a majority favoring the rebels, but remember these countries, by and large, if you weight the averages, they're overwhelmingly Sunni. And so, yes, there is an element -- and you can see that element, by the way, in the United Arab Emirates where, in the UAE, a majority does favor the government in Bahrain. In Jordan there is more division on whether they support the government or the rebels. But elsewhere, a majority support the rebels in Bahrain, as well.

So you can see -- this is kind of interesting -- while there is a factor there, it's not the overwhelming factor in the attitudes of the Arab by and large.

"When you reflect on the Arab Spring, are you more optimistic?" By the way, we used the term "Arab Spring" because that's the one that they use in the Arab world now. And so we're using it for that reference, not -- as you know, Brookings just published a book called *The Arab Awakening*, which is the term that has been used. But we're using the term that is being used there.

"Are you more optimistic about the future of the Arab word? More pessimistic? Or feeling no change?"

You can see that a majority -- 55 percent -- are more optimistic when they observe the -- and that's true, by the way, about the Egyptians. Even in the middle of all of the questions that they had, you still have roughly half of Egyptians being optimistic about the future of the Arab world in light of the Arab Spring.

But you do have -- and these are not insignificant numbers, where you have 23 percent saying they feel no change, and 16 percent are more pessimistic.

"Thinking about the Arab Spring, is it mostly about ordinary people seeking dignity, freedom, and a better life, or is it about opposition parties or sects seeking to control governments? Or is it about foreign powers trying to stir trouble in the region?"

And there is some variation from country to country, but overall this is the average. Fifty-seven percent it's about ordinary people, 19 percent say it's about foreign powers trying to create trouble. So that still is a factor in Arab public opinion -- even as they watch these revolutions. It's not gone. And obviously, you have also worries about opposition parties and sects.

Now, this section is specifically about the Egyptian elections. And it was asked only in Egypt, except for one question that I asked in the other countries as well. So it specifies, like this question, "As you look ahead toward the presidential elections in Egypt, which of the following leaders would you like the next president to look like?"

Now, this is Egypt only, as you can see here, in this particular case. And if you look at the list of names, those names were provided to them. So they are not choosing in abstract any leader they want, we gave them a set of leaders and we asked them to choose which one of the following leaders. In part, we asked based on previous polls about most-admired leaders. In part, we added, you know, a few of the global leaders they recognize to see, for comparison reasons.

And what we have here is, in Egypt, clearly the overwhelming winner of all this is the Prime Minister of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan. He is obviously admired. They want their president to look like him more than any of the others. And then you have three who are roughly the same, if you take, obviously, the margin of error into

account. You have Mandela, Ahmadinejad, and King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, who has some following. But clearly, none of them in the league of Erdogan. That is really the central theme.

And you find that, too -- when you ask the same question in the five countries combined, you have the following average, where you have, again, Erdogan is up, with 31 percent, and then you have, you know, King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, Mandela, Nasrallah, and Ahmadinejad. Nasrallah, you will see, still got some popularity in Sunni Arab countries. And you will see, in some ways -- I have a section on Iran -- also, that the picture for Iran is mixed here. Ahmadinejad still shows up there as someone that is admired, and Hassan Nasrallah still shows up there as someone that is admired.

"If Egypt's political system looked like that of one of the following countries, which one would you prefer it to be?" So, again, I gave them these countries that included, you know, two Arab countries, it included a couple of Muslim countries, it included Western countries -- and China. And that is, again, in my opinion, those are more telling about how people envision the future than "who are you going to vote for?" -- although we asked that question, as well.

And here what we find is 44 percent say Turkey, 10 percent say France, 8 percent say Saudi Arabia, China, Germany. But the bottom line is the others are, you know, they're roughly the same. But it is primarily Turkey. Turkey is really the model.

That's in Egypt only. This is the Egyptian answer about how they want to see themselves. And we didn't ask that question in other Arab countries.

"If the presidential elections were held today, for whom would you vote for president?" We didn't give them names, but we had -- the questioners have a list of

all the names of people who are known to be candidates, so they could check when they do it. So that's the way we did that.

And it's interesting, because, obviously, no one overwhelming favorite here. Twenty percent name Amr Moussa. He's been leading in almost all the polls. But surprisingly, Mohamed El-Baradei does pretty well. They're really roughly equal. And then comes Ahmed Shafiq. And I thought about Ahmed Shafiq, because was not only a transitional prime minister, early, but also as someone who is a military general -- you know, that might be a reservoir of a lot of people who are rallying behind the military, as well.

"If the parliamentary elections were held today, what type of party would you be likely to vote for?" I didn't ask them the names of the parties. Those of you who know about the current environment in Egypt, where you've got over 40 parties, most people don't even know their names. You know, they might be able to name two or three, maybe four. It's very hard, given that many of them are new parties, and a lot of old groups have re-packaged themselves political parties. So we just basically wanted to see trends.

And I should say here that we are not, meaning we, experts and pollsters, are not in a position to predict elections in Egypt or elsewhere in the Arab world, even with good polling. And so don't look at this as an election in the sense of predicting outcomes of election. Look at it more as attitudes.

Let me tell you why. Because, you know, think about America, to start with. I mean, we poll likely voters. We have half of Americans who don't vote. And so to have a poll, obviously, that means to tell you anything, unless you -- we don't know much about the likely voters in Egypt. We have no idea, really. Most people, particularly in

rural areas, they vote based on clan, on family, on personality, not necessarily on ideology.

So don't interpret this to be a predictor of how they're going to vote. Just look at it more about the broad attitudes of -- you know, a space where candidates may be able to fight for them. But not so much where they have hardened positions that will dictate the way they're going to vote.

And you can see that roughly a third say they will likely vote for an Islamic party of some kind. You have 30 percent who label themselves as, you know, favoring a liberal party of some kind, 11, 10 percent, Arab national -- a pan-Arab party and nationalist party.

This question was intended to see, you know, what Egyptians admire from their history, based on the leaders. And, again, we gave them a set of people -- mostly presidents, previous, presidents. But we also took three other personalities -- one, Muhammad Ali from the 19th century who was, you know, a great Egyptian leader who nearly took on the Ottoman Empire. And, in some ways, he's behind the rise of modern Egypt. Saad Zaghlul, who was a prime minister, head of the Wafd, who was considered to be one of the more liberal figures in Egyptian -- but nationalist -- in Egyptian history. And we added Hassan al-Banna, who is the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, to get a sense of whether, in fact, people will cluster to him politically, even if -- you know, if they were Islamist.

And what we found -- and, remember, I'm asking Awhich two of the following -- not which one, which doesn't really tell us exactly the ranking. Again, I wanted to force them to go beyond their automatic choice, which probably would have been Nassar for a larger number of them. Probably.

And what we end up having is this kind of line up, on a list of two that they admire most. It's amazing how close the top four are. Basically, you go from Nassar, Sadat, Muhammad Ali, Saad Zaghlul, and, obviously, King Farouk -- yes, we added King Farouk, too. But Hassan al-Banna, it's interesting, he doesn't have the same resonance. People may not be thinking of him as a great leader, thinking of him more as a religious figure. And that it's not surprising, obviously, with Mubarak at the bottom of that list.

Now, attitudes toward the U.S. Now this is a question that we repeat every year. So we've been asking this for a long time, so we have a sense of trend of where our public opinion is on the United States.

You can see that, generally, most Arabs still have an unfavorable view of the U.S. It is 59 percent who have -- if you include the "very unfavorable," "somewhat unfavorable" -- 59 percent who have an unfavorable view. And 26 percent, a quarter, who have very or somewhat favorable view.

The change, obviously, has been more in the "somewhat favorable," which has increased from, you know, 2009, 2008, to 22 percent. It's a warm, you know, lukewarm increase that you can see coming at the expense of the bottom category, which is "very unfavorable." And to my mind, that is probably an Arab Spring factor. And you'll see -- I already showed you about how they rank the issue, and that might be part of it. Not fully, I mean, worth thinking about.

"How would you describe your views of President Barack Obama of the United States? Positive, negative or neutral?" Now, remember, in 2009 when he was first elected -- and we did this just before his Cairo speech, actually, this poll in 2009 -- people were very much more positive about him. Thirty-nine percent were positive, 24 percent negative.

In 2010 it was reversed completely. And that has to do -- you know, in fact, 2010 was what I call a "spike year." And I think the spike year had to do with two things. One is the letdown, given the expectations from Obama in the first year, but also the timing of the poll. We did the poll right after the Gaza flotilla -- which was just very, very angry public sentiment that reflected itself in so many answers, including on Iran.

So it's a spike year, and it's better to compare 2009 to 2011 in some ways. And you see that, you know, that the President's numbers are still more negative than 2009, but certainly better than they were in 2010.

"Which of the following is closest to your views in describing U.S. President Obama?" "I have an unfavorable view of him and I'm pessimistic about his foreign policy." "I have a favorable view of him, but I don't think the American system will allow him to have a successful foreign policy." And, "I have a favorable view of him, and I'm hopeful about his foreign policy."

And you can see that a plurality are in the second category, where they might like him personally, but they don't think he's going to be able to do much, and very few people are confident that he's going to be able to accomplish much.

"How would you describe your attitudes toward the Obama Administration policy in the Middle East? Are you hopeful? Are you discouraged? Neither hopeful nor discouraged?"

You can see -- the striking thing is, in 2009, for the first time, people were actually hopeful. You had nearly half of the public expressing hope about policy toward the Middle East right after Obama was elected. And you can see that went down dramatically in 2010, after the Gaza flotilla. And now it's still down, but a little bit better than it was in 2010.

"What two steps by the United States would improve your views of the United States the most?" And we took out a lot of the key issues that people have expressed over the years.

And you can see that the number one issue is the Israel-Palestine peace agreement -- 55 percent. And that is true in 2010, it's true in 2011. In 2009, it was a little bit lower, but you can see it's the number one answer, followed by stopping aid to Israel, withdrawal from the Arabian Peninsula, withdrawal from Iraq.

I have to tell you I just eyeballed the Saudi results on this specifically. And, interestingly, in Saudi Arabia, the issue of withdrawal from the Arabian Peninsula is equal to the issue of achieving a peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians -- the preliminary read of that data.

"When you look back at the past year of the Obama Administration, which one of the following policies are you most disappointed with?" -- based on that.

And, again, you could see that Israel-Palestine is the number one issue. In 2010 it was higher. As I told you, this was a spike year because of the -- in my own opinion, my own interpretation -- it was right after the Gaza flotilla. But it's still pretty high. Then Iraq has gone down a little bit because of the U.S.'s clearly announcing that it's withdrawing. And then followed by a number of other issues.

"When you look back at the past year of the Obama Administration, which one of the following policies are you most pleased with?"

And here, you can see that in 2010, attitudes toward Islam, given the way the President was speaking right in the first few months was the number one answer. They rewarded that. In 2011, it is economic assistance and human rights are really the ones that are most catching the attention of the public. It might have to do with the Arab Spring.

I just, again, looked at the Saudi data, and the number one answer in the Saudi data is not economic assistance, because obviously they're not getting any from the U.S., but it is human rights -- as positive. About 22 percent of the Saudis highlight that.

"Which two of the following factors do you believe are most important in driving American policy in the Middle East?" That's a question we started asking from the very beginning.

And we generally get roughly the same trend: controlling oil, protecting Israel, and then -- those are the two top questions every single year. They still are. Then you go to "weakening the Muslim world," "preserving regional or global dominance." So all the four top answers are negative from their point of view, about what the real aims of America are. And then all the other stuff doesn't really get a lot of numbers.

The Arab-Israeli conflict specifically. "Which of the following statements is closer to your view?" "Prepared for peace with Israel and Arab governments should do more, based on the '67 borders." And "Prepared for peace with Israel but don't think that Israel will ever give up the territories occupied in '67." Or "Even if Israel returns all the '67 territories, Arabs should continue to fight." And so this is intended to see, you know, the percentages of people who still, in principle, are accommodating to a two-state solution.

What we find here is that, really, the numbers are still roughly the same since 2009 -- which is the first two categories of, in principle, agreeing to a two-state solution, you have roughly 67 percent who in principle still support it, and roughly a quarter who basically say even if Israel withdraws we shouldn't have peace with Israel.

I just looked at the Saudi data again, and while the numbers vary a little bit, still a majority of the Saudis say they're accepting, in principle, of the two-state solution.

"Which of the following statements is closest to your view about the prospects of lasting peace between Israel and the Palestinians? It will happen in the next five years. It's inevitable, but it will take longer. I don't believe it will ever happen."

And look at this. This is really telling you the story, in a way. A majority of people don't believe it will ever happen -- 53 percent. And, certainly, those who believe it's going to happen in the next five years are small. And that number has, you know, slightly increased since 2009.

"What do you believe is the likely outcome if the prospects of a two-state solution collapse?"

And here, too, you can see that a majority think there will be a state of conflict. And 21 percent say the status quo will continue. But, you know, hardly anyone says there will be one state, or that the Palestinians will surrender.

So what you find here is the dilemma, really, of Arab public opinion on the Israel-Palestinian question. On the one hand, they're in principle supportive of a two-state. On the other hand, they don't think it will ever happen. On the other hand, they think that if it doesn't happen, it's going to be disastrous, so they don't have an alternative.

And so they remain, therefore, engaged with a two-state solution, even as they're depressed about the prospects because they are worried about the consequences of its collapse. And I would submit to you that in Israel it's actually a very similar trend that's taking place.

"A solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict that will lead to the establishment of a Palestinian state will happen: Only through serious negotiations, By being imposed by the U.N., Being imposed by the U.S., Through another Arab-Israeli war, and It will never happen."

Now, if you look here, the most important change, really, is that the number of people who believe in negotiations have dropped dramatically from 2010. Forty percent said it will happen through negotiations. Now many people -- fewer people believe that, half of that, 20 percent, believe it will come through negotiations. If you look at -- the largest segment really, 39 percent, think it will come only through imposition by either the U.N. or the U.S., if you combine those two together.

"When you look at the Israel-Palestinian conflict, which of the following issues is more central to you, assuming they may all be important? The establishment of a Palestinian state? Arab sovereignty over Jerusalem? Or The right of return?" That's just to get a feeling for how people prioritize.

Well, in 2010, we had the plurality say it was really the establishment of a state. This year -- interestingly -- there's in an increase in the number who focus on the refugee issue. And we need to think about why. I'm not really sure. But that is an interesting finding. And that seems to hold, actually, from country to country.

"With regard to the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, would you like to see Egypt maintain the treaty? Modify the treaty? Or cancel the treaty?" That is obviously specific to the Egyptian treaty, and this is an Egypt-only question. We asked it to Egyptians about how they view the Egyptian-Israel treaty.

And here it is -- 37 percent say maintain the treaty, 35 percent say cancel the treaty, and 6 percent say modify its terms. Egyptians are very much divided on this question.

And we added a nuance. We said, “What if Israel withdraws from the West Bank and Gaza? What would you view be then?”

And what we found is there’s a little bit of improvement. They were a dead-heat before, now there’s a 10 percentage difference. Forty-one percent say “I would then support the treaty,” and 31 percent say “I would still want to cancel the treaty.” So you really have a 31 percent, you know, roughly, hardened view on this -- which is not too different from the quarter across the Arab world who see they, in principle, you know, don’t want to have peace with Israel. So it’s kind of interesting.

“Which of the following statements is closer to your view?” This is in Egypt only. This is about, also, if they’re prepared for a two-state solution.

So despite what they say, when you add it all up, you still have 66 percent of Egyptians, in principle, open to a two-state solution.

On Iran. ADo you believe that Iran is merely conducting research for peace purposes, or trying to develop nuclear weapons?@

We find that now, you know, the majority of Arabs think Iran is trying to develop nuclear weapons. That has declined a little bit since 2009, but when you take the margin of error into account it’s not all that significant.

“There is international pressure on Iran to curtail its nuclear program. What is your opinion? Iran has a right to its nuclear program and should not be pressured? Or Iran should be pressured to stop its nuclear program?”

And what we find here is -- been consistent, really -- is that, you know, a majority of Arabs still think that Iran should not be pressured to stop its nuclear program. And in 2010 it was even higher. It declined from 2010. It was spikier, as I said. But I just looked at the Saudi data, and in Saudi Arabia, I have to say that what I found was that a majority think that Iran should be pressured to stop its nuclear program. And that is true

also about the United Arab Emirates. So, while this is the weighted average of the five countries including Saudi Arabia, there is also some variation in the Arab world.

"If Iran acquires nuclear weapons, which of the following is a likely outcome for the Middle East region? More positive, more negative, would not matter?"

You can see that people say -- a plurality say "more negative," but, remarkably, not that high. I have to say, in 2010 there was a spike for Iran, as well, where actually more people said it would be more positive -- right after the Gaza flotilla. So from that point of view, it changed dramatically. But still, more people say it's negative, and particularly in Saudi Arabia, based on my early read of the data.

"Name two countries that you think pose the biggest threat to you, personally."

Every year we've had this question the top two countries, by far, are Israel and the United States. They remain to be up there -- Israel 71 percent, the United States 59 percent. But notice that Iran, actually -- the perception of threat by Iran has increased, from 12 percent to 18 percent. So there is a sense of increasing threat from Iran. And that is probably one of the negatives that have emerged over the past year about Iran, over the past year.

Very quickly -- global perspectives. AIn a world where there is one superpower, which of the following countries would you prefer to be that superpower?@ We gave them these seven countries to choose from.

And in 2009, note that France and Germany -- and last year, France -- in 2010, by the way, France was by far number one, over 30 percent. And in 2009 it was 23 percent. But notice the rise of China, and notice the relative decline of France. It's still high, but it's declined from 2009. And notice that the U.S. is not particularly high up there.

"Which leader outside your own country do you admire most?" That is an open question that we ask every year. We don't give them a name. We just ask it in open question for them to name a leader.

And you could see that Erdogan is number one. And he has been -- roughly the same as 2010. But if you look at 2010, that was a spike year, the Gaza flotilla, the role of Turkey and Erdogan. That was a high for him, and he's maintaining that high in 2011. Hassan Nasrallah and Ahmadinejad are still popular. King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia is actually emerging as one of the only rulers who has some, you know, popularity among segments of the public.

Look at Saddam Hussein. The story of Saddam Hussein is interesting. While he's only 6 percent here, he is roughly tied for first place in Jordan and Saudi Arabia, with Erdogan. There's been an interesting kind of revival of Saddam Hussein, one can say. I have a theory about that, but it's very interesting.

And, "If you had to live in one of the following countries, which one would you prefer?"

France was by far number one. It still is number one, but it's declined in comparison. And then you have mostly European, and American -- you know, all of these -- we didn't give them the choices, so they all pretty much -- what about the Arab world?

"If you had to live in an Arab country outside your own, which country would you prefer?"

And you can see that their choices tend to be the rich ones. So what's interesting about that is they don't tend to want their country to be like them, but they want to live there. The only non-rich country that gets large numbers is Lebanon. And that's true in Saudi Arabia. I just, you know, looked at Saudi Arabia, 12 percent of Saudis

say if they didn't live in their own country they would rather live in Saudi Arabia [sic]. So Lebanon is the one country that's not rich that's popular.

I have -- I just want to -- I'm going to stop here. You have the distribution. I have some results, obviously, about identify, and about the media. Al-Jazeera remains number one.

But I want to make just one very fast -- I want to draw your attention to one very fast issue about the media, which is among those people who had access to the internet, we asked them, "How long have you had access to the internet?"

And what I wanted to show you is, like, 27 percent say they acquired the internet just in the past year. Just -- you have to understand how fast this has been happening, and why the consequence has not been fully measured. And when you look at the -- say, you know, just the last five years, it's really extraordinary how many people have just recently gotten the internet.

And more importantly, I think, for my own analysis, is "What's your primary source of international news?"

In 2009, 80 percent said television. That is the primary source of international news. In 2011, you have 20 percent say the internet is their primary source of international news. So we have a changing media environment, very rapidly. We don't fully understand it. As you can imagine, those who are younger tend to use the internet more, so that's going to change even faster, and that's going to have consequences for politics.

So I'm going to end here, and I'm going to invite my colleagues Margaret Warner and Steve Heydemann to join me for a conversation.

Thank you very much. (Applause.)

MS. WARNER: So, hi everybody. Shibley, that was fascinating.

We've only got 35 more minutes, so I though I'd just -- we'll have a little discussion here, and throw it open to the audience for questions.

I'd like to hear -- I mean, first of all, I don't know how many of you have had your Blackberries on, but the whole civilian government of Egypt has just offered to resign in the last hour or so. And I think it demonstrates what you said, which was that as communication, both mass and now internet, picked up speed in the Arab world, public opinion would become more important. And heaven knows that's a perfect example.

First, Steve, let's just get your reaction to this. I mean, what did you find in this that was either startling, or you think is most significant for us to understand when we're talking about the Arab world, moving forward.

MR. HEYDEMANN: Well, Shibley presented us with an extraordinarily rich and diverse set of findings out of the survey. And I think what the presentation underscores is really what an extraordinarily valuable resource this survey is for anybody who wants to know about public opinion data in the Arab world. It's something that I've come to depend on. I'm always very excited when it's released about this time of the year.

So, first, congratulations, Shibley, about that.

What I wanted to focus on, actually, Margaret, was an issue related to this theme of the Arab Awakening that Shibley introduced in his presentation -- but that I think might open up some additional questions for us in trying to understand the impact of the events of the Arab Spring, the Arab Awakening, in particular with respect to public opinion about the United States in the Arab world.

Because one of the really striking things about the survey -- and as you move through the data, I think you'll see this yourselves -- is the extraordinary difficulty

that the U.S. has had in translating its support for political change in the Arab into improved opinions of the United States among Arabs.

Shibley, you noted a number of variables in which opinion of the U.S. seems to have improved. And yet there's also data that suggests that the Arab Spring dividend continues to be very, very elusive.

And let me just give you one or two quick examples. I don't want to take too much time because I do want to jump to the discussion.

The U.S. has been very explicit in its support for political change associated with these uprisings. On May 19th, President Obama described the uprisings as an historic opportunity. He said it was a chance for us to persuade the Arab world that we care as much about vendors, fruit vendors, as we do about autocrats. We have been enormously supportive of regime change in Syria and in Yemen. You showed the size of the majorities that support regime change in those two -- or support the protesters in those two countries. The U.S. has been explicit in supporting protesters, and explicit in supporting regime change in both Syria and Yemen.

And yet, as you said, next to Israel, the U.S. continues to be regarded as the single biggest threat to countries in the Arab world. Some 60 percent -- 59, 60 percent -- of Arabs continue to view the U.S. unfavorably.

And one of the findings -- the question in relation to what the Arab world things animates U.S. engagement in the region, you mentioned that there's a sense that many in the Arab world continue to think that what's most important in driving U.S. policy is control of oil and defending Israel.

But what you didn't point out -- and I thought this was, given the emphasis of U.S. policy over the last year, what was really --

MS. WARNER: Promoting democracy?

MR. HEYDEMANN: Less than 5 percent of Arabs who responded believe that democracy is a key priority of the U.S. Less than 5 percent believe that promoting human rights is a priority of the United States.

And so to the extent that we anticipated that the Arab Spring, the Awakenings, offered us an opportunity to realign how the Arab world things about the United States, the data make clear how compelling some of those gaps continue to be.

And just one more word. What's also, I think, especially interesting is some of the information you conveyed about Palestine and attitudes towards Palestine.

Ninety percent of Arabs in the survey continue to identify Palestine as one of the top three political issues that they care most about. As you saw from Shibley's presentation, the one thing that the U.S. could do that would most improve its standing in the region is to broker a peace agreement, along very particular lines -- '67 boundaries, Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine, and so one. The second most important thing that the U.S. could do to improve its standing is cut off aid to Israel.

And so we get this sense, I think, coming out of this survey that in many ways -- and I'm a little reluctant to draw the conclusion in a decisive fashion -- but in many ways, you get the sense that low levels of trust in the U.S. in the Arab world, and our performance, at least as perceived in the Arab world, on the Palestine issue, constitutes a significant constraint on the capacity of the U.S. to achieve the gains that we hoped our support for the Arab Spring would be able to deliver.

Now, when we think about where are in the peace process, and when we think about the frustrations the U.S. has encountered in trying to move that process forward, we really almost, I think, have to step away from this survey with a question of whether or not this tension between the expectation that our support for the Arab Spring would produce benefits on one hand, and the reality that in some measure, because of

how we're perceived to engage on the issue of Palestine, we continue to be perceived as a threat to the Arab world, it really opens up the question of whether we will be able to realize what President Obama identified as an historic opportunity to improve our relations with the Arab world.

It may be that that opportunity is really at risk because of some of the tensions that this survey brings to the fore.

And, again, without this data, I have to say we'd be severely handicapped in our ability to understand these trends and relationships. So we're really very much, Shibley, in your debt for helping us be able to do that.

MR. TELHAMI: Thanks.

MS. WARNER: Shibley, I'd like to tease out with you one other -- since I think Steve did such a good job about analyzing all the data about attitudes toward the U.S., trying to correlate, and seeing, of course, very little correlation.

What about the attitudes to Turkey? I mean, both in Arab world and then in Egypt in particular, they see Erdogan as the model for a president, they see Turkey as a model.

But were you able to figure out, or find out why? In other words, do they see Turkey as a secular state? Do they see it as one with an Islamist president? Is it because it's successful economically? The most successful in the Muslim world, really -- certainly in that half of the globe? Or, you know, is it because it's perceived as assertive, and standing up for the rights of Muslim and Arab countries?

What do you think?

MR. TELHAMI: Well, this is very interesting, because we do have a lot of data on that -- particularly on the issue of who Arabs have admired most over the past decade. We have data on that.

And every single indication we have is that -- Steve is right -- that, by and large, when Arabs evaluate the world, America and the world, they see the world largely through the prism of the Arab-Israeli issue more than any other. I call it the prism of pain through which Arabs see the world, defines kind of the world view.

And you can see that when Jacques Chirac hosted Arafat as Arafat was dying, and he was being isolated by the U.S., and shunned by Israel. And Chirac invites him to die -- quote -- honorably in France. He was the number one -- he was the number one most popular leader in the Arab world. And it helped him, of course, that he also was seen to oppose the Iraq War. Between those two, those two issues -- you know, the oil and Israel -- that made him the number one, even as we were talking about Western, you know -- the sort of clash of civilization, the most -- you know, right in the middle of the 2003, 2004, and we have the President of France being the most popular leader in the Arab world is really quite striking.

In 2006, 2007, when people were talking about a by and large Sunni-Shia divide -- remember what happened in Iraq and what happened in Lebanon, and we're talking -- and some people said, well, the Sunni-Shia divide now trumps everything else, including the Arab-Israeli issue. What we found in Egypt, Morocco, Jordan, Hassan Nasrallah of Hezbollah, the Shia leader of Hezbollah, was the most popular leader in the Arab world. In 2008, we had -- 2009, Hugo Chavez emerged as -- because of what he did on Gaza. In 2010 we had, after the Gaza flotilla, it was Erdogan. He wasn't there before, even though he was still leading the same democratic model. I mean, when you look at --

MS. WARNER: So you think that's what it really started from, the popularity of Erdogan, with the Gaza flotilla incident.

MR. TELHAMI: Yes.

MS. WARNER: Again, through the prism of the Israeli-Palestinian issue.

MR. TELHAMI: That, and there were a couple of episodes, including he was seen to have stood up to President Shimon Peres in the World Economic Forum. It was, you know, in a way that even Amr Moussa was seen to have not done.

But it was started -- he captured the imagination first on that issue. But now it's a little bigger than that. Because that would explain why they would embrace him. It wouldn't explain why they would want him as their president. There's a big difference. Because they wouldn't want, necessarily, Hugo Chavez to be the president.

MS. WARNER: Right.

MR. TELHAMI: So that tells you that there's something positive in addition to that enemy-of-my-enemy characteristic.

And I think when people look around and they're struggling, particularly with this bridge between Islam and democracy, what they see is -- they like the Turkish model. They like it because it's democratic and still respectful of tradition. They like it because Turkey is doing pretty well economically. In a very difficult global environment they're growing at 7, 8 percent a year, even in this environment. And they like it, obviously, because they see them as standing up for causes.

So that makes them a very powerful model right now.

MS. WARNER: The one other thing I just wanted you to briefly explain to the audience, because you didn't get a chance to get to it, was on the question of identity and the role of religion, there actually hasn't been that much change.

So you found both among all the countries, and then also in Egypt itself, on this divide about whether religion should be respected but the clergy shouldn't dictate the political system vis-a-vis versus clergy should have more of a voice, there hasn't been much change.

MR. TELHAMI: Yes. And I think it's interesting. And identity is something I've studied over the past decade.

From 2009 to 2011 there wasn't a substantial change. There's a little bit of a change that we have to analyze a little bit more carefully.

But over the past decade there has been a chance, where identification with the state has dropped over time, and more people identify themselves as Muslim, and some Arab. But trans-national identification has trumped the state identification over time.

And my theory about that is twofold. One is that, you know, they identify the state in part with the government. So, you know, if Qaddafi is all they know, the government is Qaddafi. If Mubarak is all they know, the state is the ruler. And so when you become angry with the ruler, you become -- you don't raise your head, as Egyptians said --

MS. WARNER: But then why wouldn't it have bumped up this year?

MR. TELHAMI: And I -- because --

MS. WARNER: As they feel they are beginning to have some ownership of their government?

MR. TELHAMI: Because of the countries that we have conducted polls in, only Egypt --

MS. WARNER: Right.

MR. TELHAMI: -- only Egypt has had that, and it's still in transition. And it's too early to tell, you know, whether it's going to have an impact or not.

MS. WARNER: All right, I think we'll go to questions from the audience.

And right here. And if you would just -- you know all the ground rules. Please give your name. And since we have so little time, try to be as crisp as you can with the question.

MR. GRINDSTAFF: Hugh Grindstaff.

What bugs me about this whole poll is that during all the uprisings, there's been very little anti-American protests. It's been focused on the governments that have kept them down for so long. And also some of the governments that kept them down for so long, the Palestinian-Israeli issue because it took away from their own countries' malaise of non-democracy.

And you didn't have Qaddafi on the poll. And if you did -- I remember pictures of Qaddafi and Hugo Chavez. So it's kind of interesting how Hugo Chavez comes out in the poll, and Qaddafi wasn't on it.

Thank you.

MR. TELHAMI: By the way, Hugo Chavez is not high this year. He was high in 2009.

MR. GRINDSTAFF: I know –

MS. WARNER: Yes. Right here.

MR. MITCHELL: Thanks. I'm Garrett Mitchell, and I write the Mitchell Report. I'm looking for sort of a quick take-away here.

And I'm struck by the -- this is going back to something Margaret was talking about -- I'm struck by the fact that if you, you know, sort of scan who's the most popular guy out there, from Chirac to Nasrallah to Chavez to Erdogan, is it fair to say that the definition of the most respected, popular -- whatever the right term is -- is whoever it is who that year, or in those years, put it to the U.S. and the Israelis best in a public setting?

Which leads me to question whether the take-away from what we're hearing here -- and thinking about Steve's questions -- is that the bottom line in the Middle East is anybody or anything but America?

MR. TELHAMI: First, on that -- no, that's not actually, that's not the take-away. The take-away is that -- you're right about the first part of it, which is when you ask them just generally which leader they admire most in the world, their instinct is to measure that first through the prism of the Arab-Israeli issue specifically. And on that, I think you're right. And it goes from year to year. And it has varied from year to year.

That's why this measure of who you want to be as your -- what would you want your president to look like more is in some ways more of an embrace measure. So these other questions that I ask "Who are the leaders you admire most," -- they're actually intended not to know who's popular, but intended as a shorthand to know what I call the prism through which they make an evaluation.

What I'm trying to understand, is put myself in the mind of the public, what is it they're thinking about when they're making a judgment. So it isn't important who Hugo Chavez is. It's just what's important to them, or it's what are they thinking? And that tells you how important an issue is in their priorities.

And that leads me to the question about, you know, this was not about the U.S. It wasn't. This was, you know, first and foremost about dignity, I think, freedom, and, certainly, economic well-being.

But if you look, if you unpack the question of dignity, collective identity in the Arab world, you cannot posit it in any shape or form without reference to the relationship between the Arabs and the rest of the world, and particularly the Israel-Palestine issue as central problem in the way people identify themselves.

And what we have seen over the past decade is that the public has been far more angry on this issue than the governments have been. And now they're going to have a voice. It's not that this is necessarily going to be their top priority. They want food, and they want freedom, and they want dignity, and they want all of these things. But now, they're going to be able to air these questions, like the Arab-Israeli issue. And they have been, in Tahrir Square.

And when you have an event like this -- let's say, you have an Egyptian election, and you have parliament, and then there is a Gaza explosion, then it rises in the priorities. So the issue rises in the priorities, and then the public will is going to be manifested in the behavior of the Egyptian government in ways that we have not seen in the past. And I think that's true for most of them.

MS. WARNER: Do you agree, Steve?

MR. HEYDEMANN: Just very quickly on this point.

I think Shibley's exactly right. It does seem to me that we may have drawn premature conclusions from the absence in these protests of a focus on Israel and on the U.S., and that they should not -- the intensity with which those protests engaged issues of domestic politics and governance should not necessarily be taken as an indicator that the passion and the commitment and engagement with questions of Palestine and Israel have diminished.

With respect to the Arab Spring and the focus on issues of dignity and social justice, and a critique of governance and home, I think some of the data that Shibley has presented us with suggests the need for a certain degree of caution in trying to understand the trajectory of where these events are headed.

The numbers who viewed the uprisings as a product of foreign meddling, the numbers who viewed them as attempts by one group to impose control on another

group -- if you add those up, they're still a majority overall, but they're a significant majority. And so there is still a substantial degree, it seems to me, if skepticism within Arab societies about the purposes, the intent, and the direction of change that these Arab uprisings represent.

And that may be less of a dilemma for the United States, in fact, than it is for those who are animating those movements and trying to give them the domestic legitimacy that would help consolidate the gains that they're aiming for.

But we shouldn't overlook those numbers. Because, to me, those are some incipient warning flags that we should really be watching.

MS. WARNER: Especially when you combine them. Yes.

Yes -- sir, right back there.

MR. ALLEN: Thank you. Michael Allen, National Endowment for Democracy.

Given the urban basis of the sample, I wonder to what extent, if at all, you think the data understates conservative political sentiment, particularly --

MR. TELHAMI: Given the what? I'm sorry?

MS. WARNER: Given the urban nature of the sample --

MR. ALLEN: Given the urban, of the city-based nature of the sample --

MS. WARNER: -- does it understate the conservative --

MR. ALLEN: -- does it understate conservative political sentiment? Particularly in Egypt, with respect to their level of support for Islamic parties, and assuming that Egyptian liberalism isn't particularly strong in the rural areas?

MR. TELHAMI: A good question.

First of all, we've been doing urban throughout the 10 years, so all of our sample is done in urban. Although in Egypt we do six cities at the same time.

However, we choose the sample to be demographically representative nationally, in terms of, you know, gender, age, sect, education. So we have, you know, a sample that is selected that way.

Early on, when we started doing this experimentally in the late 1990s, when it wasn't really very easy to do polls, we tried to figure out whether we should do rural. We -- it was very hard to do, and very expensive to do. And when we did it, we didn't get meaningful enough results that were -- you know, that added to the analysis that we had. And once we started with the samples that we had, since we are studying trends over years, we had to repeat the same exact sampling methodology, otherwise it wouldn't be meaningful to measure change from, you know, 2002 to 2011. So we stuck with it.

We are fairly confident about representation in many ways, you know, in terms of trends. And in most Arab countries, except for Egypt, the majority of the population live in urban areas -- in some cases overwhelming majorities. In Egypt it's, you know, a little over half who live in rural areas, so it's significant. It's not insignificant.

As I said, if you're looking at it as trend, it's pretty telling. Remember, these are, of course, the people who are mobilized politically. What are focused on? Tahrir Square, Alexandria. You know, Mansura. Where are the things that we're focused on in terms of what's happening in the street? These are the people who are driving everything anyway.

But, you know, as I alerted everyone when I spoke, that is not necessarily an indicator of how they're going to vote. And I think the voting behavior is probably going to be different, regardless -- I mean, regardless of these identifications.

MS. WARNER: Yes -- right over here, sir.

MR. RICHMAN: I'm Howard Richman, former State Department.

As you look back, Shibley, on the data, is there anything in recent years, in the Egyptian case, at least, which could have served as a precursor or predictor of the Awakening we've had this year? Or anything aside from the increased pessimism about Israel-Palestine, for example?

MR. TELHAMI: You know, I've written about this before. And I can say that I have not -- I have written about it, and I have a couple of YouTube videos on this issue.

Yes -- I mean, I was very concerned for Egypt. None of us knew that the revolution would happen the way it did. But most of us knew that trouble was ahead. And it was on two measures that I've spoken about and written about before.

One measure is the growing gap between governments and publics on core issues. And that was very clear. And in a way that the choices of the public were almost deliberate indication against the governments.

You know, when I do public opinion polls in the Arab over the past decade, I never ask the people, do you like your government or not? because I don't trust that they're going to answer it. And if they do, I can't trust the result. So my -- as an analyst, my task is I try to get indirect indicators that are not going to be -- they're not going to put them in a position that is difficult politically.

And when I look at those indirect indicators, I see that their choices were intended to go exactly against the government.

But I spoke about this dignity of identify in Egypt, and the sense of self, and how they've declined, how I expect that there will be a transition in Egypt that even the elites, the ruling elites, are uncomfortable with the role that Egypt was playing. That the events in Gaza put them in a difficult position when they happened in 2008, 2009, as

well as the Lebanon War, that they were stressed for -- you know, the way they identify themselves.

And it wasn't a surprise to me that the chant in Tahrir Square on the day of celebration was, "Raise your head. You're an Egyptian." Because I think a lot of Egyptians felt they were not raising their heads politically before. And that we could measure. And that we talked about. And that I wrote about.

So I think we anticipated all of that. Where we as analysts didn't fully understand is that you can actually translate this anger that we have measured into collective political action without political parties, social institutions, or charismatic leadership. And that's where this new media came in, where it provided the ability for people to get in the streets in large number to challenge that anger into political action.

It happened so rapidly we didn't fully understand it. And as I showed you in the numbers, you know, most people have gotten it only in the past three years, five years -- 60 percent of those who have internet have gotten it in the past five years, 27 percent have just gotten it in the past year. Three years ago, just in 2007, 2008, when I was doing analysis, I didn't have enough internet, people who say their main source of information is the internet, to be able to do statistically meaningful analysis. Behind you, I have one of my assistants, Evan Lewis, who's run multiple correlations trying to figure out -- we didn't have enough data early on to be able to do meaningful analysis.

Now we have data to be able to do it. But it happened very rapidly.

MS. WARNER: Yes -- right back here, on the aisle.

MR. NADA: Hi. Garrett NADA. I'm a graduate student at George Washington University in Middle East Studies.

And I want to sort of flip the issue a little bit. We've sort of talked a lot about where a lot of this negative sentiment comes from. Back in 2010 and 2009, this 2 percent that sees the U.S. in a very favorable light, and 8 percent somewhat favorable.

What do you think -- where do you think those feelings come from? Is it part of the soft-power techniques that we used? Is it State Department exchanges, and Fulbrights, and hospitals built by U.S. aid?

What are the other levers that we've sort of been getting right, that we've been trying to pull, you think, that you think have produced these small groups of people that like what we're doing?

MR. TELHAMI: Yes -- you know, it's hard to know for sure. I mean, we haven't really analyzed it, so I'm going to tell you speculation rather than a scientific answer on this. Because we haven't done the thorough analysis of the data on this.

But it is striking to me that when I ask them, you know, what has the U.S. done right over the past year? economic aid matters. That's the number one answer for the countries. So, you know, obviously not majorities. But if you're going from, you know, 7 percent to 17 percent, that's significant.

And human rights. You know, even if they think, the overwhelming majority still think the U.S. is interested in dominating, you know, the oil region and helping Israel, you're still going to get that making a difference, you know -- among some people.

And so those things matter.

MS. WARNER: I want to follow up, before we go to the next question from the audience, on the U.S. role.

How should U.S. policy-makers look at this data and take it in, in deciding whether to intervene, or whether the world should intervene any other place? I

mean, you have overwhelming majorities, even with Bahrain, of Arab publics who support the rebels against the governments. And yet a majority, or certainly a plurality, thinks intervening in Libya was the wrong thing. I think it's the majority -- right? -- 64, 35 or something.

So what is the world to do?

MR. TELHAMI: Well, this is an interesting question. Because, I think, obviously when the United States decides what it wants to do, whether it should intervene or not, it's going to first and foremost do it based on American interests. And, you know, whether Arab public opinion will be positive or negative toward the U.S. is only one factor of many.

So, obviously, we can't give advice about intervention based on that. And sometimes you want to do what's moral, what's right, what's vitally important to interests for sure. So put that aside for now.

On just the Arab public opinion part, though, I would say, you know, the Administration I thought handled Libya pretty well, I have to say. So when you're looking at it, their caution -- I mean, they were basically --

MS. WARNER: But the Arab world does not think so.

MR. TELHAMI: Yeah, they do --

MS. WARNER: From your own data.

MR. TELHAMI: -- they -- actually 24 percent. I mean, if you consider how suspicious the Arabs are of the U.S., and not rewarding the U.S. at all, when you say, who played the most constructive role toward the --

MS. WARNER: Arab Spring.

MR. TELHAMI: -- the Arab Spring, and I assume that includes Libya, then you have the U.S. do relatively well in comparison to a lot of other countries.

So my sense is that the Administration, I thought from the beginning, tried -- they understood that Arabs don't like foreign intervention. And they tried not to take the lead. And the number one slogan was, "Don't make this about us."

MS. WARNER: Mm-hmm.

MR. TELHAMI: Which I think was the right instinct. But at the same time, you've got to act -- particularly when there are moral issues at stake, when there are issues of interest at stake, and when there's still a very significant constituency that is favoring you.

So when you have half of the Arabs divided, that gives you a lot of leeway to do what's right.

MS. WARNER: Steve?

MR. HEYDEMANN: I would add a little bit to that.

It does seem to me -- and Syria is a very interesting case of this -- that we often find circumstances like the kind of turmoil we're witnessing in the Syrian case right now, in which there are local constituencies who advocate in support of international intervention.

I'm not sure we need to take that as a literal request for the presence of foreign troops. And it seems to me that if we define the question in terms of intervention or abdication, we'll be giving up an awful large middle ground that offers us a broader range of opportunities for engaging in a positive way in some of these crises, that might not trigger the sort of after-the-fact negative views that seem to accompany direct military intervention.

MS. WARNER: Is the other possibility that, in fact, the U.S. is damned if it does, and damned if it doesn't?

MR. HEYDEMANN: I'm trying to suggest it may not be the case.

Again, if you take the Syrian example, we have worked very hard to build a regional coalition, and push that coalition into the limelight, and leading efforts to impose diplomatic sanctions on Syria. That's a strategy that, it seems to me, may insulate the U.S. from some of criticism that might follow if we were to be more openly advocating military intervention.

And so, if we look for these alternative approaches, in which we're not simply either stepping back or pushing for intervention, but trying to build broader coalitions, trying to find ways to be responsive to local demands for international engagement, but perhaps avoiding this very high-risk strategy of intervention, we could actually end up having achieved something positive, and avoiding some of the backlash that seems to be suggested in the data that Shibley provided.

MR. TELHAMI: And remember, by the way, that, you know, while we're looking at this aggregately, that country to country matters. So, one of the questions is, are the Libyans happy with the intervention? We haven't measured that yet. We've got to measure it.

I suspect that, you know, probably most of them are. I mean, obviously, we don't know exactly how the society is divided. And the thing about the Syrians, do they want intervention, we know Syria is divided. Most of these countries have divisions anyway. My suspicion is many Syrians want international intervention, many don't.

MS. WARNER: Many don't.

Yes, a question -- actually, the young lady right there. And then the gentleman on the aisle.

And we're just about out of time, so -- in fact, maybe I'll have both of you, each of you ask your question, and we'll make that the last --

MS. RIZZO: Sure. Thank you. I'm Kathy Rizzo with the Public International Law and Policy Group. My question is more methodological.

Could you explain how respondents were chosen? And what improvements you may have made to the methodology of your survey over the past 10 years?

MS. WARNER: And we'll have the gentleman on the aisle, and then you can both address both questions.

MR. PLATT: Jim Platt, Cambridge Energy Research. I'd like to shift attention, for a moment at least, to Iran.

Shibley, how would you rationalize the apparent contradiction between broad belief that Iran has every right to go nuclear and that the object is to produce a weapon, on the one hand, and yet rising concern about Iran on the other?

MR. TELHAMI: Let me just quickly start with the methodology.

Because, you know, it's interesting, the methodology question, because I originally started doing polls in the U.S. In fact, the first article I wrote was for *International Studies Quarterly* about an American public opinion poll, using American methodology, but mostly phone interviews.

We figured out from the very beginning in the Middle East that we simply cannot do that by phone. And certainly, early on when we did it a decade ago, that we had to do it face to face.

And we were looking at the sampling, particularly -- sort of dividing cities into quadrants and making sure we have enough people regionally, and then looking at data for the distribution of demographics to select the sample.

One of the questions that we always had is about the assessment of the margin of error. And one of the things that I discovered very early on was that while, you

know, our polling methodology may, you know, be complex in our world where, you know, you don't have the same kind of freedoms that we have here, that my worry was far more about what you're asking, how you're asking it, and the language issues. That people -- you know, I have paid far more attention to translations, over time. I used to trust, early on, you know, that when I -- I write the questions in English and I have them translated, then I review them.

In almost every case now, when I get the translations back, I discover two or three questions -- after they've been checked thoroughly by someone -- that if they were left the way they were, without changing the Arabic version of it, we would have gotten a margin of error of 40 percent or, you know, the opposite, or something. There are always these kind of problems.

So I think while a lot of us are technically worried about whether we might be capturing or not, it really doesn't matter as much -- it matters, but when we're measuring trends over time, and you're measuring differences, when the aim is really not to poll for elections, but you're polling for trends, and you're consistent in the way you're asking questions and the sampling methodology, that works.

Now, on the Iran question, you know, I think it's interesting with the Arab world because, you know, there is a -- my colleague Steve Cole has done a lot of work around the world in polling about Iran, particularly if you ask -- if you give people the option of a nuclear-free region.

So a lot of the Arab reaction to Iran, it's not that people are embracing Iran's nuclear program, but this double-standard issue comes up over and over and over again. And so if I were to give them the option, "Would you support a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction, where Iran and Arabs Israel don't have it," I guarantee you I would have the overwhelming majority of people basically embracing it. But in the absence of that, there is this element of they don't want the pressure to go just to a Muslim country. And that's part of the problem that we have in the Assessment.

MS. WARNER: Do you want to say a quick final sentence? We are literally one minute over already. On Iran?

MR. HEYDEMANN: I think Shibley handled those last two questions beautifully.

MS. WARNER: Wonderful.

Well, thank you, Shibley, so much for a wonderful body of work. And Steve, as well.

And thank you all. (Applause)

* * * * *

CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

Carleton J. Anderson, III

(Signature and Seal on File)

Notary Public in and for the Commonwealth of Virginia

Commission No. 351998

Expires: November 30, 2012