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PARTICIPANTS:

Featured Speaker:

SHIBLEY TELHAMI
Nonresident Senior Fellow, the Brookings Institution
Anwar Sadat Chair for Peace and Development,
University of Maryland

Introduction and Moderator:

TAMARA COFMAN WITTES
Senior Fellow and Director, Center for Middle East Policy
The Brookings Institution

Discussant:

WILLIAM A. GALSTON
Senior Fellow and Ezra K. Zilkha Chair in Governance Studies
The Brookings Institution

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MS. WITTES: Ladies and gentlemen, thank you so much for joining us. I'm Tamara Wittes, Director of the Center for Middle East Policy here at Brookings. I'm delighted to welcome you to the latest in an annual series of events which our Non Resident Senior Fellow Shibley Telhami launches the results of his public opinion polling. Now those of you who have followed this for a number of years know that Shibley's polling has taken him around the region, around the Arab world. Last year he did a poll of Israelis and Palestinians, very innovative methodology. And this year we are launching the results of Shibley's survey of American public opinion on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. And it's particularly timely to focus in on this dimension of public opinion and foreign policy. It's timely because I think most of us looking at where the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is today find ourselves looking with skepticism, some I think with hopelessness at the prospect for a negotiated resolution. When we held this event last year there were negotiations ongoing between Israelis and Palestinians sponsored by the United States and driven by Secretary of State Kerry. As we meet today of course those negotiations have collapsed. And in the months since they collapsed we have seen tensions escalate on the ground in and around Jerusalem, and of course the horrific violence of the conflict in Gaza this summer. So it's a moment I think of reevaluation for Israelis and Palestinians, particularly now as Israelis are embarking on a new national election, but it's also a moment of reevaluation for regional actors and for the United States. And this is also of course part of a broader reevaluation by Americans and the American leadership of our country's role in the Middle East as we have embarked now on a new campaign against ISIS in Iraq and Syria.

And so this is perhaps the perfect moment to get a closer look not only at what Americans think about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, what their preferred outcomes

are, but also why they think those things. Who within the American body politic cares most about this issue and what are the lenses through which they develop their views? And it's important to answer those questions not only to understand the snapshot of the moment, but where American public opinion on this issue is headed over time. And I'm really grateful to Shibley for putting together I think a very innovative poll, with some fascinating data that he will share with you in a moment.

I'm also very grateful that we have this morning to help us under the poll results and the context for these poll results. Bill Galston, our Ezra Zilkha Chair in Governance Studies here at Brookings, Bill is somebody who is steeped in the debates that have been swirling over the last couple of years about America's role in the world, America's role in the Middle East, and just how much should American leaders feel themselves constrained by what has clearly emerged in American public opinion as a reticence about international entanglements. And so Bill is going to add his perspective to our discussion today.

I just want to add as well that of course as is true each year this poll launch coincides with the beginning of the Center for Middle East Policies Annual Saban Forum which opens formally this evening. This is our annual opportunity to bring together senior American and Israeli leaders from politics, from business, from the media, from civil society, and they come together for a dialogue mostly behind closed doors for three days of intense discussion on the future of the U.S.-Israel relationship and the challenges that the two countries confront in the Middle East. There will be some public events over the course of the weekend and you can find webcasts of those events on our website. And for those of you who are social media gurus we encourage you to tweet about today's event and about the other public components of the Forum using #Saban14 for the 2014 Saban Forum.

So with no further ado, Shibley, let me invite you up to the podium to present your poll results and then we'll go on with our discussion. Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. TELHAMI: Thanks a lot, Tammy; thank you for hosting this and for moderating the panel. I also want to thank a few more people including the Program for Policy Consultation that has helped us with this poll, my colleagues, Steve Kull, Evan Lewis, Clay Ramsey, my research assistant Katayoun Kishi. I also want to thank a few people at Brookings who really put something wonderful together, Elizabeth Pierce, Rachel Slattery, Ann Peckham, and Gail Chalef. You know, this poll on American public attitudes toward the Israeli-Palestinian issue I've been conducting for over 20 years actually. And in fact 20 years ago I published an article in *International Studies Quarterly* with my colleague Jon Krosnick on what we can issue importance and American attitudes toward the Israel-Palestine question, and our theory was that it's not enough to probe public attitudes in the United States, but you have to look at who are the groups who most passionately care about this issue because we know in our politics, you know, groups that care most about an issue matter most for policy makers. Those are the active groups on that issue, that's what policy makers pay attention to. So we've done that over -- we have a track record of it, but this time we still probed there but we go in slightly different directions, and you'll see that some things haven't changed much, but some things have changed a lot in a way that is consequential both for policy and certainly for partisan politics in the United States.

Let me just walk you through some of the findings. These are some of the key findings. Obviously a longer poll, and by the way in a few weeks here at Brookings we also are going to be releasing another part of the poll which is on how the Americans see the ISIS threat. Why are Americans so worried about ISIS? What is it

that made them more accepting of intervention while they weren't just, you know, a few months before? So we're probing into that; we're going to have that here. This is going to focus on some of the key findings just on the Israel-Palestine issue. And it's divided into three parts. The first part is just what are the positions with some of the key issues of the day and it how it changed from last year. One is how people rank this issue in their priorities, and the third one how people who rank the issue high on their priorities differ in their attitudes on some of the key issues of the day. So there are really three parts.

So let me go through it. First of all methodologically this is a national survey of 1008 Americans field by GFK which is one of the most respected probability based on line polling firms here in the U.S., and the margin of error after the design correction is ± 3.4 percent. Any of you can go on line, the Brookings website and actually get all that information and more beyond the key findings that we have.

Let me start with the first question which has to do with what Americans want American diplomacy to push for. Do they want the U.S. to push for two states, for one state, for annexation without equal citizenship, or maintain the status quo basically as it is. We asked this question last year as well, a year ago exactly, and last year we also had 39 percent of those asked said they want American policy to push for two states. We have exactly the same number. What has changed is that last year we only had 24 percent say we want American foreign policy to push for one state, now we have 34 percent say. It almost -- you know, if you look at the margin of error, ± 3.4 percent, it's pretty close, one state versus two states. And we'll talk about that little bit in the conversation as to what that means. When you look at the divide, republican and democrat, independent divide you find, you know, more support among democrats for both two states and one state than you find among republicans. If the approach you selected turns over time to be impossible, which of the remaining three would you prefer?

This was asked of those who endorsed a two state solution, the 39 percent who said that's their preference. And you see that in that group 66 percent then say they would then support a one state solution. This is a slight increase over last year, it was about 63 percent, but really within the margin of error from last year. And it's even more so among democrats. If you look -- I know this is fine print, but if you look at the bars blue is democrat, red is republican, and in between are independents. And you can see the big numbers, 75 percent of democrats, 70 percent of independents, and 51 percent of republicans then would advocate a one state. Even among republicans, let's say even among republicans you're going to see as we go through a huge divide between democrats and republicans on almost every one of these issues.

Here is an issue that we also probed last year, but one that is increasingly timely because of the so called nationality law in Israel that is controversial and being debated. And so we asked the question which of the following statements is closer to your view if the two state solution is not an option. And we spell it out by the way; this is just a summary of it. Favor Israel's democracy over Jewishness, we explain what it means, and the same thing, I favor Jewishness of Israel more than its democracy, we explain what that means. And you have 71 percent of Americans then say they're closer to the view that they prefer democracy over Jewishness. That is also an increase from last year. Last year we had 65 percent say that, this year we have 71 percent say that. Now here it is also striking to look while it's true for every category of Americans, you look at a republican, democrat, independent, 84 percent of democrats, 68 percent of independents, 60 percent of republicans still favor that, but again there's still a big difference between republicans and democrats.

In general what role do you want the United State to play in mediating the conflict, lean toward Israel, lean toward the Palestinians, lean toward neither side.

This is basically a question we have asked for years, this is not new. And we get more or less similar breakdown. Usually people who say they want the U.S. to lean toward neither side are roughly two thirds, they go from 60-70 percent depending on the year. What varies a little bit is the lean toward Israel, lean toward Palestinians, but the ratio is always huge in favor of Israel. That has not changed all that much actually. And the question is what is the meaning of that. And you'll see later on that it breaks down differently for different parties. Now here look at the huge difference between democrats and independents on one side and republicans on the other. It's stunning actually in some ways, it's like two Americas. You have 77 percent of democrats say they want the U.S. to lean toward neither side, 70 percent toward Israel, 6 percent toward the Palestinians. Independents, 73 percent want the U.S. to lean toward neither side. With republicans look at the difference, 51 percent to 40 percent. Fifty one percent say lean toward Israel and 46 percent say lean toward neither side. So incredible difference between republicans and democrats and independents on this one.

When you say you want the U.S. to lean toward Israel which one of the following reasons is closest to your view? So we probe to see what is it that's driving people who say they want the U.S. to lean toward Israel. So this is only asked of people who said they want the U.S. to lean toward Israel. And so you can see the number two reasons people give are shared values and they feel that it serves American interests. But you do have 21 percent who say they feel their religious or ethnic duty to lean toward Israel. You see that's an interesting divide as you'll see in the analysis, particularly divide between evangelical Christians and Jewish Americans. When you look at it at the level of party divide you find that among democrats only about 10 percent say they feel a religious or ethnic duty to lean toward Israel versus -- that's the top line -- if you look at the top line, that 10 percent blue, that's the people who say it's because they feel a

religious or ethnic duty. If you look at the bottom line among republicans, the red, the top line, 27 percent is republicans who say they feel it's their religious or ethnic duty. So there's a lot more kind of, you know, affinity based on religious or ethnic duty among the republicans than among democrats.

If the Palestinians proceed with their plan to push for state at the UN what do you think the U.S. should do as a member of the UN Security Council, abstain from voting, vote against the resolution, use the veto power if necessary to prevent it, vote in favor of endorsing the Palestinian state. And those are the choices and you can see that a plurality 45 percent basically say abstain. You have 27 percent who say vote against it, 25 percent, roughly the same if you take the margin of error into account, support it. So, you know, essentially roughly a quarter of the population wants the U.S. to veto, otherwise abstain or vote for. That's even if you break it down again, republican-democrats, you find a lot more support for voting in favor among democrats than among republicans. That's not a surprise.

The Israeli government has continued to build settlements, arguing that they have the right to do so or that these are not obstacles to peace. How do you believe that the U.S. should react to new settlements? So what we have here is you can see that really the public doesn't favor taking tough action. I mean what you see is 11 percent say take -- look at the first line which is -- the second line I mean, 28 percent says impose some economic sanctions, and the top line is impose even more serious sanctions. Combined together you have 39 percent, a minority obviously, who want to impose more. Thirty four percent say limit the U.S. opposition toward and twenty seven percent say do nothing. And yet when you ask them about is it all right for Israel to build settlements or not you'll find that 63 percent oppose building settlements and 34 percent support building settlements. And the divide among republicans-democrats again is huge. Even

republicans, a slight majority, opposes settlements but only a slight majority, 51 percent versus 75 percent for democrats who oppose settlements.

Now this is a question about challenging the U.S. in the Middle East. Which one of the following do you believe threatens American interests more? This is actually about comparing the Israel-Palestine in terms of its threat to American interest versus issues like the Iranian policy that instability in Libya and the rise of ISIS. And here is a story that is really fascinating because this is across the divide. Look at the long blue line, the long middle line, and the long red line. They're roughly the same, roughly 70 percent of Americans overall think that ISIS is the top threat in the Middle East by far. And look at that in comparison to Iran or the issue of Palestine question. We'll come back to that.

Now I want to go quickly through issue importance, and that is so okay, so this is general public opinion. Now how about people who really care about this issue, who rank it either number one or in the top three priorities? Who are they and how do they feel? So let's go through it very quickly. So when you think about U.S. interest how important an issue is the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? You see that here we have five percent say their top -- look from the bottom up -- five percent say it's the single most important issue, sixteen percent say it's in the top three. Now remember this is for comparison purposes. Doesn't mean that this is really -- 21 percent think it's more important than the economy or more important than other issues because you have to have comparison to do that. It tells you that within that segment these people rank it more than the others. So this is good for cross-sectional analysis, not to look at it as absolute term, this is how Americans view this issue. And you'll see that actually when we look at a couple of other issues. For example, we asked them how about maintaining international law? How important to you is maintaining international law? We have nine

percent say it's the top issue, eighteen percent say it's among the top three.

Now the one issue that I really wanted to probe this year which I had a hunch on particularly the Democratic Party is human rights. Because I think that's an issue that a lot of people care a lot about and it has been an active constituency. I wanted to see how people rank it and what the position is on these issues. And what we find is that it really is a big issue. Twenty for percent of those polled say it's the single most important issue in American foreign policy for them, and another twenty nine percent say it's among the top three. So you've got roughly -- it's slightly more than a majority think about it's either single most important or in the top three. In comparison you can see international law or the Israel-Palestine question.

Now when it comes to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict would you say you are most concerned about the conflict, about international law, most concerned about protecting human rights, most concerned about Palestinian interests, most concerned about American interests, most concerned about Israeli interests. So we're trying to probe to see when people take up this issue what is their key concern here about the Israel-Palestine question if they're concerned at all. And what we find is human rights is actually the number one issue, 31 percent. And we find American interest at 24 percent, Israeli interest 14 percent. And then international law is another eight percent. So you got 39 percent say it's either human rights or international law, but human rights is by far number one. And we already see how people care about it in their priorities.

Now when you break it down by parties it's even more stunning than that. I mean you have 42 percent of democrats they say that's the prism through which they see the Israel-Palestine question. And if you add international law another 10 percent you have essentially 52 percent who say it's either human rights or international law. That's the prism through which they view this issue, more so than independents and

more so certainly than republicans.

Which of the following statement is closest to your view, the Palestinian-Israeli violence will not affect support for ISIS or its strategies, Palestinian-Israeli violence is likely to be used by ISIS to draw support for Muslims and target the U.S. and Israel. That's what we said in the full outlay of the question. Now you could see that roughly two thirds of Americans actually think that it matters, that the Israel-Palestine question matters for the fighting the ISIS issue. It's interesting because if you recall Secretary of State John Kerry got criticized for suggesting that, you know, the violence on the Israel-Palestine question may actually fuel support for ISIS. Well, here's the interesting thing, not only is it true at the public, but look at the breakdown. Actually 71 percent of republicans think it fuels more violence, it fuels ISIS a little bit more. So it's a fascinating story.

Let me end with just a bunch of questions, the section on -- how does this matter? You know, how do people who care deeply about the issue think about these issues, you know, what's their position? So I want to start by the question of in general what role do you want the United States to play in mediating the conflict, lean toward Israel, lean toward neither side, lean toward the Palestinians. Broken down by people who rank it among the top three, single or among the top five -- or not in the top five, no, the bottom category of course is those who refuse, but if you look at the others you can see that people who rank the issue overall in the population higher in their priorities, 55 percent want to lean toward Israel. So those people who care most deeply about the issue nationally, they generally tend to be more pro Israel. And that has been true actually really from the beginning when 20 years ago we started doing these things; that hasn't changed. But something else has changed that this doesn't capture. And one thing is the divide among the republicans and democrats on this very issue because 20

years ago there was very little difference between republicans and democrats on this issue, very little. It was kind of a national sample. I want to show you what we have now. If you look at democrats, just look at the democrats separately, and look at that. People who ranked the issue higher in their priorities are pretty much the same as the norm of the rest of the population which is 30 percent say lean toward Israel, 57 percent say lean toward neither side. Very, very different -- quite the opposite of what you see on the republican side. So issue importance yes matters overall but if you're a politician you're thinking about it terms of what is your constituency; democrats and independents definitely a different breakdown on this issue. More importantly on matters like the Jewishness of Israel you can also see that the breakdown on or the position among those people who care most deeply about this issue, who said that it's either the single most important to them or in the top three, this is roughly twenty percent of the American population. What you find here is that on the issue of favoring Israel's democracy over Jewishness you still have a majority even among those who rank the issue highest in their priorities favoring democracy. Lesser numbers, 54 to 42 in comparison to those who don't care much or top five where you have three quarters favoring it. So obviously the consequences of and the meaning, the policy meaning of leaning toward Israel isn't so clear on some of the issues. This one is clear here in terms of where people break down.

Let me just go down to this one. Again if you look at it, you know, democrats who rank the issue high on their priorities again, you know, on this issue Jewishness, look at the numbers, 66 percent still want to, you know, prefer democracy over Jewishness. So the breakdown is sustained.

Which of the following statements is closer to your view if a two state solution is not an option, Jewishness or democracy. Here we break it down by those

Americans who identify themselves as evangelical or born again Christians. That's a significant, significant segment of the public, you know, close to 30 percent of the public. It's not small; between 25 and 30 percent varies from year to year. But look at the difference here. So when you look at it it's really quite telling because, you know, they're pretty much divided on the Jewishness versus democracy. You know, slightly more, but within the margin of error prefer democracy versus the rest of the population. Very, very dramatic difference.

Now we did something -- you know, on additional policies I want to go through just very quickly. I just want to share one more slide which is among Jewish Americans. I have to say a little bit about the sample here. As you know there are only about -- roughly two percent of the population is Jewish American. In our sample we were able to capture roughly five percent in part because there's a little bit more for example and people who identify their religion as Jewish is about three and a quarter percent in our sample, and we added a new category which is asking people about their ethnicity and we put Jewish American as an ethnicity not as a religion. And while there's two third overlap between the two there is still quite a few people we'll not capture one category or the other. So that pushed our sample to roughly five percent. Still small, limited obviously. You have to draw limited conclusions, but nonetheless the trend is interesting because you have among Jewish Americans -- let me just go back here a little bit. So you can see that on the question of when you say that you want the U.S. to lean toward Israel which one of the following reasons is closer to your view in terms of whether it's a religious or ethnic duty, whether it's shared values, whether it's U.S. interest, Israeli interest. You can see that among Jewish Americans the percentage who say religious or ethnic duty is really not different from the rest of the population; very close, 24 percent. As opposed to when you look at the people who identify themselves

as evangelical Christians you get a much larger percentage who say that this is an ethnic and religious duty. So it's fascinating to see.

We find a similar division by the way where 61 percent of Jewish Americans say they prefer democracy over Jewishness. Quite the opposite of evangelical. And that's even more true when you break it down by party.

One last point I want to make before I just make the other two points is when you look at the breakdown by party it's quite remarkable. You've seen where the democrats and independents on one side the republicans on the other, bottom line is that's true even demographically. So the younger people are much closer to democratic position on this one, that is leaning toward neither side, more inclined to want to impose sanctions, more supportive of Palestinian state. That's true of women and that's true of African Americans and Hispanic Americans in the sample. So it's not just democrat, republican, it's really a changing demographic group that we see.

Just a couple of more points about issue importance. You know, with human rights when -- I have thought it by saying a lot of people don't realize how important human rights is for a large constituency of Americans. And so when you're looking strictly at the people who rank the Arab-Israeli issue specifically as being important you're missing a group that looks at it as a subset of a broader principal to them. And we've seen how important that is for human rights community. But it holds true in this slide that I'm showing here that the more you rank the human rights, the higher you rank it in your priorities, you higher you rank the Israel-Palestine issue in your priorities. So there's an overlap in some ways that you see. And second, when you look at those people who rank the issue high on their priorities have a different policy position. For example, those Americans who say -- the one quarter of Americans who say human rights is the single most important issue to them tend to want to impose sanctions or

harsher measures because of settlements. Look at the two categories on top, thirty seven percent impose sanctions, 14 even take more action; that's 51 percent versus the rest of the population. You see the correlation in descending values based on that. So they tend to take a different position than just what the general population does. The same thing I think with Security Council taking up the Palestinian state. You find that more people who rank the issue high on their priorities want to vote in favor of a Palestinian state than the rest of the population.

I'll end with that and open it for discussion. Thank you very much.

(Applause)

MS. WITTES: Thank you. Okay. Well, Shibley, thank you. That was fascinating and surprising in certain ways.

Bill, you wrote a magnificent essay a couple of months ago about the anxiety of the American public. The anxiety at home and in the way they look at the world around them and the role that the U.S. is playing in the world. So as you look at these survey results on this particular issue how does that jive with your understanding of how Americans are feeling about their role in the world and what they want from their government on this?

MR. GALSTON: Well, in the context of that question the result of the survey that really jumped out at me was the extraordinary dominance of the rise of ISIS as the principle threat to American interests and why might people think that. Well, in addition to the obvious geopolitical concerns it's I think chronologically demonstrable that the ISIS videos featuring the beheadings of Americans turned American public opinion about as quickly as I've ever seen public opinion turn on any issue. Not only did the perception of the threat rise, but also what Americans were willing to do in response to that threat also changed very fundamentally and you saw a huge increase in the

willingness of Americans to bear some burdens and even some risks in order to do something about it. And that freed up space for the political system and for the President to respond. Having said that I think it's really important to keep not only the Israel-Palestine question but also foreign issues in general in perspective. A series of elections since 2008 have revealed roughly the same priority of issue concerns for Americans with economic and social policy issues at the top and even issues like terrorism trailing far behind. If you look at the exit polls from 2012 for example -- rather 2014, the most recent midterm election. You know, when people are asked well, what really drove your vote, what was most important, 45 percent said the economy, 25 percent said healthcare, 14 percent said immigration. You get all the way down to 13 before you hit foreign policy, and of that 13 as Shibley's poll shows a huge percentage was ISIS. And so if you ask me how many votes were actually shaped by the Israel-Palestine conflict in 2014 or even 2012 I would have to say very few. So at this point the Israel-Palestine issue is what might be called a governance issue as opposed to an electoral issue. That's not true for everybody, that's not true all the time, but I think it is generally the case that as long as there are storms or even clouds on the economic horizon all other issues, whether cultural issues or foreign policy issues, tend to be secondary or tertiary.

MS. WITTES: Does that mean that leaders have more room to choose among policy options? They don't need to take these kinds of -- even among the very interested, mobilized constituencies they don't need to take those views into account as much?

MR. GALSTON: They do need to take those issues into account because as Shibley indicated intensity matters a lot. And in our political system a highly mobilized minority feel intensely about an issue and for whom the issue is or may well turn into a voting issue, a make or break issue. At that point politicians have to worry.

Up to now foreign policy has been much more likely to have been a make or break issue for republicans than for democrats, and because republicans have tended to take, as Shibley mentioned, one side of the Israel-Palestine issue that intensity has been reflected in public policy intriguingly not only for republicans. And so one of the things that jumps out at me as an implication of Shibley's poll is that although there is a close alignment between republican elected officials and the republican rank and file there is an increasing misalignment between democratic officials and the democratic rank and file. How long will it take for that misalignment to manifest itself in electoral terms? And I think it's fair to say that as the process of generational replacement proceeds within the Democratic Party that could be very, very consequential for the Democratic Party's long-term stance of the issue that your survey is exploring.

MR. TELHAMI: And I would say, you know, just to add to this, I mean if you're an aspiring democratic candidate for national politics first you have to go through your core constituency for the primaries. But even beyond the primaries your main constituency isn't the republicans, it's going to be democrats plus independents.

MR. GALSTON: Sure.

MR. TELHAMI: Those are the ones you can sway. And you can see that they're in one space. So looking past the primaries to national election based on that alignment that we see, or intensity could be problematic even if foreign policy isn't the top issue. Here's why I would say that, if I'm right and this needs more probing about what might be called a cluster of issues that define the ethos of a party or a people. A cluster of issues of human rights where they see a subset of issues, it's not just about what we say on Israel-Palestine, it's what we say about Egypt, it's what we say about Syria, it's what we say about -- it's not about being in favor of Israel or the Arabs, it's really about being, you know, in the spirit of the constituencies, where people might feel --

MS. WITTES: People want America to be a city on a hill kind of think.

MR. TELHAMI: There's an identify issue, there's a democratic identity issue that emerges out of those cluster of issues linked to this notion of human rights and international law. And that if a candidate starts deviating from them they risk a challenge from those who may be closer to that identity. That's the question. So it's not Israel-Palestine as such, it's being a subset of something bigger and that's what I'm suggesting here. And I think that's what needs more probing obviously because this is something that we only have early indications of, but I'm suggesting that there's maybe something about a political identity issue that is emerging that one might call a democratic identity or even many of independents that is being threatened here by certain positions.

MR. GALSTON: I agree with you that it's a political identity issue, maybe even more than that. I think it may be a fundamental difference of world views. And here's what I have in mind, I'm looking at the detailed results of your question number eight in your survey, you know, which gives people an array of, you know, prisms through which to judge the Israel-Palestine conflict and just to refresh people's memory. They range from I don't really care all that much to international law to human rights to Palestinian interests to American interests to, you know, Israeli interests. And among democrats the prism of human rights is twice as important -- at least people say -- as the prism of American interests; 42 percent to 21 percent. Precisely twice as strong. When you look at republicans it's the other way around. You have 29 percent of republicans mostly concerned about the consequences for American interests versus only 22 percent who are concerned about human rights. And then there's one other feature, five percent of democrats say that they're mostly concerned about Israeli interests, twenty six percent of republicans say that. So 55 percent of republicans choose an interest based response to your questions, only 26 percent of democrats do. And this is it seems to me linked to a

very broad question in, you know, in public moral consciousness of this tension between or perhaps even outright contradiction between particularity and (audio skips).

Republicans are comfortable with the language not only of interests but of national interests. And republicans are more comfortable than are democrats with the privileging of an ethnic identity such as Jewishness over a universal value such as democracy if you have to choose, right. And for democrats it's the other way around. So this goes very deep and I think it's going to be very interesting to see how this discussion proceeds within the American public over the next 8, 10, or 15 years because this new generation isn't really going to achieve political prominence. It's already politically significant, but it won't be politically prominent or dominant for another 10 to --

MR. TELHAMI: Undoubtedly. And I mean you can see it. You know, I mean if you look at the trends I mentioned the demographics because this is not just about democrat versus republican. Ideologically it's really about the base of these parties where you see, you know, minorities are moving in that direction. Certainly Hispanics that are growing are in that space. The younger people are in that space. So this is a trend for sure I think and it's something that I think we're going to have to -- Tammy?

MS. WITTES: Can I just ask you both about an additional component of this partisan difference? So, Shibley, you just noted minorities and young people are more and more core constituencies for the Democratic Party, we've seen that in repeated elections, and American is becoming a majority-minority country over the next years. And so, you know, a lot of people have commented that's good for democrats. On the republican side 30 percent of republicans are evangelicals I think you mentioned, Shibley, so how much of --

MR. TELHAMI: It's even larger than that.

MS. WITTES: It's even larger than that. So when we look at this

partisan difference how much of the republican viewpoint is informed by this cultural religious set of commitments among evangelicals? So in other words, Bill, it might not be a world view question in the way you framed it, it might be that there's a very large constituency within the Republican Party with a preexisting set of commitments from their evangelical identity. Does that make sense to you?

MR. GALSTON: Sure it does. And that's certainly a part of it, but you wouldn't necessarily have expected that to manifest itself as a preference for a certain kind of particularism or nationalism.

MS. WITTES: I see.

MR. GALSTON: In other words --

MS. WITTES: So the interest versus values.

MR. GALSTON: -- that is a very particular manifestation. Not obviously for at least some evangelicals the ingathering of the Jewish people and the reestablishment of Jewish state is the essential prelude and precondition for the second coming.

MS. WITTES: Well, that's pretty self interested, pretty particularistic one might say. (Laughter)

MR. GALSTON: If you think you're on the right side (laughter), otherwise it's a big problem.

MR. TELHAMI: Just to be fair let's keep in mind that evangelicals are diverse, you know, and unbarring and questions, including on this issue, but by and large there's no question that they're more passionate about this issue and they take one side on this issue. And if you -- just to go back to your question that, you know, Bill said it not as much as you think, it really is as much as you think because if you take it out statistically from the data --

MS. WITTES: Take the evangelicals out?

MR. TELHAMI: Take the evangelicals -- obviously it's unfair and unjust to take them out. I mean we're talking about almost one third of America, so that's sort of just an exercise in statistics not in reality. But if you take them out just for statistical analysis, of course the numbers change completely.

MS. WITTES: The republican numbers change completely.

MR. TELHAMI: The republican numbers change completely undoubtedly.

MR. GALSTON: Well, but that's -- of course that's like saying if you took African Americans and Latinos out of the democratic party, you know,.

MR. TELHAMI: Exactly. That's why I say it's not -- it's unjust and unfair and that's just not -- that's the way it is.

MR. GALSTON: Right. Aside from that, Mrs. Lincoln, how was the play?
(Laughter)

MS. WITTES: Okay. So you've both drawn out some broader implications. Let me zero in if I may on some of the narrower policy implications. I was really struck -- perhaps I shouldn't have been, but I was very struck by the findings on settlement building. Okay, Americans don't like the idea that Israel keeps building settlements and they've heard repeated democratic and republican administrations tell them that this is an obstacle to peace, that it's not helpful; they've seen presidents sometimes take direct steps in response to Israeli settlement activity, but Americans by and large don't want the U.S. administration to really do anything about something they don't like and they see as a problem. How are we supposed to understand that? Is that just a general preference for stating our preferences but not getting enmeshed or is there something more going on here?

MR. TELHAMI: I can tell you how I interpret it. I mean on one level I think you can see generally Americans are reluctant to recommend anything, they want the easy way out. And generally people don't want intervention and --

MS. WITTES: If we can abstain we should abstain. If we don't lean it's better. Okay.

MR. TELHAMI: Yeah. I mean I think that's a general -- and that's why, you know, when they say, you know, two thirds want to lean toward neither side it used to be understood though, you know, these are people that don't care much, they don't want to, you know, bother to take a side. I don't think that's right actually. I think what we are seeing here is a polarization. Again when you look at the dynamics or who are the people who don't want to take action in a passionate way is the evangelicals. If you look at the community who want to take action in a passionate way it's the human rights community. So you have a neutralizing effect I think at some level because if you break the data down you find passionate positions. So these are not neutral positions, they are just negating each other.

And I want to say that one of the findings really that's interesting with regard to the human rights community is that that category that we see lean toward neither side, which we used to regard as the not passionate, it's not true. A lot of them are passionate --

MS. WITTES: About not leaning toward either side.

MR. TELHAMI: And that's true because they care in a different way. We're thinking of it only in terms do they care about Israel, do they care about Palestine. No, they care about something bigger than Israel and Palestine, and they take the position in a passionate and determined way and we see that in some of the data.

MS. WITTES: Bill?

MR. GALSTON: Well, taking action abroad always incurs costs of some kind, all right. They can be military costs, they can be resource costs, they can be diplomatic costs. They can be costs measured in conflicts with allies, and so I don't think the preference for inaction on this issue for very modest almost verbal action at most is either light or transient. And it will take if not a see change at least a big change in my judgment for American rank and file to be willing to invest a lot in a diplomatic effort perhaps backed by the sorts of things that Jim Baker did 25 years ago which turned out to be pretty politically costly for the Bush administration I think.

MS. WITTES: When they linked American loan guarantees to Israeli --

MR. GALSTON: Right. Yeah, I don't --

MS. WITTES: -- activity in the West Bank.

MR. GALSTON: I would be surprised to see that happen any time soon unless there is a massive tidal wave for democrats in 2016. That would at least create the precondition for considering that sort of action, but it is a very brave pundit who would predict a democratic takeover of the White House, the Senate, and the House of Representatives (laughter) given the current baseline.

MR. TELHAMI: And you're not that one.

MR. GALSTON: And I'm not that one.

MS. WITTES: It should be clear. Okay. One last thing I want to ask you about before I open it up to the floor. Looking at the partisan splits on this issue, and particularly looking, Shibley, at the core constituencies for the Democratic Party and the views they've expressed in this poll. It seems that -- well, look, we've seen a lot of tension between Washington and Jerusalem especially over the last year on this issue. And a lot of complaints on the Israeli side about the attitude of the Obama administration, the harsh critique of settlement activity in and around Jerusalem just over the last couple

of months. But if you look at this poll it suggests that President Obama's policy on settlements, on potential UN resolution, on Palestinian statehood, reflects his core constituency, his political base. In other words they've gotten the foreign policy they asked for on this issues and we've seen similar things on Syria, on ISIS, and so on that, you know, he's actually reflecting his political base pretty well. Do you think that's a conclusion from this?

MR. TELHAMI: I think so; I agree with that. And I think that, you know, just based on that part -- obviously politics is complex; it's, you know -- the public opinion and even core constituency only is part of it, you know, campaign contributions and --

MS. WITTES: All right. Because they might not be mobilized on the issue?

MR. TELHAMI: Yeah. I think they've -- no. I think they've got it roughly right. That's why even when he took positions that are seemingly at odds with traditions on this issue, you're not going to be able to see any kind of upheaval and if anything the pressure on him from his constituencies actually to be more to the left than he is on some of this. Now the question of course in real terms, what he would do or what that administration would do if there was international law passed in Israel, what kind of position would they take. Or if they face the resolution at the UN as, you know, is expected, would they veto, would they abstain. Is this kind of information likely to inform them on what they do? Now you could take Bill's position which is yeah, you might have those attitudes but it's in such a small number they're not going to pay attention to it in taking their position.

I look at it a little bit differently because that means if they really want to abstain they have the leeway to do so. It's, you know, they made the --

MS. WITTES: They shouldn't feel like they have to vet.

MR. TELHAMI: They don't have a public opinion constraint. They have other constraints, most of them are congressional and those congressional constraints are real and big and huge and particularly they're priorities right now. But from public opinion they don't have constraint from -- I mean that's not obvious to me that there's anything that would stop them from doing.

MS. WITTES: Yeah. Bill?

MR. GALSTON: First of all in this particular case I agree with you. In other words I actually think that the passage of the national (audio skips) in anything like its current form would represent a moral sea change, not only in Israel but in the relationship between Israel and the United States. And you might not see it manifested in policy immediately, but it would be a big deal, and it's a big deal for reasons I think that are related to the rising attractiveness of the one state solution. What does a one state solution mean for Americans? It is what you're driven to if you want to hold fast to your commitments to democracy and equal citizenship in circumstances in which you've given up on the two state solution. It is a moral position. It is not a practical position.

MR. TELHAMI: Practical position.

MR. GALSTON: I think we agree on that. And so if you have an Israeli law that directly affronts the core of that moral position then I think the government of Israel would be asking for trouble and would probably get it. Having said that abstaining on a vote rebuking Israel or even imposing some punishment on Israel for a vote of that sort would be considerably less costly politically than acting affirmatively the way Jim Baker did 25 years ago and the way Bush 41 administration did.

Let me just make one more point which is more future oriented?

MS. WITTES: Yes.

MR. GALSTON: Based on your data, Shibley, I don't think that there is

likely to be much of a fight about Israel and our policy toward Israel within the republican (audio skips) soon. The closest we got was Rand Paul's quasi libertarian realism, but as he got realistic about running for president he scuttled back from that position very adroitly. So the question that interests me as a political analyst and also as a democrat is whether these late intentions within the Democratic Party are going to manifest themselves in Democratic Party politics. And here I would say that a fundamental alteration of the relationship between the United States and Israel is not a congressional level decision, it is a presidential level decision and would have to be argued out in a presidential primary. If a prospective democratic presidential nominee adopted a descending or different position on this issue and survived what would be regarded by traditional democrats as heresy that person would then have permission in a way that he or she would not have if there had been no explicit debate on that issue.

And so I will believe that this is a real issue, a real live political issue inside the democratic party if and only if a presidential candidate with a serious chance of winning the nomination is prepared to take this position in an argument.

MS. WITTES: Okay. I think that's a great point on which to open it up for your questions. Let me just reiterate our house rules. Number one, please wait until the microphone comes to you. Number two, please identify yourself, and number three, out of respect for all of your fellow audience members who would like to join the conversation please keep your question brief and a question. Thank you. And let's start right here.

QUESTIONER: Thank you very much. Abdulla Hamfulcholla from Jazeera. My question is both to Bill since he talked about morality and obviously to Shibley since he's the pollster. Now as we all know there are Americans who look at the issue of Israel-Palestine in terms of justice. They say the Palestinians have suffered an

injustice which must be corrected. But there are other Americans who look at it in terms of the rules of physics. The Palestinians are divided, much of the Arab world is on fire; Israel is under no compulsion to do anything with the Palestinians. Is there anything in your study that looks at whether this paradigm finds a reflection in the bipartisan reality of the United States?

MR. TELHAMI: First of all in terms of I didn't really probe into the divisions. There were some questions that we didn't ask, like how the views of Palestinian leaders, Israeli Leaders -- they're actually posted on line. You could see that. But my own instinct when using the term justice a little more problematic because everybody tells you they are for justice but they interpret it differently. Human right, although that could be true about human rights as well, there's a little bit more understanding of what that means and we actually struggled even to try to figure out how we ask that question. Initially wanted to lump it with international law and then we said no, international is different than human rights, so we need to ask about both of them separately. Turns out human rights really is different and they care about it more.

My own sense is the kind of question you're asking isn't about the level we're asking. Because we're asking at a moral level meaning what is their instinct in terms of taking a position. What you're asking is about a practical issue. What would you do given that there's a divided Palestine, divided Israel, et cetera. So instead for those practical issues we put out some specific questions like statehood and settlements that people can relate to and we know what the answers are. But I'm not sure, you know, if you had to ask them now what is the main obstacles for the absence of peace between Israel and Palestinians, how they would rank divisions among Palestinians versus, you know, dysfunctional Israel politics. I'm not sure most of them look at it at that level of detail. Those who care about it would, but in general I don't think they would.

MS. WITTES: Okay. Did you want to add anything on that, Bill?

MR. GALSTON: No, I think we won't get through many questions if I chime in each time. (Laughter)

MS. WITTES: Okay. Why don't we actually take a couple of questions in a row and we'll start here with Ori on the end.

MR. NIR: Thank you. I'm Ori Nir with Americans for Peace Now. I wanted to take Tamara's question and sort of turn it on its head about settlements. If I were a journalist and not a representative of an organization that advocates against settlement construction I would make a headline -- the headline perhaps out of the fact that 40 percent of Americans support imposing sanctions on Israel because of settlements. As an ally, you know, the affinity, and so on and so forth, my question is if there is any way to compare it to anything in the past, and if you agree with me that that is a coup?

MS. WITTES: Okay. And before you answer that actually, let's take one from the back. Charles Bronfman. The mic is right there. Yeah.

MR. BRONFMAN: Charles Bronfman, IPF. In the discussion there's been a lot of talk about human rights and I have yet to hear a definition about human rights. Some will say that the Israelis are dumping on the Palestinians, the Palestinians, even those living in Israel, are treated as second class citizens. Others are saying the that the Israelis have suffered enough and the human rights they are treating Palestinians in Israel very well, that the Arabs in Israel are making a heck of a lot better living, their conditions are much better. What in your opinion in the survey said human rights?

MS. WITTES: Thank you.

MR. TELHAMI: Let's start with the second question. Obviously as I said, you know, one never knows what people mean by it; therefore what we try to do is

correlate it with their positions. So we say okay, people who say they care mostly about human rights, what do they think about settlements, what do they think about Palestinian statehood? So we know, we know that the majority not only are -- a larger majority of those people are opposed to settlements, but they even want to impose sanctions unlike the rest of the population. A majority among those people support endorsing -- a large plurality I think it was support Palestinian statehood at the UN or abstain. So we have much more than the rest of the population. So you know where they're leaning. More of them favor democracy over Jewishness than the rest of the population. So that gives you a guide as to who these people are and what they mean by it.

Now the question on sanctions, I haven't asked it before, maybe other people have; I'm not aware of it. I mean, you know, I would be surprised. No one has asked it. I didn't find anything related to it. So we don't really have a very good guide to know whether this has changed or not. That's quite a large number given the special relationship, how people look at Israel when you get, you know, close to that. And it's even larger of course among democrats and independents. So when you look at that as a constituency within the party and it's a majority among people who care about human rights so, you know, it is kind of -- it's a mixed picture you're right, but obviously still at the national level a majority still don't want to take tough action.

MS. WITTES: I wonder whether there is historical data on American public opinion about George H.W. Bush's 1991 decision on loan guarantees. Do you know offhand, Bill?

MR. GALSTON: I don't, but that's a very good question. Let me just, you know, make a point that was hovering it seems to me in a couple of questions. For me one of the headlines from this survey is that although the vocabulary of international law is very weak in American public opinion, the vocabulary of human rights is very

strong. Why might that be? And I'll be interested in further survey research by Sibley and his colleagues to answer that question, but here's a hypothesis, when most Americans think about international law they think about a regime created by people other than Americans which is then imposed on the United States in order to constrain American action. International law from that standpoint is something between a nuisance and a real problem. When it comes to human rights, you know, there we're talking about something very close to the core of American identity. It's sort of like the Declaration of Independence writ large. And by the way the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in many respects is our Declaration of Independence write large. And so I think there's much more of a sense of identity that Americans feel to the vocabulary of human rights than to the vocabulary of international law. That's a hypothesis constructed not quite out of whole cloth, there's a little bit of evidence to support it, but I look forward with interest to further research on the subject.

MR. TELHAMI: I'll probe that next time.

MR. GALSTON: Please.

MS. WITTES: Yeah. You know, it's interesting too because I remember looking at some of the data around the time the President announced the beginning of the anti ISIS campaign. And American public support was strongest for the human rights element of the mission, saving the Yazidis on the mountain. So even on an issue -- Iraq, where there is baggage and a lot of reticence and skepticism among the American public, when it comes to human rights protection they were willing.

MR. GALSTON: And similarly in the case of Afghanistan the human rights dimension of equal rights and opportunities for women has been enormously powerful in both political parties. That's the common political property of both parties and I don't think that's an accident.

MS. WITTES: Okay. Let's take a couple of questions up front here; in the third row, PJ. Just wait for the mic; yeah.

MR. CROWLEY: PJ Crowley, George Washington University. Shibley, as your data suggested the ISIS conflict has eclipsed, you know, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in terms of preeminence from an American standpoint. You know, flip that around, today in the region based on your polling, is that true within the Middle East as well?

MS. WITTES: And, PJ, just hand the mic to two rows in front of you. Right there.

MR. MITCHELL: Thanks very much. I'm Garrett Mitchell and I write the Mitchell Report. And it's a long question with a lot of parts, Tammy.

MS. WITTES: Oh, Gary. He's trolling me. (Laughter)

MR. MITCHELL: The finding about the differences between human rights and U.S. interests it seems to me is a really telling one. And often in the data that you've shown us over the years there's always this question in the back of my mind which sort of I want to know how to position these people; what else do they think, you know. Are they Yankee fans or Red Sox fans, you know. Do they believe you squeeze the toothpaste tube in the middle or roll it up from the bottom? (Laughter) And when Bill talked about universalist versus particularist, which is very salient from a remarkable session that he did last week with Alan Wolf on the diaspora question, I wonder if the findings in this survey on the question I talked about is an indication not just of a point of view about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but a sort of world view in and of itself which if applied to other areas of interest, and I think Bill spoke to that in his last response, and Tammy did, whether there's a rock in that snowball.

MS. WITTES: Okay. And then let's just take one more since we're right

here.

QUESTIONER: Professor Telhami, how do you explain the higher leaning to support Israel among evangelicals compared to the Jewish Americans and how would that impact the policies of the United States if republicans won the next elections?

MR. TELHAMI: Thanks. Let's talk about the first question -- and by the way when we say ISIS is now the trumping issue for the U.S. in the public eye in the Middle East, remember they link it to other issues so that when you ask them do you think Israeli-Palestinian violence will increase, will make it harder to fight ISIS you have two thirds say yes, 71 percent of republicans say yes. So people see a connection.

Now on the Arab side, while historically the Israel-Palestine question was the prism through which most Arabs see the outside world, since the Arab uprising there is no question that most people are focused on the immediate issues to them. Egypt is focused on Egypt, Syria is focused on Syria, Iraq, all these, but when you look at the narrative -- and this is the interesting stuff, just how we do it, there's linkages in their minds. So they have a conspiracy theory of a weaving of why ISIS it out there that is indirectly or directly related to the Israel-Palestine question sometimes. So it's not that the Israel-Palestine issue disappears, it's now part of a broader narrative that incorporates their focus on immediate more important issues. And we'll see how that evolves because again that connects to the second question which is sort of, you know, people have a world view and you want to see how these issues fit into the world view. Americans have a world view. We discovered democrats, republicans have different world views in some ways. And so the Israel-Palestine question is a subset of a broader democratic view. A democrat has a certain political identity, a view of the world. Human rights is important to that core identity and they see the Israel-Palestine question as a

subset of it. I'm sure that will be true if I were to ask them about how the Egyptian government is behaving or, you know, any other subset of questions. They're going to take a principal position deriving from it. But what's interesting is that among this group that ranks this issue high in its priorities they also rank the Israel-Palestine question higher in their priorities than the rest of the population. So they see it as an important subset of their world view.

Now with the final question it's really a long -- you know, we could go forever. I'm sure Bill has a whole theory of the rise of the evangelical interests in Israel-Palestine. I happen to view while it has a genesis dating back to early America. It wasn't really a political issue until the Reagan revolution. It's kind of propelled into a religious political coalition that emerged, you know, in the late '70s and beyond and we see it as emerging. Regardless it's now part of the narrative of the evangelical question. Whatever the history of it is it's now part of that narrative and it's important to them. So for the consequences as Bill suggested earlier with regard to the republicans, is there is not debating on the republican side of this issue. There isn't. I mean this is a core constituency of the republican side and you're not going to have variation, it's just going to be what it is going to be. On the democratic side it's a completely different question. And yes, it's not Jewish Americans. Obviously when we look at people who identify themselves with Jewish Americans, either religiously or ethnically, they rank the Israel-Palestine question higher in their priorities, but they also rank human rights higher in their priorities. And so when you translate that and you see the position on democracy or Jewishness, they take democracy over Jewishness. And so it's a completely different identity question that emerges out of that. So I think it would have consequences for sure for republican politics.

MS. WITTES: Bill, you want to add anything?

MR. GALSTON: No, let's get to some other questions.

MS. WITTES: Okay. I think we can do a couple of more rounds. Let's go to the back of the room. Let's see, in the very back row -- is that Greg? I'm looking past the lights.

MR. AFTANDILIAN: Hi. Greg Aftandilian, Center for National Policy. Thank you very much for your discussion. My question is dealing with trying and failing. In other words democratic secretaries of state have repeatedly tried to deal with the Israel-Palestine, they failed. But considering your data there seems to be no political downside to that failure especially if they are perceived to be evenhanded on their approach. Is that correct from your findings? And if so will we expect more secretaries of state in the future to continue to try because there is no political downside? Thanks.

MS. WITTES: There's no political downside to trying and failing. Okay. And let's go on this side, back row. Other side, Donnie; yeah.

QUESTIONER: Donnie Delayan, the ISHA Council. First of all I think the survey is very interesting and will give us many, many hours and days to investigate even further. My question is not a statistical one, but one of policy stemming from your findings, Professor Telhami. If human rights is the most important issue and let me suggest I think an intelligent guess, an educated guess that the conflict is not going to be solved in the short or mid-term. What does the thing that human rights is the most urgent issue expect the U.S. and the parties to do? What is the policy stemming -- because I must say that as I said the survey is exciting, but the concentration on one state, two state, Jewish versus democratic is not so relevant to what's going to happen in the coming years. I think the question of what we should do with human rights is the most important. And the question is what Americans expect Israel, the Palestinians, and the U.S. to do on that respect?

MS. WITTES: I think you have some new survey questions for your next poll, Shibley. (Laughter) Okay, let's take one more on the aisle here. Right -- yup. Right there; yup.

MR. DIGGS: Brian Diggs from Yeshiva University. This question is for Shibley. I think that another headline that would be coming out of your poll is that the divergence between Jewish Americans and evangelicals on a number of key questions, some of which are in the packet that you had handed out and some were in your presentation, seemed to suggest -- and the political behavior of American Jews and American evangelicals over the last three or four presidential cycles seems to bear this out, that there doesn't seem to be very much of a cost for democratic candidates to take positions that are potentially going to be at odds with what some would suggest is the received wisdom as to the way in which American Jews feel about it, but that there would be for republican candidates. And that the room to maneuver for a democratic presidential candidate as well as a democratic administration is much wider in part because many of the findings that you have in your poll that seem to be borne out in other polls as well is that Jewish Americans tend to be more in line with the positions that other democratic voters are taking or independent voters are taking anyway.

MS. WITTES: Thanks. Bill, you want to start us off?

MR. GALSTON: Happy to. First of all let me take the questions almost in reverse order. We should always keep the basic structure of American politics in mind, American electoral politics. Before you get to be a candidate you have to go through a primary. And the people who determine outcomes in primaries are a very unrepresentative subset of larger statistical aggregates of rank and file democrats or republicans. And there is also something called an invisible primary that precedes the actual primary when people are being evaluated for suitability by editorial boards, by

people who are potentially going to fund campaigns, et cetera. And so the invisible primary and the primary have consequences for candidate behavior that may not be entirely consonant with what you'd expect if you simply looked at the broader statistical aggregates, which is why I said candidates, particularly presidential candidates, are going to have to prove on the democratic side that they can take a dissenting position or an unorthodox position on these issues and not pay a price for that. And you might look at the aggregates and say they won't pay a price, but if you look at the way you move through the political system there may be a price.

Now on the trying and failing issue I confess I don't quite agree with that analysis because, you know, one of the things that's important in the conduct of diplomacy is credibility. You're credible if people think, you know, outside observers including leaders, foreign policy officials in other countries, think that what you're doing is grounded in the serious analysis of real possibilities. And, you know, Don Quixotes make for wonderful literature but not such good diplomacy. And I do think that Secretary Kerry paid a price for trying to do something that almost everyone told him in advance could not be done. I don't think that that was good news either for Secretary Kerry or for the administration that he served.

Now onto the tough question, the really tough question. If human rights are so central what do Americans expect of Israel? Very good question. And off the top of my head here is my answer, unlike violations of international law violations of human rights are things that you can see on television. And so if I were giving advice to the government of Israel I would say stop doing things or minimize the doing of things that create visible images of what many Americans take to be human rights abuses. And that means that setting aside the question of the continuation of the occupation versus the end of the occupation or the continuation of settlements versus the end of settlements,

how the status quo is enforced on a tactical level will make a very, very big difference. In the same way, if I can take a domestic U.S. analogy, that affronts to equal justice in the application of criminal law are, you know, are vivid, they're immediate, their inflammatory. If they're backed by video evidence all the more so. And I think that there are some tactical steps that the Israeli government can and should take in order to minimize these visible affronts to what an American audience will see as human rights. And I could go into great tactical detail on that point, but there are better and worse ways of being occupiers.

MR. TELHAMI: Well, I would just say don't just minimize the visibility, just don't do them. (Laughter)

MR. GALSTON: But that's how you minimize the -- in other words what I was saying, Shibley, is, you know, don't do the things that create such vivid images on television. It's a simple tactical matter.

MS. WITTES: You mean things like housing demolitions, things like --

MR. GALSTON: I think that housing demolitions could horribly be worse from the standpoint of the American public, right? I mean the idea of collective punishment is an affront to American sense of basic decencies. Blowing up houses occupied by women and children because the men in the house have committed crimes is -- you know, that's not regarded by an American public as an appropriate punishment. It just isn't. Nor does it seem to be much of a deterrent by the way.

MR. TELHAMI: And it's not just visible things. And actually Bill agrees with me, although he's focused on the visible right now, because he said earlier that, you know, if the nationality law passes as it stands it's going to have huge consequences for American attitudes toward Israel even though it's not going to be necessarily visible per se because I think it is a philosophical moral question that people internalize even if

there's no images that are taken out of it. And I think it could have consequences.

Just one last point about human rights constituency. Actually in the poll we are facing some questions that are immediate, like what do we do about voting in the UN which is going to come up, abstain, veto or -- so there's a particular recommendation that falls out of that. So it's very practical. But I happen to think that if you look at the President's decision to recommend attacking Syria, Assad regime, after the use of chemical weapons which was then opposed by the public, and you have to ask the question what was driving that decision. I would say that the President, the Democratic Party, and the White House had a very passionate human rights constituency that was pushing for it. It wasn't public opinion as we found out in general. And then he faced opposition not so much because of human rights, because of consequences and it became a question of war or no war for the rest of the population. But I think there is a constituency out there that is recommending certain types of action, you know, for good or for bad, certainly in the Democratic Party, but in the body politics of the U.S. And if you don't pay attention to that, this is a group that is passionate and involved and engaged and certainly within the Democratic Party, you're missing something. You don't understand how people are evaluating or ranking issues.

MS. WITTES: Bill, you want to make one more point?

MR. GALSTON: One last point because I'm continuing to think about these questions after I've allegedly answered them. (Laughter)

MS. WITTES: That's the mark of a good discussion.

MR. GALSTON: And it occurred to me to ask myself what is it that has done most to form the consciousness of contemporary America? So what is it that forms the prism through which so many Americans see not only their own country and their own history, but other countries around the world and events? And my answer to that question

in the case of contemporary Americans is not only the norm of equal citizenship, struggle for it. And I was really struck in the 1980s and 1990s how important the U.S. civil rights movement was for our reaction to South African events in the (audio skips). And similarly I think that in the case of Israel-Palestine and a number of other issues, this idea of the struggle for equal citizenship, however applicable or inapplicable it may be to oversee circumstances, does a lot of real work in forming American political judgments about overseas events. And, you know, I'm not here necessarily to defend that as the right way of thinking about foreign policy, but it is a fact it seems to me that policy makers have to keep in mind.

MS. WITTES: Thank you. So I think, Bill, we'll take you as our model. I certainly will be continuing to digest and think about these poll results and their implications.

Shibley, so grateful to you for all of the work that went into this and presenting today.

For all of you, the data that you saw on the screen today is also available on our website. You have packets that were distributed this morning as well. Please continue to share and reflect on that. And we look forward to continuing the conversation with all of you in the weeks and months to come. Thank you very much. (Applause)

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CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

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

Carleton J. Anderson, III

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