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HOW AMERICA’S WAR ON TERROR BECAME
A GLOBAL WAR ON TRIBAL ISLAM

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PROCEEDINGS

MR. INDYK: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. I'm Martin Indyk, the Director of the Foreign Policy Program at Brookings. And it's my honor today to introduce you to Akbar Ahmed and his wonderful new book, *The Thistle and the Drone*, which, of course, you can purchase outside afterwards, and I'm sure you will want to do that.

*The Thistle and the Drone: How America's War on Terror Became a Global War on Tribal Islam*, is the third of Akbar Ahmed's books -- all of them published by Brookings, I'm proud to say -- in which he has examined the relationship between the United States and the Muslim world in the wake of the terrible terrorist attack of 9/11.

It is, I think, the most provocative of his three books, each of them excellent in their own right, because it makes the argument that we have fundamentally misunderstood the way in which the war on terror has morphed into a war on tribal Islam. And it is the tribal dimensions of the war on terror that are the subject of this book, and what I think makes it so unique -- and, as I said, so provocative in its conclusions.

For those of you who don't know, Akbar Ahmed is the Ibn Khaldun Chair of Islamic Studies at American University in Washington. He is also a Nonresident Senior Fellow in the Project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World here at Brookings. He is our most distinguished member of our fellows who work in this project on U.S. relations with the Islamic world.

He holds degrees from Birmingham University, Cambridge University, and SOAS, the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London. He joined the civil service of Pakistan, the CSP, which is the elite cadre of Central Superior Services of Pakistan, in 1966, and held important posts in Pakistan and Bangladesh, including Commissioner of Quetta Province, and political agent in the South Waziristan
Agency in the 1970s. And it is the experience of his time there in South Waziristan that so informs the study that he has written about here in this book, as he will no doubt explain to you.

After Professor Ahmed makes his presentation, we are going to welcome to the podium Sally Quinn and Mowahid Shah, who are going to comment on the book. And we’re going to have a kind of three-way or four-way conversation with its author.

Mowahid Shah is an attorney-at-law, author, and policy analyst, and from 2003 to 2007 he served as Minister and Special Assistant to the Punjab Chief Minister of Pakistan.

Sally Quinn is probably known to you all, and surely needs no introduction, as the editor-in-chief of The Washington Post’s "On Faith" column, and the author of several best-selling books.

So, please join me in welcoming our very distinguished guest today, Professor Akbar Ahmed. (Applause)

MR. AHMED: Thank you so much, Martin, for that very warm introduction. And I do want to welcome all of you here this afternoon, assembled to help us launch this book.

As you know, the launching of a book, the creation of a book, the completion of a book, takes a lot of effort, and many people are involved -- particularly in a book of this nature, as Ambassador Indyk has just pointed out.

I can't name everyone -- many of you are named in the book -- but this afternoon I would like to thank some people. I would like to begin with Ambassador Martin Indyk, himself. He has always been a great friend, a great patron. And I think I got probably one of the greatest compliments that a Muslim can be given from South Asia when, after some performance of one my plays on stage, on the panel, he called me the
Dara Shikoh of South Asian Islam. For those of you who are not familiar with that name, do look it up. Unfortunately, the character ends badly, because he's actually executed by his other brother, but he does fight for peace and compassion, and bringing people together, and that's what matters.

I would like to thank Brookings, the Saban Center. Welcome to Tamara Wittes, she will be with us in future events together we plan to do. And I would like to thank the panel, the very distinguished panel, my friend Sally Quinn, a star here in Washington, D.C. I'm delighted she's here. My friend Mowahid, we go back many, many decades. He's one of the brightest intellectuals from South Asia, and very vocal. And you'll hear that today. He's a very honest intellectual. And my friend Khalid Aziz. Martin mentioned I belong to the '66 batch. Khalid Aziz is the '69 batch, and becomes the Political Agent in North Waziristan, I was in the South. And he was also Chief Secretary of the Frontier Province in Peshawar. He'll be speaking to us via video.

I'd like to thank the Brookings Press. No book, no good book, can be published without an excellent press backing it. And I don't think I could have asked for a better press. Brookings Press has been absolutely first class -- and it's headed by the wise and wonderful Bob Faherty. Bob, over there, I am once again grateful to you, my friend, and your excellent team, Chris and Melissa, and I know how they have been so active in already promoting this book in the media. And, of course, the senior editor, Janet Walker. I often think to myself that had Janet Walker been a Catholic, and had I been a pope, she would have been Saint Janet Walker a long time ago.

I'd like to thank my family, my wonderful wife Zeenat. She has always been available to any of my projects, whatever the circumstances, whether she's in ill health, or she's got other things on her mind, she's always supported me. And, very often, I wake up early in the morning and I dictate about a thousand words even before I
get to office, where Aja is, of course, waiting for me very anxiously. Babar, Umar, Nafees, and Melody, who’s just joined us, and her beautiful son, the book is dedicated to my grandson, and I’m delighted he’s here. So if he becomes too noisy, I’m sure his mother will slip out.

And now I must thank the team. This book really is mine, but it is also theirs. They have contributed very significantly and substantially to it, but, most important, they have committed emotion and passion and their ideals in this book and in this project.

We often hear of the “Greatest Generation” of Americans, and we salute them. They really took on the world, in a sense, and changed the direction of history. And we often ask, certainly, the senior generation, ”What is happening to this present generation?” We have all kinds of skeptical doubts about the young generation and their capacity for pleasure and self indulgence, and so on.

Well, if you ever want to know about this young generation, look at members of my team. I have been inspired -- and it’s not easy to inspire me -- by their passion, by their commitment, by their loyalty, by their dedication, by their pursuit of knowledge. And, above all, I have tested them in the field. When I went to Cambridge last term as a visiting professor, I was coming back -- in a sense, "home," because I had been there many years in the U.K., I knew a lot of people. So there were many events. I spoke at the House of Lords, at the U.S. Embassy, who had a big event, many lectures, talks, dinners, lunches. And Harrison decided to come from the United States and work with me there. And he really arrived like the proverbial Marines. And once he arrived there, he handled the lords and the masters and knights and Muslim community, to balance work -- the manuscript needed to be corrected, the drafts were being prepared -- and my schedule. And I must say, I felt so proud of Harrison. And I did tell him jokingly --
and it's in the book -- that his folk back home in Tennessee would be so proud that here's this young boy managing to deal effortlessly, through his courtesy, and through his natural enthusiasm, in a very difficult circumstance.

But the point I wanted to make was that in the midst of this activity -- and Frankie had just joined the university in the midst of this activity, we'd be working over the weekend, and Pakistanis are very, very hospitable, so there would be big dinners, and lunches, and they have a terrific cuisine, beautiful, very delicious cuisine. And I'd very often tell them, on a Saturday night, Frankie and Harrison, you've got to break now. We're going to have dinner. My friends are expecting Zeenat and me. And we specifically aid, "We're going to be joined by our young assistants." And they would say, "Well, we'd love to come, but we have some work to do, and we are going to continue working, and we'll see you next morning 9 a.m." And that is Sunday morning.

Now, whenever you have any doubts about this generation, believe me, this is the generation that's going to take us into the 21st century. And it's critical to know that there are young Americans out there with this kind of dedication, and with this kind of capacity to do work under difficult circumstances, because they believe in it.

Now, I would like to name them. And before I do, I would like to acknowledge their parents -- their wonderful parents -- who have give us these brilliant young kids -- and the parents who have come down for this occasion. I know that several of you have come from distances. I know that you've come from Tennessee. Priyanka's parents have come from Pittsburgh. And, of course, Frankie's mom has come from Baltimore, right? Harrison? Where is she coming from? Baltimore. Yes, here you are. This senility, I'm mixing the two of you.

So, here they are, the list: My senior research officers, Harrison and Frankie. And Frankie, I'm thrilled to see, has just flown in from Cambridge. That's the
kind of team I'm talking about. This young man is in the middle of his term -- don't tell the
tutors at Cambridge -- and he flew last night, arrived here, so that he would not miss this
launch, because he's been to every public launch of my previous books over the last
decade. So here he is.

Aja, herself, our chief of staff. Priyanka's here, whose poetry is making
her so famous that now I'm known simply as Priyanka's professor. And Nafees, part of
the team. And here you have someone with an Indian background and someone with a
Pakistani background. And if these Indians and Pakistanis can work so well here in
Washington, D.C., surely there's a lesson for their peoples over there in South Asia,
where they're constantly confronting each other and threatening us with yet another
confrontation. Three wars that they've had in South Asia is enough. It's time for peace in
South Asia.

We have Dylan, Dylan Kaplan, Peggy, Jamey. And, of course, in the
back row, I see the great Jonathan Hayden, who used to be with me as my chief of staff.
Jonathan, don't think I didn't see you over there. Welcome.

So, parents and my team, I would request the wonderful guests of ours
to please give them a round of applause. Please stand up first, and I want you to please
give them a round of applause. Please -- parents and team. (Applause)

Thank you. Thank you.

Now, let me get to the substance of this book itself. It begins, in a sense,
in a very profound sense, on 9/11, when I've just arrived in Washington, D.C. I'm in
class. America's been incredibly generous to me, very welcoming to me and my family.
And I confront a situation where my class disintegrates. That's the day 9/11, we changed
everything.
And I realized that if there was one way I could pay back, give back to this great country, it would be to help understanding, to build bridges, in my own small, limited way, on campus. And that is what I have been doing for most of this decade -- books, articles, television, media non-stop. It's been a cycle of activity.

And it's been a very, very energetic cycle, because we are running against a lot of violence, misunderstanding, confrontation, which simply keeps that big gap between Muslims and non-Muslims as wide as ever. All the statistics show that, in spite of 10 years of interfaith dialogue, and understanding, and friendship, that gap still remains pretty wide.

This particular book is the third part of a trilogy. The first book was *Journey into Islam*. The second, *Journey into America* -- again, with my team. In the first one, we went to the Muslim world. In the second one, we traveled in the United States. And this third one takes us into tribal Islam, tribal societies, and we examine 40 tribal societies.

We look at the interstices, those parts that are between states, those parts that are between borders, those parts that are often neglected. Martin pointed out the controversial nature of this book, and he's right, because we don't look at these places. We simply look at this monolithic structure of "Islam versus the West." We are not seeing these border areas, the tribal areas, the peripheral areas, and these areas have become more or less voiceless. And they're caught up in a confrontation of their own, and that confrontation is between the center and the periphery, their own central governments -- and that history is a long history. It goes back not even decades, it goes back centuries -- and the current relationship between the center and the periphery.

So, we go into great detail. We apply the model that I call the "Waziristan model," which is based in my experiences when I was in Waziristan, and then
it brings the story up to date, to see how and what has changes in Waziristan today. So you see how an anthropologist, which is what I am professionally, can relate the past and the present, create a model, and use it then to understand society today.

And the conclusions are both startling, inspiring, frightening, and humbling. And this is where I want you to be involved in this discussion. It is a much more urgent situation than we imagine. Because we don't know about it, should not assume that there is not a crisis at hand.

But for millions and millions of people, and their children, and their families, there is a crisis. And I hope that America, with its great heart, with its desire for learning and knowledge, will understand and pick up this point, and take the argument further -- hopefully, contributing and changing to the present paradigm.

I want to give you a flavor of the book. I'm going to request my team, I'm going to request Harrison to come up here, and four members of my team. And, again, we are very conscious of our agenda, balance in the team. I know the founding fathers, especially Washington and Jefferson, would be very proud of the composition of my team. There's a Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Hindu, and even Sikh all represented on my team, so you cannot have a better representation of America today. One or two, I suspect, atheists, but I haven't checked, and I haven't asked. Aja will talk about that later.

So, Harrison, can you come up and very briefly have the team give us some glimpses of the book, as a flavor of the book itself.

This is all within my quota of time, so please don't get worried about overshooting any length of time. Come along, Harrison.

MR. AKINS: Hi, I'm Harrison Akins, on Ambassador Ahmed's team. And, first of all, I would just like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the entire team, to
say what an honor it has been to work with Ambassador Ahmed on this very important project.

So, we'll be reading excerpts from the book *The Thistle and the Drone*, and I will begin with its opening lines.

"The Jonas Brothers are here. They're out there somewhere,' a smiling and confident President Barack Obama told the expectant and glittering audience attending the White House Correspondents Dinner in Washington on May 1st, 2010. 'Sasha and Malia are huge fans. But, boys, don't get any ideas. I have two words for you: predator drones. You'll never see it coming. You think I'm joking?"

"Obama's banter may have seemed tasteless, given that he had just been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, but this was not a Freudian slip. The President was indicating he possessed Zeus-like power to hurl thunderbolts from the sky and obliterate anyone with impunity, even an American pop group. One report said he had a love of drones, noting that by 2011 their use had accelerated exponentially. It was also revealed that Obama had a secret 'kill list.' Having read St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas, and their ideas of the just war and natural law, which promote doing good and avoiding evil, did not deter Obama from a routine of going down the list to select names and 'nominate' them, to use the official euphemism, for assassination. I wondered whether the learned selectors of the Nobel Peace Prize had begun to have second thought.

"As its use increased, the drone became a symbol of America's war on terror. Its main targets appeared to be Muslim tribal groups living in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia. Incessant and concentrated strikes were directed at what was considered the ground zero of the war on terror, Waziristan, in the tribal areas of Pakistan. There were also reports, however, of U.S. drones' being used against
Muslim tribal groups like the Kurds in Turkey, and the Tausug in the Philippines, and also by the United Kingdom against the Pukhtun tribes of Afghanistan, by France in northern Mali against the Tuareg, and even by Israel in Gaza. These communities, some of the most impoverished and isolated in the world, with identities that are centuries old, had become the targets of the 21st century's most advanced kill technology."

Next, we have Frankie Martin, who will take you into the heart of our study, and the heart of the war on terror -- Waziristan, where Ambassador Ahmed had served.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Harrison, and Dr. Ahmed.

"Three decades before President George W. Bush began his manhunt for Osama bin Laden, the most wanted individual on his terrorist list, and hiding among the tribes along the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan, I had faced a similar challenge, but in a different context, and on a different scale: As Political Agent in charge of South Waziristan Agency, I was tasked with bringing in Safar Khan, the most wanted man in my area, and an outlaw who was also hiding among the same tribes, on the same border, as bin Laden. Just as the job Bush held made him the most powerful man in the world, mine made me the most powerful man in the Agency. And just as Bush was determined to keep the United States safe, and believed bin Laden needed to be captured in order to do so, I believed Safar Khan needed to be brought to justice for the safety of the Agency, although his crimes clearly did not match those of bin Laden.

"In the end, it was not Bush, but his successor, Barack Obama, who located and killed bin Laden, but it would take a decade of war, costing trillions of dollars, with hundreds of thousands of lives lost, and millions displaced. Entire nations would be thrown into turmoil, and the world put on high alert. I got my man alive, without a single shot being fired. The writ of the government was established, justice served, and the
guilty man brought to book. The difference was that I worked entirely within the tribal framework and traditional social structure.

"Safar Khan, a Pukhtun from the Mando Khel clan, had resorted to an infamous life of crime, raiding, and kidnapping, after concluding he had been treated unfairly by the Political Agent of his Agency, following a land dispute with a neighboring clan. I had discovered that breaches of law such as shooting at, or even kidnapping government officials were sometimes a desperate attempt to draw attention to an imagined or real grievance. It was the equivalent of presenting a written petition for redress to the administration. Safar Khan was involved in outright criminal acts, however, and had to be dealt with accordingly.

"But instead of using the military, I negotiated with the tribal elders, who saw it as in their own interest to turn over the outlaw. The elders came through, and I was able to bag my man.

"What I could not imagine for a moment, as Political Agent in the 1970s, was that one day an event across the world, in the United States, would bring a series of unprecedented and unwelcome developments in this very area; that it would become the target of a new kind of weapon; that a new breed of Muslim warriors, called 'suicide bombers' would blow themselves up, slaughtering women, children, passengers, and worshipers in mosques, targeting especially the very elders and officials who had helped me apprehend Safar Khan; that the Pakistan army, whose officers were seconded to Waziristan to protect its people, would indiscriminately launch a series of invasions on its tribes as if they were a foreign enemy; that Pukhtunwali, the code that defined these tribes and was the core of tribal identity, would be shattered; that Waziristan, so famously inaccessible, would one day become the focus of the world's attention in the first truly global war of the 21st century, as Americans pursued an elusive group called Al Qaeda;
and that hundreds of thousands of tribal peoples from this area would be driven out as destitute refugees, to live on charity outside the Agency, waiting for the time they could return home.

"The question for all parties involved was how to approach the relationship between the past and future; that is, how best to apply lessons from the past, if they're apt and suitably adjusted, as guideposts for the future. Problematically, neither the Americans nor the Pakistanis were known for attending to the lessons of history. If they had done so, the Americans would have asked themselves why Afghanistan was called the "graveyard of empires," and approached it with less arrogance and ignorance. And Pakistanis would not have attempted a military solution in the tribal areas, and thus put themselves in danger of repeated their catastrophic handling of East Pakistan.

Obviously, neither the Americans nor the Pakistanis were aware, as Caroe pointed out in his history of the Pukhtuns, that -- quote -- 'No empire of which we have any record has ever succeeded in making subjects of the tribes of Waziristan.'"

Within this study we had 40 case studies from Morocco to the southern Philippines, and we looked at their history and their current plight. And next, we'll have Nafees Ahmed recounting some of the horror stories that we discovered in our research. And she'll also show an often overlooked side of the war on terror: that it has, in fact, become a war on women.

MS. AHMED: "Because these staggering statistics involve hundreds of thousands of people -- if not millions -- they are numbing and difficult to comprehend. Perhaps individual cases will throw the horror of genocide in sharper relief.

"Consider the two children in Waziristan who saw their father shot in the head during indiscriminate firing by Pakistani security forces when he took them shopping to a bazaar. The children were covered in blood and brains. They saw their beloved
father, head shattered, lying in a pool of blood, with no one to help them. For hours, the children sat by the dead body of their father, eyes wide open, not able to cry, not able to speak.

"Or consider the Fulani Muslims of the Middle-Belt region of Nigeria, who became victims of cannibalism by Berom tribesmen making matter-of-fact comments on video, while police watched passively, 'I want the heart,' and 'Did you put some salt?'

"Or hear a Russian soldier describing what his fellow soldiers were doing in Chechnya. 'One guy pinned a Chechen to the ground with his foot, while another pulled off his pants, and with two or three hefty slashes, severed his scrotum. The serrated blade of the knife snagged the skin and pulled the blood vessels from his body. In a half a day, the whole village was castrated. Then the battalion moved out.'

"Or listen to Fatoumata, the brave young Fulani woman who relived her ordeal at the hands of security forces chanting 'We are going to exterminate the Fulani,' in the notorious episode at the stadium of Conakry, Guinea. 'A police officer, after raping me, decided to urinate in my mouth. I received streams of urine all over my face. After, they used sticks to rape me. Then, finally, one stabbed me in the front, in my private parts. The blood began to flow, and I was so exhausted that I could not scream or cry.'

"Or hear the courageous Kashmiri woman recalling the night the women of her village were gang-raped by the Indian army. 'The army entered our houses at 10 p.m., and left at 9 in the morning. There were screams everywhere, from almost every house in the village.'

"Or contemplate the bodies of dead Baluch men, with lettering carved into their chests, declaring, 'Long live Pakistan.'

"It is difficult to believe that these are not chronicles and legends of ancient peoples visited by demon barbarians, but what is happening today. People on
the periphery have been traumatized beyond imagination in recent years. They have been cooked and eaten; their women have been gang-raped. Their elders and religious leaders have been humiliated, tortured, and killed. Their houses of worship have been destroyed. They have been relocated from their homes, and their lands have been stolen from them. They face widespread famine and disease. They are voiceless and friendless in a hostile world. They have been robbed for their dignity and honor.

"They have seen their young men and women transformed into suicide bombers, killing innocent women and children, passengers in busses, worshipers in mosques. And yet the world seems indifferent to their suffering, and is barely aware of its scale. This is, indeed, the dark side of the soul of man.

"After the grim and relentless litany of woes I have just related, it should give everyone pause to reflect on the fate of humans, and ask: 'Is this where we were meant to arrive? In the end, will we be defined by little more than our indubitable capacity to breed and to kill?'"

MR. AKINS: And we will conclude with Aja Anderson, reading the final lines of the book, and pointing the way to peace in the world.

MS. ANDERSON: "Bright colored flowers still bloomed in the midst of the dark and bleak battle-scarred landscape. I received one such flower in the form of a message from Mahdi Murad, a young Kurd in northern Iraq who had just performed my allegorical play Noor at the American University in Sulaimaniya. It was produced by Peter Frederick, a dedicated American professor who inspired his students. We had never met, but Mahdi’s heart was overflowing with love as he wrote, ‘We all prayed for you, and expressed our gratitude to you for writing such a great play.’ Then, from a region plagued by war and genocide, this young student made an offer to a professor safe and secure in Washington, D.C., ‘Please let me know if I can assist you in any way.’"
"Mahdi went on to write, not of revenge and honor lost, but of tears and redemption. And in this, he conveyed a message of compassion and love for all. Saddam’s missiles and mustard gas, and the anarchy of the American invasion could not extinguish the (inaudible) of his heart.

"As I am writing you this e-mail, my eyes are full of tears. If you could have seen the audience, you would have known that almost everyone lost someone very close to them in a war. I say "a war," because there have been many of them since the day we were born. However, none of us have ever had the opportunity to cry for the people we have lost.

"We, Kurds and Arabs, in the Noor cast are joining hands together to shed light on the life of every single person in our country. We gather together to shed our last tears to the sad events our people have experienced so far. We, the cast, stood together as Kurds and Arabs to cry for the innocent sons and daughters we lost.

"But it would be selfish to just do that. We also cried for the soldiers on all sides who gave their lives. We also cried out against corrupt politicians, greedy businessmen, a cry of warning to everyone who thought someone was evil just because they spoke Kurdish, or Arabic, or English.

"We cried for all these things, but most of all, we cried for every Noor in every home, wherever she was.’

"In effect, Mahdi was saying, ‘No more. There must be a different way.’ Mahdi’s tears in search of Noor, or light, are an apt metaphor to conclude this study. There could be nothing more human than tears of compassion shed in the yearning for illumination. The test is to see a common humanity in the suffering of others. If people can rise above tribe, race, and religion to reach out to others not like them, it will save humankind in the 21st century."
"It is a daunting task. Perhaps it is necessary to seek guidance from our ancestors, and apply their wisdom to the present time. If the world is to become safer, more harmonious, more compassionate, then both the non-Abrahamic and the Abrahamic societies have much to offer. The path to nonviolence and peace shown by the Hindu, Jain, and Buddhist sages, the lessons of the great Guru Nanak of the Sikhs to embrace all humanity, the knowledge of the Jewish savants, and the commandment of Jesus to love one another, and the exhortations of the Prophet of Islam, known to his followers as a mercy unto mankind, to express compassion at all times -- all may be combined and reduced to one universal shibboleth: to go out and heal a fractured world, tikkun olam." (Applause)

MR. AKINS: Thank you very much.

MR. INDYK: Well, I think we're all in shock, Akbar, at that reading. But I think I'd like to just start with a question for you, and then I'm going to bring Sally and Mowahid into this.

What's your own policy conclusion from this last book? What do you think that President Obama should know and do about what you've discovered on this journey? This long journey that you've taken?

MR. AHMED: Martin, knowing your own interest, and your own intellectual background, I know that you'd zero in on this crucial question. And, of course, that is the crux of the study, on one level.

The answer, the very short answer, is that he really needs to get the experts like you, and offer an alternative paradigm -- for you to come up with an alternative paradigm, because this particular paradigm is not working. We've seen it for the last -- over a decade, and it's just continuing to generate more and more violence.
This paradigm that we're offering, looking at those societies, those particular societies, these societies on the periphery, through a tribal frame, offers ways to deal with them. And these ways are based in actual case studies to show it has been done, it's been done over a 200 period [sicXXX], the British were there, successfully. There were some other European powers that were not successful, because they were trying simply force. And force has very limited use over a length of time.

And so he's really got to begin to understand that this is a very complicated global situation. It's a long-term solution, and there are no quick fixes. But he really needs to get to that first step, which is to sit down and say: This is not working; I want an alternative which is radical.

Now, it's not an easy thing to suggest, and that is the luxury, I think, that we scholars have on campus to think outside the box, and come up with answers that hopefully will guide practical policy makers.

Because, Martin, again, as a practical -- I was an administrator in charge of these areas -- practically, if you've spent trillions of dollars and still haven't got peace, if you've spent trillions of dollars and you still cannot have one of our citizens, an American, wandering around in Afghanistan or in Pakistan -- which are supposed to be allies. These are very close allies of the United States. And we've invested trillions of dollars in these countries, what have we really got out of it?

I would like to see a situation where Americans are welcomed as friends, and the investment, in fact, is very apparent in the affection we receive in these societies. And that was true at one stage. And it is true, Martin, through programs, projects, like educational ones. I went to a college called Forman Christian College in Lahore, run by American Presbyterians. It's still very popular in Lahore, it's still very successful. It produced all kinds of presidents and prime ministers, and members of parliament. Why
can't we have colleges like that in the tribal areas? Colleges which actually promote education, promote an idea of the world, would bring people together and really change the direction of society?

Because unless that happens, Martin, we are going to continue to see a generation of young tribesmen coming out of this chaos that you've read -- and you just got the tip of the iceberg through the excellent reading of my team -- where you are aware that there's something really huge happening, and nothing is being done about it.

So, I would say this is the short answer. But, of course, the longer answer is to ask him to sit down and read the book. (Laughter)

MR. INDYK: Well, he should certainly do that.

Sally, let's bring you into this. What's your reaction to what Akbar has written?

MS. QUINN: Well, you know, Akbar's book reminds me of a trip that I took 40-some years ago to cover the Shah's celebration in Iran. It was the 2500th anniversary of the Shah celebration, and they invited kings and queens from all over the world, and they spent millions and millions of dollars. And everything was imported from France. They didn't have a single Persian dish. And I remember the queen, Farah Diba, was very upset, because she thought this would have been a perfect time to showcase Persian culture.

But in any case, as a young reporter, I was taken by another Persian, or Iranian, reporter to a private, secret meeting, blindfolded. And at the meeting were all these young reporters and protesters, and they all started talking about how the problem with the Shah was that he was evil, and he had to be overthrown, and that this was going to happen, and that there was going to be, you know, a religious revolution, and that the
Americans didn't understand anything about what was going on in the country. And I was just appalled.

So they took me back to my hotel. I took my blindfold off. And the next day, our top foreign correspondent from The Washington Post showed up. And I said, "John, do you know there's going to be a revolution?" I was a beginning part reporter -- right? -- "There's going to be a revolution, and the religious people are going to take over." And he sort of patted me on the head and said, "There, there, dear. Why don't you just cover your parties, and let me handle the foreign policy."

And I came back, and my brother, who had just gotten his Ph.D. in religion, was talking about Iran, and he said -- because he had dealt with -- he was sort of a consultant for the State Department -- and he said, "They don't have a clue what's going on in Iran. They don't understand it. They don't understand the religion. They don't get it."

And, of course, we all know what happened. The Shah was overthrown, and the mullahs came in and took over.

And the same thing happened in Iraq. When we went into Iraq, most Americans -- and, I would venture to say, most people in the government -- did not know the difference between Sunnis and Shiites. They thought it was going to be a cakewalk, I guess, was the expression. But they didn't understand the culture of the country. And we had, obviously, the same problem in Vietnam, going way back.

But what Akbar's book is saying, over and over and over -- and something we should have learned a long time ago -- is that we need 100 Akbar's in the State Department. We need anthropologists, we need religion experts, and people who can understand the culture of a place we're in. I mean, the reason that we are not accepted in Pakistan in the tribal areas is because we don't understand them. We don't
have a clue. We think Afghanistan is Karzai. We don't understand that Afghanistan's not Karzai, and that they don't have a relationship with the tribal areas, as well.

And so, I mean, I think that that's one of the biggest issues -- and certainly what comes out of your book. And it seems to me -- now, I'd really like to know whether you think that we did the right thing in going into Afghanistan in the first place. I think most people in this country, even the liberals and pacifists, thought that that was a good thing, to go in and bomb Afghanistan after 9/11. Now, looking back, it may not have been the right thing to do. But I'd like to know whether you thought that that originally was a good approach?

MR. AHMED: Sally, I give the answers in a historical context. I think the biggest strategy mistake of us going into Afghanistan was that that campaign was based in anger. We went in angry. 9/11 had happened, we were very emotional. Someone had to be hit, and really hit hard.

So we went into this tribal society, not knowing what a tribe is, not knowing all the complexities of Afghanistan history -- which are complicated enough -- not knowing the language, the culture, the clans, and so on. And we got deeper and deeper and deeper and deeper into what is clearly a tribal situation. And now, 10 years later, we have no idea how to come out of it.

Now, let me go back a little bit and, for the sake of the audience --

MR. INDYK: Yes, I'm going to interrupt you for a minute. We do know how to come out of it, which is what the President decided to do, which is to leave.
MR. AHMED: Martin, that's what he's decided. Let us see whether the history of Afghanistan will allow that or not. That's what the President wants.

MR. INDYK: But that was my question. So, what happens 2014, when we leave?

MR. AHMED: Martin, if that happens, you have handed over a victory to the Taliban, and that is completely detrimental to American interests. The Americans must stay, but stay differently. Again, the emphasis has to shift from the military to culture, to reaching out, to making friends, to education -- which is what the Afghans want, which is what the Pakistanis want.

And let me make the point here, Martin, that, again, I don't want to be projecting or promoting a simplistic analysis, pro-this government, or pro-that government, or pro-this people, or pro-that people. I'm simply trying to reach for the best solution.

And Sally, you were talking about your own reactions in that part of the world. Now, going back to the examples I give in the book on Waziristan -- and I'm going back to British times, and I know it's not a good or a popular thing for an American audience to hear quotations from the imperial British, but Martin, we'll have to --

MR. INDYK: Well, we tend to think that they screwed it up just as badly as we did.

MR. AHMED: They did. They did, Martin. But, in this case, with the political officers, it was a brilliant masterstroke of administration. It really was. And it's undisputed.

Now, let me tell you what happened when I met Sir Olaf Caroe, one of the legendary officers of the Frontier Provinces. And I'm delighted his son Michael is sitting here. Michael, welcome, delighted to see you.
Now, Sir Caroe spoke Pashtun. In fact, the great classic, *The Pathans*, the book on the Pathans, the definitive book, is written by Sir Olaf Caroe. And when I met Sir Evelyn Howell at Cambridge in the mid-’60s, Sally, who was Political Agent in Waziristan 50 years before then -- just think of the link I'm giving you -- at the high noon of the British Empire, Sir Evelyn Howell had asked me to see him. I was a young student, completely unaware of my own culture and my own history. And he said, "I want to talk to you about Khushal Khan Khattak," one of the greatest Pashto poets, because he was translating his work.

My question to you, Sally: We’ve gone into Afghanistan. How many Americans spoke Pashto? Translated Pashto poetry? It was doomed from the start. You cannot appear in a land, and abuse people, and humiliate them, and dismiss their culture, and then expect them to love you -- in an environment where dignity and honor matter greatly.

I don't know, I think, Martin, we could request Mowahid to come up to the stage.

MR. INDYK: Yes. Exactly. Thank you.

MR. SHAH: Well, first of all, I want to thank you for writing this book, and trying to give voice to the voiceless. I think that in this book you have transcended the tribalism that is sometimes hard-wired in our psyche.

But alongside the conflict you are mentioning between the periphery and the center, there's another conflict which is emerging, an outgrowth of that, that is between the elite and the street. The elites were traditionally seen as at the center, and the street was seen as in the margins. But what is happening now is that the elites are getting marginalized, and the street is now coming into the center.
Why? Because I think there's a fatal flaw in Western policy which has never been tested, that -- the feeling is okay, very simplistic -- let's install, foist, promote, and foster so-called moderates. And these moderates, once they are installed, they're going to foil militancy. That's the conventional thinking. In fact, in theory, I've seen that, because I was in the cabinet, I was advisor for the prime minister, also. In fact, the very installation and promotion of the moderates have enhanced radicalism -- because there is no moderation in their pursuit of the quick buck.

And the so-called “democracy,” the fixation with the label of “democracy,” not on its content, what is happening is, it's a combo of plutocracy and kleptocracy -- the rule of the super-rich, Pope Francis has said, “the imperialism of big money,” -- and the rule of thieves, like something like the lure of Robin Hood during the time of King John.

So, what to do? I think, first of all, as Martin Indyk said -- but, let's be very honest: Instead of fighting futile conflicts, let's attack the two issues which are at the center of the fueling of radicalism-, regionally, it's Kashmir. And Kashmir is not (inaudible). If you look at the New York Times of Sunday, there's a big huge travel article, depicting Kashmir as a ski resort. It's not a ski resort. And then handling the issue of Palestine. I think it's one of the key sources of global militancy. There has to be, I think, an attack on that.

And I was very pleased, actually, to see -- because I have come to the conclusion, and this is a conclusion shared by a lot of people, that America has lost the war on terror. Period.

What to do now? I think of one remarkable documentary, it came from Israel, The Gatekeepers. I suggest that everybody in this room should see that. These are six heads of the Shin Bet, who have gone to the surface (inaudible). Heed what they have said. They realize that this route of crackdown, of brutality, of not talking is basically
putting Israel on the road to perdition. And to see -- these people who know, they're not theoreticians, not academics, not just think-tank pundits, they're dealing with it practically -- they feel that the future is very, very bleak for Israel itself. And there has to be a change of course.

And I feel that -- you mentioned about F.C. College. I think that we have given people -- we talk of martyrs -- we have given people enough reason to die. People who are not afraid of death cannot be deterred; I promise you that, through the use of force. (Inaudible) fear of death. Give them a reason to live now. Do something so that they feel there's no need for them to blow themselves up.

We went to -- Akbar and I were privileged to go Forman Christian College, set up by American Presbyterians -- occupiers, 1864, at the peak of the Civil War, when Lincoln was the President, they were the occupiers of the heart, the conquerors of the heart. And if you go to a very quiet corner of a Lahore cemetery on (inaudible), we occasionally have gone to pay homage to my American teachers. And most of their tombstones it's written the parting dictum of St. Paul, that I stayed the course, I kept the faith, and I fought the good fight.

I think, most importantly, we should not quit, giving up the good fight. Often I've seen in Washington that people throw away their hands, "That's it." And it's very interesting, you see more conformity, more fear of breaking away from the group thing than you see in countries like Pakistan, where you're (inaudible).

So, I think the time has come, what (inaudible) said -- my final comment - - he said, there are two days of destiny -- the great saint -- one day destiny is for you, one day destiny is against you. When it's for you, as it was for America with the collapse of the Soviet Union, do not be proud.

Thank you very much. (Applause)
MR. INDIK: Thank you, Mowahid.

Akbar, I want to focus on a related aspect that grows out of the discussion we've just been having here, which is President Obama's drone policy. Because, in effect, to simplify it, what we have here, in terms of the U.S. approach, the United States approach to the challenges that you're describing in the relationship between the United States and tribalism, is the exact opposite of what you're suggesting we should do. We are, in fact, drawing away from engagement on the ground to engagement from the air, to try to achieve a kind of surgical extraction or elimination of the jihadist elements that attacked us on 9/11, and still see themselves as -- see the United States as the enemy.

So, what is the impact -- I think you speak about this is the book very compellingly -- but what is the impact of that policy on these, what you call the "ungovernable areas," what we've come to call the "empty spaces," though, of course, they're not empty at all.

But what is the impact of this elevation of drone warfare in the war on terror?

MR. AHMED: Martin, first of all, again, I want to really thank you and Brookings for allowing us to talk about it, because we hear so much there is a debate about drones in the United States. It's not a debate. We're just hearing one side of a discussion, which is justifying the drone in terms of keeping us safe, keeping boots off the ground, and so on.

A debate is two opposing ideas presenting themselves in the form of a discussion, in the form of a dialogue, and then some conclusion emerging from that. We really need to hear people from the other side. We need to talk to people from the tribal areas of Pakistan, or where the drones are being used, on the impact it's having there.
Now, you used the word "surgical," Martin, and I believe that there can be something as -- something that can be described as "surgical." That's the theory. But, in practice, Martin, think of it, if you're sitting in a little settlement in the tribal areas of Pakistan -- and we're talking of huge areas, with millions of people involved -- and wife, husband, family having dinner, lunch. Across the world, someone presses a button, and for some reason, you're blown up.

We know that it's not surgical. We know that study after study -- the Stanford study, New York University study, studies coming out from the tribal areas -- confirm that with every one intended target, you may have 5, 10, 15, 100 unintended. Now, that, once, twice, an apology, a mistake has been made, could be acceptable locally. But this is happening with such alarming frequency that it has reached and gone beyond the red lines of tolerance in that part of the world.

So, today you kill one man who's anti-American, and you add 100,000 who become anti-American. So you are crossing out one, and they then, in the other ledger, you're adding 100,000. And in the process, you're feeding into the, I would say now, furnace of anti-Americanism, both in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and other parts of the world -- which did not exist. I want to remind the audience that in a country like Pakistan we have a picture in the last book that Bob published of Jackie Kennedy visiting Pakistan, visiting Lahore, standing in an open car with the President of Pakistan, Sally -- and she's a beautiful woman. The President was a very smart, handsome man. And the two of them are in an open car, surrounded by hundreds of smiling, laughing Pakistanis throwing flower petals at them.

Now, Sally, think, and picture to yourself, any American today, standing in any car in Lahore, what would they be throwing at him?

MS. QUINN: Probably not tomatoes.
MR. AHMED: And not flower petals.

So what has happened? We have to ask ourselves. The same Jackie Kennedy goes to the Khyber Pass -- same tribes we are talking about, Martin. And the tribal chiefs actually give her a grand reception. They have all kinds of meats and feasts prepared for her, and welcome her in the Khyber Pass.

So, America has, as I said, Martin, in answer to your earlier question, a role to play. It is a world leader. It has a vision of the world. It has a vision of promoting a society that is democratic, civil liberties, human rights issues -- these are American values. And they're being lost in this war on terror as it's being conducted.

So, for taking out 5, 10, 15, whatever number of people we have to take out, we are losing much, much more. And as one of our blubbers said, Colonel Wilkerson, who was chief of staff of Colin Powell, he said -- Harrison, do you have the exact quote? I'd like you to stand up and read it if you can get a copy of the book? He wrote, Martin, a beautiful, almost poetic -- I'd like you to hear this. This is the chief of staff of Secretary Colin Powell, an Army man, and he gave us this blurb about the strategy.

Martin, with your permission?

MR. AKINS: Yes, this is Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson:

"In the end, like the Kurdish observers of Noor in Sulaimaniya in the book, I was close to tears. Lagrimas caudales or 'flowing tears,' to use the apposite phrase of Blas de Otero, seems to be what the book's conclusions lead to. This is particularly true if, like me, you have been very, very close to the center of decision-making in the U.S., and you know how incapable it is of embracing such sophisticated reasoning, let alone developing and applying strategies in accordance with such reasoning. Thus lagrimas for the tribes, for the soldiers, and for the United States.
"If one extrapolates from Professor Ahmed's findings, and from the history of torture, as well, bug-splat, as the victims of drone strikes are called, and torture live in the same house. Ahmed makes clear that, like torture, the creation of such profound fear wounds the creators as well, destroying their liberties, polluting their democracy, and devouring their souls.

"Professor Ahmed gives us the only way out of this dangerous dilemma, a way to coexist with the thistle without the drone."

So you see, Martin, the average person there -- the household head, the mother of so many children, head of the family -- they are being struck one day by the drone; the next day by their own army looking for terrorists; the third day by suicide bombers blowing themselves up, they may belong to one religious ideology or another; the next day by tribal rivals. It's a sheer Hell there. And as they say, they say every day is like 9/11 for us.

Now, unless we have some modicum of stability in those societies, the impact is then felt on the larger nations. And the larger nations are now in turmoil so that today in countries like Afghanistan, Pakistan, you have a situation where these suicide bombers are walking into schools, into buses, into offices, and blowing themselves up.

This has never happened in the history of those areas. How are we able to stop them? Where are the drones? How effective are the drones? Where is the success of the surgical strikes? I would go back again to the much simpler philosophy of the old officers on the frontier, the political officers who could get to the source of the problem and control it. I'm not saying ignore it. I'm not saying ignore the bad guys, but deal with them effectively; that's all I'm saying.

MS. QUINN: Akbar, do you think that there's any role at all for drones in the tribal areas?
MR. AHMED: Not the way they’re being implemented, Sally, because --

MS. QUINN: Or in any other area?

MR. AHMED: Right now it’s almost blind. We’re just going bang, so-and-so is a bad guy, and you blow him up. A hundred people blown up alongside of it, and that’s feeding into Pakistan and Afghanistan a very anti-American feeling. It’s reached, I would say, Sally -- I hate to use the word -- almost pathological now. In Pakistan, for example, people will tell you, I’ve heard this, that the floods that came to the country a year or two back were engineered by the Americans. The civil plane that crashed north of Islamabad, killing 300 passengers, organized by the Americans because they wanted to fly it into Pakistan’s nuclear program. That’s the kind of thinking that’s taking over in a country, which is potentially our ally. And, again, we have to say all right, do we want to simply lose this so that we can fire at 10 or 15 bad guys? There must be a cheaper, more effective, way.

I don’t know, Mowahid, do you want to comment on this?

MR. INDYK: But can I just say one thing here, just to provoke you? This is -- we talk about Pakistan as the country that was hosting Osama bin Laden. So I mean it’s not total blame on the United States’ side.

MR. AHMED: No, but Martin, I say --

MR. INDYK: But in the tribal areas, there are tribal leaders. And what are they doing in this to stop what is happening within their own tribal societies?

MR. AHMED: Again, very important questions, Martin, important questions. First of all, the tribal leaders, 400 have been killed. So it’s like an entire society decapitated. That’s where they are.

MR. INDYK: Killed by who?
MR. AHMED: By the suicide bombers. So they’ve been killed. They’ve been removed. So you have a vacuum in society. Now, when you have a vacuum and you as a superpower are saying, we want to be effective in those areas, we want to remove the bad guys and still have some influence, do you think it’s good strategy then to say okay, it’s on fire, let it burn? Pour on some more gasoline, which is the drones, or to bring some modicum of stability because that tribal leadership that you’re pointing to has been removed, is decapitated, number one.

Number two, as far as the notion of they are to blame and we are to blame, I’m really, Martin, in this book stepping back. So I’m not looking at it as America’s point or Pakistan’s point. I’m not representing any country, although when we were in the United Kingdom, Martin, this pleasant site has, in fact, and I would very often face huge audiences in the U.K. where, as you know, unfortunately America is not always the most popular of foreign powers. From a time when it was, it was very much the favorite country, but there’s lots of control of what foreign policy is and so on. And we had to actually face all these questions from the other side that said, you Americans are doing this and you Americans — and we’d say look, we are just visiting Scotland. We are not representing the embassy.

So we’ve got to step back, Martin, and look at it clinically and not see it in terms of is this in this country’s interests or that because if you begin to do that, then once again you’re using ideology to come to the conclusions and that has failed. That’s failed to bring law and order in these areas, and that’s the big takeaway.

MR. SHAH: I think finally you have to look at the scorecard, whether the drones have helped America or they have hurt America, whether they have reduced radicalism or whether they have enhanced. I think very clearly it has diminished America. It has enhanced anti-Americanism and even here because the language of extremists is
the same everywhere. You can be a person with a beard and robe. You can be a three-piece sort of person speaking fluent English. The language of extremism is the same. Even here there’s been a tremendous rise of Islam-phobia. Anybody who has watched the Republican debates, I think it is stunning to see the language used against Islam and Muslims. And insofar I think there’s been an erosion of commonsense, an erosion of common decency, erosion of common civility.

So talking about Osama bin Laden, I think let’s be honest. So let’s go back. Osama bin Laden was brought there with the help of the Arab establishment to slip through Pakistan also with the blessing of America. One can’t just distance himself away from the consequences. When you’re given medicine, one should be -- a good doctor knows first of all a diagnosis and the side effects. These are one of the side effects of that, and I think that shows that policies were never fully vetted. I just saw a snippet of a very interesting --

MR. INDYK: But Mowahid, what is Pakistan’s responsibility in this?

Pakistan doesn’t get mentioned in your litany of --

MR. SHAH: Pakistan -- if you had read my writings, I’ve been brutal attacking Pakistani political culture and the path Pakistan is taking. I think this kind of setup in Pakistan is not the answer. This kind of democracy is not the answer. The results are quite clear. The leadership in America in handling this issue has not delivered, the so-called leadership I call it in Pakistan. They’re office bearers. They’re not leaders. Leaders give a vision. Leaders inspire confidence in the people. Leaders don’t induce despondency. So they’re not a deliberate sort. That’s why I feel that a time has come to change course, and this is why I was referring to this documentary of the gatekeepers and also want to refer to another document, which is going to be released tomorrow, the one they’re calling with Dick Cheney. And Dick Cheney was asked this
question, have you any faults? And, you know, for 10 seconds his head slumped. He said, my faults, after 10 seconds he said, I don’t spend a lot of time reflecting on my faults.

So this is what Confucius said. We need to self-reflect. We need to identify, rectify, and correct the part of what is self-destructive, and that’s the part. And it’s completely driven because you look at South Africa. Let’s look at Frederik de Klerk, he realized that the status quo would destroy South Africa, and he realized that we have to open dialogue with Mandela; de Gaulle also to his credit realized that it was consuming the soul of France.

MR. INDYK: Sally, let’s talk for a moment about the dimension of women in this conflict because Akbar again in the book focuses on the way in which the combination of all of these violent forces, especially in tribal societies where honor is such an important value, is having a devastating effect on women.

MS. QUINN: Well, you know, I was about to bring up religion, and what fascinates and baffles me is the seeming acceptance of Muslim against Muslim. I mean who are all these suicide bombers blowing up? They’re blowing up other Muslims, and an American can be criticized for destroying the Koran, but if you’re blowing up a Mosque, you’re destroying a lot of Korans.

But I don’t think you can separate out the issue of women and religion because one of the reasons that women are devalued in these tribal societies is because of their religious views. I mean it’s cultural, but it’s also religious, and we can talk forever about women’s rights and all of that. But I think until the society is better educated, and we know how difficult that is. We’ve seen what’s happened recently with this young woman, Malala, who stood up for women’s education. But I think until women are educated, you’re not going to have much improvement in women’s status. And I think
one of the reasons women are not educated is because the religion, particularly in -- not Islam; I'm not speaking about Islam forever because we all know that in certain societies, education is valued. But I think that the role of women in religion really means that they stay at home, they take care of their families, and they don't get educated. And so it's kind of like which comes first, the chicken or the egg? I mean you have to educate the women in order to improve their role in society, but how do you educate them if the religion keeps them down?

MR. AHMED: And Sally, this is a very important issue you raised, and Martin, I'm grateful you asked about this. The situation, especially in tribal societies, is dire. And you're absolutely right; if it is so bad for ordinary people, think of it for the women. The statistics for the tribal areas, which we quote in the book, Sally, for literacy for women, is zero. Just think of an entire society as zero. Now what does that mean? Does that mean that women don't want to be educated?

Now let me give you the other side of the story. In Swat where the Taliban had taken over until a few years ago, one of the first things the Taliban did was to destroy or close the girls' schools. Now why did they have girls' schools in a place where the Taliban closed them? Because the formal ruler of Swat, the valley of Swat, had created something like 300 free girls' schools literally for women, free girls' schools. And I remember him showing me the convent -- he was my wife's grandfather -- he had created a convent. He had requested that the nuns from the convent where they studied, his family, the girls, to open a convent school in Swat, which the nuns did. And that was his prize. And, of course, the first thing the Taliban did was to blow it up.

So what does this mean, Sally? Are they giving up? No, the women of Swat, the women of Pakistan, the women of Afghanistan, are the real heroes in the story because you mentioned Malala. They've been working with my wife's family. In fact,
Nafees was there last year. Nafees, do you want to comment on women because we don’t want to give the impression women have given up education in your part of the world. Do you want to make a comment on that?

SPEAKER: Sure.

MR. INDYK: Let’s wait for the microphone, if there is one, or why don’t you come up and speak here. Why don’t you speak at the podium?

MR. AHMED: And there, Sally, are 17 members of Parliament who are women, so you know they have -- I totally agree their rights are denied in inheritance and they’re being treated -- but they’re fighting back. They are at the cutting edge of this debate about society and modernity, and they need all the support we can give them.

SPEAKER: Well, I’m not a terrible expert on this matter at all, but I have worked in Swat, Pakistan, for about two summers. And as an American woman, you can imagine that it would be quite difficult to work there. But I visited so many young girls’ homes and so many schools, and I saw this incredible passion to be educated and to learn. And a lot of them found this desire to be educated and to learn and to better themselves from their religion. And a lot of them do have backing from their homes. I actually just heard a BBC episode on this young woman in Waziristan who has become a world-renowned squash player because her father and her family supported her.

And I think it goes back to the issue of the drones where if you have things like this that are totally disabling and ruining societies, you curb the opportunities for women like this to rise and to show their true potential to the world. And so I have seen this desire to learn, to be educated, and I think that it just needs backing from their societies.

MR. INDYK: Thank you. I still think it’s a bit of a stretch to say that drones are responsible for the lack of education in women.
MR. AHMED: No, I don't think they are.

MR. INDYK: It's a bit of a stretch.

MS. QUINN: But what I'm interested in is the different view between the men in these tribal areas and the women in terms of education and their religious views.

MR. AHMED: The men are -- Sally, I'm not taking sides, I'm not justifying -- it is unacceptable the way they behave with their women, especially in tribal societies. Traditionally, they don't have a voice. Traditionally, very often the brothers don't give inheritance to the women. That's not Islam. You know, you keep confusing Islam and tribalism. This is tribalism.

MS. QUINN: I don't.

MS. AHMED: No, but it is generally confused. But under Islam as you know, Sally, there are laws of inheritance for females given in the 7th century and other rights. Now, those are not given them. So the situation of women is dire, but again, women today are aware of their rights. And they're not just taking it lying down; they're fighting back and they're demanding it. And the examples that you're hearing are examples of very inspiring, especially the young generation of women, going out there and demanding this and getting it. I mean they're also getting it. There is an environment now, in spite of all the chaos and the violence.

Now the drone, Martin, is not responsible for this, but when you have a fire burning in the house, anything that adds to the heat is not good for the promotional causes like you and I may want, you know, women’s rights, education, compassion. You're talking of simply interfered dialogue. For example, Sally, you may remember Nafees’ elder sister, Dr. Amineh Hoti, was the first director of the only Jewish Muslim Center at Cambridge University, and that Center had been opened by the chief Rabbi in the U.K. who’s a great patron of Amineh. Amineh went back to Pakistan with her
husband and started the first female interfaith movement in Pakistan who published an article in the *Post* last year. Now, she’s out there, and this is a woman who’s actually promoting interfaith dialogue for women. So she could be sitting very comfortably in Cambridge. In fact, Zeenat and I are constantly worried about her being in that environment. But they’re not giving up, Sally. She’s not listening to her parents. She is saying this is my battle, I’m out here, and I’m going to face this.

MR. INDIK: Let’s go to the audience, my goodness. There are microphones here, and you need to wait for the microphone after I call on you. Please identify yourself and please ask a question. As you can see, we’ve got some very talented people, especially Akbar, who can answer your questions. But you need to ask a question.

MS. QUINN: Martin, can we wait just for one second because Akbar didn’t finish answering the question about Muslim against Muslim.

MR. AHMED: Yes, yes.

MS. QUINN: I mean do you want --

MR. INDIK: Yes.

MR. AHMED: And, Sally, again there’s a whole discussion in my book on this very issue because how can a Muslim -- to me it makes absolutely no sense. There’s no justification for violence to start with, and I condemn that. It’s not Islam. But then when you have a Muslim walking into a Mosque and blowing himself up and killing 200 worshipers, what sense is there in that? And yet that’s happening, and yet somehow they’re justifying it.

Now, the only way I as an anthropologist, as a former administrator, can explain it -- you cannot justify it, you have to condemn it on all counts -- explain it is that it is working within a code that to that individual, as Mowahid said, there’s no reason for
that individual to live. Everything has been lost. So that person is functioning under
some kind of mutated, distorted, code of revenge.

MR. INDYK: But somebody sends that suicide bomber?

MR. AHMED: Not always, Martin. That's what we've analyzed.

MR. INDYK: They've got to get bombs. Where do they get the bombs
from?

MR. AHMED: Martin, those people are living in societies that have
fought --

MR. INDYK: But people who commit suicide out of despair is one thing.
People who strap bombs around their body and go into a Mosque to kill innocent
worshipers is another. And somebody is sending them up there.

MR. AHMED: Yes, and the people who are sending them are organized.
They're behind them, but they also are violating the code of Islam, which does not permit
this. So they themselves are involved, and these are the small groups that we are talking
about. And we have to contain them because unless we contain them, Martin, this
business of promoting women and education is in the end going to be reduced to naught
because if you set up a school, they'll come and blow it up. They're terrorizing -- we'll
just take Malala Yousafzai's example. They shot her. She was flown to the U.K. She
became an instant -- received very well deserved recognition internationally. And what
do the Taliban say? They say when she comes out we're going to try again. We won't
let her go.

MR. SHAH: Just want to add one very quick footnote. First of all,
drones are a convenience. And that was a convenience I think of short shelf life like
marriages are. Secondly, on the issue of terror, he's absolutely right. But I think you
have to deeply analyze the issue of terrorism. Strict terror, group terror, individual terror,
has to be put on the same level. It’s a crime against humanity. It should be attacked firmly.

MR. INDIK: Thank you, my goodness. Let’s have a woman first, down here with the blue scarf on. Please identify yourself.

SPEAKER: Yes. My name’s Natalie Chwalisz. I work at the Center for International Policy just two doors down. I wrote my master’s thesis actually on Afghanistan. And your discussion raised a question that I posed myself, which is you mentioned the area is so much under attack and Afghanistan has been at war for two decades. In the areas those traditional institutions have degraded the young generation and the passion itself has often been educated in Islamic schools in Pakistan. They come back and with very little respect for the traditional elders.

And I was wondering what is in your opinion a way to peace when both the central states can provide what a traditional institution, obviously not there anymore, can’t really provide?

MR. AHMED: Natalie, this question has been covered in great detail in my book because I go back; I take the full sweep of history from the time I was there in the late ’70s when the Soviets entered Afghanistan. So I’ve traced that tragedy, how this begins to impact and change society, and you’re absolutely right. If you took the pillars of authority -- the religious leadership, the tribal leadership, government authority -- all those pillars have been slowly demolished. You know, the tribal elders you were talking about, Martin. They’ve all been removed. They’ve been destroyed.

Now in that vacuum you do have the emergence of these suicide bombers. They organize in small groups or large groups, but they’re there. They’re a reality and they’re blowing up things. They’re causing destruction and they’re really
paralyzing society. You cannot function when you have that kind of repeated violence. What do you do about it?

First of all you understand the problem. We are not understanding it here in the United States, the superpower of the world, with all the facilities we have here. How do you expect the Islamabad government to understand it? Those bureaucrats are really a pained reflection of our bureaucrats here. They're not understanding the problem also. There's a very limited understanding of the center periphery in terms of the capital cities of the developing world. That's what I've found. So if you talk to the bureaucrats in Islamabad or Kabul, they would look at it very differently. They'd blame, for example -- let me give you one example.

When I interviewed people for the study and my team was with me and we were amazed. When we talked to Americans, senior Americans, and we said who do you think is responsible for the TTP, the Taliban, the people who are causing the violence? And without a moment's hesitation, they said Pakistan. So we said fine because it's a study. It's an anthropological study. You put it down, keeping the sources anonymous. Then we asked Pakistanis, senior people -- ambassadors, generals, and so on -- who do you think is responsible for the TTP. Without a moment's hesitation, what did they say? Americans.

Now, when it's that bad, when the fog of war is so thick that two allies aren't able to even come to the conclusion as to who is causing the problem, you have a problem. And you've really got to first of all begin the process of sitting down and saying, here's the problem. This is what we're going to do about it. We're not even recognizing that there is a problem. There is a problem. When I talk about women not having their rights, that's the issue Sally raised, all the suicide bombers blowing up things, that is a problem. It's not in normal society. And that's why I said if the government itself is seen
as it is seen in Pakistan and in Afghanistan as corrupt, as incompetent, as cruelest, how
are we going to solve the problems that are creating this situation of what I would say like
a house on fire?

So in Afghanistan itself, the first answer is to start rebuilding those
structures that can then contain this violence, and those structures have not been built
yet.

MR. INDYK: Question here, the gentleman in the red tie.

SPEAKER: I just wanted to make a correction.

MR. INDYK: Please identify yourself.

MR. ILLIGH: I'm Fazin Illigh -- about that big party the Shah had in

Persepolis. There was one item from Iran. It was Beluga caviar.

MS. QUINN: You're right.

MR. ILLIGH: The greatest historical irony was that the Shah --

MS. QUINN: You're right, and it was the Shah's golden caviar.

MR. ILLIGH: -- the Shah was allergic to caviar, and he had to settle for

something a little less exotic.

MS. QUINN: But he gave his golden caviar to his closest friends.

MR. AHMED: So what is golden caviar?

MS. QUINN: It's the most rare form -- it's a pale, sort of gold color, and

it's unbelievably delicious. I had some.

MR. INDYK: Can we get to the question, please?

SPEAKER: So I feel like there's a sense of desperation and paralysis in

this town that is the cause. This is the symptom. They just don't know what to do. There

must be a cheaper way. We would assume that is doing sustainable development. We
haven't figured out how to do it. The entire establishment is incapable of producing results.

I think the paradox is that if people are qualified, they won't be able to find a job, and the beltway bandits who piss away this money year after year and we know they're not producing, there's --

MR. INDYK: Is this a question?

SPEAKER: That's the question.

MR. SHAH: I think it was a statement.

MR. AHMED: Can I ask if there was a question?

MR. INDYK: Do you have a question?

SPEAKER: Yes, I do. And I want to get -- Stephan Richter with the *Globalist*. I want to get to the policy question that the two of you had at the beginning when you asked, what are the policy precepts, consequences, and so on. And in what has been a rather depressing, but brilliant afternoon, I think the question behind this is the following. Akbar, you started the answer with despite the trillions spent, Americans are very smart people. They're extremely well educated. The only logical conclusion with everything that you've attested to through your research is that it can't be in spite because anybody can conclude that it makes no sense, but there must be a political economy in play because we need to spend the billions and trillions. And I'm not having just a discussion on the Pakistan situation, but even newspapers like the *Wall Street Journal* have put it on their front page that 90 percent of all development aid expended by USAID and the United States government rests within the beltway, which is a surefire way of never getting anything done around the world. Thank you.

MR. INDYK: I'm not sure we had a question there, but do you want to respond to this?
MR. SHAH: There was no question.
SPEAKER: Development, development aid. Why can't we do this?
MR. INDYK: Why can't we be more effective without development?
MR. SHAH: Yeah, but that's what I've been saying through education and so on.

MR. INDYK: Okay, all right. Let's go down to the back, please, the woman in the black. Yes?

MR. MASAH: Hi. My name is Fayd Masahi. I am a student from Afghanistan. Actually, I don't have a particular question, but I was so surprised to hear that you said, what is the solution now for Afghanistan? And you said we have a solution because Obama said that we want to come out. And it is a question, but I want to know your view, what you think is Afghanistan? Is it a laboratory of practicing your weapons? With all the respect that I have for Americans, but please do not make the mistake that you did with Mujahideen because it is not that Afghanistan anymore.

Now, people in Afghanistan know their lies and you know that if this happened, if America leaves now Afghanistan, Afghanistan will destroy the world because people in Afghanistan they have become more, I don't know, they become more in a way -- they become in a way that they are more dangerous now. So I would like to know your idea. Thank you.

MR. AHMED: Thank you. Martin, I think that is for you.

MR. INDYK: Excuse me? Don't send the drones. Well, I'm moderating this discussion, but if the question was for me I would simply say that -- what I was trying to say before was not that we have a solution, but that our failure to achieve a solution is leading to a view in the United States that I think is broadly held across political lines; that
nothing good can be done in this situation; that the best thing we can do is get out of there.

I think there is at the moment a commitment to stay until 2014 and to keep funding the effort of the Afghan government and the Afghan army that has been trained up in the meantime to maintain order there in the hope that Afghan lives and society can be rebuilt. But I think it’s a very big question mark whether the American people will continue to support that kind of funding after 2014. And if that goes away, then I’m afraid we’re going to see a repeat of what happened when the Soviet Union withdrew and the Taliban will, indeed, end up taking over again.

So I’m quite concerned that it becomes very important to maintain support in this country for a continued American engagement after the troops are withdrawn. And that’s where your argument, Akbar, becomes all the more important because then we’re going to have to rely on things other than boots on the ground.

MR. AHMED: Martin, I completely --

MS. QUINN: Can I follow up --

MR. AHMED: I’ll make a comment, Sally, and then you take over.

Martin, I completely agree because, again, stepping back, this is the area of what was called the great game in the 19th century, the great game between Imperial China, Imperial Russia, and Imperial Britain, right? The United States is there now. The United States, Martin, to my mind as I’m looking at it from my part of the world, cannot pack up and leave. It just cannot because if it leaves, it leaves a huge vacuum. That is where it’s all happening. You have China on one side. You’ve got Russia on the other, India in the south. You’ve got the Arab world in the west, Iran in the west. How can the United States just pack up and leave? And yet, and yet, when you talk about how successful this whole exercise has been, we have the president of Afghanistan set up by the
Americans actually saying that the United States and the Taliban are my two biggest problems. I mean there’s something very wrong here, Martin. This is almost like a Shakespearean tragedy or comedy, I’m not sure what. Sally, please.

MR. INDYK: But you can’t blame Americans for saying well, let’s just give it up.

MR. AHMED: No, you have to then explain to them why that cannot happen. It’s against the interests of America itself.

MR. INDYK: That’s right.

MS. QUINN: I was just going to -- but getting now as you pointed out recently, we’re now getting into Africa and we’re getting into the same mess in Africa. We’re easing in with Mali and all over, and General Rodriguez testified as you pointed out and didn’t come up with any new solutions. So here we are getting out of Afghanistan, but maybe not, and now we’re entering into another area.

MR. SHAH: Charging into, yes. I think the mistake that was made was giving the deadline of 2014; that became a millstone around the neck. And I think it didn’t make any strategic sense because on one hand the United States is asking the Afghan security, government, army, to make an unlimited commitment while limiting its own, I think, commitment. I think that was a significant mistake.

The second mistake pertaining to your book, *Drones*, that my friend just showed me a clipping in the *Washington Post* which shows that the Pentagon has already minted a medal, a Distinguished Warfare Medal, given to drone operators which will be a higher rank than the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart. So this shows how they are going to be rid of innocents in the rest of the world, particularly in the tribal areas.

MR. INDYK: Okay. Let’s have a question down the back there, the gentleman with the mustache.
SPEAKER: My name is Titus Presler.

MR. INDYK: Wait for the microphone, please.

SPEAKER: My name is Titus Presler. I’m the current principal of Edwardes College in Peshawar.

MR. AHMED: Welcome to our town. We all know Edwardes College.

Welcome.

SPEAKER: A sister college to Forman Christian College.

MR. AHMED: Yes, yes, and we live just next to it.

SPEAKER: And so I very much appreciate your encouragement of culture and education. And yet at the same time, I share the anguish of a college like Edwardes trying to do its part like Forman Christian College, regarded as a kind of island of moderation and enlightenment. This year we have inaugurated the integrity project dealing with some of the salient issues of Pakistani society -- gender respect, diversity tolerance, community responsibilities, servant leadership. And yet we find within this island of enlightenment --

MR. AHMED: And I presume you’re being sarcastic.

SPEAKER: Yes. Yes, a constant tendency. Anytime the issue of religion comes up, a hyper sensitivity. Anytime the issue of community responsibility or gender respect comes up, a hyper sensitivity among students who come from, in fact, some of the elite families. And at that level of culture, what do you see happening in Pakistani society that is drawing some of the best and the brightest not towards the ideals that you’re espousing, but, in fact, away from them?

MR. AHMED: Well, that’s, of course, the great challenge that you face, the education like you, and again I want to salute you in public. You are the real heroes for me. I’ve had the privilege of knowing your college. My relatives studied in it. We live
just next to Edwardes College for many years, and I've had the privilege of meeting Dr. Tebbe, your counterpart who heads Forman Christian College. You are actually creating an entire generation and sustaining it in a certain direction.

Your problem as I see it is this; that for every one step you’re taking forward in trying to move towards that vision, every time there’s a religious rite, someone burns a Koran here in the United States or there’s a drone strike, it doesn’t make your task easier. Am I right?

SPEAKER: Yes.

MR. AHMED: And what happens then? Then you’re facing greater resistance within society. Wouldn’t it be far greater help to you if you had some help from Washington? And that help can only come if they’re aware of the issues. So far there’s a disconnect between you as an American on the ground and the Washington policymakers. That is, Martin, what I’m trying to point out; that connect. And if that connect can happen, things can change because Americans have been traditionally -- and I’ve grown up in that part of the world -- very popular with ordinary people. It’s the last couple of years that’s really ruined that reputation. Why can’t that happen again? That’s why I said we looked up to and we loved our teachers. We have great respect for them. They represented this great civilization. And today they’re so hated that they can’t be wandering around in the streets.

MR. SHAH: But I think while you’re making this point, there is knowledge here but there’s little wisdom. I think if you have knowledge and there’s no wisdom, it’s like a car without a steering wheel and a brake.

MR. INDYK: This gentleman here.

MR. AHMED: And we used this phrase, Mowahid, in the book.

MR. SHAH: Yeah.
MR. AHMED: We said that every kind of information is available, but no understanding.

MR. CASSIN: I'm Momah Cassin and I have actually two questions. Last year Don Leone Panettone when he was capo di capi at CIA said there are only 50 al Qaeda and they're all in Pakistan. And then there was the other warlord, General James Jones, who said oh, no, no, there are 150 in Pakistan and 50 in Afghanistan. Now they're so precise, these two top warlords, about their numbers, how do you expect the drone fellows to be even more precise? And then you've got a figure like 49 innocents killed, I guess, in one supposed target.

The other thing, I'm an economic historian, getting a bit old, but what I find is that empires expand, empires retreat. And they expand conquered lands to divide and rule, and rule to divide. And when that power retreats, those break up. And all the European empires -- Africa and Europe and Asia -- are going through that with the exception of the United States. Can you observe it from that point of view?

MR. INDYK: Sally, do you want to respond?

MS. QUINN: I'm -- I didn't --

MR. INDYK: For you, Akbar.

MR. AHMED: I'm not sure that's a question or a comment.

MR. INDYK: Well, it's a comment.

MS. QUINN: Yeah, it's a comment.

MR. AHMED: You're talking about the rise and fall of empires, right?

SPEAKER: The lines and what --

MR. AHMED: I'm not sure where this question is going. Are you talking about redrawing those boundaries?

SPEAKER: Yes, it's a public problem.
MR. AHMED: So, would you like to help redraw them? I think it would be great if we can have more peace in the area, but I don't see it happening.

SPEAKER: I'm getting a bit too old. I know no nuances anymore.

MR. AHMED: I don't think it's going to happen in my lifetime or my daughter’s lifetime. So I think we should leave that alone for the time being.

SPEAKER: Hi. I'm Stephen Stern, worked with Ambassador Ahmed and our colleague, John Malisky, on a play about his life and times in Washington.

So back to Waziristan and maybe looking backward to some lessons, I mean I think in this discussion we realize that it’s not an intact thistle hit by the drones. The thistle has been vastly weakened, especially since 1978-79 at a time in which all the actors who are now destroying it were partners in the great anti-Soviet game and all went through a series of alliances and blowbacks and falling out and now we’re at a point of utter devastation.

You talk about the Waziristan model, which was there, which had come through centuries of the great game to where it was when you were there in 1979. Did you look back on that and talk in terms of the prescription that you've given of trying to slowly, painfully, carefully, build that up, what lessons there are?

MR. AHMED: Stephen, thank you for that question. Yes, very much so, a lot of us go back to the past and we write for all kinds of reasons about the past. I very consciously wanted to recreate the past, to be able to compare it with the present, to see why we’ve gotten to where we’ve gotten to, what has been destroyed, what has been changed. And when we began to reconstruct the past, it was frightening, Stephen. All these pillars that we talk about in the Waziristan model don’t exist anymore. And the more I probed this, the more horrified I became because I realized that unless a process of reconstruction began, not everything -- women’s rights, for example -- they have to be
changed. You have to give rights to women. You have to have a proper democracy so suitably adjusted. If you can have some modicum of a structure being built that is the only development that will halt this violence. If that doesn’t happen, it’s an open -- it’s open season, right, and nothing is checking it because I do not believe -- and I’m talking from the field, Stephen -- that violence, whether it’s military or the scouts or whatever, is going to contain these suicide bombers. They can check them at one point, but they have to be tackled at source and effectively contained and removed. And that cannot happen simply by violence because that has failed. The drones have failed. The violence has failed. Even now you may have something like a 100,000 or 150,000 soldiers in the tribal areas with drones raining down every second or third day. What’s the rate, Harrison? What’s the latest -- how many? Every 4 days, and it hasn’t checked it. So that reconstruction must start; it must come. And I’m delighted to see that someone like Khalid Aziz who is both political agent and Chief Secretary of the Province completely agrees with this, and he’s been taking this position consistently. It’s not easy as you can see. Even here in Washington there’s little understanding or even sympathy for any serious thinking along this. Think of it in --

MR. SHAH: You can see also after Sandy Hook how fickle it is to contain even gun violence here after such a horrible atrocity.

MR. AHMED: Yes, yes.

MR. INDYK: Yes, please?

SPEAKER: Yes, hi Ambassador Ahmed. My name is Noah Bayali and I wanted to address the core of your book, this concept of the core and the periphery, and in particular the crimes that are going on in the periphery. And Nafees broke our hearts telling this in 45 seconds of terror and torture throughout the periphery.
We’re here in the core. Washington, D.C., is the equivalent of London in the time period you’re reflecting back to the 19th century. This is the imperial center now. I wanted to talk with you or ask you to reflect on the tribalism of the Afghanistan war, your words as you mentioned them in a reply to Martin a while ago when he asked you, why did we go there. What took the American imperial project, such as it is, to invade Afghanistan? Your reply was it was vengeance. That’s a word that comes straight out of tribalism. Could you comment on the tribal character of the crimes committed by the core? We’ve heard from Nafees the terrible character and the nature of the apology of those crimes in the periphery, what’s the tribe of guys like Martin who is advising Clinton on his terrible crimes in Israel and Palestine? Why does he still prescribe those same policies of abuse and what they’ve been called, racist and genocidal by very moderate figures like former President Carter? Thank you.

MR. AHMED: Well, no, all we need is --

MR. INDYK: By the way, there was no tribal genocidal crimes against humanity by Bill Clinton in the Israeli-Palestinian arena. As far as I recall, he spent 8 years trying to resolve that conflict.

SPEAKER: But that’s what a criminal would say.

MR. AHMED: I think what is needed really is to get beyond it, as I said earlier, taking this position and moving towards a compassionate understanding of the other irrespective of the fact whether you are of one religion or one color. And that’s why I constantly emphasize that we have to see the other in terms of our common humanity. That’s why I emphasize that in my team. We have every religion, every major religion, represented and each member completely and passionately involved in the project. That’s the only way we can change the program or we’re going to be completely stuck in this. You see that so-and-so did this in the past; we’ve got to move beyond.
MR. INDYK: Akbar has made a videotape, which he’d like to screen now to conclude our session. I’ve no idea what we’re about to see, but it’s a way of I think wrapping up what has been a very lively and interesting discussion.

MR. AHMED: It’s a message from Khalid Aziz in Peshawar who is very much involved with the tribal areas of Pakistan. He’s considered one of the country’s great experts.

MR. INDYK: Can we get the video going now?

VIDEO REMARKS OF KHALID AZIZ: My name is Anthony Quinn. I’m a former United States Ambassador. I’m currently Diplomat in Residence at American University and earlier I was the Foreign Service Officer in Pakistan.

I’m pleased to introduce one of the most distinguished scholars and illustrators of Pakistan, Khalid Aziz. He is the former Political Agent as well as the Chief Secretary of the Northwest Frontier Province and federally administered tribal areas of Pakistan. He now serves as Chairman of the Regional Institute of Policy Research and Training in Peshawar.

Mr. Aziz has provided recorded remarks from Pakistan about The Thistle and the Drone by my distinguished colleague and friend, Ambassador Akbar Ahmed.

Ambassador, Martin Indyk, Mowahid, ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon. It gives me great pleasure to be here with you today for the launching of Akbar’s marvelous book, The Thistle and the Drone.

I will briefly touch upon some of the messages that I got out of reading this fantastic and phenomenal work by Akbar. I think it stands in a quality of its own. It is something that is written in a manner that is exciting to read. It is almost a thriller.

The first thing that I noted and I have been impressed by Akbar’s research and those of his colleagues was that the 9/11 narrative was wrongly
constructed. First it began as a crusade as President Bush had defined it then and later on it was transformed into war on terror. When you call it a crusade, then you have the problem of a religious sort of scapegoating coming into this. I mean there is this historic background between the relationship of the Christians and Muslims. And once it was America war on terror, then we were actually mixing up war with crime. War seems to have its own rules and its own logic, but crime is something of its own. Even 9/11 is being investigated as a crime. I’m sure many of the mistakes that were made subsequently could have been avoided.

One of the biggest blunders that took place was the parties in war, especially the United States and the NATO allies, never really understood the enemy. And General McChrystal saying in June 2010 that he thought the biggest problem that he faced was that neither understood our enemy, how he lived, what were his businesses, how he made a living, what were the cultural and traditional barriers in the way, things like those. Now, that has been brought out very clearly and over the last 11 years we’ve been having a lot of problems. I mean lots of useful and important lives have been lost, and the U.S. is now running ahead of almost $9 trillion, a sign attributable to Afghanistan and the other in Iraq.

The solutions that Akbar gives in his book to deal with this first of all is to correct the narrative. Secondly, to understand that many of the governments around the world and it’s not only true of Pakistan, but also true of Africa. This war is being fought against the modularized and tribal people all along its axis. And that is where the problem is. I think the full step that needs to be taken is to understand this and stop the center’s onslaught against the periphery. The second one is to give primacy to the federal principles and to become the sort of partner with the periphery people. Fifty
percent of Pakistan belongs to them, and unless we wake up, I think we will be facing problems.

Finally, I compliment Akbar for a wonderful contribution to knowledge and also it’s a great assist to the practitioners in the field. Thank you very much.

MR. INDIK: I think that’s a very fitting way to end our very lively session today, and I want to ask you all to thank our panelists and particularly Akbar Ahmed for his book.
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

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