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RELIGION AND FOREIGN POLICY: A TRANSATLANTIC DIALOGUE

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. DIONNE: I'm going to let everybody take their seats, and get their coffee, very important to international relations. Or tea, I should say, in deference to international relations.

I want to welcome everyone here today. I'm E.J. Dionne, a Senior Fellow at Brookings, for today's purposes. Also I teach at Georgetown. And on behalf of the Religion Policy and Polities Project at Brookings, and also on behalf of the Co-Host of our event -- of this event, George Mason University and City University of London, I want to thank you all for coming here today.

Our project, Religion, Politics and Policy Project focuses on the nexus of the topic areas you have been, and this group has been, and we'll be talking about today, a lot of our recent work has looked at how faith and values influence American's political engagement, their attitudes, and the role religion plays in the American public sphere.

So, my partner on this project, Bill Galston, and I were very excited when Peter Mandeville came with us for the opportunity to facilitate this discussion on how religion is relevant to foreign policy.

I should say, that I am almost entirely a free-rider on this project, that Bill Galston, Peter, and Coreen Davis. Where are you Coreen? She's probably doing more work. They did all of the work with Peter to put this together, and I'm very grateful to them. This area is something that has interested us for a long time at Brookings. It was 10 years ago, this year, that we published a book called *Liberty and Power*, subtitled *A Dialogue on Religion in U.S. Foreign Policy in an Unjust World*, and I went back to that book recently and was reminded that it was -- the book was based on a conference.

And Father Brian Hare, many of you know, one of the most brilliant foreign policy analysts I have ever encountered, couldn't resist pointing out to us that

Dean Acheson once said, "Moral talk was fine preaching for the final day of judgment, but it was not a view I would entertain as a public servant." That was Dean Acheson.

Jim Lindsay, at the time, formerly our Brookings colleague and a figure in foreign policy, many of you know, said that foreign policymakers needed to think a lot more about the impact of religion on world politics. And he added, and so this is a challenge to our Panel, "This is going to be hard to do. We are not used to thinking about the topic, we do not have much practice handling religion, and the consequences of getting it wrong could be enormous." Indeed, and that's why this conference is so important.

Last, I can't resist quoting, probably along with Bill Galston, of course, one of my favorite political philosophers, Michael Walzer, who at that meeting said, "In the contemporary world, I suggest that we need to worry about faith, for when it turns into dogma and certainty, as it frequently does, it tends to override morality." He concluded that a faith-paced foreign policy is a bad idea. And thus, three perspectives on this question.

We are fortunate here to have the opportunity to hear the results of many months of discussion among U.S. and European government officials, policymakers and scholars. Peter and his collaborator, Sara Silvestri, have organized two transatlantic conferences that have addressed many difficult issue areas, including the relationship between promoting religious freedom and the advancement of national security interest. And also the differences in how the United States and Europe approach religious freedom. These are among many issues that they have addressed.

We are very fortunate to have my friend, Shaun Casey, with us. I told him I would embarrass him, just briefly, by talking about Shaun and also the Methodist tradition. Shaun is, quietly simply, one of the most decent people I know in Washington,

and we have talked for many years about his Methodist tradition. I am a Catholic who has great admiration for the Methodist tradition.

And what I admire about it is that it really understands and grapples with the tension between individual responsibility and social responsibility, between the obligation to write a moral action on behalf of individuals; and if I may quote the Jewish tradition, "The obligation to repair the world." And I think Shaun really embodies this healthy struggle in the way he lives his life, and so on behalf of -- speaking only as an American citizen and a taxpayer, I am grateful that you are working now for the people of the United States.

And I am sure you are all looking forward to hearing how the EU has been approaching these issues, and we are grateful to have Merete Bilde here. When we told her how many people were showing up, she said, "It is certainly because so many Americans are vitally interested in the EU," and I am sure that is absolutely right.

So I want to pass the floor over to my friend and partner on this project, on our projects at Brookings, Bill Galston.

I just want to say that religion, as we all know has been a source of division and conciliation. It has led to some horrible conflicts. It has also fed and promoted the search for justice and peace, and I just salute everyone on this Panel, and everyone here today, for struggling with the possibility that religion might actually increase the supply of justice in an imperfect world. Thank you, all, for being here today. Bill?

MR. GALSTON: Well, thanks so much EJ for getting us well launched. I'm Bill Galston, a Senior Fellow in Governance Studies, and one of EJ's partners in crime in our Religion, Policy and Politics Program. Reporting from the standpoint of the Jewish community I can tell you that repairing the world is steady work. (Laughter)

We are very, very fortunate today to -- you know, to have four people who have really immersed themselves in the question of the relationship between religion and the conducts of foreign policy, or as the Europeans would say, external relations. And I'm going to introduce everybody right now, very briefly. You have the full bios in your packets, I'm not going to waste your time by reading them.

And after which, each one of our speakers will have 10 minutes, strictly enforced, so we'll all have plenty of time for crosstalk and questions and answers. After they are done -- after they are done speaking, I will moderate a brief podium discussion, after which I will turn the floor over to you for questions and responses. Notice I didn't say questions and answers. A critical difference and, you know, our public officials, I think, are entitled to that protection.

SPEAKER: Thank you, Bill.

MR. GALSTON: Right. So, you know, the aforementioned, Shaun Casey, is Special Advisor to the Secretary of State for Faith-based and Community Initiatives, and he is currently on leave of absence from the Wesley Theological Seminary. You didn't make my mistake of resigning an academic position, very wise of you. You know, where he's Professor of Christian Ethics, and Director of the National Capital Semester for Seminarians.

Merete Bilde is Policy Advisor at the European External Action Service, you see, I told you, the European Union. And prior to her current position she worked at the Policy Unit of the EU High Representative, Javier Solana, on issues related to Political Islam and Cross-Cultural Relations, and that must have been a very interesting posting. Wish I could have been a fly on that wall.

To my immediate right, but stage left, Sara Silvestri, who is a Senior Lecturer in International Politics and the City University of London, where she's in charge

of Specialist Courses on Islamism, Religion in Politics and the EU. And she did more -- she completed more degrees, than I can count, at Cambridge.

And finally, Peter Mandeville, who is the Director of the Ali Vural Ak Center Global Islamic Studies, an Associate Professor of Government at George Mason University. And I'm happy to say, a Non-Resident Senior Fellow in Foreign Policy here at Brookings. In 2011, 2012, during the Arab Spring, he served as a Member of the Secretary of State's Policy Planning Staff at the U.S. Department of State, and that must have been a very interesting period to have been in that posting. So without further ado, Shaun.

MR. CASEY: Thank you very much, Bill, I love your "steady work" quote. The way I used to phrase it, by virtue of teaching ethics in Washington, D.C., it meant I never ran out of material to work on.

MR. GALSTON: Yes.

MR. CASEY: So job security was very high.

MR. GALSTON: Classic Augean Stables.

MR. CASEY: Indeed, indeed. Let me begin by thanking EJ and Bill for their generosity and their wisdom. I was back, really, actually to the conference you mentioned that Brian and Michael Walzer were at 10 years ago, you do such interesting programming here. Your conversations, the ideas really enrich what has now become, sadly, in parts, intellectual desert here in Washington, D.C. And I know if I come to one of your events, it's going to be interesting, it's going to be stimulating, and it's going to be fun. So, thank you, not only for this event but for your ongoing work.

I'd like also to thank Peter Mandeville for your unstinting efforts to raise this topic, and to convene this here, globally, and it's great to see Merete again, and Sara. I look forward to our interactions.

As a recovering graduate school professor, I need to note my sympathy to the late, great journalist, Teddy White, who was one of my favorites. He once remarked about his failed attempt to transition from being a long-form journalist to being an Op-Ed writer. When he said he couldn't clear his (inaudible) in 800 words a week, much less write a coherent argument. Coming from academia where the smallest unit of time measurement is the semester, and for me to speak for 10 minutes on this topic, is indeed a wild-eyed, utopian guess on your part.

So I'm going to try to hold my remarks to 10 minutes. I can't guarantee you the results, it's very difficult to make that transition.

I'm going to do three things in my allotted time. First, I want to say a word about what we are doing at the State Department, in the Office of Faith Based Constituency Initiatives which we launched last August. Second, I'm going to talk a little bit about what we aspire to do as we grow. And finally, I want to suggest some areas where we might be able to build some collaborative initiatives across governments, across academic institutions, and other civil society entities. Because indeed, I often say we are all students in this space; there are no teachers here, because of the complexities at the intersection of religion and foreign policy.

I tell people in my standard elevator speech that we have three missions in the Faith-Based Office at State, the first mission is to advise the Secretary of State when it cuts across his portfolio. And if you have even a nodding acquaintance with the news, you'll realize that religion cuts across just about everything John Kerry does today. So it would be absurd for us to argue that our tiny office can possibly claim expertise on religion across such a diverse range of context and issues.

We have to be collaborative, we have to partner with experts to generate wisdom for the Secretary, and we have to be smart about our own skills and limitations.

But we have many opportunities to support him. I should be very clear that from day one, he gave us a robust agenda of issues he wanted help and support on. Early on he asked us to do two things. One was to raise awareness about the Disabilities Treaty, which is currently before the Senate of the United States, there had not been a lot of awareness-raising on the part of the State Department in faith communities. We've been doing a lot of that.

And secondly, he asked us to support the work of Special Envoy, Martin Indyk, and his staff on the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, and there's plenty of work to be done in that space. So our second mission then is to build capacity for religious engagement in the State Department. The good news is, that there are many offices in the State Department that do a lot of religious engagement across an astonishing array of issues and points around the globe. That list is really too long for me to spin out here, but perhaps we might want to talk about what some of that work is that was already going on in the State Department.

The bad news is, that we've never had a strategy in the State Department to govern all of that activity across the vast bureaucracy of the State Department until last summer. Thanks to President Obama, in the National Security Staff's leadership of an interagency process, we now have a national strategy for integrating religious leaders in faith community engagement in the United States Foreign Policy.

So we actually have robust mandate from the President to do more religious engagement, and to begin to find ways to multiply our capacity, and perhaps during our discussion we can talk a little bit more about what some of those tools are to expand the capacity for religious engagement in the State Department.

Our third mission is to serve as a conduit for outside stakeholders who want to learn what we do. Perhaps partner with us around common interests, and also to share knowledge from their experiences from around the world to make us smarter in the Harry S. Truman Building.

Now at the end of my fourth month I stopped counting because I hit 300 groups in visitors who had come to see us, to tell us what they did. Finally I ran out of fingers and toes and decided it's going to be a large number, a lot of people are going to keep coming. Now those groups come back after the initial meet and greet, and they have asked for us. They have letters to the Secretary. They want to meet certain policy shops in the building.

I have been overwhelmed by the number of people who have been waiting to come to the State Department to engage us. I think the size of the audience today and yesterday, would suggest there's a lot of pent-up demand to interact with the State Department on this wide menu of issues, at the nexus of religion and foreign policy.

Now these three missions represent a huge footprint, and as I look at my 1.8 staffers every day I realize we have to make some very, very hard decisions. We have to be in (inaudible) and radically inclusive in terms of who we engage. We have engaged every group that has come and knocked on our door where we can find a half-hour opening on our schedule, and we will continue to do that. At the same time, we have to be smart in how we marshal those vast resources of 1.8 staffers.

So what's the next phase of our work? Let me name, simply, a few policy areas we are pursuing, and it's not an exhaustive list, but it will give you a sense of where we are engaging currently. In the realm of religion in sustainability development we are looking to work with faith groups that want to continue to participate in the

multilateral discussions regarding the shape of the post-2015 sustainable development goals.

We are also looking to gain capacity in the global climate change areas. There are a number of international faith groups that are putting equities into the fight to mitigate and to adapt to global climate change. In the human right space we are going to continue to work on disability rights, and we are ramping up an LGBTI venue where we are helping to engage religious leaders across the globe on that nexus of very important issues.

We are going to continue to support our sister office, the Office of International Religious Freedom in their crucial work, and let me answer the question now, which it will come up, as it does in every public gathering, no, we are not closing that office down. No, we are not absorbing that office into my office, but indeed that office will continue with its significant staff and to fulfill its congressionally mandated work. And we will be partners with them in that crucial work.

In the conflict prevention and mitigation area we are looking at developing an early response option in conflict areas where religion figures prominently. Think back just for the past few months, Central African Republic, South Sudan, even the Ukraine, they were indeed vastly different but deeply important, our religious actors in all three of those spaces, and we need to develop a more robust capacity to respond early in those kinds of crises in engaging religious leaders and communities on the ground.

You know, if I may be allowed to brag a moment, I believe that President Obama and Secretary Kerry, have quietly built a remarkable roster of talent at the intersection of religion in foreign policy. We are in the process of looking at synergies across the State Department on religion and religion office on the nexus of issues, and we are going to be expanding our staff, and look for more news on that front in coming

months. Suffice it to say I am quite ecstatic about these developments, and I'm eager to rollout more staff and more engagement in future days, and you will be hearing more about that, I think, in the press.

Let me say a few things now about possible collaborations going forward. As a scholar of religion I have long argued that my guild should be better partners in addressing global problems. Now, unfortunately, that remains a controversial proposition in my academic guild. I've spent a lot of time toiling in the committee structure, the American Academy of Religion, trying to make a case for more public engagement on the part of religion scholars, but we are a fissiparous and cranky lot, and sometimes given to solipsistic navel gazing, and those are on the good days.

Look, I've been impressed since I've taken office here, and how many of my sister and brother religion scholars have been willing to help us engage these broad areas of promoting sustainable development, expanding human rights and mitigating conflict and building peace, but there is room for so much more academic engagement.

It strikes me, and Peter, perhaps, you and Sara may want to comment on this, that the foreign policy academics are far more eager for this interdisciplinary work than our religion scholars. We tend to be more reticent, and I lament that fact, because that's my tribe. Likewise I've been impressed by how many governments have expressed deep interest in what we are doing. I think there have been 9 or 10 embassies come and meet with us to talk about what we are doing, how did you get this started in your secular government? How did you begin to build out your office?

So I've been quite impressed by the international interest in the kinds of things we are doing. So I think it's safe to say we are at an early stage where there's a growing recognition that there may be many fruitful ways in foreign policies for more religious engagement on the part of more governments and more regions. Now there is

not a consensus on what that that should look like. And I believe there will be great benefit in mutual exchanges as we go forward, but the space is indeed fraught, and there needs to be more analysis, and there needs to be more conversation. There is not a single path to wisdom in this space.

And civil society is threatened all around the globe, and some global observers are speaking of a constriction of global civil society, I think it's imperative that public actors of all types work hard to reverse this disturbing global trend. There needs to be strong collaboration between governments, and a wide variety of civil society players, and think tanks are certainly a crucial piece of that; to be vigilant in protecting the freedoms that we all a hold dear.

Recently I told another group I was speaking to, that I take great joy in waking up every morning knowing that I go to work in a building that's populated with thousands of public servants who toil at trying to reduce extreme poverty, expand the roster of human rights around the globe, and to reduce conflict and build peace.

Thank you, for letting me talk to you about what I do today, and I think I've burnt my 10 minutes and then some, and I look forward to the discussion.

MR. GALSTON: I can't imagine a more effective use of 10 minutes and 30 seconds. Merete?

MS. BILDE: Thank you very much. And thank you, to the organizers for also inviting the EU. I cannot pride myself with the academic feathers that Shaun has. I come from the meager policy world, but academically one of the things that my teachers always said is, look at the question before you answer. And I cannot but fail notice, Shaun, that you did not address the transatlantic dialogue, be that as it may.

SPEAKER: There's fears -- the transatlantic dialogue.

MS. BILDE: Exactly. I have 10 minutes to cover a very vast and complex issue, and I would like to stress that I will speak in my personal capacity, because this topic in Europe goes beyond one person, it goes beyond one function, it goes beyond one institution. So what I'm going to try to do in my 10 minutes is to focus on the three sort of major puzzle pieces about -- in how Europe tries to deal with this nexus.

And doing so, I will try to stress where I see differences to the U.S., because though we speak the same language and we use the same terms, there's -- not very often -- but sometimes these terms come with a different meaning, or they have a different interpretation. And that, I think will very much be at the center of when we try to look at seeing what we can do -- what we can do together.

Two introductory remarks, there is no one European approach for policy on this topic, but many different courses of action that implicitly or explicitly deal with these issues. When we say Europe I'd like to be specific. Europe is both the EU, its institution of which the European Union's External Action Service is only one. It's also its member states, but part, a very important part of the picture of what shapes our reflection in this field, is also countries outside the EU limit. And I'm thinking notably about the important role that Norway and Switzerland have in this area.

We have been going at this for a while in Europe. We established, I think it was 2007, what we called a like-minded group, where we put in some of the member states who seem to be thinking about the same issues, coming up with different solutions for different ideas. But we wanted to have an area where we could -- sort of a safe area, and when I say safe, it was at that time, very much important to have it free from CVE, so the countering violent extremism, but really to focus on these nexus issues.

And what we did in this group was basically, very simple, very pragmatic, compare notes, exchange best practices, look at how we are -- our different approaches are, but our common concern about these issues. And these issues sort of lack an acronym, they lack a working group, they lack -- they go across desks and departments, and that's why it was so important to have that momentum, or that group that sort of helped us shape our thinking as we moved on.

My second introductory remarks, and I will get to my main dish here in a minute, is when we hear in the U.S., hear talk about Europe and how we -- you know, you choose -- you are very awkward about dealing with religion in Europe, you know, the strong separation, the French model. I just want to say, sometimes sits very important to look beyond the headlines. What sets the limits and the tone for what we can do is not so to ease diversity as to the different models about the role of religion and public affairs, but more this growing awareness that many member states have as to the difficulty of keeping religion, in whatever shape or form, out of the equation.

And I will give you just one example, France, which has the strongest, and secularist is not even the word, but (inaudible) setup, is the very country that was first setting up its religions unit within the MFA, but a similar unit within the MOD and within the development branch. Now France doesn't do that to reinvent itself, but it does that to better equip its diplomats to deal with these issues.

And that's -- so in short, we have this pragmatism that goes beyond the debate between separation of church and state, and keeping religion out of politics, or politics out of religion, it's all very interesting, but it's not -- it's not where we are looking. We are looking at pragmatic challenges, what it -- where is it we need to factor in religion, not to increase the role of religion, but just to be a little bit smarter about how it plays, and how in the various areas that we work on

And that then leads to my main three points. What we do at the EU level, within this nexus of religion and foreign policy. I think it's very important to be specific about what you mean by religion, by religion and religious engagement, and religious actors and -- I will have three suggestions.

First, religion and our policy filter. We had yesterday a very interesting discussion where the morning session, unanimously, pointed out the problems of our secular blind spot. The fact that policymakers simply refuse to look at the realty, and therefore we need to sort of take a step back and see, how do -- how does our worldview affect our formulation of our foreign policy? Who do we see as the credible political actors? Faith-based political actors in various strengths, the various strengths of Islamists? Evangelicals, representatives of the Christian right, Jewish lobby groups, et cetera, et cetera? How much face time do we give the respectively?

The Arab Uprising had put renewed focus on these issues, and right now we are faced with some real tough choices, not only in Egypt. Do we continue to engage the full spectrum of political landscape, and when does a group become a terrorist group? Pre Arab Spring, we had a network of engagement with such faith-based actors around the world, and a number of policy people from the EU, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey.

The aim of that group was to challenge precisely our secular blind spot, and ensue that we have first-hand knowledge and exchange with these political actors. That was a network that proved very useful when the Arab Uprising happened. Unfortunately our official U.S. colleagues are often absent from these kinds of initiatives.

Second, religion and the broader freedom and tolerance agenda. How do we promote and protect what we call freedom of religion and belief? Who do we choose to engage with in promotion tolerance agenda? I'm thinking 1618. Who speaks

for whom and with what mandate and credibility? Within the EU we have adopted a policy line on freedom of religion belief, and as of Monday, our member states, our ministers have now also adopted a similar on freedom of expression, where the EU developed explicit guideline to send a strong signal as to how we intend to promote and protect that agenda.

Our policy clearly states that the EU is impartial, and it's not aligned with any specific religion or belief, and that it has a very broad scope. We talk about the right to have, not to have and to change religion. Some people find that very, very surprising. Again, here to compare with the U.S., you have within a Europe a very strong emphasis on the -- or belief within the freedom of religion, or belief. You have not an (inaudible) worry on religious freedom, but an EUSR on human rights, per se. We see this right as one among many, a very important right, but a right that needs to embody -- be embedded in the full rights specter.

Third, because I'm aware of time, so I'll fast-forward a little bit. Religion as an undeniable contact for conflict dynamics. Do we engage, do we think about religions from a two-based approached? And when we see a conflict the first thing we sort of snap into is how can we do SSR-DDR? Or do we start looking at these complex realities of each -- of each conflict? That was very poor English, I apologize. What we have noticed is the increased need to do the latter, to take a step back and say, it's no good just to pretend all conflicts are the same, we can just sort of take them -- our toolbox, and sort of apply it (inaudible) and what have you.

But instead, take as step back, and engage in conflict analysis, where we -- and we do that with the aim of challenging our assumptions, and looking really at the conflict and the dynamics that that conflict is entwined in, and also a more regional perspective. And here again, religion pops up as an important puzzle piece when

analyzing an actual conflict dynamic in individual countries, be it Libya or Lebanon. And it increasingly inspires our mediation efforts to engage also with religious actors, within the Central African Republic and Syria.

My conclusion is, the European approach, these nexus issues falls into many boxes, not into one. We will not have one policy, but we will try to look at how it plays out in the different areas. Two, religion is understood more broadly than the role of religious leaders or religious engagement. Three, and very importantly, the need to increase awareness and institution building, that this is not just something for the few, but something that becomes the necessity, and there, there is something which is maybe a low-hanging fruit but that we are not paying enough attention to, is training, training, training.

Make sure that we both provide our diplomats at all levels, not just you and your staff, with the right religious literacy training, be it on Islam, be it on skill sets, like engagement with faith-based actors when in post. How to use our toolsets, the four freedom of religion or belief guidelines, and we are very fortunate within the external action service of having a senior management who is interested in this, and who wants us to try to come with a retreat material, for having senior managers, who are very busy, sit down and think about these things.

That is a challenge that I will not let go by. But at the same time and, finally, we should not kid ourselves, the pushback from other quarters is very, very strong. There is the secular bias or blind spot, there are those who want to ridicule this exercise and say it's esoteric copy for those who have nothing better to do. And even for those who buy into it, and say this is very needed, it's never urgent business, it can always be done next Friday.

And that's why, in short, I think the European Union and our partners, we do more than meets the eye, but we are not beyond making the case that religion needs to be taken seriously for our own sake if we wish to remain relevant diplomatic actors.

Now having just said to Shaun, that he failed to answer the question on transatlantic dialogue, I'll quickly add that to my presentation and say, what is very interesting here is precisely this kind of exchange, where we use the same terms, and they mean the same things, where can we try to compare notes, exchange experience, what has worked, what has not worked.

So we don't each sit in our part of our part of the world and start from scratch, we need to build these kind bridges. A bridge cross-Atlantic, this may be a little bit broad, but we can at least try, but also between the politics -- the political side of things and academia, and that's why I was very happy to be invited here and I will go back to Brussels later this afternoon with ideas as to how to follow up. Thank you very much.

MR. GALSTON: Thank you. I'm now going to turn to my right, and let me brief, very briefly frame what you are about to hear. Peter and Sara together have, I think, incarnated the transatlantic dialogue, having staged the first convening in the U.K., and the second one here yesterday. And what you are about to hear is, so to speak, a readout, the major findings and recommendations from those two very densely populated, and I would say densely argued convening. So, Sara, first to you.

MS. SILVESTRI: I'm delighted to be here in Washington to be able to share with you this project. I would like to thank, also, Brookings for hosting us here. I would like to thank the audience for having come here in such large numbers and the speakers for having accepted to come to the Panel.

I'm delighted to share the insight also, and to thank -- and to acknowledge the funding we received also from the British Council and the Lusk Foundation, who in a way, the vision actually to anticipate that this area of research was one of the key issues to developing the future.

Peter and I, apart from our academic career, have always been interested and always had a foot, in a way, in the policy area. Peter, here in D.C., and myself in Brussels. So actually, he came up spontaneous for us to come together last year, and put our thoughts together and develop a project that would feed to the interest of the British Council and Lusk, but also that would really serve the policy community.

So the aims of the project are those to develop a transatlantic collaboration, not an academic conference where the academics give the lecture about religion and politics, but actually, to do something useful that would help to establish real practical connections across the Atlantic, but also that would enable a dialogue to start us so within subsectors of the different administrations within the different regions of Europe and within the U.S.

And this transatlantic dialogue is meant to -- we learn together how to integrate the relevance of the religious in our consideration, in our strategic considerations, but also in the day-to-day operationalizations of the bureaucracy that is behind the policy process.

And this thinking happens along two lines. One is to think about, what is actually the religious in the context of policymaking in foreign policy. And also, what are actually the practices that enable the practitioners to deal with the religious. And one of the key themes that has emerged, one of the key findings of this transatlantic -- this set of transatlantic meetings that we had in the U.S. and here, is the notion of mainstreaming. Mainstreaming, basically is intended as the attempt to identify the relevance of religion --

mainstreaming religion as the attempt to identify the relevance of religion in the different sectors.

Not only of the different academic disciplines that are interested in religion, but in particular, of the different policy you need to -- ministries that deal with the full spectrum of foreign policy, not just to issues of, for instance, religious freedom. And to try to attempt to exit the silos mentality that we have. So this mainstream, in effort, in practice then, this attempt to detect the religious, starts from the need to identify what are the religious voices we want to consider. And it requires an attempt to move away from a reductionist attempt to say, oh, religious engagement means talking to the religious leaders, or bringing the religious leaders together; or using the FBOs, faith-based organizations in specific areas of policymaking.

No. Detecting the religious means identifying the religious component, the religion culture, the various religious voices, and being able to go beyond, also, those that label themselves, means actually being savvy about identifying what does -- do the labels of those who call themselves mean, and why, and in what context some people may -- some religious voices may actually be absent from the scene. So the fact that they are absent doesn't mean that then they are not relevant, or that particular religious perspective is not relevant.

And secondly, this attempt to detect the religious factor obviously requires self-criticism and the ability to go beyond our, you know, Eurocentric or Western-centric understandings of what the religious, or what the secular principles are. And therefore to move away this philosophical assumptions that we have, as well as beyond some -- trying to move away from the temptation to project some mechanisms or some ways of understanding religion that are typical of our domestic field, but that we try to project to the foreign policy field.

And finally, obviously, this mainstreaming of religion requires, obviously, being critical, again, and not then simplifying the whole story into saying, oh, well, then, let's just focus on religion. No, because that would be very simplistic and it would discarding key factors. Economic, political, security factors that are actually still part of the scene and ought not to be forgotten. Such as, for instance, economic concerns of state fragility. For instance, in the current crisis in Nigeria, the state fragility, and the problem of governance are part of the picture. And the religious dimension in the Boko Haram crisis is one tiny component of the bigger problem.

So now I will pass the floor to Peter who is going to share with you, so I'm actually mind worthy, and (inaudible) points, and he is going to share with you the tangible, concrete actions that we identified in the dialogue that we had with the policymakers in the last few months. Thank you.

MR. MANDAVILLE: Thanks very much, Sara. And good morning, everyone. I need to also register a firm note of thanks to Bill and to EJ for being such interested and supportive partners in this endeavor, and for being such gracious hosts here at Brookings over the last couple of days.

As Sara mentioned, it falls to me to take a series of meetings that we had over the course of the last year, that involved engagements with 100-plus leading experts around the world, focused on this interface of religion and foreign policy, and pull out of that that enormous amount of material, our best attempt at capturing what we take to be the most tangible, actionable, concrete recommendations. In a sense this is the policy implications of the work that we are going to be doing.

Given the diversity of the groups that we engaged with, culturally, geographically, as you can imagine, there was nothing like consensus. Btu happily there

were a number of themes that kept coming up time and time again. And so we'll have the opportunity now to kind of go through some of those items.

I think it's fair to say that the main components of the policy recommendation piece, and it relates to a set of concerns on the other hand, about the idea that there may be certain kinds of biases, baked into the institutional cultures of foreign ministries, the State Department, government agencies, that do this kind of work. That have an impact on how we think about, and the assumptions that we go into the field with, when we talk about religious engagement

And we heard this, to some extent already, in Sara's points about the dangers associated with kind of assuming as normal and usual, certain sets of arrangements that govern relationships between religious institutions, the state and society, that may be present in European and North American context, but where the arrangements are rather different out in the world.

It's a rather abstract point at one level, but I think it does have very tangible implications simply with respect to speaking to the need when contemplating this kind of work, to first do a little bit of inward looking. You know, ask some questions about, what are the assumptions that we work with as we go out into the world to begin this kind of work? One thing that has come up fairly consistently over the course of our conversations, and I think it's been an abiding challenge to those working on these issues, particularly in the U.S. context, are a set of legal issues, of course.

The question of the extent to which the U.S. Constitution, the establishment cause, more particularly, serves potentially as a constraint on the ability of government agencies to undertake certain kinds of work with religious actors. Or groups that are understood to be faith-based organizations, and there's a variety of opinions out

there about, both the sort of severity of this problem, and the appropriate way of dealing with it. And I hope that might be something we can get into in the discussion.

But I think where we come down in terms of the ability to deliver something akin to a more tangible recommendation, really comes down around the question of capacity deficits within the institutions involved in foreign policy and national security work.

Sara already mentioned this challenge of mainstreaming religion. This event is occurring at a time fairly shortly after the establishment of Shaun Casey's office. We've already heard that the French were kind of first movers in many regards, in terms of establishing entities in various ministries there that look at this issue, and there's been a -- I think, an upsurge, generally speaking, of interest in the interface of religion and foreign policy in a number of agencies in the United States, but also in Europe.

So, there's this very interesting moment of opportunity right now, but I think that one thing that we need to be sort of attentive to, with respect to the institutional side of things, is even as there is more interest, we need to make sure that that interest is leveraged in a way that does not serve to perpetuate the idea of religious engagement as an activity that remains ghettoized.

The idea that you have to meet with religious leaders at some point while working a particular policy problem. And once you've done that, you can tick that box. Yes, we talked to them.

Or, and this, I'll be honest, is one of the greatest concerns I had when I learned that Shaun's office was going to be established, was the idea that, on the one hand, yes, it might prove to be a crucially important part of the solution to showcasing and building greater attentiveness to the importance of this agenda, across the full range of activities that the State Department does. But it also might potentially serve as an

excuse for senior officials in bureaus and offices, that on the face of it have nothing to do with religion to say, oh, we don't have to worry about that, because there is this office over there, the religion office and they'll deal with that piece.

And so I think approaching this work in a way that helps senior officials who sit right across the full range of sectors that the State Department works in to understand that -- understanding the place of religion and the role of religious actors is critical to their mission, the mission of their bureau, I think, is going to be a persistent challenge here.

One theme that I think was most universal, in every discussion and event that we had, was this idea that there needs to be greater attentiveness to the training, education and professional development side of things. A dearth of religious literacy, if you want to think of it in those terms, across the relevant institutional context, and the need to build those sorts of skill sets into these institutions. Now there has been some progress here, in so far as European partners have been doing trainings from time to time.

The foreign services institute here, has for several years now run week-long courses on religious engagement and that's, you know, welcome, in terms of developments. At the same time, however, I don't think that we are really going to be able to able to have an impact, at scale, until those trainings are baked into, and integrated into the regimes by which professional diplomats are trained.

Right now these courses are optional, and in my experience in observing them, often attended primarily by people who are already supportive of the religious engagement agenda. And, you know, people spend a lot of time, you know, patting each on the back and expressing solidarity with each other about how important this is, but if

you leave that group, you know, confine to those who have already bought into the importance of this work, you are not really making that impact.

One participant at the conference we had yesterday, I think scaled this up to an even more important point, a broader point about the persistent importance of the humanities as a field of study, to public life. At a time when even at the university where I reside, most of my time, where I feel that it will be impossible to study philosophy in a few years, given the privileging of stem areas, certain kinds of technical skills, right.

The idea that making sure that those who go into public life, and in the realms of foreign and national security policy, understand broader debates about how people understand who they are, their values, is absolutely crucial. And so I think there's a larger point to be made here about the importance of the humanities as a field of study to foreign policy and national security priorities.

The final area, and this does track now towards the transatlantic dialogue pieces, is that I think it's quite clear in our discussions over this year, that because of this moment of, perhaps, unprecedented transatlantic interest in the religion and foreign policy piece, there's great opportunity to build tendrils and networks of collaboration. To help this work to occur at scale and to be more impactful.

My colleague and good friend, Merete, mentioned that that there are differences that will have to be dealt with, but that’s fine. I think for the most part the like-mindedness that she talked about with reference to the European context, is present here in the United States as well, and there's plenty of opportunity for collaboration.

Finally, I can't resist but making one last point about the European and U.S. differences with respect to the question, international religious freedom, particularly at a time when there's a lot of questions in the air, about the fate of that agenda here in the United States. The position of the Ambassador at Large for International Religious

Freedom has been vacant for some time now, and those who follow these issues won't fail to miss that.

As Merete said, Europeans tend to approach this differently. They have documents as well that talk about that importance of religious freedom, but the institutional arrangements are very different. Europeans tend to engage and try to advance international religious freedom through a broader human rights function.

To treat it as part of a broader human rights package. Whereas, in the United States, we have institutional arrangements that are a product of congressional mandate. The International Religious Freedom Act which set up certain institutions which, on the one hand, provided more institutional power but also created the slightly odd arrangement whereby international religious freedom gets carved out of the human rights space and pursued somewhat differently.

My concern is that the politics of the years in the world, during which that machinery was set up, has potentially tainted it so much that it is increasingly difficult for those who work in the IRF, to use the kind of acronym lingo, to advance that agenda effectively. And I wonder if it might be time to revisit the institutional arrangements by which international religious freedom is pursued. And I'll leave it there. Bill, thank you.

MR. GALSTON: Well, thanks to all four of you for delivering such pithy remarks, and substantive to boot. I had all sorts of questions prepared, but I think I'm going to recuse myself from of them. I actually -- you know, I actually have questions for the two folks to my right. First it's going to be a very practical one.

As you listened to the readout from these two meetings, what did you draw from these findings and recommendations that might make a difference for your practice? Might be integrated into your practice; or the thinking that guides your practice?

MR. CASEY: Do you want me to go first?

MR. GALSTON: Yeah.

MR. CASEY: How much time do you want me to burn? A couple minutes?

MR. GALSTON: A couple of minutes, yeah.

MR. CASEY: Okay. Let me just, in no particular order. I actually think the framework needs to be larger than just transatlantic, truly. I mean, because the embassies that are coming to me are not all housed on that axis. It's actually even more complicated. It's more than two-dimensional. It's multidimensional. I have spoken to government officials from Asia, from Africa, as well as Europe, and from the Americas that are all interested in this, so eventually, if not quickly, we actually need the aperture which is going to make it even more complicated.

I take the point on training, I think as you noticed I talked about building capacity. I am a professor, I still view the world through those lenses despite my fall now as a public official. And we are looking at the issue of how, as you put it Peter, is to bake it into the curriculum. You know, in a perfect world at a certain point there shouldn't be a faith-based office at the Department of State, it should disappear. Now what time link, I'm not in not in a position to judge, but there should be a day where it disappears because it's woven into the DNA.

So if you become an American Ambassador, if you become a political officer, of embassy, if you become a Foreign Service officer, you get that training in your required curriculum in the Foreign Service Institute. That is -- now, in two-and-a-half years I turned into pumpkin and go back to academia, I don't pretend I can bend the arc of the DNA that far, but at least we are looking at that, because I think the Foreign Service Institute is the place to begin to do that.

And so I agree, I think there's agreement across the table here that training needs to be integrated into the curriculum, and we are trying to do that. I also take your point, Peter, about trying to leverage the current interest in religious engagement against ghettoizing religion. I don't think that's an immediate problem in the State Department for a number of reasons.

Number one, my boss does not want that to happen. I mean, I could not have asked for a more robust, clear statement from Secretary of State. At my inaugural event, he pointed to me and said, I want everybody in the building to play nicely with this guy. Okay. And that helps. In a building as bizarre and as complicated as the Department of State, nobody wants to offend the boss by not playing nicely with the people he wants you to play nicely with. So that is an extraordinary gift to our office.

So there may be naysayers in our building, they do not come and knock on my door, but instead, there's been a remarkable pilgrimage of offices and bureaus across the arc of the State Department, coming in and saying, how can we partner together? How can we make each other better? How can we make each other more effective and smarter?

So, I have been warned before I joined the State Department, it's a very secular place and religion is a career killer, and all of these things. It's not true, at least in my experience. Now I'm sure the conversion is not complete, but I think, certainly, in this administration that's not the threat that we are facing at this point.

Now, will we handle that responsibility effectively? Only time is going to tell, but we will not fail because we don't have buy-in from the top, and support from the upper regions of the bureaucracy. So, let me just stop there.

MR. GALSTON: Okay. Now, Merete, as you respond to that question, you have the same question. Let me play back to you what you said towards the end of

your remarks. You had this very interesting little session -- little section on what you call push backs.

MS. BILDE: Yes.

MR. GALSTON: Right. And actually, I wrote them down. I mean, you referred to the secular blind spot. You know, but you reported two other very interesting things. First of all, that in many quarters these issues are regarded as a luxury, that's the word you used. And you also reported that many quarters they were regarded as well, perhaps important and interesting, the quote "not urgent".

Now those strike me as important perceptual roadblocks on the path to, I think, what we are all talking about. So what kinds of recommendations -- how would you react to the recommendations you heard and what other ideas do you have about pushing back against the pushback, and doing so effectively?

MS. BILDE: I think Peter listed it. Peter's five points are all relevant to us, maybe with the exception of the establishment clause, which I'm still struggling to find out what it means. But I think the point you just raised on making sure that the naysayers, who don't seem to be a problem for Shaun, but I see the, maybe also because I'm junior to you, so people are more honest probably.

That's where I see a benefit from maybe standing shoulder-to-shoulder in sort of open-minded group where we can come together, it has to be specific, there has to be concrete. It's not enough to say mainstream because we've tried that on a number of other issues, and it doesn't happen just like that. We need to know what we want to do, what we want to achieve, what our target groups is.

But I do see some areas where, despite our differences we are trying to achieve the same thing, and where it would be helpful to have that sort collective oomph, when we go back to base and say, but hang on a minute, at the State Department, Kerry

has just appointed this guy and he's excellent, and he has this mandate, and dah-dah-dah, or go and point to the U.N. and say, you know, starting from the UN's Population Fund, there has been -- thoughts going out on how to get everybody around the same thing, to the point that they've actually managed to set up an interagency group for these issues.

So use each other's experience, use each other's acki, which is a European word, what we have achieved to build on. Rather than we each sit on our part of the globe and say, oh, my, you'd better do some training, let's start from scratch. And that's one of the things that I have found most interesting here, is to hear how the training has evolved on the U.S. side. And I have shared with my U.S. colleagues what we are trying to do on the European side, and of course it has to be adapted to the tone and tenor of our context.

But it doesn't mean we can't inspire each other from, you know, the kind of cases we face, because out there, in the broader world, and I think, Shaun, you have a very good point about not being too traditional about it, that it's not just a transatlantic thing. But it should be something where we engage those who really have a constituency, and who bring something to the table. What I would warn against is making this something of a fashion.

You know, religion, it sounds -- you know, it needs to be concrete, and that's why when I went through what I wanted to say, and the message that I wanted to bring to you, I wanted to say that religion is not just sort of a deux machine, it's not just there. You have to make sure you know what want to -- how you want to deal with it. And also make sure that on the other side, if it's religious axis that they actually want to deal with you.

So I think the buy-in, continue to do the buy-in, the training. I'm a very practical person. I believe training, training, training, and I keep saying it, and I keep pushing our colleagues through the system. Making it, obligatory is one thing, but maybe also cross-training. Look at, you know, maybe send some Europeans over to you, or have some Americans over at our place to sort of see how do you each do this. Because out when we are going in mission, the problems we face whether it's Bamako or Kabul, et cetera, et cetera, are pretty much the same. Thank you.

MR. GALSTON: Well thanks to all of you. We are right on time, and we now move to audience Q&A. My understanding, there's a roving microphone, yes, so when I call -- there are two of them as a matter of fact. So when I call on you, if you would stand up, tell us your name, and if you think it's relevant, institutional affiliation. And then ask questions.

I'm actually going to deviate from customary practice and start from the very back and move forward. So right in the very last row, there's someone with a piece of paper. Is that on?

MR. THAMES: Can you hear me?

MR. GALSTON: Yeah. There we go.

MR. THAMES: I hope I have a good question with that lead up. My name is Knox Thames, I work at the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom. A quick comment and a question. To Peter's points about rethinking how the United States does it's religious freedom work, my Commission is one of the entities that this congressional mandate created. A report that came out about 10 days ago, we recommend that we take a hard look at how the United States engages on this issue.

A lot has changed since these mechanisms were created back in 1998, and the law hasn't been adopted or amended in any way to meet the realities of the 21st Century.

Secondly I'll also say that, while we are unique to the religion realm, that we have this commitment, I think we are a part of a broader trend in U.S. foreign policy world of creating specific entities to do specific things. So we've got these religious freedoms, mechanisms, trafficking in persons, anti-Semitism, Muslim communities, special envoys on energy. It's a larger phenomenon in U.S. foreign policy that I think we are a part of.

But my question for the Panel is, how do you see issues of human rights engaging your efforts on religious engagement? If you are trying to reach out to different people of faith, yet they are in a context of persecution and repression, how will that impact your ability to be successful in this work? Thanks.

MR. CASEY: Hi, Knox. It's good to see you again. Let me say a couple of things. You are right that the apparatus for International Religious Freedom was created in 1998 by Congress. I'll simply say, not being a member of Congress, I don't have any opinion, so on how they might want to readjust that. That really is up to Congress to weigh through that, and we are, to put it mildly, in a vexatious space with respect to Congress.

So call Mr. Reid and call Mr. McConnell to see what you can do. And I'm going to abstain from anything else. I want to quibble a little bit with Peter's description of where the IRF Office is, it actually is, in fact, embedded in the human rights apparatus of the State Department, it's not separated. It's a unique entity, but it isn't the Bureau of Democracy Labor and Human Rights, which is also then housed in the larger under

Secretariat of Civilian Security Labor and Human Rights. So it actually, it's not separated it, it's housed within.

We can argue if that's the right place or not. Some people ironically argue that it should be pulled out and made a separate entity in the direct report. So the sort of competing narratives here, should it be embedded in human rights, or should it be -- should it be pulled out? And again, I have no stake in that fight. I think it will whatever the Secretary and President wanted it to be located. But at the end of the day, it is in fact a vital part of our human rights stance at the State Department. They are fully integrated into the discussions that office interacts with the human rights professionals. Both in their neighborhood but broadly.

So I'm not sure that rearranging the furniture is a solution in it, but I hear two different trends. It's segregated, but it should be liberated. Some people argue that, in fact, if it's liberated it will lose the institutional heft it has because of where it's nested. I think at the end of the day, in this administration, contrary to a lot of our critics, indeed International Religious Freedom is a very central concern.

I have been in those meetings. I have seen what the Secretary has said privately and publicly to many, many government and to many stakeholders who come through. President Obama gave an amazing speech and the International Prayer Breakfast. And ironically there were people leaving that, a little congregation of 3,000 people at the Hilton; stunned they didn't know they cared about. So part of that, we got some partisanship that lays on top of this issue, I think to the detriment of the issue; and that's preventing some people from understanding indeed, how much we have actually invested in this space, in this administration.

MR. GALSTON: Yes. Moving forward, there's a gentleman on the aisle there, about three rows up. There you go.

MR. WEINTRAUB: Thank you. I'm Leon Weintraub. University of Wisconsin. Formerly a member of the Foreign Service. I have a question for Mr. Casey. Specifically you mentions the Secretary asked you to work on the Treaty on Disabilities, and also with Ambassador Indyk, in his negotiations on the Middle East. Now it seems the issue of the Disability Treaty, that's fantastic use of the faith-based segment of the community to help you.

But I'm wondering. As far as what Ambassador Indyk and the Secretary have been trying to do, this is an issue that's been worked over 50 or 60 years, often very intensively, even at the presidential level. Everybody is aware it's a dangerous mix of politics, religion, nationality, and who knows what else. I'm wondering after all this, what can you possibly add that Ambassador Indyk and the other people don't already know?

MR. CASEY: That's a great question. First of all let me recommend Martin's book, *Innocent Abroad*, if you want kind of a quick -- actually it's not a quick, it's a long tour through 30 of those 50 years of American diplomacy there. That will be the first place I would put you. It was actually Martin Indyk's idea to bring us into the discussion. And one of the things that he observed is that, historically, in that space, we have been most interested in the parties at the table.

We have not been interested in the political support around them, either in the space or globally. And there have been times in the negotiation, historically, where principles have begun to look over the shoulder of the other person and ask the question, is there anybody out there with us, with me, even in my own space, much less in civil society or global society? And there have been times when negotiations have suffered because people said, I'm out here by myself, and I'm taking all the political risk.

So what he did he hired Laura Bloomingfeld, who many of you know, a distinguished journalist here in Washington and in New York; to set up a series of global

outreach efforts both in Israel and Palestine, but then also globally, to begin to talk to other kinds of stakeholders who had an interest in success there. And part of the global outreach included a global faith outreach.

So we had a team working Jewish outreach, a team working Muslim outreach, a team working on Christian outreach, and then interfaith work across the spaces. I did an extensive tour in the space earlier this year. I'll never forget, I met with the Latin patriarch, the Catholic Archbishop there, Bishop Twal. And we walked into his room and I was immediately put at a disadvantage. He said, welcome, Dr. Casey, we've been waiting for you for 40 years; because United States Government had never reached out diplomatically to all of the religious communities in that space.

That's a parable for why we need this office, because in that space we've never systematically done that. Now, where we are adding -- no, where we are sending notes in to Martin in the negotiations, no, that's not what we were doing. But we were arguing that civil society engagement there is very, very important, because the politicians feel the pulse of their populations, they feel the pulse of the Diasporas, they feel the pulse of business people. They feel the pulse of faith groups around the world.

So, I think we were able to add value by, first of all, showing up in and showing the faith communities that, indeed, we recognize their value in their own spaces, and they took that as a positive sign, that the American Government was finally having a wider aperture about the space itself. So that's kind of a quick tour.

SPEAKER: Right.

MS. BILDE: Yeah. I'd just like to add that this should be part of normal diplomatic work and field, it's something that our embassies or head of delegations, et cetera, et cetera, should be doing, and probably are doing. I know from Danish diplomats on loan to this EU Service, and I know the Danes have been doing so, probably pushed

around the hard way, because of the Danish cartoons some years back. And where they realized that if they wanted to get to people -- to the opinion-makers it's not good enough just to speak to government officials. So there was a very, very steep learning curve after that.

I just wanted to respond to Knox's second question, which Shaun didn't pick up on. I will abstain as being European on what the U.S. should do about how they set up their different commissions. But the issue, because I heard also, part of the audience said, that's a good question on religious actors and human rights. It's very important that we ask these questions head-on, and these are difficult policy dilemmas that have to be weighed.

We don't obtain anything from fudging it, and we don't obtain anything from assuming it's a tradeoff, and that's what I heard a little bit maybe in your question, that it's very important that we are able to promote and protect the full scale of human rights, and that we have a narrative, and that we are willing to go and tell it, especially to those who are not converted, as it were.

MR. GALSTON: Yes. I've going to move up one row now. The gentleman second from the aisle.

MR. GOPEN: Hi. Mark Gopen. Hi, Shaun.

MR. CASEY: Hi, Mark.

MR. GOPEN: I just -- I think there's something -- Peter and Sara, I want to thank you so much for orchestrating all of this. It's really, really important in terms of foreign policy, and that you've framed it in such a way the foundations would support, I think that's a major, major contribution.

Having said that, there's one piece that I think is missing; and that is that none of this would be occurring without practice. In other words, there is no theory

without practice, there is no policy without practice. There is not training without practice. There is no Martin Indyk inviting you without us lobbying Martin Indyk for 15 years on what was missing from the Middle East peace processes that had failed before. And we sat in offices years, and years before your office was ever invented. And Doug Johnson and I are veterans of a very, very painful process of 15 years of lobbying for this.

Ironically now, the American Government is way ahead of the foundations, and is investing in practice with religious people and that's where the learning is going on. So I want to argue and ask -- or challenge you that none of this policy is going to work without the practice. None of the training is going to work without the practice, and without serious investment. And that goes for Europeans, it goes for Africans, it goes for Middle Eastern governments.

There is no -- there is no policy that's intelligent without deep engagement on the ground with religious people of great diversity, that's where our learning is coming from.

MR. CASEY: May I ask two quick things. We have been doing that practice for decades in the State Department, in U.S. Government, you haven't always read about it, but it has in fact been there. Our offices engage now in doing three religious engagement country studies, where we are investing a lot of time, a lot of energy, and a lot of energy and a lot of resources, going out ad investigation how indeed, what we have done in terms of religious engagement. What has worked, what has not worked. Where are the opportunities to do more?

We consult with the other governmental embassies in countries that are interested in these issues. My hunch, and it's only a hunch, when we are done with these three-country studies, we will have enough internal demand among other U.S.

ambassadors that we will continue to offer this as sort of a custom -- consultation service where we do our desk study, we do our research.

We talk to the religion experts. We talk to what's going on, to the folks in-country, across AID, across State Department, and go and do the same kind of consultation saying this is what you've done well. Here is what you may be missing in terms of religious engagement possibilities, and how can we resource you from the United States to make it more effective? We've complete one study, we are about to launch on the second one, later on in the summer we'll do the third one.

And that's while all this other religious engagement is in fact going on across the building. So I think we have -- I take your point. If we were simply thinking great theoretical thoughts at the State Department here, this would end up -- we'd produce a lot of paper that nobody would read, and would die on somebody's hard drive in 30 years when they all turn to dust. And that's not what we are trying to do. We are trying actually to change practice on the ground, so that our government is more sophisticated on these issues, or globally on the very important issues we've talked about.

So I take your point, but it's not as if we are starting from zero. Even in my office, where, we are trying to be -- I tell people, we are doing a listening tour inside the building as well as globally. Trying to understand who has equities inside the building in terms of religious engagement already, and it's been an astonishingly large menu of practice that we've uncovered.

MR. GALSTON: Peter, Sara, is that a fully -- satisfactory answer from the standpoint of the conversation --

MS. SILVESTRI: I have something, quickly. Obviously I agree fully that the practice is very important, but I'd say, practices can be informed by assumptions. So

we do need to work with these assumptions and be able to break them as we push for the practice. For instance, when it comes to the debate on religion and democracy, the practice of engaging on the topic work -- as long as we start from a sort of candid, humble point of view, that doesn't associate to some permanent fix -- features to a religious group in relation to its position to democracy.

Because the positioning of a group, of a faith community, in relation to the democratic process, may change depending on the economic political security conditions. So this is what I wanted to add.

MR. GALSTON: Thank you. Yes. Continuing up that side, the gentleman on the aisle, and then I'll move over here.

SPEAKER: I'm Alan Keese, with the Middle East Institute, and a Retired Foreign Service Officer. I chaired a Pane -- actually a conference -- of about 30 diplomats, and religious leaders, in Doha a year ago. Anyway, my question I think is largely to Peter and Sara. To what extent have you reached down and sort of used diplomats to draw them out, to bring the types of experiences in which it would be useful? Because it seems to me that your recommendations are very formulaic, and standard sort of thing.

The problem A -- or this is solution A, and what we need is something much more specific that draws on the experiences, getting any (inaudible) to talk about how it could have been useful at some points in the past, that sort of thing.

MR. GALSTON: Yes? No?

MR. MANDEVILLE: Sure. Thanks for raising that point Alan. I mean our project really was couched in a specific institutional space, in terms of the transatlantic relationship between a set of -- a select subset foreign policy officials, who

have been thinking about how to integrate this work the sort of day-to-day, routinized operation of particular bureaus and offices.

And one point that did come up very quickly is the idea that, look, there are plenty of people who have been out there doing this. Right, and this echoes the point that Shaun just made that, you know, this is not new, you might not always hear about it, but there was a lot of this. One of the things that the State Department did, as part of the preparation of laying the groundwork for what eventually became Shaun's office, was to undertake an inventory of the vast array of religious engagement activities that our diplomats take, you know, across a wide variety of context.

And this sort of diversity, and the learning associated with that is enormous. And so I think, part of the potential that Shaun's office has, and I think this is reflected in the way that the White House's National Strategy for Religious Engagement is being pursued, is precisely to take set of countries and use them as case studies. Where this kind of work has gone one, and that's exactly what's going on right now, and you know, Shaun might want to say a little bit more that at some point.

But it's precisely about pointing to the things that are already being done, and showcasing that work as examples of the best practices, right. That are not just saying, oh, you need to train people more, or we need a new office. But is rather saying, look, this is living, breathing stuff that is already going on in the day-to-day work, on another, and although it might not be in the headlines, and it might not be reflected in the names of bureaus and offices, it's fundamental to what we do, and so let's showcase it, and help others to see the value of it.

MR. GALSTON: Okay. Merete?

MS. BILDE: Just a quick point to add. One of the things we have done in an EU context is we have drawn in some of our former ambassadors for the training of

younger generations. Also because when you've become a former ambassador sometimes you become a little bit more vocal, and yet you know the game. And that's a very useful resource, because when we have trainers coming from the academia, or the academic world, sometimes there's a bit of lost in translation kind of -- they don't understand the setting we are in, and yet they have a huge knowledge base, but it's not so relevant, we need someone who can juggle that interface.

MR. GALSTON: Thank you. I see a woman in this row, and then I'm going to move to the gentleman back there.

MS. MANDELSTAM BALZER: Marjorie Mandelstam Balzer, Georgetown University. In the interests of getting to specific cases, I was hoping that Shaun Casey would be able to tell us what those three countries are, but my other question is, is of the Ukraine. Because you mentioned "even" Ukraine, and indeed, especially Ukraine right now could use some serious data information about the full ranges of diversities of religions, including some of the issues with the Crimean Tatars. So I'm just wondering how much on the scope of the U.S. State Department this is, and what's -- what you can say if you can say anything.

MR. CASEY: What I'll tell you, I arrived at the State Department when the National Strategy was finished, so it was handed to me. It was finished almost exactly the day I started, and I was going -- which is always an interesting exercise. This is going to be your governing document, and oh, by the way, you didn't have any input on it. Which is fine, it's a great document. And it called -- it simply called for three case studies, so then I went to the Interagency Meeting, and the goal was to pick three countries. I left with 45 countries on my legal pad, and I realize, we have a problem here.

And so in the next Interagency Meeting, we generated a criteria, and then the next meeting after that we pushed all 45 countries through that criteria. You

know, I'd rather not list the countries right now, I think, because we are still analyzing the data we collected, and we are still ramping up for the second one, so we are still too much in process for me, but I will tell you Ukraine is not one of them.

In fact, one of the criteria we selected was a permissive security environment, and right I'm not -- I know Crimea doesn't count, and Eastern Ukraine probably doest count for, you know, middle-aged, State Department bureaucrats to be traipsing around unescorted, that it's probably -- it's not going to quality. But hopefully some of the lessons we learn can in fact then shape how we respond in hot spots like Ukraine. That's ultimately the goal of these field exercises.

MR. GALSTON: Okay. The gentleman and -- there you go.

MR. LEMON: Michael Lemmon, Former Foreign Service Officer. I wanted to build on a remark and an observation that Sara said, that I thought was very important, and that is that religious faith or secular belief systems, are an organic part of each human being, not something you can disaggregate out and put aside. That's it's a way -- it's an integral part of the way that human beings see the world, interpret particular events, analyze problems, issues, et cetera. And that this one way of getting at this larger problem of, well, are we going to validate religious belief here as some sort of different thing.

Merete's point about, how do you pragmatically, practically integrate that into training? One way that has been tried, more or less, successfully over the years, is language training. Where you learn a language and -- and (inaudible) off on the side for a while, in its cultural context. Cultural context written large. That includes all of the belief systems. Or, more importantly, or more precisely, the multiple competing narratives of the others present in any given region or country that you're going to.

And that can provide a more practical, pragmatic ongoing and integrated way to build on Sara's important point, how do you understand these multiple competing narratives of the many folks that you're trying to deal with. Be it in Ukraine, or in Turkey, or in Egypt, or Iraq, wherever it might be, and do it in a way that prepares the average person who is going out there in a way that they don't have to take a special Religion 101 Course.

MR. GALSTON: Well, as usual an effort to pursue one form of equality, leads to a different form of inequality, and in the back-to-front exercise I've neglected the side-to-side equality, and okay, and I am going to -- I'm going to start with E.J. Dionne and move forward, and then move forward, and then move backward.

MR. DIONNE: Thank you, Bill. For you -- I appreciate your broad egalitarianism. I just -- I was -- Shaun mentioned Teddy White, whom I admire. There's a great, surprisingly relevant Teddy White story when he was a correspondent in China. What he saw in China did not comport with what his publisher, Henry Lue saw in China. And so he sort of filed his reports, and what appeared in the magazine had nothing to do with his reports, and he once said in frustration, I send them the Bible and they print the Koran.

But I wanted to -- I want to ask the Panel a question that has nagged at me, and that I don't have an adequate answer. I still don't have an adequate answer. So it's really two questions that relate. The first is the inherent difficulty of this enterprise, because in a sense everything we are talking about is dealing with religion instrumentally on behalf of the national interest of a particular countries, yet it is the very nature of religious faith that it should not be dealt with instrumentally. I mean to sort of sharpen it a bit, there are many, many, many, maybe most religious people believe their commitment to God trumps their commitment to the nation state.

So, this is almost the flip side, the secular objection to this is, you know, you just shouldn't deal with religion, but the other side's objection is, if you're going to deal with it only instrumentally, what respect does that show to religion? And then the related question is on the matter of liberal democracy. I think the whole Panel, most of us are committed to liberal democracy, but if you are you inevitably are entering into theological questions, because traditions, not only disagree among themselves, but traditions are sharply split in their attitudes toward liberal democracy. And my own Catholic tradition, the difference between Pius the Knight, and the John XXIII is rather substantial, although in the Catholic Church they like to say the doctrine didn't change, it developed.

And so it's sort of the same question which is, how can you do this work and still respect the integrity of faith, and how do you avoid getting involved in theological questions, when the very matter of liberal democracy and what this relationship is to a tradition, is itself a theological question?

MR. GALSTON: Do you want to take that one?

MS. BILDE: Shall I go first?

MR. GALSTON: Sure.

MS. BILDE: It's easier for us because we don't do that. Simply, I mean, I know this is a public session so I should probably watch my big tongue, but it's a pleasure to sit next to Shaun Casey, but I don't think he'll have a European counterpart. I don't think we will do religious leaders like that, and I'm not the right person to say whether religious leaders in the American objective will instrumentalized or not, that's not my position.

But to say I -- I still share the view that they have an important role to play, and especially now that we are sort of shifting from the paradigm that we were in for

a long time, which had lots to do with security, 9/11 CBE, to something which has to do with the resilience, the consolidation, the inclusive societies, et cetera, et cetera.

But I would like to pick up on the point also, by the gentleman over here, to say our -- we are secular and what religious tradition will we validate? We would never go there. We talk about the secular bias, that doesn't mean we say that there's something wrong with secularism, we just need to be aware of our bias and how it -- how it shapes the way we see the world, and that leads me to your point on liberal democracy.

We have to question a little bit the assumptions that we have. We have had a very interesting three years in the MENA region where uprisings have led to something which we were quick to say that's going to be a transition towards democracy. We looked at the political actors that came along. We may not have trusted them, but if they played along with the rules we would work with them, et cetera, et cetera. Who said that liberal democracy is the only form for accountable governments in the world? And I think it's very important there also to build on the work that's done elsewhere. I know the German Marshall Fund is looking a little bit at these issues about the Liberal World Order, to what extend is that global buy-in to this?

But not because we should sellout, but just that we should look at the world as it is. And also there was this assumption that the new political actors would come to force and be like the old political actors. Well, your worldview, if you were a very strong Muslim leader, that you have a tendency to be very conservative. That will play out in our you see the world. That will play out the politics you want to see, it will even play out in the foreign policy.

I mean, it was almost to the point, and now I'm characterizing, that we sort of say, okay, Arab uprising, box, constitution elections, and out on the other side comes something which looks like us, smells like us, and we can work with it. Foreign

policy also, it's different, and it's all different, and what do we -- how do we best do ourselves a favor? Do we do it by clinging on to what we know? Or, knowing what we stand for, but looking at the reality straight in the eyes and say, hang on a minute there's another dynamic out there, how do we factor in religion? Not to validate it, not to increase it, but just to be a little bit smarter.

MR. GALSTON: Mm-hmm. If I could just make a procedural announcement. It's now 11:30, and I've been watching the body language as well as the movement, and virtually it's been an-hour-and-a-half, and virtually no one has left. That tells me something. That is, I think that there is a demand in the room that this dialogue continue. Now, obviously people who have appointments are free to get up and leave. And I don't think there's anyone on the podium who absolutely has a hard stop at 11:30, please tell me.

Okay. So we can -- I think we can safely extend this for 15 minutes, and I think that's a very good -- a very good idea, and Shaun wants to answer EJ's question, then I'm going to move forward.

MR. CASEY: I have six things listed. I'm not going to say all six. But let me say, first of all, instrumentalization is a two-way street. The 300 religious leaders who have come to see me, are putting far more pressure on me for the U.S. Government to institute their policies, and I -- to my knowledge I've not really moved any of them to adopt positions they didn't want to adopt. That's number one. Number two --

SPEAKER: Whose instrument?

MR. CASEY: Indeed. Indeed. You know, and trust me, there's a lot of Christian theology that says you shouldn't view the state in an instrumental fashion, and an lot of people will acknowledge that, but in practice these folks want specific things from the U.S. Government, and they want specific things from me.

And it's not really a parody there, frankly, between us. I think you are too modest. I think you do want certain religious groups around the world to stop doing certain things, and start doing others. So to the extent that's what instrumentalization mean, I think you do that in the EU too.

I think the key is, number one, we are transparent. You know, I've told you about the policies we are abdicating generally. We are fighting extreme poverty, we are promoting human rights, we are trying to mitigate conflict. That's not a mystery, you can read page after page after page on a website, about that is our mission, that is what we do. Do we try to coerce people to do things clandestinely, or things we know that will violate their own deeply-held precepts? I have not done that. I'm not -- if I feel, and my office was there to persuade and coerce religious groups to do things that violated their own theological precepts, I would quit today.

Now, sometimes I make the most robust arguments I know to different theological communities about why they should, in fact, align themselves with certain policies. At the end of the day I'm very clear, you should process this through your own theological lenses, and your own philosophical orientations, and tell me to take a hike if you're tired of listening to my arguments.

So, I mean, I have to be very clear. We do represent very specific, well-articulated -- well, at least theoretically well-articulated policies, and that's what we are asking people to do. And if at the end of the day they look at it and say, this violates our conscience, this violates our precepts, we can't do it. I say, fine, my work here is done we'll see you next time.

I do think we have to be continuously self-critical. And trust me, one of the common characteristics of the hundreds of religious leaders who come in, they are not reticent about being critical of the U.S. Government, or about my own behavior. So

we have a lot of data to process in our interaction when people say, that's a mistake, of you've just done something really stupid and let me tell you how to get smart.

Lastly, you know, this is frankly -- this is in the research question that's driven my whole academic career. What are the political and social implications of religious belief and practice? I mean, that's the thread that runs through my bizarre career to this point, and well, I hope, continue to sustain it. And I -- where I come from philosophically, and theologically, I do not believe government should be manipulating and coercing religious groups to do things that would, in fact, violate their principles.

So maybe I'm the wrong guy for this job, but so far they've not asked me, in the State Department, to do that with respect to any faith group. We have the power of persuasion, we try to do no harm. And so the -- so I think the instrumentalization question is actually more nuanced than complicated. Are we asking people to do things? Indeed we are. Are we trying to do it clandestinely? Are we trying to manipulate, and trying to coerce them? I would argue we are not doing that.

MR. GALSTON: Peter, you wanted to get in on this.

MR. MANDAVILLE: Well, Shaun said it.

MR. GALSTON: Okay. I will then move forward.

MR. CAREY: Hi. Galen Carey, with the National Association of Evangelicals. We were one of the groups that worked a lot on the International Religious Freedom Act. So this is a question for the European Panelist. The position of Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom was vacant for the first two-and-a-half years of the Obama Administration. And then it's now -- it's again been vacant for the better part of a year.

Advocates are often distressed and worry that this is presenting a message to dictators that it's fine to oppress religious freedom because we are -- at least

the U.S. is not really watching all that closely. So my question is, what message has this sent to European governments, if any; and what do you observe to be the message to other countries?

MR. GALSTON: Thank you.

MS. SILVESTRI: Well although -- actually Merete can say much more in a moment. Although the European Union has also developed religious freedom also to agenda and guidelines and so on, and in particular the European Parliament has been very active also. I think that so far, European governments have sort of not prioritize that side of the story, they have -- they are more concerned with the broader human rights agenda, and they have tried to address issues of religious freedom within that.

From my analysis of what Europeans are looking into foreign policies and transformation, political processes that are going on, on this side of the Atlantic, the absence of a person in that post has not been noticed in a large way.

MR. GALSTON: Any other responses to this?

MS. BILDE: I would cautiously agree with Sara, but I would say, it's probably also because our work, and the way we work with the U.S. is as much with your instruments, we use the reports that we have. We still come into (inaudible), it doesn't mean that there's all of sudden none. So how the U.S. chooses to organize themselves and the rapidity with which they appoint, is something which we don't -- I mean, officially we would never have an opinion about it, but since you're a nice guy, I'll try to answer.

But I think when we see these Ambassadors at Large, and the way they connect with the European system, they also tend to have a sort of approach which may favor their own positions, and I'm hesitating whether I should say this, but we have been under a fair amount of pressure from our European Parliamentarians who seem to be very fond of your system, and who, sometimes you sense they want to do a copy/paste,

et cetera without bringing -- taking into account the way in which we think on human rights.

So my bet would be that our EUSR on human rights will remain, and he will remain the only one, and he's a very good guy, and he will talk to whoever you have on your side.

MR. GALSTON: This gives me an opportunity -- oh, Peter, you have body language there.

MR. MANDAVILLE: I just wanted to put a slightly sharper on that question, which is to say that I don't think European colleagues are really missing and IRF Ambassador, because I don't think they ever really paid much attention to the position in the first place. Others on the Panel can't say that, but I think that's the case.

MR. GALSTON: This actually opens the door to the only piece of selfishness that I've permitted myself in nearly two hours. That is to say, I'm going to pose the last question, because it's just perfectly teed up by the commentary that just occurred. And that is that Merete said in her opening remarks that she identified, quite directly, a difference, a conceptual difference between the United States and the EU, with perhaps some practical implications.

The theoretical conceptual difference, as I understand it, is that Europeans see religious liberty within this broad tableau of human rights. And if I can put a gloss what you said, religious liberty is not necessarily elevated above, you know, it's a horizontal relationship. Well, there's this and there's this, and oh, yes, there's religious liberty. I think it's fair to say that in the United States, if I were to generalize about the collective opinion on that subject, it's no accident that many people refer to religious liberty as "the first freedom."

It's no accident -- I mean, it's no accident that in our Constitution religion has both special abilities and special disabilities. There is, you know, we could establish a secular doctrine. Indeed, we establish all sorts of secular doctrines, but we cannot have our government in the business of endorsing a particular religion, in the same way that our pedagogy endorses the theory of evolution, or government institutions endorse Keynesian economics, right.

We can do that, but we can't enshrine Methodism as the religion of the land and -- so, at any rate, my question is, if I have this difference, right, that is that, you know, religious liberty is regarded as an important human good on both sides of the Atlantic, but it's elevated above other goods and rights here to a greater extent than it is in Europe. What kind of practical difference does that make?

I think we've already -- we've already heard one. Or do you disagree with the analysis, Shaun?

MR. CASEY: I would do -- I quibbled a little bit, but it's probably such a boring quibble, maybe we can talk about it.

MR. GALSTON: All right.

MR. CASEY: I think your last question is more interesting, what difference does it make institutionally? Listen, I think it's a good thing that different governments approach religious engagement from radically different perspectives. I think we need to celebrate that diversity, I think we need to learn from each other. The notion that one government should impose their limited experience on the rest of is an anathema to me. I mean, by training and inclination, I'm much -- I'm resistant to grand theory that explains it all.

I celebrate the fact that the more accolades we have in this space, the wiser we are going to be over time. So the fact that we have a mechanism that is

different EU's on this participants human right, troubles me not in the least, because we can understand the history behind it. It's not arbitrary it's anchored in our unique history.

The institutional difference is, we do put out that annual report, which is in fact the gold standard. It is cut and pasted all over the world, so that when we identify particular incidents and problems around the globe, global attention is drawn to that space, and I would argue, that is a value-added, whether we have the IRF Ambassador in place or not, that indeed the report still comes out every year, and people across the world look to that as a bright, shining light on the state of religious freedom in their space and in others.

And we don't need 199 countries issuing their own reports, I don't that -- that's not what we need here, we need other people to reflect on what does religious freedom mean in their own country and in their own region. This is simply one tool that the American Government now, has gotten very good at doing, and I think we should continue to do it, because it sheds light, and spread data around the world for other people to engage.

I don't count it a deficit that there's not an IRF Ambassador in EU, and you don't do a report. I don't think there's a demand for that. So I actually celebrate the institutional diversity on that issue.

MR. GALSTON: You're going to make a fabulous government official, but I knew that already. (Laughter)

MR. CASEY: Thank you, I think.

MR. GALSTON: Any other comments there?

MS. BILDE: I'd just like to add that, if you turn the question around, does that mean by not having this that we are less committed to freedom of religion and belief? And there I would strongly say no. It's a question of household, and we do refer to this

freedom as a fundamental -- as the fundamental right, but we see it in a context, and that's also why, after having done the policy line on freedom of religion belief, we do not stop. We press on with the one on freedom of expression.

We see it as a part of a freedom of association, freedom of assembly, et cetera, et cetera. So it's a way of looking at things in a context. It does not mean that we delude the waters, and that we are not committed. I think our colleagues would be -- in Brussels would be horrified if that was the impression. And I think when our (inaudible) on human rights goes on his various missions he's very clear on this. I mean it's a whole package and there's no sellout.

MR. GALSTON: I'm just going to -- you know, I'm going to introduce a mischievous note here, you know, because this has been such a ameliorative and consensus-building Panel, I will just say publicly what I said privately yesterday. I think it does make a difference. There are discussions of issues such as circumcision and ritual slaughter in Europe that would simply not occur at such high levels in the United States.

And so, and there was one -- you know, there was one minister, you know, who went so far as to say that "Animal rights trump religion," and I quote. That's not something that would be said here in the United States, I can assure you. And as a matter of fact the Supreme Court said just the reverse. Any last comments before we wrap up?

MR. MANDEVILLE: Well, you know, on the religious freedom question, Bill, I think it's absolutely, you know, the case of course that religious freedom has a particular valence in the American value imaginary by virtue of this country's history. And that's natural, and that's as it should be. And I want to be clear that my assault, as it were, on the current institutional mechanisms for advancing religious freedom are driven by my own support for that value. And a conviction that the way that the way that we are

doing it now s not the most effective way to advance that agenda, if indeed we truly do care about it.

I think there is great value that has come from aspects of the reporting mechanisms. It's given, for example, a platform to communities around the world that have otherwise had to pursue their claims and grievances through an already difficult, broader human rights agenda. It's given them a platform to say, hey, that's me. Constraints on my freedom of conscience and belief, that's me, and thank you for giving me a space to make that heard.

At the same time, however, I do think that as a happenstance of the last 10 years, and the domestic U.S. politics around it, the current mechanisms are so tainted that they are not really fulfilling their function. And rather I would love to see the United States Congress get serious about prompting the State Department and other foreign policy entities to advance more robustly, human rights.

MR. CASEY: I'd like to see the United States Congress get serious about anything.

MR. GALSTON: On this happy note, please join me in thanking a superb Panel for a superb dialogue. (Applause)

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